II

CHARACTERIZATION

IN THE RAMAYANA OF VALMIKI
Aim and Method of Investigation

The aim of the thesis is to analyse the characters of the Rm. systematically (1) and unfold them intuitively in the evocative dimension in which V. intended to unfold them before the minds of the audience in the mould of an over-all poetic impression arising from his poetical presentation (2).

As a consequence of this, our method is both intuitive and scientific. It is scientific in as far as we base our documentation on the text, a selected text, and conform our estimate as closely to it as possible. It is intuitive in as far as we attempt to read the intentions of the poet in and behind his poetic expression and, by this, to re-capture the over-all impressions which he wanted to leave on the minds of the audience about these characters, and in as far as we can do this only by identifying ourselves with the audience of his time. But these two aspects are on the whole never separate, but harmoniously interwoven with one another. Though we have foreseen separate analytical and synthetic chapters in our scheme of investigation, these do not reflect two different methodical approaches, but the build-up of a constructive approach. It is true that the summary portraits of the characters are wholly intuitive in their outlook and that they re-capture the over-all impression intended by the author in the most genuine way, but they are themselves built on previous analytico-intuitive investigations.
In taking into account the evocative dimension of the poem, we restrict ourselves only to character-impressions, leaving aside the poet's messages in conveying these impressions to a separate final chapter: 'Vālmīki's Poetical Mission and the Message of his Character-Portrayals.'

N.B.: Our aim is to unfold V.'s portrayals of characters in the poetico-psychological dimension intended by him. It is not the analysis of characterization in a culturo-psychological or ethnico-psychological dimension, i.e., that psychological dimension mirrored in the poem of which the poet is not aware due to the fact that he is unconsciously moulded by the vision of life of his time and culture. Such an analysis would amount to a historico-anthropological analysis of characterization, an analysis which would aim at unfolding the collective unconscious of a people mirrored in the characterization of literary figures, but not at unfolding the portrayals of literary figures themselves. But an analysis of the collective unconscious as it is mirrored in Epic characterization is meaningful only if it takes pains to unravel its growth, to bring it into relief against the collective unconscious mirrored in literature other than Epic and to compare it with its equivalent in the Epic literature of other peoples.
Scheme of Investigation

For Prominent Characters:

(1) A systematic analysis of characterization
   - Translation or contents [of passages bearing on characterization]
     If required, an interpretation of context is added.
   - Analysis of characterization.
   - Classification of literary basis and traits of characterization
     - In case of descriptions or narrations where the character-traits exposed are of a simple, general or repetitive nature this system is replaced by a résumé or appendix.

(2) A synthetic view of the author's conception and portrait of the character.

(3) A criticism of the views of modern scholars.

For Major Characters:

(1) and (2)

For Minor Characters:

A synthetic view of the author's portrait of the character.
N.B. : It may be noted that our division into minor, major and prominent characters has not been made from an over-all literary viewpoint of eminence, but on methodical grounds. Though a number of persons, such as figuring in episodes, may not be judged as very important from an over-all literary point of view, they nevertheless do receive ample characterization by the poet, and the poet, who is still a poet with the blood of a rhapsodist, addressing himself personally and spontaneously to the audience, does want to leave vivid impressions on the minds of the audience about these characters just as about anything else that would conduce to capturing their minds. And so, on methodical grounds, it is proper to take this perspective into account and mete out respective treatment to such figures according to the richness in which their personalities have been unfolded before the audience.

1) The method of résumé will be given much wider scope in the case of L., S., and Rāma 1) for the sheer extent of their characterization, 2) because many aspects of their characterization will be treated in the context of other characters and so merely need to be put into the right limelight, 3) the very outlook of their characters is far simpler than that of the previous chapters and hence does not need such detailed investigation. The presentation of Rāma will be totally a résumé-unfolding of his character both for the sake of clarity of its evolutionary perspective and for the reasons given above.
A

VANAVASI CHARACTERS
Guha is portrayed as the hospitable, sympathetic and devoted Niṣāda king, who, on learning about Rāma's misfortune, welcomes the trio with sympathy and sorrowful affection and is intent on extending all hospitality to them — so much so that he requests them to consider his kingdom as Ayodhyā, offering them various dishes, the comfort of sleep, and fodder and water for the horses (all of which Rāma thankfully declines except for the latter as he is intent on living an ascetic life), and, on seeing L. keeping awake to protect his brother, with sorrowful concern offers him a soft bed specially prepared for him to lie down upon, begging at the same time to be allowed to guard Rāma in his stead — Rāma who is dearer to him than anybody else, by whose favour he expects great merits in this world. This offer, however, is declined by L., who does not find sleep and happiness out of concern for Rāma, whose pitiful plight he depicts to Guha in sorrowful words along with dismal musings over the destiny of the royal family (II 44-45).

Guha manifests his loyalty to Rāma when, on seeing Bh.'s vast retinue approaching, he expresses his apprehension about Bh., thinking that he may be out to kill Rāma, and takes necessary precautions. Prompted by Sumantra's cheerful and appreciative reference to him, he, however, welcomes Bh. and extends a warm hospitality to him, yet inquires about his intentions towards Rāma. On Bh.'s asserting his sincerity, Guha immediately puts full confidence in him and pays tribute to him (II 78-79).

True to his devoted spirit, he lavishes all hospitality on him and even accompanies him with his men, on his way to Rāma. Guha's affection and deep sympathy for Rāma as well as for L.
and S. is of so tender a nature that, on seeing Bh. engrossed in anxious thoughts about Rāma, he tries to console him by relating to him in all details how L. declined his offer of a comfortable bed out of concern for his brother and gave expression to Rāma's misfortune, falling into gloomy musings regarding the destiny of the royal family, and thereby plunges Bh. into greater grief than he is already experiencing and so also Śatrughna and Ks., who share his grief with pitiful lamentations. As Bh. asks Guha to relate how Rāma and S. spent the night etc., Guha sympathetically relates everything how Rāma declined all provisions and in what humility and selfless devotion to their path of asceticism they spent the night (II 80-81).
Extensive characterizations of ṛṣis as a whole are few and drawn on a common pattern: Surrounded with an aura of brāhmānic lustre and an atmosphere of ascetic austerity and yogic contemplation in the midst of enchanting forest scenery and animals and birds, they dedicate themselves to tapas of the most varied types, meditation, recitation of the Vedas, fire sacrifice and floral worship (III 1 § 5 passim).

As ascetics given to a self-restrained life they require the patronage of a protector. So, looking up to Rāma as the lord of the Ikṣvākus, excelling in fame, valour and ārtha and their virtual ruler and protector in the forest, they appeal to his kṣatriya duty to protect them (and save them from the cruel Rk(s). harassing them) (III 1.17-22, III 5.6-21, III 9) since, being ascetics who have given up punishment, subdued anger and conquered their senses, they need to be constantly protected like embryos (III,1.20). Able though they are to kill the Rk(s). by the power of their penance, they do not wish to annihilate their tapas to which they have devoted themselves for such a long time, which is full of obstacles and hād to be accomplished. That’s why they, rather than uttering curses allow themselves to be eaten up by the cruel Rk(s). (III 9.13-14). In an earlier passage (II 108) Vālmīki depicts the anxiety of the ṛṣis of Citrakūta, caused by Khara’s eradication of the ṛṣis of Janasthāna and the Rk(s)’ recent attacks and harasses also on them, and their decision to leave the place as well as their request to Rāma to come along with them. When Rāma has killed Khara and Dūṣaṇa, the ṛṣis are described as coming together and triumphantly announcing that it was for the sake
of the destruction of the sinful Rks that Rāma has been led to the Dandaka forest and that from now on they will live safely in the Dandaka forest (III 29.28 ff.).

The individual sages are to a great extent also portrayed on a common pattern with more or less stress on personal character-traits. They are all sages of extraordinary yogic power, and some of them have secured all heavenly regions and even Brahmaloka and would have already renounced their bodies — were it not for the sake of virtuous Rāma, whose presence they have been longing for. Receiving Rāma with great hospitality, they express their gratification at his gracing presence and invite him to stay in their hermitages and to accept the heavenly regions they have attained through their penance. To these sages belong Sarabhanga, Sutiksna, and Śabarī. All of the ṛṣis are characterized by overflowing hospitality, gratification at Rāma's presence and eagerness to bestow their blessings or favours obtained by their yogic power on him in some form or other. Now a brief delineation of each of the major sages:

Bharadvaja, whose character emerges mainly in the context of Bh.'s passage through his hermitage and Rāma's good-will visit on his return to Ayodhya (II 84-86, VI 112), is a lavishly hospitable and wonder-making, omniscient and future-predicting sage, who, by the power of yogic concentration, invokes Viśvakarman, the rivers, the earth, the atmosphere, the Gods, Gandharvas, Apsarases, the Nandana forest etc. to entertain Bh.'s retinue in the most spectacular and lavish manner (II 84) and who, at Rāma's request, causes the trees on the way to Ayodhya to bring forth sweet fruits for the enjoyment of the Vānaras (VI 112.16 ff., 115.19 f.). By the same yogic power he knows everything about Rāma's destiny and foretells the happy end of Rāma's exile, admonishing Bh. not to blame Kai.
(II 86.24-28), and demonstrating before Rāma his acquaintance with his experiences in the forest and in Lahkā (VI 112.9-14). His devotion to Rāma is manifested also in his ascertainment about Bh.'s intention in coming to his hermitage and referred to as such by the poet:

\[
\text{tatheti ca pratijñāya bharadvājo mahātapāḥ/}
\text{bharataṁ pratyuvācedam rāghavasnehanbandhanāt} //
\]
II 84.9

Bharadvāja shows great admiration also for Bh.'s selfless dedication to his brother. Listening with deep sympathy to his report on the outcome of their talks, he exults at the noble loftiness of his devotion, saying:

\[
\text{naitaccitram naravyāghra dīlavṛttavatām vara/}
\text{vadāryam tvayi tiṣṭhetu nimme vrṣṭamivodakam} //
\text{amṛṭaḥ sa mahābāhuḥ pīṭa daśarathastava/}
\text{yasva tvamīḍrāḥ putro dharmāmati dharmavatsalaḥ} //
\]
II 105.16-17

Śarabhanga, Sutīkṣṇa and Śabarī are portrayed in a uniform pattern. Sarabhanga is a meritorious sage, who has distinguished himself through his severe tapas, by which he has secured all heavenly regions and Brahmaloka, so much so that Indra personally, with his spectacular chariot and with a retinue of Gods and Gandharvas, has come to invite him to that region, and is characterized by his eagerness to meet Rāma as priyātithi. Knowing about the presence of virtuous Rāma close to his hermitage, he has postponed his going to Brahmaloka till after the arrival of Rāma. He is highly gratified at his presence and offers him to accept the heavenly regions conquered by him – which Rāma thankfully declines – and, feeling that with this all his desires have been fulfilled, he, after advising Rāma, on his inquiry for a hermitage to stay, to go to Sutīkṣṇa,
enters fire and, before the eyes of Rāma is transformed into a shining youth and ascends to the world of Brahmā, who is greatly pleased with his sight (III 4).

Sū tkṣṇa, also an ascetic of great merits, has acquired heaven by his tapas and has been personally informed by Indra of his attainment of all the worlds, but in expectation of Rāma he has not renounced his body and gone to heaven. He welcomes Rāma and treats him with hospitality and offers him to enjoy himself with Ś. and L. in the heavenly regions conquered by him, and, as Rāma thankfully declines this and inquires for a hermitage to stay, he invites him to live in his own hermitage—which Rāma declines, as he wants to proceed further to Daṇḍakāranya (III 6, 7).

Sābāri is an accomplished śramaṇī surrounded with an aura of ascetic glory. She has distinguished herself through life-long tapas and devotion to her elders, ascetics of old of great yogic power, who, before going to their heavenly regions, have predicted to her that Rāma would come one day and that she should receive him with due hospitality after which she would attain the highest regions. She receives Rāma with great respect, introduces to him the āśrama still reminiscent of the aura of glory and great asceticism of her elders and with Rāma's permission enters fire and, resembling fire in her splendour, ascends to heaven where the old rṣis dwell (III 70).

Agastyā is portrayed as an eminent and venerable sage and protector of the virtuous, surrounded with an aura of magnanimity, a sage who, by conquering Death, has made the Southern region a place yielding protection to the world, in obedience to whom the Vindhya mountain does not rise, and who has made his hermitage an abode of peace and holiness,
unapproached by the Rk(s), who have become peaceful since the
time of his conquest of the Southern region, a place where
Gandharvas, Siddhas and ṛsis go for patronage to him, where
Gods, Yakṣas and Nāgas dwell practising abstinence with a desire
to practise dharma, where no sage is found who tells lies or is
deceitful or wicked or addicted to sensual pleasures (III 10
latter part). Agastya receives Rāma with warm hospitality and
respect for his greatness of status and character and shows his
favour by presenting him with a bow of Viṣṇu together with an
inexhaustible quiver of arrows. He expresses his gratification
at Rāma's, L.'s and S.'s visit, showing a special admiration for
S., whose exemplary chastity and devotion to her husband he
exalts, and at having the privilege of their gracing his āśrama
by their stay. When Rāma thankfully declines, though he
inquires for some hermitage with abundant water and forest where
he would like to build a cottage for himself, Agastya proposes
Pañcavaṭī (the picturesque beauty of which he depicts to Rāma in
glorious oLOURS), remarking, however, that by his power of tapas
he has discovered that Rāma first cherished a desire in his
heart to stay with him, but now has changed his resolution
(III 11-12).

Anasūya is Atri's venerable sage-wife, who has
distinguished herself through great devotion to her husband and
extraordinary penance (10,000 years), by the power of which she
had caused the Ganges to flow into the hermitage when the world
suffered from a 10 years' drought and had prolonged a night for
10 days for the Gods (II 109.7-12). Learning about Sītā's
devotion to Rāma on account of which she has left relations and
wealth, Anasūya shows much affection and interest for her,
instructs her about the supreme virtue of a wife's devotion to
her husband and exhorts her to adopt it. When S. respectfully
answers that nothing of her teaching is unfamiliar to her and
that she herself regards wifely devotion as the highest virtue
(and this the more in case of Rāma, who is an embodiment of
virtues and shows great respect for his mother Ks.) and she will
never forget what has been imparted to her regarding this by
Ks., her mother, her friends and relatives, Anasūyā is greatly
delighted and eager to grant her some boon. When S., declining,
expresses her gratitude for all her kindness, she is still more
pleased and presents her with a garland, ornaments and cosmetics
(II 109.17 ff.; 110.19) As the devout wife of an eminent sage,
she feels curious to know how Rāma obtained S. in marriage and
requests her to tell her everything about it (II 110.22 ff.). 1)
JATAYU

Jaṭāyu is the aged king of the vultures, a descendant of Vinatā, who, prompted by his friendship with D., introduces himself to Rāma and offers himself as vāsasahāya and protector of Jānakī in his and L.'s absence (III 13).

He is characterized, mainly in the context of the S.-harana, as a self-sacrificing hero who, out of compassion for S. and his friendship with Rāma, challenges Rv. and valiantly fights with him to the extent of sacrificing his life in order to save S. : Being aroused from his sleep by the pleading voice of S., he first appeals to the moral conscience of Rv. to release S., exposing his sinfulness of touching another's wife, particularly the wife of a king, moreover, of a virtuous king like Rāma devoted so much to the welfare of others, and Rāma's justification in killing Khara's army, and warning him of the dire consequences which this ignoble act of his will bring upon him, and finally he challenges him to fight, boasting that he will prevent him from taking away S. as long as he lives, even to the point of his life, for the sake of Rāma and D. Jaṭāyu fights valiantly with his beak, claws and wings notwithstanding the injuries inflicted by Rv., succeeds in breaking Rv.'s bows and arrows, shattering his chariot and killing his charioteer and horses, and as Rv. suddenly sets out to fly away with S. in his lap, on seeing Jaṭāyu exhausted, the vulture king obstructs his way and, with words branding his sinfulness which will entail the destruction of the whole Rk. race and his cowardice, and challenging his patience, he vigorously attacks him, fighting at the risk of his life for Rāma, but in a moment of exhaustion his wings, feet and sides are cut off by Rv., and he falls on the earth, almost lifeless. (III 48 - 49).
V. makes Rāma praise Jaṭāyū's greatness in his lamentation over the death of the vulture king, who has died while trying to fulfil Rāma's request to answer his questions, with words of high esteem:

sītāharanajam duḥkham na me saumya tathāgatam /
yathā vināśo gṛḍhrasya matrte ca parantapa / 25
rāja daśarathaḥ ērīmānyathā mama mahāyaśūḥ /
pūjanīyaśca māṃśaṃca tathāyāḥ patageśvaraḥ // 26
saumitre hara kāsthāni nīrmatiśyāmi pūvakam /
gṛḍhrarājam didhakṣāmi matrte nīdanaṃ gataṃ // 27
nāthaṃ patalgoṣṭya cītāmārupayāmyaham /
imaṃ dhakṣāyāni saumitre hataṃ raudreṇa rakṣasā // 28
yā gatirvajñāśīlāmāhitāgnesca yā gatiḥ /
aparāvartinām yā ca yā ca bhūmipradāvinām // 29
maya tvaṃ samanujñāto gaccha lokānanuttamān /
gṛḍhrarāja mahāsattvā saṃskṛtaśca mayā vraja // 30

III 64.25-30
The characterization of Kabandha, the cursed Danu, consists of three layers according to his three states of existence: his state of curse as a deformed Rk. monster, his state of mutilation caused by Rāma and L., and his state of regained glory after cremation.

In his first state, he is drawn as a terrifying and cruel-looking deformed Rk. monster bereft of head and neck, with yojana-long arms and a huge mouth on his belly, a monster whose roar resembles the rumbling of clouds and who feeds on wild animals. On catching hold of Rāma and L. with his arms, he sarcastically expresses his satisfaction at having obtained them as food from Fate, with no pity on them on hearing them lament their misfortune and their inevitable subjugation by Fate. Yet, he is prevented from carrying out his intention by Rāma and L., who cut off his arms and feet. (III 65-66). This side of Kabandha's character is attributed to a curse by Indra, who, enraged by Kabandha's provocation prompted by his pride over a boon for a long life granted to him by Brahmā, hurled his thunderbolt on him, which pressed his thighs and head in the body, and, as a relief, gave him arms as long as a yojana, fashioned a mouth with sharp teeth on his belly and assured him that, after Rāma and L. cut his arms, he would obtain heaven (III 67.7 ff.).

In his second state, we see Kabandha remember the words of Indra and express his joy at the fortunate outcome of the events, as he will now reach heaven again, and cheerfully relate the story of his curse (III 66.13-15, 67). Questioned whether he
knows something about the whereabouts of Rāma and S., he declares that, as he has not as yet the divine power of knowledge, which he has lost after his curse, he is not able to do so but he will know after his cremation (III 67 latter part).

After he has been burnt, he emerges with a glorious form and from atop the vimāna, while ascending to heaven, gives directions to Rāma. He is characterized as possessing that supernatural knowledge and insight into the future by which he ascertains that for Rāma to regain S., the best means is to make friends with one being in equal distress, and in this situation gives the optimistic prediction that Su., with whom he should make friends, will do everything in his power to restore S. to him, and is able to give directions how to go to Kiṣkindhā. (III 68.7-22).
The character of the vulture king Sampati is two-sided. He first appears as a greedy vulture pleased to find the fasting Vn(s), a welcome food presented to him by Fate (IV 55.1-6). But when he hears from Angada about the heroic death of Jaṭāyu, he is struck with grief and curiosity to know everything about his dear brother, of whom he has not heard ever since he lost his wings while protecting his brother Jaṭāyu under his wings from the heat of the sun, out of brotherly love (IV 55.16 - 57.7). He is characterized as possessing profound knowledge of old times, knowing the worlds of Varuṇa, the three steps of Viṣṇu, the fight between Devas and Asuras and the churning of the Ocean (IV 57.13), and gladly extends information about Rv. and the island of Laṅka where S. is confined - the only way of help he can offer to Rāma - which information he has gathered as a personal witness of Rv.'s abduction of S. and by way of knowledge and supernatural power of vision with which he can see Rāma and S. straight from his position (IV 57.11-34).2)
THE VANARAS
1

A SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS

OF THE CHARACTERIZATION OF VALI
Translation

Having been humiliated by my brother and deprived of my wife, I thus roam on the foremost Rṣyamūka mountain, tormented by fear and filled with deep grief (16). And I dwell here with agitated mind, frightened and immersed in fear, having been humiliated and treated with hostility by my brother Vālī, oh Rāghava (17). You, who free the whole world from fear, be pleased to grant your favour also to me, who am helpless and oppressed by the fear of Vālī (18).

A long time ago, I was made to abdicate my kingship and was expelled by Vālī, the more powerful one, telling me harsh abuses (31). And my wife, dearer to me even than life, was taken away by him, and those who were my friends were confined to prison (32). And the evil-minded one attempted to kill me, o Rāghava, and Vn(s), repeatedly instigated by him, were slain by me (33). But when I, in this state of fear, saw you, o Rāghava, I did not approach you out of fear, for in fear one fears all (34). Only because H. and these chiefs are my helpers, I still retain my life, although I am in calamity (35), for these dear monkeys guard me from all sides, they go with me wherever I have to go and stop whenever I stop (36). This, o Rāghava, is my story in short. What is the need of telling you details? This my elder brother and enemy of mine, Vālī, is of well-known power (37). After his death my grief would be dispelled. My happiness and my life are dependent on his death (38). This, o R., is the unhappy end I, oppressed by grief, have reported to you. Whether grieved or not, a friend is always a friend's refuge (39).

Interpretation of context and analysis of characterization

Su., delighted by the promise of R. to grant him, in turn, any help he asks for, expresses his satisfaction at possessing the favour of the Gods and his utter confidence in R.'s patronage to secure for him his kingdom. Reflecting on this, he feels the need to assure to R. by way of an allusion also his trustworthiness of a friend, humbly remarking, however, that he is not
competent to speak of his own qualities. Seeing the ideal of the beauty and value of friendship realized in R.'s behavior, he bursts forth into an eulogy of the firmness of love between friends, the spirit of sharing with one another, of taking refuge with one another and sacrificing for one another as it is prevalent among good friends. Su's speech is acknowledged by R. with a single word of approvement. Then Su. breaks a branch from a Sāl tree and makes a seat for him and R. while H. breaks another one and invites L. to rest on it. Su. is delighted, and with a few words lovingly entrusts his affliction to R.

Still, although it is said that Su. is delighted, that his voice is soft and his words are agitated with joy, his very speech betrays a tone of affliction and fear. This reflects very well human experience. If we are in great calamity and we suddenly, like by a bolt from the blue, are struck with hope that our grief may be dispelled, we are supremely delighted, but as soon as we recall our mind our past situation, we again fall into musing and sadness. Su., therefore, characterizes Vālī not prompted by his new, momentary feeling of delight, in which he sees R. as his saviour, but by a slight emotion of affliction and fear (ṣokabhayahāva). This makes a difference, for if Su. spoke with confidence, we could expect him to pour his anger upon Vālī. But he does not do so. He merely and quite objectively characterizes Vālī's action as a humiliation (v.16 - vinikṛto bhrātra; v.17 - vālinā nikṛto bhrātra) and as hostile treatment (v.17 - vālinā nikṛto bhrātra krtavairāśca), which he understands in the sense of persecution, for only then all the adjectives expressing Su.'s fear have their meaning. In conformity with the reminiscent tone of affliction and fear is Su.'s plea to R. (whom he addresses as the one who frees the whole world from fear) to grant his favor also to him, who is helpless and oppressed by the fear of Vālī.

R., in his answer, promises Su. to kill Vālī this very day, assuring him of the unfailing power of his arrows. At these encouraging words of R., Su. is filled with extreme delight, but at the same time, he states how much his grief has been playing
upon him and how incomparably dear R.'s friendship is to him, and repeats his request to R. to free him from his affliction. While he speaks these words, all the pain and grief of his calamity come into S.'s mind again, and, giving full vent to the burden of his soul, he bursts into a stream of tears. Then, making an effort, he restrains his tears and now acquaints R. with his story in more extensive words.

This short account is narrated by S. in a similar reminiscent tone of affliction and fear, but this tone is set off more effectively, particularly in v.35, where he says that it is only because of the companionship of H. and some Vn. chiefs that he still can bear his life, and in v.38 - 'My happiness and my life are dependent on the death of Vālī. This is the unhappy end I, oppressed by grief, have reported to you.' In conformity with this tone, S. characterizes Vālī as having humiliated him - he has been forced by him to abdicate his kingship and has been expelled, he has been told harsh abuses, and has been deprived of his wife dearer than life to him and of his friends, who have been confined to prison - and as having persecuted him. This last follows from v.33, where it is said that Vālī attempted to kill S. or instigated other Vn(s). to do so, from designations like ripurbhātā (v.37) and from S.'s assertion of the fear he has to endure, in vv.34 ff.

Classification

In both the paragraphs the characterization is subjective, i.e., V. does not characterize Vālī himself but lets S. characterize him. Furthermore, it is a narrative, not a descriptive characterization because S. gives an account which throws light on the character of Vālī as he sees him, but he does not describe Vālī's behaviour as such. As the theme of S.'s account is his own affliction caused by the humiliation through Vālī and not so much the deeds of Vālī as such, we have to speak of an implicit characterization as opposed to an explicit or thematic characterization, where the theme is the characterization of the person itself. The tone in which reference is made to Vālī's character is a reminiscent tone of affliction and fear (śokabhayabhāva).
"Vali, my elder brother, was proclaimed king after his father's death by his ministers. During his reign I, at all times, offered him humble service. There was a demon called Mayavi, the first-born son of Dundubhi, who, because of some strife for the sake of a woman, at the dead of night came to Kiskindha and, issuing a loud roar, challenged Vali to fight. When Vali heard that terrible roar, he could not bear it and, prompted by anger, he speedily rushed out to kill the demon, sweeping away his wives, and me, who tried to restrain him. Then out of love I followed him. When Mayavi saw his enemies, he fled head over heels. Vali and I chased him, while the moon rose, till he entered a cave. Then Vali, filled with anger and in agitated mind, said to me that I should stand at the entrance of the cave till he had killed the demon. I requested Vali not to enter the cave, but Vali made me swear by on both my feet and entered the cave. As I waited for my brother in vain for a whole year, I considered him dead and began to mourn him. And when, after a long time, I saw a stream of blood issuing from the cave and heard the roar of demons but not my brother's triumphant battle-shout, I closed the cave with a rock as big as a mountain and, oppressed with grief, performed the water-rite and went to Kiskindha. I tried to hide the truth, but, asked by the ministers, I told them, and then they consecrated me king. While I was ruling, one day Vali returned, having killed his enemy. When he saw me consecrated as king, he, out of anger, imprisoned my ministers and spoke harsh words to me. Although I had the power to curb him, no such thought came to me out of respect.
of my brother. I spoke to him with proper respect, but he, in an angry mood, did not say any words of good-will. As he was filled with anger and rage, I tried to propitiate him - 'How glad I am you have come back successfully and killed the enemy. You alone are the protector of me, who was without protector. Receive once more all the kingly adornments. You alone are the king. I restore your kingdom, which was a pledge. With folded hands and bowed head I request you, don't be angry with me.' Seeing the country without king, the ministers installed me in the kingdom. Although I spoke with affection, Vālī reviled me and, summoning his subjects and ministers, he amidst his friends narrated to me with reproaching words his experience with Mayāvī - how he had been followed by me - his ruthless brother, how, when Mayāvī had entered the cave, he had instructed me, of cruel sight, that he would not return to the town before he had killed him and that I should remain at the entrance till he had killed the demon. Relying on me, he had searched for a whole year, and when at last he had caught sight of the demon, he had killed him along with his kinsmen. The demon, when falling, had poured forth his blood, which had filled the whole cave. When he had come to the entrance, he had found it blocked and repeatedly had called for me. But as no answer came, he was grieved and with a knock of his feet he burst the rock and made his way home. Then he had been angered by me - the wicked one, who had disregarded brotherly friendship, coveting the kingdom. With such words he, unmoved by fear, expelled me, leaving me a single garment, and took away my wife. Out of fear of him and grieved by his abduction of my wife, I traversed the whole earth and entered the Rṣyamūka mountain. You have heard the whole account of how this enmity began. You, who free the whole world from fear, be pleased to grant your favour to me, who am afraid of Vālī, by destroying him."

R. smilingly assured Su. that his unfailing arrows would bring Vālī to fall - "As long as I haven't seen the robber of your wife, so long that sinful Vālī of wicked conduct will live. Like myself, I see you immersed in an ocean of sorrow. I shall save you. You will obtain your full desire."

Interpretation of context

Su. narrates this whole account of how the enmity between Vālī and him began, after R., again requested by Su. to free him from his affliction and fear by killing Vālī, expresses his desire to hear the cause of the enmity so as to be able to determine the relative strength and weakness of Vālī and thus to restore Su.'s happiness.
Analysis of characterization

It is said that Su. is extremely delighted at R.'s suggestion -

8.44-45 evamuktastu sugrīvah kākutsthena mahātmanā /
praharsamatulaṁ lebhe ca turbhīṁ saha yānaraṁ // 44

tataḥ prahṛṣṭavadanaṁ sugrīvo lakṣmanāgraṇe /
vaṁrasya kāraṇaṁ tattvamākhyātumupacakraṁ // 45

Therefore Su.'s narration does not betray that sad tone which prevailed over the two previous abridged accounts. It is the author's intention to let Su. narrate the cause of his enmity with Vālī -

8.45 tataḥ prahṛṣṭavadanaṁ sugrīvo lakṣmanāgraṇe /
vaṁrasya kāraṇaṁ tattvamākhyātumupacakraṁ // 45

10.24 etatte sarvamākhyātaṁ vairānukaṭhaneṁ mahat /
anāgasā mayā prāptaṁ vyaśanaṁ paśya rāghava // 24

That means, the theme which prevails in ss.9 – 10, is rather that of an objective narration for the sake of elucidating the background. Thus the narrative is not marked by any striking emotional tone. But it is natural that, when Su. comes towards the end of his account, with his own calamity coming into focus, he again falls into the same tone of affliction and fear so characteristic of him.

We see in these sargas how at the slightest instigation Vālī's anger is aroused and how in such a state of anger he turns down all propitiations, even if they are made in his own interest -

When Māyāvī challenges him with his roar in the middle of the night, he rushes out, prompted by anger, and thrusts aside his wives and his brother Su., who want to restrain him; when Māyāvī disappears in the cave, he is filled with anger, but instead of listening to Su.'s request not to enter, he makes him swear on his feet to keep watch at the
entrance till he has killed the demon—,
how in a state of anger, fed by suspicion, he imprisons the ministers and abuses his brother without asking any explanation from him why he left his entrance and how it came that he was consecrated, how all reasonable explanations and well-meant propitiations by Su. do not quell his anger and suspicion but only excite him more, so that he reviles his brother and, blaming him for his disloyalty, banishes him, leaving him only a single garment, and takes away his wife. Such an action, however, is not to be explained with anger and suspicion alone. It needs a certain amount of cruelty to banish his own brother and take away his wife only because he suspects him of having taken advantage of his absence to ascend the throne. And certainly it is not only the injustice done to Su. but also Vālī's cruelty of which is hinted at in verses like

10.21-22 - evamuktva tu maṁ tatra vastreṇakena vānaraḥ /
tadā nirvāsāyaṁśa vālī vigataśādhvasaḥ // 21
tenāhampaviddhaśca hṛtadāraśca rūghava /
taḍhavāceca mahī krṣṇa krānteyam eṣaṣaṇāṁ//22

It is reflected also in the epithets which R., in his answer to Su., applies to Vālī —

10.28 - yāvatam na hi paśyeyam tava bhāryāpahārinam /
tavatsa jīvetpāpaṁśa vālī oṁitra dūṣakaḥ // 28

Classification

The exposition is subjective-narrative like the two previous passages. The theme is the narration of the cause of the enmity, which involves a direct characterization of Vālī. Hence we could speak here of an explicit characterization. There is no special tone except in the last lines. See above.

Literary basis:

exposition: subjective – narrative – explicit
tone: (towards the end) reminiscent tone of affliction and fear (sokabhayabhāva)
In this sarga Su. describes to R. Vālī's unequalled physical power, heroism and courage -

v. 3 - vālinah pauruṣaṁ yattadyacca viṇyaṁ dhṛtiśca vyā /
v. 48 - etadasyaśasama viṇyaḥ mayā rāma prakāśitaṁ /

implied in the narration of Vālī's victory over Dundubhi and his casting the corpse of Dundubhi, as an illustration of these qualities, so as to induce R. to demonstrate his valour in his presence.

"Vālī leaps from the Western to the Eastern, from the Southern to the Northern Ocean. He uproots mountain-peaks, hurls them into the air and catches them. He breaks down trees. The buffalo-demon Dundubhi, who was as big as the peak of Kailāsa and had the strength of a thousand snakes, once challenged the Ocean to fight, but the Ocean, admitting that he had not got the power to fight with him, sent him to Himavat. He challenged Himavat by hurling huge rocks to the ground, but Himavat said to Dundubhi it did not befit him (Dundubhi) to torment him as he was the refuge of ascetics and not versed in the action of battle. He told Dundubhi, who was angry at his refusal to accept the challenge, that he should approach the Vn. Vālī, whose prowess was equal to that of Indra and whose residence was Kiskindhā. 'Well-versed in battle, he is powerful enough to engage in a duel with you like Namuci and Vāsava. He is unassailable and a hero in the action of battle.' At these words, Dundubhi, assuming the form of a buffalo with sharp horns, went to Kiskindhā's gate and roared, shaking the ground, tearing down trees and rading the earth. Hearing the roar, Vālī angrily rushed out together with his wives and, with considerate but clear and firm words, asked Dundubhi why he was roaring at the gate, warning him that he should better protect his life. Then Dundubhi became enraged and, with the highly challenging words that Vālī should go to fight with him right then in the presence of his wives or in the coming night, but not before having gratified his senses - for he would not like to be considered the killer of an embryo, i.e., the killer of one who is intoxicated, drunk, asleep or destitute - he aroused Vālī's anger. Vālī sent away Tārā and his other wives, and with a smile he addressed the demon - 'Don't consider me intoxicated if you have no fear of fighting with me, but consider the hero's drink in this battle my intoxication.' Then
challenged to fight, Vālī seized Dundubhi's horns and whirled him round, and, with blood streaming from his ears, the demon fell dead to the ground. Vālī raised the corpse with his arm and threw it, with one effort a yojana away. While the corpse flew through the air, some drops of blood fell into Mataṅga's aśrama and Mataṅga uttered the curse on Vālī that whoever entered the hermitage would be killed. Out of fear of the curse Vālī does not enter the Rsyamūka mountain, and I with my companions roam about here with confidence. See here, O R., the bones of Dundubhi and see these seven Sāl trees with their branches hanging down, from which Vālī is able to strip the leaves with one grasp. So I have illustrated to you the heroism of Vālī. How will you be able to kill him in battle? If he was able to pierce this Sāl tree with one arrow, I would like to know how you will be able to kill Vālī?" - At the words of Su. R. lifted the corpse with ease with his great toe and cast it ten yojanas away. At this, Su. said that Vālī had cast the corpse when it was still fresh and had its flesh. So it was not possible for him to know R.'s power.

Analysis of Characterization

The main theme of the sarga is the description of Vālī's unequalled physical power, heroism and courage, which is illustrated by the narrative of Vālī's victory over Dundubhi and his casting the corpse a yojana away. Features like Vālī's power to leap from the Western to the Eastern and from the Southern to the Northern Ocean, to uproot mountain-peaks etc., his casting the corpse of Dundubhi a yojana away, his power to pierce seven Sāl trees with one arrow, the description of the unequalled power of Dundubhi, with whom neither the Ocean nor Himavat dare to fight, whom Himavat directs to Vālī, characterizing him as possessing power equal to that of Indra (ākṣarātulyaparākrama), well-versed in battle (yuddhavikrāmā), invincible (durdhāraṇa), a hero in the action of battle (śūraḥ samarakarmāṇi), reveal a picture of a super-human being (diyamānuṣa), i.e. Vālī is characterized as possessing super-human features as far as his physical power, heroism and courage are concerned. Although, apart from the appellation as Vn.,
kapi, hari etc., Vālī is characterized throughout in the same way as human beings are - like H. and Su. he thinks and argues like cultured men (he is also called mahāprajña), he follows human customs and rites in his way of living in the palace, in the discharge of his kingship etc., and he is cremated according to the śastra rite etc. - , there are a few details mentioned in this sarga which allude to his monkey nature from the physical point of view: his leaping from the Western to the Eastern, and Southern to the Northern Ocean, his uprooting of mountain-peaks and tearing down of trees (this also is done in a 'super-monkey' way). Another character-trait of Vēlī's which is alluded to in the background is his flying into anger at the challenge of Dundubhi. He rushes out with all his wives, but he does not immediately allow himself to be carried away by his anger to fight Dundubhi. With considerate, but clear and firm words he asks Dundubhi for the reason of his making trouble and warns him to protect his life. But, at the succeeding provocation, he is swept away by his anger. He cannot restrain himself and immediately he engages in battle with Dundubhi.

Classification

Literary basis:
exposition : subjective - descriptive and narrative - explicit // subjective - descriptive - implicit
tone : of wonderment and heroic sentiment (abhuṭavīrārasa)
Traits:
unequalled super-human power, heroism and courage // characteristic monkey-like activities - flying into anger at Dundubhi's provocation.
IV 12. 15-23

Vali-Sugriva-Yuddha

IV 12. 28-31

Rama's excuse for not having struck at Vali

Contents:

Su., in order to call Vālī, raised a frightful roar, at which Vālī rushed out, enraged like the sun when declining into the Western mountain. Then a fierce battle arose between Vālī and Su., resembling that between Budha and Aṅgāra. Deprived of their senses through anger, they fought against each other with their palms and fists, while R., bow in hand, watching the two heroes looking alike like two Aśvins, could not make out who was Vālī and who Su. Sugriva was defeated by Vālī, and as he did not see R. protecting him, he fled into the forest onto the Rṣyamuka mountain, fatigued and wounded. Vālī, out of fear of the curse, returned with the laconic words: 'You have been saved.'

Translation:

As that noble-souled Su. was thus speaking pitifully with dejected voice, Rāghava again said to him (28) - "Sugriva, listen, O dear one - and let your anger be dispelled - to the reason why this arrow was not discharged by me (29). In decoration, dress, size, and gait both you and Vālī are alike to one another (30). In sound and brightness and look and valour and speech I cannot see a distinction between you (31)."

Analysis of characterization:

In the first passage, which is marked by a tone of abhūta-vārārasa, the author V. explicitly characterizes Vālī's flying into anger at Su.'s challenge and his power and heroism
in battle. In the second passage R. characterizes Su. and Vālī's alikeness in appearance and valour.

IV 15. 1-5

Vālī's reaction to Sugriva's challenge

IV 16. 1-10

Vālī's reaction to Tara's plea

Translation:

Then indignant Vālī, while in the female apartments, heard that roar of that noble-souled Su., his brother (1). But as he heard his roar, which caused the whole world to shake, his wanton passion all at once vanished and great anger rushed upon him (2). And that Vālī, appearing like the sunlight in the evening twilight as he was seized by anger, immediately lost his splendour like the sun in eclipse (3). Vālī with his terrible teeth and, appearing like blazing fire due to anger, looked like a lake resplendent with lotuses plucked up and covered with lotus fibres (4). Hearing that unbearable sound, the monkey rushed out, as it were, tearing the earth with his foot-steps by his speed.

As Tārā, shining like the lord of the stars, spoke thus, Vālī reproached her and said these words (1) - "For what reason, O lovely-faced lady, should I tolerate the arrogance of this roaring brother, who is specially my enemy now (2) ? To heroes who are unassailed and who never withdraw in battle, to tolerate an assault, O timid one, is worse than (surpasses) death (3). I cannot tolerate the arrogance of that 'ill-necked' roaring Su., who desires to fight in battle (4). And you should not worry about Rāghava because of me. How should he, who knows righteousness and gratitude, commit a sin (5) ? Return with the ladies. How much farther are you following me? You showed, O Tārā, your affection and devotion to me (6). I will go and encounter Su., give up your fear, and I will subdue his pride and he will not be deprived of his life (7). You are entreated by my life and victory - go back! I will return after having completely defeated that brother of mine in battle (8). Then, that
considerate Tārā, speaking pleasing words, embraced Vālī, and, weeping, she slowly made his circumambulation (9). Then, having given her blessing for his safety accompanied by mantras, she, ardently longing for his victory, entered the female apartments, deprived of her senses with fear.

Interpretation of context and analysis of characterization:

In the first five lines of s. 15, the main theme of which is Tārā's plea to Vālī to reconcile himself with Su., V. depicts in graphic words and similes Vālī's flaring anger at Su.'s challenging roar, which makes him on the spot forget his lustful passion and rush out from the female apartments. This explicit description of Vālī's anger is quite in conformity with the previous characterization of this trait of behaviour of Vālī, though we heard about it mostly only in the words of Su. [So we see that V. lets Su., so to say, speak in his own words when he characterizes Vālī - a technique which, as we shall see, stands in contrast to the technique in which V. makes the Rks. characterize persons]

When Tārā sees her husband fly into such terrible anger, she, prompted by fear for his safety, lovingly embraces him and tries to persuade him to give up his torrent-like anger. "Your brother," she reminds him, "who was defeated by you and who fled before you, challenges you again to fight. The pride, the determination and the arrogance of his roar show that he has got somebody to assist him. Clever as he is, Su. won't be with somebody whose valour has not been tested." Then she tells him about the news Aṅgada had brought about the alliance between R. and S., about R.'s being the shelter of the virtuous and those in affliction, and all the other merits of his, and his unequalled power in battle. Thus, she entreats him to let Su. be installed as heir-apparent, to stop his fraternal enmity and show love to Su., who is more powerful, who is his younger brother and worthy of being treated with affection and who, wherever it may be, is his relative, and to make friends with R.

Vālī, turning down Tārā's plea, justifies his anger at the arrogant challenge of Su. with the argument that heroes rather die than tolerate an assault. (Cf. also IV 14.15-17) We see
from this passage two things: Vālī is conscious of himself as a hero. We found this self-assertion already indicated in the narration of Vālī's fight with Dundubhi—at the first challenge by Dundubhi he warns him he should better protect his life, and at the second provocation he admonishes him not to consider him drunk but drunk with the delight of battle. But Vālī is a hot-blooded bellicose hero (yuddhavīra), who gets all too easily enraged and, once in a state of anger, is not ready to listen to any wholesome advice, not even of his dearest wife, whose affection and devotion he appreciates, but whose propitiation he cruelly turns down. It is Vālī's own wrathful nature which is partly responsible for his own death. We see thus how V.'s motifivates the course of events which led to the death of Vālī—externally by R.'s promise before the fire and internally by depicting Vālī's unfortunate modes of behaviour: his humiliating and cruel treatment of his brother and his unrestrained anger and embitterment. Although the critical reader will never take the blame from the description of R.'s insidious attack on Vālī, we have to admit that the author did motivate his death, making his own behaviour responsible for it. That the author did not describe R.'s act of killing Vālī in a more refined way, lies in the oral nature of the poem. See pp. 39 ff.

As V. thus emphasizes Vālī's unfortunate, though unjustified and unfair, modes of behaviour side by side with his good character-traits—his heroism and courage and his absolute trust that R., righteous as he is, will avoid any kind of sin (na ca kāryo viśādaste rāghavan prati matrte /
dharmajñaśca kṛtajñaśca kathaṁ pāpaṁ kariṣyati), we may ask ourselves whether it was not the intention of the author to lend a tragic sentiment to the depiction of Vālī's behaviour. That this is true in the greater context, we see from Tārā's plea to her husband, to reconcile himself with Su., from Vālī's acknowledgement of Tārā's affection inspite of the fact that he rejects her
request, from her loving embrace and blessing for his safety, from her heart-rending lamentation after Vālī's fall and Vālī's speech of reconciliation to Su. and his instruction to Aṅgada before he dies - some of these scenes, in addition, being marked by a strong tone of karuna rasa. But I would not agree with the idea of seeing a tone tragic throughout in the very passage we deal with. For, though V. certainly intended to convey a pathetic-tragic atmosphere in a number of sargas related to the circumstances of Vālī's death, the oral nature of the Epic demands that the bard-poet always conveys such a sentiment to the scene he describes as is momentarily suitable to excite the audience. [In this respect, classical poetry and drama are quite different, for there the different rasas are harmoniously fused in such a way that they enrich and emphasize a dominant rasa.] Thus the tone of sentiment has constantly to change along with the differentiating characterization. Applied to our case, this is nothing more than a reflection of human experience: When we describe the unfortunate death of some person, caused through his own guilt, we first vividly depict his errors, in order to change into a more pitiful tone when we come to the pitiful circumstances of his death. Such an impression we get when we carefully read vv. 1-4 on the one and vv. 5-7 on the other hand. There is a shift of emphasis from Vālī's unwholesome wrathfulness and bellicosity to the declaration of his confidence in the righteousness of R. and his acknowledgement of Tārā's affection for him in spite of his turning down her request, to be succeeded again by a description of his anger when he sallies out - a mosaic of characterization in a few verses. And with this transition of characterization there is also a transition of the shade of atmosphere prevailing. While Vālī's words in vv. 2-4 are indignant, they are more consoling and affectionate in vv. 5-8, which lends a tragic tone to the latter.
In addition to its pathetic connotation, Vālī's expression of trust in R. has an unspoken psychological connotation: Vālī is a man of honour, so at least he thinks himself to be, though actually he is more a man of bellicose pride, and, in his distorted conception of honour, he so overrates R.'s sense of righteousness that he would think, and think with all confidence and trust, that R., a man so committed to dharma, would never raise his hand against him, would never, to speak in his words, commit a sin, projecting thus his distorted sense of honour on R., for whom to interfere in his enmity with Su. would be a violation of dharma, an incurrence of sin.

Classification:

The exposition is not subjective but objective, for, when Vālī characterizes himself by justifying his attitude, he does not describe his character but he manifests it. In the same way, though his words betray a tone of affection and consolation, in vv. 5-8 of s. 16, the tone of sentiment manifested in them is tragic.

Literary basis:

exposition: (a) objective - descriptive - explicit
(b) objective - descriptive - explicit
with a (towards the end) tragic tone

Traits:

(a) Vālī's flaring anger at the challenge of Su., which is so strong that he even forgets his lustful passion
(b) Vālī's justification of his wrathfulness, thereby revealing himself as a self-assured, bellicose hero, who gets all too easily enraged and is too obstinate to listen to any wholesome advice even of his dearest wife/his acknowledgement of her love for him inspite of his turning down her plea/his endeavour to console her by declaring his trust in R.'s righteousness and referring to his heroism/his bellicose consciousness of honour - a bellicose pride.
IV 16. 11-27

Vali's sally, fight and fall

In this passage, which conveys a tone of adbhutavīrarasa, we meet again with the already familiar character-traits of Vali's terrible anger (against Su.), and his great valour and heroism in battle. The exposition is objective - narrative - explicit.

IV 19. 21-24

Translation:

As she approached, she saw there her husband fallen on the ground: the slayer of mighty Dānavas, one who never retreated in battle, the thrower of mighty mountains, as Indra is of thunder-bolts, one whose roar was like that of a flock of clouds pervaded by a mighty wind, who possessed the prowess of Indra - now like, a cloud having ceased showering, a roarer formidable among roarers, a hero felled by a hero; like a lion, killed by a tiger for the sake of food, like a sanctuary, with its flag and altar, worshipped by all people, destroyed by Suparnā for the sake of snakes.

Analysis of characterization:

Since the central theme is Tārā's lament - a theme which should move the audience to tears, the author strikes all notes to depict Tārā's emotional reaction as well as the tragic and pathetic situation of the whole event. The enumeration of epithets relating to Vali's valour and heroism are a simple means to express the fact, unbelievable for Tārā, that her husband, the incarnation of valour and heroism, lies on the ground, deprived of his life.
IV 20. 11-12

Translation:

Su.'s wife has been taken away and he himself been banished by you, which is the reason that you have obtained the consequence of it, O lord of monkeys (11). And I, unequalled in misfortune, have been reproached by you out of delusion, who have spoken beneficial words, O lord of Vais., desirous of your welfare (12).

Analysis of characterization:

Tārā, in a tone of extreme grief, which pervades the whole sarga, muses over her husband's ill-treatment of Su. and his rejection of her beneficial advice as the reason for his misfortune.

IV 21. 6-7

Translation:

He, on whom duly apportioned shares made thousands, millions and hundreds of millions of monkeys subsist, has come to the end of his life (6). He, who considered every object with righteousness and was intent on conciliation, generosity and forbearance, has gone to the land of those who have conquered dharma (7).

Analysis of characterization:

In these two lines, part of H.'s consolation of Tārā, H. acknowledges Vālī's loyalty to his dharma as a king: his righteousness, conciliation, generosity, and patience. As he has thus never
transgressed his dharma, he will go to the world of those who have conquered dharma, and therefore Tārā should not bewail him.

IV 22

Vali's last advice to Sugriva and Angada

Contents:

As Vālī, lying on the ground and deeply sighing, saw Su., he spoke to him these words endowed with affection - "Don't approach me with blame because of my sin, me who was overpowered by pre-destined delusion of the mind. Happiness was not apportioned to us simultaneously, for friendship as it is befitting for brothers turned out in the wrong way. Accept my kingdom, O Su., as I have to leave, glory, life and kingdom in order to obtain great fame without blemish, and do me one favour: Take care of this my son Aṅgada lying on the ground with his face filled with tears, who is dearer to me than life. Be his guardian, helper and saviour and always follow the advice of Tārā, who is skilled in making decisions, interpreting portents, and carry out R.'s orders, for if you commit any wrong, he will kill you without any reason. Receive this divine garland, for with my death its charm will cease." As Vālī had spoken to Su. with such brotherly love, Su. dismissed all joy and, filled with grief, accepted the garland. As Vālī saw his son Aṅgada standing, he addressed him with love and affection - "Choose proper time and place, be forbearing in favour and disfavour. Take happiness and grief at its time, be obedient to Su. Don't make friends with his enemies. Do your duty neither too affectionately nor wanting in affection. Both are faults, discern the middle." ....

Analysis of characterization:

The context of this sarga has to be primarily understood from its oral character: its purpose to press on the tears of the audience. The scene is already tragic and pathetic enough with Tārā's heart-rending lamentations, and it is still heightened,
when Vālī, prompted by the realization of his fault and by love, gives a last message to Su. and to his dear son Aṅgada. From the point of view of composition also this passage plays an important part since Aṅgada will be in constant relationship with Su. We have to understand the change in the characteriza-
tion of Vālī not from the intention of the author to exalt Vālī's character in the end as an after all noble character (this would be a misinterpretation), but simply from the pathetic situation the author wants to depict before the minds of the audience. The change lies in a reversal from Vālī's terrible anger and embitterment to the realization and regret of his fault -

vv. 3-4 sugrīva doṣeṇa na māṁ gantumarhasi kilbiṣāt / kṛṣyamāṇaḥ bhaviṣyena buddhimohena māṁ balāt // yugapadvihitam tāta na manye sukhamāvayah / sauhārdām bhrātryuktam hi tadidaṁ jātamanyathā //

and from his humiliating and cruel attitude towards his brother to his affection for him, an affection which is far away from any bitterness. Next to that, we see Vālī's fatherly love and affection for his son Aṅgada, whose moral welfare is his last concern. This latter character-trait does not conflict with any preceding one, but also here it is elevated through the tragic - pathetic situation itself.

Classification of literary basis and traits of characterization:

Since Vālī does not describe his character except in one or two verses but rather implicitly manifests its through his words, the characterization is objective

Literary basis:
exposition: objective - descriptive - implicit
tone: tragic - pathetic

Traits:
Vālī's realization and regret of his fault / his affection towards his brother / his fatherly love for his son and his concern for his moral welfare.
A SYNTHETIC VIEW OF THE AUTHOR'S CONCEPTION 
AND PORTRAIT OF VALI'S CHARACTER
The characterization of Vālī is organically interwoven with the presentation of Su.'s request to R. to deliver him from his affliction and fear resulting from his humiliation by Vālī, and the account of its accomplishment. V. did not intend so much to give a characterization of how a brother humiliated his brother but to give an account of how R., himself a person in affliction, being entreated by his newly gained friend to deliver him from his affliction, promises his help and finally accomplishes it. From the point of view of a conception, Vālī's character was not V.'s primary concern. Though Vālī and Rv. may be considered analogical figures, Vālī is only an antetype. With Vālī's destruction an episode ends which was necessary for the process of the plot, while Rv.'s destruction is the termination to R.'s separation from S. and his exile in the forest. Still, though there was no primary conception of a characterization of Vālī, the very fact of Vālī's involvement with Su.'s destiny makes him a character in the plot. Due to V.'s disposition as a poet to give an insight into human nature and experience and due to his disposition as a bard to thrill the audience with vivid descriptions of all kinds, of which a character-description is one, most of the persons of the Rm., by their very fact of being organically involved in the plot, are amply characterized, no matter whether they are of major or minor importance. And explicit characterizations may be in their detailed treatment as much units of themselves as e.g., nature-descriptions or battle-scenes. Characterization is thus an organic and dominant literary feature in the Rm.
And this explains the variety of literary bases in which character-traits are exposed. While the latter characterizations are mostly objective, we hear, at the beginning, about Vālī's character-traits—his humiliating treatment of his brother, his unrestrained anger and embitterment and his physical power and heroism—through a subjective medium, i.e., Su.'s narration. However, there is as good as no difference in the representation of Vālī's behaviour between the objective and subjective medium in this case.

The tone of sentiment depends both on the situation of the plot the author has in view and the disposition prompting him to stimulate the audience. As tone of sentiment and characterization are often interrelated, the characterization of a person is sometimes more a personal life-like portrait true to human experience and sometimes more a conventional pattern. There is, however, no clear line between the two, and we should therefore not draw a line while framing the portrait of a character. Yet this consideration gives us an explanation if we are suddenly confronted with a reversal of characterization. Such a reversal if it highlights more the situation than the character, reflects mostly some conventional oral narrative pattern based on the intention of the author to thrill the audience. There is a reversal of characterization from Vālī's terrible anger and embitterment to his realization and regret of his fault in his last gasps and from his enmity and cruelty against his brother to a great affection for him. This reversal is not due to the intention of the author to exalt Vālī's character as an after-all noble character, but is to be understood simply from the sentimental situation the author wants to depict.

To what degree is there an interrelation between the tone of sentiment and the characterization of Vālī? Su., while he
characterizes Vālī, betrays a tone of affection and fear when he speaks of Vālī's humiliating treatment of him and his cruelty towards him - he is dispassionate when he characterizes Vālī's unrestrained anger - and he even applies a tone of adbhutavīrarasa to describe Vālī's unequalled power, heroism and courage to R. V. himself first applies a tone of adbhutavīrarasa when he describes Vālī's physical power and heroism and his terrible anger, but from the time he comes close to the description of Vālī's fall, he strikes a more and more tragic and pathetic note - so much so that with the reversal of tone a reversal of characterization is connected.

PORTRAIT

Vālī, by his designation and physical nature, is a monkey. But this physical nature of his is put entirely into the background and alluded to only rarely and then only in activities which are unseparable from his monkey-nature even though they are 'super-monkey' activities: leaping from the Western to the Eastern, and from the Southern to the Northern Ocean, uprooting mountain peaks, hurling them into the air and catching them again, tearing down trees, fighting with stones and trees etc. While the monkey-nature of Vālī thus remains in the background, Vālī on the whole is characterized like a human being or super-human being (diwamānusa). His unequalled physical power, heroism and courage in battle - qualities in which he even excels the demon Dundubhi with the power of a thousand snakes, with whom neither the Ocean nor Himavat dare to fight and in which he is likened to Indra (śakratulyaparākrama) - and his self-assertion of being a hero make him some kind of a Hercules. But he is a bellicose yuddhavīra with all too human sides:
He is possessed of unrestrained anger, which is aroused in him at the slightest instigation (mostly in the form of a challenge) — when Māyāvī challenges him with his roar to fight, when Māyāvī disappears in the cave, when he sees that Su. left the entrance and blocked it, when Dundubhi challenges him with provocative words, when Su. challenges him the first and the second time. Once in a state of anger, he turns down all pleas even if they are made in his own interest:— When Māyāvī challenges him in the middle of the night, he rushes out, prompted by anger, but thrusts aside his wives and his brother Su., who want to restrain him. When Māyāvī disappears in the cave, Vālī is filled with anger, but instead of listening to the request of Su. not to enter, he makes him swear on his feet to keep watch at the entrance. When Su. challenges him the second time with his roar to fight, and Vālī, filled with anger, rushes out, Tārā tries to persuade her husband to reconcile himself with Su., drawing his attention to the ominous pride and self-assuredness of Su.'s roar and of the promise R. had given to Su. to assist him against his brother. But Vālī does not listen to Tārā's advice, though he appreciates her love and affection towards him, justifying his indignation with the reason that heroes rather die than tolerate an assault on them. Once in a state of anger fed by suspicion, Vālī does not ask for any explanation — he imprisons, in his anger, Su.'s ministers and abuses his brother without asking him why he left his entrance and how it came that he was consecrated — nor do any reasonable explanations and well-meant propitiations quell his rage:— Though Su. explains to Vālī in a reasonable manner that it is not out of a bad intention he left the entrance of the cave and propitiates him with all his affection to accept the kingship, which he administered only as a pledge, Vālī only gets more embittered and finally banishes his brother and takes away his wife. Resulting from his anger and embitterment is his cruelty towards his brother. He reviles, humiliates him by taking away
his wife and banishing him, leaving him only one piece of garment, and persecutes him, so that Su. lives in constant grief and fear of him - and the whole thing simply because he suspects him of being disregardful of his duty and having taken advantage of his absence in order to ascend the throne.

On the other hand, he is characterized as heroic and brave throughout. He has all the social merits a king should have (these are alluded to only in H.'s conciliation of Tārā, but as they do not appear to be a reversal of characterization, they can be taken as characteristic) - righteousness, conciliation, generosity and forbearance, and because he has fulfilled his dharma as a king, is predicted to go to the land of those who have conquered dharma. And he asserts his confidence in R.'s righteousness when Tārā draws his attention to the friendship between Su. and R.

With the narration coming close to Vālī's fall, the duality of his character - his heroism in battle and his conversance with dharma as a king, on the one hand, and his terrible anger and embitterment and cruelty, for which he has to pay with his life, on the other hand - though prevailing already before, begins to make him in some way or other a tragic figure. This emphasis on the duality of Vālī's character is less a reflection of human nature than a conventional (oral) pattern based on the intention of the author to move the audience to tears (karunarasa). The tragic and pathetic atmosphere is the inspiring force of the moment, and the author has to adjust his narrative, i.e., also his characterization, to its demands. This demand goes so far that V. makes Vālī address his enemy in a speech overflowing with love and affection, in which he realizes and regrets the delusion of his mind and gives a last instruction to his small son Añgada, his moral welfare being his final concern - a reversal from an angry, embittered and cruel Vālī to a Vālī realizing and regretting his fault and endowed with love and affection for his brother, whom he had hated so much.
CRITICISM OF MODERN SCHOLARS' VIEWS
ON THE CHARACTERIZATION OF VALI 2)
The question naturally arises whether Sugrīva's offence was such a heinous one as to be punished so severely. Could not Vālī have accepted his brother's explanation and treated him more generously? By nature Vālī was not cruel. On a later occasion when Sugrīva backed by Śrī Rāma, challenged his brother, the latter gave him a good thrashing but allowed him to escape with life. Sugrīva himself admits this and extols his brother's generosity (IV.XXIV.8). What is the special reason for the uncompromising attitude taken by Vālī on this occasion? After all it was a venial offence and the harshness shown toward Sugrīva is out of all proportion to the mistake he had committed.

We have naturally to suppose that Vālī had other motives in mind and used this incident as a pretext to gain then. There is sufficient proof to show that sex was Vālī's chief weakness. It is said that the quarrel between him and Māyāvī was over a woman (IV.IX.4). In the course of his speech inviting Vālī to single combat, Dundubhi makes a taunting reference to Vālī's sex-weakness (IV.XI.33). After his discomfiture at the hands of Vālī, Rāvana sues for peace and offers to share many things, including the ladies of his harem, with Vālī (VII.XXIV.41). In view of all this, would it be wrong to conclude that Vālī's chief motive in expelling his brother was to be able to annex Rumā, Sugrīva's wife, to his harem? This could not be done as long as Sugrīva was present on the scene. Unless he was got out of the way, Vālī's unholy desire could not be fulfilled. The small mistake that Sugrīva had committed served as a cloak for this deeper motive. The ostensible reason for expelling his brother was his blocking the entrance to the cave, but the real reason was the desire to add Rumā to his harem. On any other assumption
it is difficult to explain why Vālī, who was not wanting in generosity, took this drastic step with regard to his brother.

This hypothesis is fully borne out by the statements of Śrī Rāma in defending his action against Vālī. He does not base his argument on the cruelty shown by Vālī in expelling his brother, or in making him flee for life or pursuing him most relentlessly as he ran from one end to the other gasping for breath. Rāma's argument, on the other hand, is based on Vālī's illicit relationship with the wife of his younger brother. Many things which were taboo in Ayodhya were possible in Kiśkindā, but not this offence. Rāma tells Vālī: "Bharata, as the ruler of Ayodhya, holds sway over Kiśkindā also. His writ runs far and wide. The arm of his law lies heavily on immoral people. You are guilty of incest. As the elder brother of Sugrīva you are in the position of his father. One's younger brother is to be treated as one's own son. The wife of your younger brother is similar in status to one's sister. In having illicit relations with Rūma, you are really guilty of incest. As the plenipotentiary of Bharata, I have punished you....."

Criticism: The author's interpretation of Vālī's sex weakness as his motive for taking away his brother's wife is based on:

(1) 9. 4 - māyāvī nāma tejasvī pūrvajō dundubheh sutah /
    tena tasya mahadvairām strīkṛtaṁ viśruteṁ purā/ 4

(2) 11.33-34 -
    athavā dhāraviṣyāmi krodhamadya niśāmīmām /
    grhyatāmudayaḥ svairām kāmabhogeṣu vānara // 33
    yo hi mattaḥ pramattāḥ vā suptāḥ vā rahitāḥ bhrām /
    hanyātsa bhrūnahā loke tvādvidhaḥ madamohitam // 34
with which words Dundubhi challenges Vālī to fight -

(3) R.'s reproach of Vālī's illicit relationship with the wife of his younger brother, in ss. 17-18.

To these passages can be added 15.2 -

śrutvā tu tasya ninadāṃ sarvabhūtaprakampanam /
mandaścaikapade nastaḥ krodhaścāpatito mahān // 2

and the references to the many wives of Vālī. However, it has to be taken into account that all references before s. 18, where R. justifies his killing of Vālī, are not more than allusions and are completely put into the background as compared with other character-traits of Vālī, without any emphasis being laid on them. His sexual passion is nowhere causally connected with his expulsion and persecution of his brother except, one might say, for the fact that he deprived him of his wife. But this taking away of Su.'s wife by Vālī is always seen in the light of his cruelty and never in the light of his passion. Since ss. 17-18 are proved to be late interpolations, being an afterthought in the form of an attempt at justifying R.'s action by stressing Vālī's weaknesses, there is no indication whatever for a causal connection between Vālī's sexual passion and his cruel treatment of Su. Hence it appears that this sexual passion of Vālī alluded to in the narrative is just as an intrinsic part of his nature (perhaps it is a reflection of some social pattern the author has in mind) as are his power of leaping, uprooting mountain peaks, tearing down trees etc. Had the author intended to bring this trait of Vālī's emphatically in connection with the fate of Su., he would have surely taken an opportunity to depict it in graphic scenes as he did with regard to Su. when he lost himself in sexual pleasure.

Iyer does not find any other possible explanation for the incongruity of Vālī's harshness with Su.'s mistake than Vālī's lust for Rumā. But, whereas Vālī's lust for Rumā is nowhere
mentioned or even hinted at and can be only inferred from a few allusions to Vālī's passion, his unrestrained anger is depicted again and again together with his cruelty in an almost repetitive pattern and is brought in causal connection with his expelling Su. and taking away his wife. Why read more than this from the context?

N. R. Navlekar

"Vālī had one great defect in him and this defect was born of consciousness of superstrength: He was willing to meet his rival at whatever time and on whatever ground he proposed. In short, he suffered from superiority complex like Afzul Khan, and like Afzul Khan he was lured into a death-trap. He was a hero to the core, who never played others foul and never expected them to play him false. He went about the world unguarded, flinging all caution to the winds and in this lack of circumspection lay the cause of his ghastly destruction. As Bhāravi puts it: 'These simpletons are bound to go down in the world who have not learnt how to meet cunning with cunning, who go through life unwary and unarmed, thinking that they are proof against all harm.'

Indeed he had too much charity in him to think of perfidy in others. He went alone with a firm step to the appointed spot, and while he was at close grips with his brother, Rāma shot an arrow callously from behind a tree, which tore open his noble heart and laid him flat on the ground, never to rise again!"

Criticism: Navlekar sees Vālī in the light of R.'s unjust killing of Vālī and his brazen-faced way of justifying his action.
Considering R. a hypocrite, he goes to the other extreme and idealizes Vālī to such an extent that no blame is left in him at all. On the contrary, it is an excess of heroism and straightforwardness, far from any crooked thinking, that leads Vālī to his death-trap. We need not try to counter-argue Navlekar’s interpretation. It does not possess any foundation in the text.

V. Raghavan⁵)

".................................................................
Seeing Sugriva sitting on his throne, he got infuriated in the extreme. Sugriva explained and begged pardon, but without exhibiting either nobility or brotherly feeling, Vālī drove Sugriva away with a bare garment. And Vālī started his cruel chase of his poor, fleeing brother. This extreme and relentless vindictiveness, and the general display of his giant prowess which upset the peace and normal life of the neighbourhood, effectively alienated the sympathies of everybody. Sage Matanga cursed him and his followers against entering his asrama, which, incidentally gave an asylum to Sugriva. Emissaries of Vālī were constantly prowling about to fall upon Sugriva and his four followers. So much so, the whole locality was in favour of the victimised younger brother. There was hardly any choice for Rama...

In the very first mention of Vālī by Hanuman, Valmiki describes him as cruel, krūra, kuruḍarūḍana [Dev] To this cruelty and mortal vindictiveness, Vālī added a more heinous trait which brought him close to the main anti-hero of the epic, and classified him among those to be removed by the operation of the mission on which the hero had appeared in Ikshvaku’s race. After driving
out Sugriva, Vali appropriated his younger brother's wife, Rumâ. That this sexual excess of Vali was not casual, that, though not of such proportions as in Ravana, it was fairly characteristic of Vali, may be made out of Valmiki's mention of his great feud with Mayavi as one due to a woman - tenu tasya mahadvairâh strikrtam visrutam purâ / It was part of Rama's mission of Dharma to salvage not only the domestic felicity of saubhrata, but also the purity of sexual relationship both of which were endangered at Kishkindha and Lanka. So, it is not mere sympathy with a co-sufferer that affects Rama when he hears of Sugriva's suffering; it is indignation at another glaring case of immortality.

It was not as if Tara, whom he himself glorifies as an omniscient, Sarvajna, did not enlighten him in time about the arrival of Rama, his pact with Sugriva and of Rama's own search for Ravana. Elated with his own strength, bellicose at the slightest provocation, and relentlessly intent on finishing off his younger brother, he ignored the advice which, on his death bed later, he praises as the Tara-mata that never goes wrong. Hence, when Vali says, as part of his accusation of Rama that had he known, he would have brought Ravana and Sita with least effort, he was merely indulging in a rhetorical boast.

Vali was always a strong character. Any softer aspect about him, such as the endearing talk with Sugriva, we are able to see only after his fall. Even here, as Valmiki depicts him, he reveals his original trait in his final heart to heart talk with his son in which, with no faith in Sugriva, he asks Angada not to love or hate but follow a middle path. But how did this strong character finally accept Rama's words and become silent? While we are yet wrangling, Vali himself was satisfied. Vali not only accepted that Rama was a superior being and one inferior like him ought not to carry on a wrangling with him, but actually said that he verily courted death at Rama's hands - tvatto hi vadhamakâkshan! We have obviously to take it that as Rama stood in front, ãrawing
up his full form, and Vālī lay in his last gasp, the entrancing personality cast its inevitable spell on the latter........

Criticism: Raghavan's main point is to show that Vālī is characterized as possessed of a complex of reprehensible character-traits - relentless vindictiveness, exaggerated prowess, sexual licentiousness - , which made him lose the sympathies of the people living in his neighbourhood and "brought him close to the main anti-hero of the epic and classified him among those to be removed by the operation of the mission on which the hero had appeared in Ikshvaku's race."

Leaving aside controversial points like Vālī's sex-weakness, which we have dealt with above, we can say that Raghavan's argumentation appears correct at least in so far as Vālī's reprehensible behaviour is used by Vālmīki as a motive that leads to Vālī's death. But it is surely too far-fetched to conclude that the author created an aura of ill-fame around him so as to consider him an anti-hero like Rv. For this there is no foundation in the text. Unlike Rv, Vālī is not seen against the background of his social relations - these are alluded to only and in a decisively positive manner - , but in his own emotional set-up and in his personal relationship with Su. On the other hand, Raghavan admits the strong character of Vālī and he searches for an explanation why Vālī accepts Rama's words so easily. He finds the reason in the impression of R.'s entrancing personality. Actually, this is only one of the many inconsistencies of ss. 17-18, which for other reasons also have to be taken as interpolation.

K. S. Ramaswami Sastri

"Vālī's nature is even more concupiscent than that of Sugrīva."
He is even more attached to pleasures than his brother. Despite Tūrā's entreaties, he, being a person of peerless prowess and reckless nature, will not turn back from danger. After he is fatally wounded by Rāma's arrow he realized Rāma but is soon convinced about the justice and virtuousness of Rāma's action. His greatness and glory are described in the Uttara-Kāṇḍa (Canto XXXIV)."

Criticism: Vāli's concupiscence has been discussed above, pp 404 ff, the inauthenticity of ss. 17-18 pp 138 ff. The Uttara-Kāṇḍa is a later interpolation.

1) References to Vāli's enmity with Su. earlier than 8. 15 - III 68. 11 śṛuyataṁ rāma vakṣyāmi sugrīvo nāma vānaraḥ / bhrātrā nirastāḥ krūddhena vālinā śakrasūnunā // 11

   16 sa ṛkṣarajasāḥ putraḥ pamāmati śaṅkitāḥ / bhāṣkarasyaurasaḥ putro vālinā kṛtakīlvīṣaḥ // 16

IV 2. 6 etau vanamīdaṁ durgāṁ vāli praṇaḥhitau dhruvam / chadmanā cirivasanau prarənantavihāgatau // 6

14-15 yasmāuddvignacetaśtuṣaṁ pradruto haripuṅgava / taṁ krūra darśanaṁ krūraṁ neha paśyāmi vālinam //14

   yasmāttvā bhayaṁ saumya pūrvajatpapakarmaṁ / sa neha vāli duṣṭāṁ na te paśyāmyahāṁ bhayaṁ //15

19-22 dīrghabāhū visālākṣau sargacānāśīdarīṇau / kasya na syād bhayaṁ dṛṣṭvā etau surasūtopamau // 19

   vālipraṇaḥhitavetau śaṅke'haṁ prumōttamau / rājano bahumitraścā viśvāṣo nāţre hi kṣamaṁ // 20

   arṣyaścā manuśyeṇa viśeṣāschannacārināḥ / viśvastanamaviśvastascchidreṣu praharanti hi // 21

   krtyeṣu vāli medhāvī rājano bahūdārasānaḥ / bhavanti parahāntāraste jñeyāḥ prakṛtaṁmaraiḥ //22

3. 18 sugrīvo nāma dharmāṁ kaścidvānarayūthapaḥ / vīro vinkṛto bhrātrā jagadbhirnāti duḥkhitaḥ // 18

4. 19 sa hi rājyaścā vibhṛastāḥ kṛtavairāśca vālinā / hṛtadāro vane trasto bhrātrā vinkṛto bhṛṣam // 19
2) Though Vālī cannot be called a prominent character and it is only for prominent characters that we have foreseen a full treatment including a criticism of modern scholars' views on their characterization, we make an exception to this here both for methodical reasons, since the characterization of Vālī raises tricky issues, as well as because of the intimate connection of the understanding of Vālī's character with that of Su.

3) Vālī. KK XXVIII 173-178.


Though Tārā is characterized exclusively in the context of the Vālī episode, i.e. in her plea to Vālī not to engage in fight with Su. and in her lamentation over her fallen husband, she emerges in these few scenes as an impressive character, as the loving and devoted wife of Vālī:

Her attempt at persuading her husband to renounce his terrible anger caused by the roar of Su. and to reconcile himself with his brother (IV 15) is prompted by fear for his safety, which reflects her genuine love for him. Knowing and asserting her respect for Vālī's great valour, she nevertheless forbids him to give vent to his bellicose anger, having an intuition that fate is against him. She gathers this intuition from the determination with which Su. challenges Vālī, from which she concludes that Su., who is fearful by nature, enjoys the assistance of a hero whose valour has been testified, as also from news intimated by Aṅgada about an alliance of Su. with R., whose greatness of character (he is the refuge of the virtuous and those in affliction, he is the abode of all virtues, and he possesses unexcelled power in battle, resembling the fire at the destruction of the world) she realizes to be a decisive factor against Vālī. But it is not only fear for her husband's safety which prompts her to persuade Vālī to make friends with Su. Though she does not have much respect for Su., she nevertheless expresses in her concluding words that it is befitting for Vālī to show love to him who is his younger brother and relative wherever he may be and is worthy of being treated with affection, and she also feels that her husband ought to make friendship with R. Thus a feeling of concern for domestic happiness, reflecting her womanly wisdom, emerges side by side with her
concern for the safety of her husband. And it is this gift of intuition and womanly wisdom which Vāli in his last words to Su. advises him to attend to, himself having failed to realize it in time: IV 22.13-14 -

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{susēṇadhūhitā ceyamarthasūkṣmatāviniścaye} & \text{ /} \\
\text{autpātike ca vividhe sarvatah parināṣṭhitā} & \text{ / 13} \\
\text{yadeṣā sādhviti brūyākāryam tānmuktasaṁśayam} & \text{ /} \\
\text{na hi tārāmatā̤ kincidanyathā parivartate} & \text{ / 14}
\end{align*}
\]

Though Vāli, blinded by his bellicose anger, is too obstinate to listen to the wholesome advice of even his dearest wife, he acknowledges her love and devotion for him and tries to console her by expressing his trust in R.'s righteousness and referring to his own heroism and also promising her not to kill Su. but only subdue his pride. And Tārā, realizing her inability to convince him, embraces him lovingly, circumambulates him and gives him her blessing. (IV 16 beginning)

All these scenes already intermittently foreshadow the tragic-pathetic tone of sentiment which reaches its climax in the author's representation of the whole complex of Tārā's heartrending lamentations (ss. 19, 20, 21, 23). V. exhausts all his power of poetic ingenuity and insight into human experience of grief to bring out in words and scenes the pathos of Tārā's grief: her deep love for and devotion to her husband, the all-in-all of her life, and the tragic turn-out of events: Vāli's ill-treatment of Su. and rejection of her plea, and the destructive force of Kāla in the form of R., as the causes for her misfortune. At times, the author makes Tārā even go to the extreme of spurning everything dear to her, even her son Aṅgada or her own life, for the sake of Vāli. H.'s attempt at consoling her by exposing to her the vainness of grieving over the dead and advising her to see to the future of Aṅgada and install him on the throne is designed by the author to add fuel to the fire:
Giving full vent to her devotion to her husband, she emphatically declares that she does not care for a 100 sons like Adgada, that the kingdom of the Vns. now lies in the hands of Su. and it is not her duty to confer the kingdom on him, and that on her part she does not want anything more than to lie by the side of her husband.

Conspicuous in Tārā's lamentations is the absence of any major rebuke of Su. or R. There are only a few stray allusions which indirectly convey Tārā's indignation at Su. :

IV 19.9 - rājyahețoh sa cedbhṛata bhrātrā raundreṇa pātītaḥ/ rāmeṇa praértairdūrāṁmārgaṇairdūrapātībibhiḥ // 9

IV 23.4 - sugrīva eva vikrānto vīra sāhasāka priya / rksavāṇaramukhyāstvām balinaṁ paryupāsathe // 4

But these are not at all in correspondence with what one should expect of a wife in such a situation. In fact, she realizes well that fault was with Vālī and laments over his rejection to listen to her advice :

IV 20.11-12 sugrīvasya trayā bhāryā hrta sa ca vivāsitaḥ / yattattasya tvayā vyuṣṭiḥ pṛāptevaḥ plavagādhipa // 11

IV 23.22 avasthāṁ pascimāṁ paśya pituḥ putra sudārunāṁ / samprasaktasya vairasya gato'ntaḥ pāpakarmanā // 22

IV 23.30 na me vacaḥ pathyamidaṁ tvayā kṛtaṁ na cāsmī saktā hi nivarāne tava / hatā saputrasmi hatena sahyuge saha tvayā śṛṛvijahati māmīha // 30

As she refers to R. as having performed a great deed as he has acquitted himself of his debt regarding his promise to Su., and
exhorts the latter to be contented, as he will regain his wife, and to enjoy the kingdom without anxiety, as his brother, who was his enemy, has been killed (IV 20.18-19).

Though Tārā knows that Su. had a right to the throne, it is nevertheless in utter contrast to her devotion to her husband, which she has expressed in such a pathetic and touching manner, that she is later alluded to as one of the beloved wives of Su. along with Rumā, without any attempt whatsoever being made by the author to explain the breach of Tārā’s loyalty and to throw light on her character in the later course of the Rm. (The only instance of characterization — when Tārā gives the suggestion to the desperate Vns. to enter the cave where they would have no occasion to fear anybody (IV 52.31-33) — is much too colourless to be a real piece of characterization). How then to interpret the sudden change in Tārā's behaviour? Considering the oral nature of the Rm. and the pattern of spontaneity, we can say that V. intended to delineate Tārā's personality only in the context of the Vālī episode and that this characterization was meant to be subservient to the depiction of pathos. When Tārā later emerges as if she had committed a breach of loyalty to her former husband, it is not at all because V. intended to characterize her as an unfaithful wife. It is only Aṅgada who, in the obstinacy and stubbornness of his mind, includes this fact among the charges in his rebuke against Su. See s.v. Hanumān p.512. Having no intention to delineate Tārā’s personality beyond the scenes of her lamentations, he simply treats her as a Vn. lady and endows her with those character-features which he allots to the civilisation of the Vns. As he apparently did not intend to allot the same lofty ideals of character to the Vns. as to the Dāśarathīs (except to H.), he did not mind depicting Tārā with certain less ideal features, which he thought of as characteristic of the Vns.
SUGRIVA
A SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS
OF THE CHARACTERIZATION OF SUGRIVA
Kabandha advises Rama to seek the alliance of Sugriva who will do everything to help him

Hear, O R., I am going to narrate, of the Vn. called Su., who has been expelled by his brother, wrathful Vālī, the son of Indra (11). On Rayamuka, the foremost of mountains, beautified by the circuit of the Pampā, the self-possessed hero dwells together with four Vns. (12). Go quickly from here today, O Rāghava, and make him your friend, having united before the blazing fire so that there be no iniquity (13). And do not disregard that Su., the king of the Vns., who is grateful and capable of assuming forms at will and desirous of an ally and heroic (14), for you two are able to accomplish that task of his which he desires to be done. Whether he has achieved his object or not, he will accomplish your task (15). That son of Rāṣarajas, the actual son of the Sun, roams about the Pampā fearfully, having been treated with insult by Vālī (16). Quickly deposit your weapon, O Rāghava, and make the forest-loving monkey, dwelling on the Rayamuka, your friend by way of a promise (17), for that foremost of monkeys, on account of his intelligence, knows entirely all the places in the world of those who eat the flesh of men (18). For nothing in the world is unknown to him, O Rāghava, as far as the son possessed of a thousand eyes shines, O subduer of enemies (19). Searching through rivers, large mountains, hill forts and valleys with the Vns., he will secure to you your wife (20) and he will send gigantic Vns. into all directions to find that S. of yours, moaning on account of her separation from you (21). Whether that blameless lady, your dear wife, be on the topmost peak of Meru or even has entered the netherworld and dwells there, the foremost of monkeys will bestow her again to you after having killed the Rks. (22).

Analysis of characterization:

This passage focuses the character of Su. in a general, introductory (though subjective) way, and for this reason gives us
a clue to unravel the type of character V. had in mind when introducing the person of Su. into the story. For later we shall be confronted with a very fluorescent picture of manifold character-traits, partly due to the vividness of particular scenes the author exposes before the audience, which, taken by themselves, will make it difficult to judge what was the character of Su. like in the mind of V. from the point of view of the whole composition. First of all, Su.'s character-traits are throughout positive, his unreserved and boundless helpfulness and gratefulness to R. being emphatically foretold -

vv. 14-15 - na ca te so'vamantavyah sugriyo vānarādhīpaḥ / 
kṛtaṁḥ kāmarūpaṁ ca sahāyārthī ca vīryavān //14 
śaktau hyadya yuvāṁ kartum kāryaṁ tasya cikīrtātm / 
krītārtho vā kṛtārtho vā kṛtyaṁ tava karisyati //15

20-22 - sa nādiṟṟipulāṁśailāṅgirindurgāṃi kandaran / 
anvisya vānaraṁ sārdham patṁṁ te'dhigamisyati //20 
vānaraṁśca mahākāyānprasāraisyati rāghava / 
ādī sa vicetuṁ tāṁ sitāṁ tvādvīyogena śocatīm //21 
sa meruṁ ṛggaratāmaninditāṁ praviṣya pātaṁkaleṁ 
vāśri-ām/ 
plavaṅgamānāṁ pravarastava priyāṁ n-hatya 
rakṣāṁśa punāṁ prādasyati //22

so much so that it appears as if both initiative and accomplishment of regaining S. are the sole task of Su. whereas actually we find Su. not at all in the centre of narration during the battle in Dañkā. This overstressed picture of Su.'s helpfulness which Kabandha gives to R. has surely psychological reasons: He must create confidence in R. (in line with this is the emphasis on Su.'s geographical knowledge), yet Su. is not only introduced as a source of hope to R. but also as a character to the audience, and from this point of view the character of Su. is meant to be objectively positive. And with this agree certain general statements interspersed in that part of the narrative where Su. is not any more in the centre of characterization: E.g.: When Agada,
in his despair at not having found out the whereabouts of S., expresses his fear of the sternness of Su. and his severe punishment, thereby suspecting Su.'s sincerity in dealing with him. H. encourages Aṅgāda and defends Su. with these words -

IV 53.19-21 -

asmābhīstu gataṁ sārdham vinītavadupasthitam /
ānupūrvyātto sugrīvo rājye tvāṁ sthāpayisyati // 19

dharmakāmāṁ pitryyaste prītiṁ mātudrāvatāṁ /
śuciḥ satyapratiṣṭhaṁ ca na tvāṁ jātu jīghaṁsatī // 20

priyakāmaṁ ca te mātustadārthah cāsyā jīvitam /
tasyāpayyaṁ ca nāstyaṁvattasmādaṅgada gamyatām // 21

H., despondent at not being able to trace S. in Lāṅka, reflects how R. at this news would renounce his life and with R. L., Bh., Śatrughna, Ks., Sumitrā, Kai., and also Su. In this context he says: V 11.28 -

kṛtajñāḥ satyasandhaṁca sugrīvah plavagādhipaḥ /
ṝmaṁ tathāgataṁ drṣṭvā tataṣṭyaṁsyatī jīvitam // 28

After the battle, Su. receives not only the affectionate treatment of R. (VI 100.6; 110.13), but also of Bh.

Classification:

Literary basis:

exposition: subjective - descriptive - explicit

Traits:

Su.'s unreserved and boundless helpfulness and gratefulness to R. foretold / his unlimited knowledge / his heroism etc.
Sugriva's fearful reaction at the sight of Rama and Laksmāna

Contents:

At the sight of R. and L. Su. was frightened and dis-spirited, looking in restless anxiety into all directions and expressing to his counsellors his apprehension that the two were spies of Vālī in disguise. Sojournig to the summit of the hill, the counsellors sat down encircling Su., while the other Vns., in panic-stricken flight, created a horrible tumult. Then H. addressed Su. - "I do not see cruel and wicked Vālī anywhere here, out of fear of whom you run away with an anxious heart. Hence I don't see any reason for fear for you. You show indeed your monkeyish nature since through your lightmindedness you do not control yourself. Being endowed with intelligence and knowledge, you should do everything with internal thoughts, for a king fallen into stupidity cannot rule a people." To this Su. answered - "Who is not afraid seeing those two heroes with mighty arms and large eyes, carrying bows and arrows and swords, like two sons of Gods? I suspect them to be Vālī's spies. We should not trust kings, for they have many friends, are treacherous, attack the vulnerable points of confident people, are skilled in stealing and killing. Hence find out, O H., who they are, go in the disguise of an ordinary man" ..... (abbrev.)

Analysis of characterization:

Su. is characterized as reacting in an extremely fearful and dis-spirited manner to the presence of R. and L., whom he mistakes for spies of his brother Vālī, as a result of his experience of being persecuted by him. In H.'s words, he is lightminded and unstable mind, thereby revealing his true monkeyish nature:

v. 16 – aho śākhāmṛgatvam te vyaktameva plavaṅgama /
laghucittatayātmānaṁ na ethāpayasi yo matsu // 16

Though this verse is subjective (spoken by H.), it is V. himself
who plays with this idea since he makes Su., in his answer to H., expose a whole scale of treacherous character-traits of kings, in virtue of which he nourishes his suspicion that those two powerful persons who carry their bows and swords, are Vālī's spies - a clear sign of his over-suspiciousness and -anxiety. I would be inclined to see at times a slight tone of a humorous sentiment (hāsyarasa), but this is not more than a purely subjective inference.

Classification:

Literary basis:
exposition: objective (partly subjective) - descriptive - explicit

Traits:
Su. reacts in an extremely fearful and dispirited manner when imagining himself confronted with Vālī's spies who in reality are R. and L. / his over-suspiciousness and -anxiety manifesting itself in a display of far-fetched reasons, in virtue of which he suspects the two persons to be spies, a characteristic of monkeyish nature, which is lightmindedness or instability of the mind.

Contents:
At the words of H., Su. gave up his fear, assumed a human appearance and with cheerful look addressed R., praising his qualities and expressing his appreciation for his readiness to make friends with him. He offered his hand, and R. pressed it in delight, as a token of friendship, and embraced him. Then Su. and R. circumambulated the blazing fire (which was produced by H.) and made friends, gazing at each other without feeling satiated. After that, Su. expressed his concern for R.'s grief on account of his separation from S., of which he had been
informed by H., trying to console him by giving his assurance to restore his wife to him whether she be in the lower world or in the sky and disclosing that it must be S. whom he had seen being carried away by a Rk., crying 'Rama, Rama and Lakṣmaṇa', and who, when seeing the five Vns. on the top of the hill, had thrown down her ornaments. When Su. showed the ornaments to R., he fell into heart-breaking lamentation. Then he asked Su. about the place where he had seen S. being carried away by the Rk., about his whereabouts and his person. Yet Su., with tears in his eyes, expressed his inability to give any details about Rv.'s abode etc., but tried to console R. by assuring him that he would do his best and restore S. to him after killing Rv. with his host in battle. He advised him not to lose himself in grief and to be steadfast. He also was in great misery on account of his separation from his wife, but he did not grieve himself and lose his steadfastness although he was only an ordinary Vn. How much more then should R. be able to restrain his tears - he who is noble-minded, disciplined and possessed of courage! Contrasting the character of one who, on account of his courage and intelligence, does not become disheartened whether in calamity, loss of wealth, fear, or when his life comes to an end, with one who is ignorant and consequently submerged in grief, like a heavily loaded boat is by the current of the river, and constantly in distress, Su. advised R., entreating him lovingly, to resort to his manliness instead of giving way to grief, for those who surrender to grief are unhappy and lose their energy. At the end, Su. stressed that he spoke these words for R.'s benefit and out of friendship, not out of a desire to instruct him. R., consoled by the sweet words of Su., wiped his face, and, embracing Su., said - "You have done, O Su., properly and befittingly, what a loving and well-wishing friend should do. I have been restored to myself by you. It is difficult to get such a friend, particularly in this time. Now you will have to put your effort into searching for S. and the cruel wicked Rk. Rv. Now tell me what I shall do for you. As in a fertile field during the rain, everything will turn out well for you. And these words I have spoken through pride. Let them be known to be true. I have never told any lie nor will I ever do so." Thereupon Su. was filled with great delight and he reflected upon R.'s object, considering his duty in his heart.

Analysis of characterization:

These three sargas, whose main contents are the alliance between Su. and R. (5), Su.'s disclosure to R. of his tidings about S. and the ornaments dropped by her on her aerial path, R.'s breaking into lamentation (6) and Su.'s consolation of R. (7),
depict Su.'s character in a very positive light: his loving and joyful readiness to enter into friendship with R., his concern for R.'s grief, his endeavour to console R. by trying to assure him of his unlimited help and disclosing to him the information about S., and finally his endeavour to console and cure his deep grief caused by the sight of his wife's ornaments by lovingly advising him not to lose himself in grief but to resort to his steadfastness and manliness. Externally, due to its length and didactic character, this advice given by Su. to R. looks more like an admonition on steadfastness and courage in grief, qualities which R. appears to fall short of inspite of his noble-mindedness, his discipline and courage, whilst even he himself, but an ordinary Vn., is able to control himself. Yet the context in which Su. gives his advice, and his statement that his words are not meant as an instruction but are spoken out of friendship, for R.'s benefit - v. 13:

\[
\text{hitam vayasyabhavana brumi nopadiśami te} \\
vayasyatam pujayanme na tvam socitumarhasi
\]

and R.'s welcome of Su.'s advice as a deed proper to a loving and well-wishing friend - all this makes one think of a person who, in his good-natured endeavour to help and console a dear friend, pours out a whole sermon on the principle of self-control, which, he knows, his 'cliset' very well lives up to, but which, due to some emotional upset, he has lost sight of, and which should thus bring him back to reason, thereby pointing out that even he himself, but an ordinary person, knows to restrain himself better. From this point of view Su.'s consolation has to be understood, otherwise there would be the temptation to argue that V. intended to show the hypocritical nature of Su., who tries to correct the weakness of R. by pointing to his own steadfastness, while actually he is the last and least to be of even mind in fear. Such an interpretation is surely wrong. One more thing we can learn from this last passage: V. did not intend to impart the same lofty moral standard of behaviour to the Vns. as he apparently
did to the sons of D. Keeping this in mind, we should not immediately be inclined to see a contrast of characterization if in a particular situation the moral standard of the latter is not up to that of the former. A difference of degrees of moral standards is naturally implied, but not necessarily for the sake of contrast.

Classification:

The exposition is throughout objective, even in ss. 6-7 in the sense that V. makes Su., in his speech to R., reflect his own character. We are inclined to consider Su.'s speech, specially that part of it where he shows his endeavour to console R., to be imbued with a feeling of compassion.

Literary basis:

exposition: objective – narrative and descriptive (intermixed) – partim implicit – partim explicit

tone: of a compassionate feeling (Su.'s speech of consolation)

IV 7. 22-23
8. 1-9

S u g r i v a ' s c h e e r f u l r e s p o n s e t o R a m a ' s p r o m i s e o f h e l p a n d h i s e u l o g y o f t h e v a l u e o f f r i e n d s h i p

Translation:

Then Su. was delighted together with the Vn. ministers when he heard the words of Rāghava, specially asserted by him. Hearing the words of the magnanimous one, that chief of the monkey heroes reflected upon the task of that foremost of men, thereby considering his own duty in his heart.
The Vn. Su., exceedingly delighted at those words, spoke to R., the elder brother of L., these words - "Doubtlessly I am altogether favourable to the Gods, I who have in you a friend endowed with the appropriate qualities. Indeed, with you as helper, O faultless R., I should be able to obtain even the kingdom of the Suras, how much more then my own kingdom, O lord. Thus I am honourable to my relatives and friends, I who have obtained a friend from the line of the Raghavas in the presence of the fire. That I on my part am a friend worthy of you, you will come to know gradually, but I should not speak myself of my own qualities. But the love of noble-souled, self-possessed men like you is immoveable in most of the cases as is the courage of the self-controlled. Be it silver or gold or clothes or ornaments, good men consider them as common properties of good men. Be he rich or poor, grieved or happy, faultless or with faults, a friend is the greatest resort. For the sake of a friend one renounces wealth, happiness or even one's body, realizing love of such a kind."

Analysis of characterization:

Sugrīva responds to R.'s promise to offer him, in turn, whatever help he asks from him with an expression of grateful joy, a feeling of possessing the favour of the Gods, and of utter confidence in R.'s patronage in securing for him his kingdom. Reflecting on this, he feels the need to assure R., by way of an allusion, also his trustworthiness as a friend, humbly remarking, however, that he is not competent in speaking of his own qualities. Seeing the ideal of the beauty and value of friendship realized in R.'s behaviour, he bursts forth into a eulogy on the firmness of love between friends, the spirit of sharing with one another, the spirit of taking refuge with one another, and sacrificing for one another, as it is prevalent among friends.

Classification:

Literary basis:
exposition: objective - descriptive - explicit
tone: euphoric (harsabhāva)
Sugriva intimates his affliction to Rama


Résumé: Though Su. is in the highest realm of joy at R.'s assurance of his help, he, as he is about to lovingly entrust R. in short with his affliction, by the very recalling of the humiliation and persecution he suffered at the hands of Vālī, falls back into a state of grief and fear, which prompts him to entreat R. to grant his favour to him, who is helpless and oppressed by the fear of Vālī. When R. spontaneously assures him that he will kill Vālī this very day, he resumes his cheerfulness — but only for a moment. The more the painful thought of his calamity comes back to his mind, the more he falls back again into a state of grief and fear, which now reaches such an intensity that he gives full vent to the burden of his soul and feels prompted again to intimate to R. the story of his humiliation — now in greater length and with more pathos.

Sugriva narrates to Rama the full account of Vālī's enmity with him


Classification:
Literary basis:

exposition: partly subjective (in so far as Su. describes his character), partly objective (in so far as Su. reflects his character) - narrative - partly explicit, partly implicit

tone: (towards the end) a reminiscent tone of affliction and fear (śokabhayabhāva)

Traits:

Sugrīva's affection for his brother against all the humiliation and cruelty he suffered / his falling back into a state of affliction and fear terminating in a request that R. may free him from his fear.

IV 11
12.5-11, 24-27, 38
14.1-6

Sugrīva between doubt and confidence

Résumé

In the midst of all delight and hope at R.'s assurance, Su. suddenly falls into musing and doubt when calling into his mind the unequalled power and heroism of Vālī, and so feels urged to impress vividly R. with an account of Vālī's heroism, so as to induce R. to demonstrate his power before his very eyes and free him from all doubts. So great is his impatience to guard himself against any eventuality that, even when R. already stood the test given to him, he demands another, more unmistakable proof of R.'s prowess. (IV 11 passim).

When R. accomplishes his second test (his arrow traverses seven palmyra trees, a mountain and the innermost region of the earth and enters his quiver again), Su. simply stands wonderstruck and with humble gratitude and exceeding joy and satisfaction expresses his full confidence in R., whose valour and heroism he praises.
as beyond those of even the Gods. (12.5-11)
Yet a little later, Su. feels downcast and ashamed at R.'s failure to come to his rescue and to discharge his deadly arrow against Vālī and angrily accuses him of having put him to shame by not plainly telling him that he would not kill Vālī (12.24-27). After R.'s explanation and his tying a creeper round Su.'s neck so as to be able to distinguish him from Vālī, Su. is fully pacified (12.38). Yet, when they have arrived at Kiskindhā, he raises a frightening battle-roar amidst the Vns. and reminds R. again to fulfil his promise, which leaves the reader with an impression of Su.'s māden fearfulness (14.1-6).

IV 15.6-23

Tara's plea to Vali to reconcile himself with Sugrīva

Contents:

When Tārā saw her husband fly into such terrible anger, she, prompted by fear for his safety, lovingly embracing him, tried to persuade him to give up his torrent-like anger. "Your brother," she reminded him, "who was defeated by you and who fled before you, challenges you again to fight. The pride, the determination and the arrogance of his roar show that he has got somebody to assist him. Clever as he is, Su. won't be with somebody whose valour is not tested." Then she told him about the news Āṅgada had brought about the alliance between R. and Su., about R. being the refuge of the virtuous and those in affliction, and all the other merits of his, and his unequalled power in battle. Thus she entreated him to let Su. be installed in the heir-apparentship together with him, to stop his fraternal enmity and please Su., who is, after all, his younger brother, and to make friends with R.
Analysis of characterization:

Tārā characterizes Su. somehow as a shrewd and arrogant coward, who possesses the courage to challenge his brother only because he knows himself guarded by an assistant whose valour he has first tested. Now the question arises whether this definitely negative characterization of Su., as it is drawn by Tārā, is merely functional, i.e. an expression of the loving care of Tārā for the safety of her husband, or whether, beyond this, V., so to say, lets Tārā address the listeners in his own words. To solve this question, we have to see whether we have any previous indication which goes to show Su.'s cowardice. When we read 14.1-6, the contents of which we have outlined above, and further 18-21, we feel that the energy with which Su. raises his terrifying roar in the midst of his companions, appearing, as it were, like an inner call to self-encouragement, and the reminder to R. to fulfill his promise, do bring out, at least implicitly, an innate timidity in Su., which he is able to hide, as he knows himself guarded. But it is illicit to interpret this timidity in the light of 15.9 ff. The passages 14.1-6 and 18-21 are not meant to give any more 'hidden' implications. So we conclude that the characterization by Tārā is purely subjective in a functional sense, interpreting Su.'s fearfulness (which is, in part, due to the humiliation he suffered from Vālī) as cowardice.

Classification:

Literary basis:

exposition: subjective - descriptive - explicit
tone: of anxious concern
IV 16.2-4, 17-18
(9.9-20)

Vali’s accusation of Sugriva


Résumé: Vālī's characterization of Su. as arrogant (and as a betrayer of brotherly love) are to be interpreted purely from the point of view of Vālī’s character defects and hence are here out of question.

IV 12.15-23
16.13-27

Vali-Sugriva-Yuddhas

In both narrations Su. turns out to be as heroic and valiant as his brother Vālī, yet in the end he is overpowered by him.

IV 19.28
22.17-18

Sugriva's grief over the tragic course of events

Translation:

Seeing her crying like a female osprey and Aṅgada approaching, he fell into extreme despondency.
Having been thus addressed by Vālī prompted by brotherly affection, Su., dismissed his joy and became grieved again like the moon in the eclipse. Prompted by these words of Vālī, he, with tranquil mind and vigilance doing what was befitting, took, with his permission, that golden wreath.

Interpretation of context:

The former verse is embedded in the depiction of Tārā's grief when she, at the news of her husband's fall, rushes out and sees him lying like dead on the ground. The latter verses form a transition from Vālī's last speech to Su. to his last advice to his son Aṅgada.

Analysis of characterization:

Both verses have to be interpreted from the point of view of the tragic-pathetic sentiment which prevails in the scene. Thus the character-traits of Su. alluded to in these verses are primarily due to the pathetic situation which the author tries to depict before the minds of the audience. Yet, as they do not imply a reversal in the characterization of Su., we can safely assume that V. did intend to mark out Su.'s sympathy with Tārā and his grief over the tragic course of events and his innate affection for his brother.

Further allusions to Su.'s grief in form of consolations made by R. and L. etc. are found in s.24 ¹, which is a description of Vālī's funeral preparations - a theme which by itself lends ample opportunity to the poet to press on the tears of the audience, by once more depicting Tārā, the Vns., Su., and Aṅgada immersed in grief at their departure from their beloved lord.
These rains are of abundant merits. Su. obtains his happiness. His enemy has been defeated, he is with his wife and has been established in his great kingdom. But I have been deprived of my wife and of the great kingdom. I go down like the swampy bank of a river. My grief is great and the rains are extremely difficult to pass through, and the great enemy Rv. appears to be something that is unreachable. And seeing this unsuitable occasion for advancing and the roads to be extremely difficult to pass, I have not said anything to Su., though he is submissive. Also, as he has been reunited with his wife after a long time, having experienced extreme hardships, I do not wish to speak to the Vn. because of the seriousness of my task, for Su. himself, after taking rest, knowing when the proper time has come, will no doubt think of his obligation. Therefore I am staying here, waiting for the proper time, 0 auspicious L., awaiting the favour of Su. and of the rivers. For a hero is intent on favour and fair reward. One who is ungrateful and does not return the favour kills the heart of the good. Having been thus addressed, L., lying prostrate and paying respect, with his hands folded, to those words of R., said to R. with his charming look, displaying his auspicious foresight - "Just as you have said, 0 lord of men, this lord of the monkeys will accomplish without delay all that you desire. Forbear this downpour of rain in expectation of the autumn, fixed on the destruction of your enemy."

Interpretation of context and analysis of characterization:

R. depicts to his brother L. in glowing colours the magnificence of the rainy season and thereby gives vent to his painful musings and longings for S., aroused in him by the sight of the beautiful scenery. Finally, his reflection goes towards Su., whose regained happiness he contrasts with his unfulfilled desire, the fulfilment of which appears to be far away from him on account of the unfavourable climatic conditions and his unwillingness to disrupt Su., who has just regained his wife and his kingdom, all too soon from his happiness. While he reflects on Su., he, as if a ray of hope were flashing up in his mind, suggests to himself to trust in Su.'s favourable disposition and sense of gratefulness and fair reward, in which he is strengthened by his brother L.
Rāma thus characterises Su. throughout positively. V. 37 expresses merely the emotional contrast and is not in any way to be understood as an implication of suspicion at Su.'s disloyalty. On the contrary, Su. emerges as one who is obliging and intent on giving fair reward (vv.41\textsuperscript{2}. 44\textsuperscript{1})

Classification:

Literary basis:

exposition: subjective - descriptive - implicit
tone: of affliction (śokabhāva) constituting a pathetic sentiment

Contents:

When the sky was cleared from the rains, wise H. saw Su., - now that his task was accomplished and he had obtained all his desires, his dear wife Ruma and the much-coveted Tara, - endowed with abundant riches, yet little anxious for accumulating religious merits and wealth - 'his mind being directed towards the path of the un-virtuous - and addicted to pleasure, sporting and playing, as it were, like Indra with the hosts of the Apsaras, free of all anxiety, entrusting his duties entirely to the ministers without caring at the least to supervise them, seeing this H. addressed him with sweet, well-wishing and wholesome words, which were calculated at conciliation, dharma, prosperity, conduct and were endowed with love and affection: - "You have acquired your kingdom, fame and vast riches. You should now acquire friends. For he who treats his friends well in time, increases his kingdom, fame and glory. Being of virtuous conduct and walking on the blameless path, you should fulfil the desire of your friend. He who engages in actions for his friend, after a long time has elapsed, is not keen on his duty towards his friend even if he has accomplished great things. Hence let the search for S. be accomplished without delay. The time for performing your friend's work has already passed. And R., an obedient servant of yours, who knows the value of time, though being in a hurry, does not tell you that the time has passed. He is
the source of your prosperous rule, a long friend of yours, of boundless lustre and matchless in his merits. Do now fulfil the task he has done for you and send for the chief Vns. As long as there is no pressure, the time may not have passed over, but once the task has been urged upon, the time has been transgressed. You do the task of one who has not rendered help to you, how much more then should you do the task of one who has rewarded you by restoring your kingdom. Not that R. would need your help, for he is able to subdue even the Gods and the Asuras with his arrows, but he wants you to fulfil your promise. As he has done his favour to you at the risk of his life, we should search for S. on the earth and in the sky. Are not the Gods, Gandharvas, Maruts, Yakṣas afraid of him? How much more will be the Rks.? Do what is agreeable to him with all your heart. There are crores of irresistible Vns. under your command, and nothing will be able to thwart their course in heaven and on earth. Now give us directions." Su. carried out H.'s excellent proposal and ordered Nila to mobilize all the Vn. armies with their leaders in all directions within a fortnight and then to look after the army himself and approach, with the help of Aṅgada, the older monkeys to see to it that his order be ascertained. Whoever failed to arrive within a fortnight, would be punished with death. With this command Su. entered the palace.

Analysis of characterization:

In the first lines of the sarga, V. stresses Su.'s total forgetfulness of his moral and kingly duties, which should be the acquirement of religious merits, whereas he floats in luxury (v. 2 - samṛdhārthaḥ ca sugṛivaḥ mandadharmārthaṣaṅgraham / atyarthamasatāṁ mārgamekāntagatamānasam // ) and pleasure (vv. 3-5 - nivṛttakāryaṁ siddhārthaṁ pramadābhirataṁ sadā / prāptavantamabhipretāṁsāvāneva manorathān // svāṁ ca patnīmabhipretāṁ tārāṁ saṁśītanām / viharantamahorātraṁ kṛtārthaṁ vigatajvaram // krīḍantamiva deveṣaṁ nandane'purasāṁ gaṇaṁ / ), going so far as to leave his whole job in the hands of his ministers without caring to supervise them (vv. 5-6 - mantrisu nyastakāryaṁ ca mantrināmanavekeśakam // utsaannarājyaśandeṣaṁ kāmayṛttama vaśhitam / )
and all this after he obtained his kingdom, his wife and all other desires. What the author has obviously in mind is the causal connection between Su.'s attainment of his satisfaction, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, his losing himself in the objects of his satisfaction, his râches and his sensual pleasure. With H.'s speech, being both a moral admonition and a reminder, Su.'s forgetfulness of his duty is focussed towards his forgetfulness of his promise of help to R. and his ungratefulness towards the friendship of R. Now the question arises whether it was the intention of the author to place this trait of Su.'s disloyalty to his friendship with R., which H. alludes to, in the foreground or in the context of his complete forgetfulness of his duty and his losing himself in the pleasures of life. When we scrutinize H.'s speech, we find him not so much blaming Su.'s lack of good will as his negligence in the sense of his losing sight of kâla, which is expressed again and again:

vv.13-15 - yastu kâlavyatîteṣu mitrâkaryesu vartate /
    sa kṛtvā mahâto'pyarthānna mitrârthena yujyate //
    kriyatāṁ râghavasyatâdvaidehyah parimârganam /
    tadidah vîra kâryaṁ te kâlatítamarindama //
    na ca kâlamatītam te nâvedayati kâlavit /
    tvaramâño'pi sanprâjñastava râjanvasânugah //

vv.18 - na hi tâvadbhavetkålo vyâtitaścodaññadête /
    coditasya hi kâryasya bhavetkâlavyatikramah //

In accordance with this interpretation is also v.19, where he says:

    akarturapi kâryasya bhavânkarta harîvara /
    kim punah pratikartuste râjyena ca dhanena ca //

Classification:

Literary basis:

exposition: objective § subjective - descriptive - explicit
Translation:

The time of activities for the kings has approached, O dear one (30). This now is the first time of military expeditions for the kings, O prince, and I don't see Su., or any such preparation (31). Four months of rain, appearing as long as ten rainy seasons, have passed to me, afflicted with grief, without seeing S., O dear one (32). King Su., O L., does not show compassion towards me, who am bereft of my beloved wife, overwhelmed by grief, deprived of my kingdom and banished (33). 'He, being helpless, having been deprived of his kingdom and insulted by Rv., being distressed, with his home far away, has with a great desire come to me for protection' (34). - for such-like suppositions, O dear one, I have been treated with contempt by the evil-minded king of the Vns., Su., O hero (35). That evil-minded one, having fixed the time for the search of S., now that he has obtained his object, having made an agreement, does not know of it (36). Enter Kiskindha and tell Su., the chief of the Vns., that fool addicted to sexual pleasure, with the authority of my words (37) - "He who has promised hope to suppliants approaching him and to those who have shown their favour before and kills it, is the vilest of men on earth (38). He who clings to a word spoken truthfully, be it good or evil, is a hero, a most eminent man (39). Not even a carnivore will eat those ungrateful men, even if they are dead, if they have not fulfilled the desires of their friends, - whose desires are unfulfilled (40). Indeed, he wishes to see the flash-like appearance of my golden-reared bow drawn by me in battle (41). He wants to hear once more the horrible twang of my bow-string, produced by me filled with anger in battle, resembling, the rattling of the thunderbolt (42). Really, he, on his part, should not be anxious, O heroic prince, about my prowess - being of such nature and tested by himself, with you as my helper (43). What for has this undertaking been made, O foremost of conquerors? With his object fulfilled, the lord of the monkeys does not know his agreement (44). Yet, having promised the rainy season as the proper time, the lord of monkeys, diverting himself for four months, does not know of it (45). Entertaining himself with his ministers and the counsellors, Su. is addicted to drink and does not have any compassion on us - being distressed by grief (46). Go, my powerful son, and tell Su. what is the object of my wrath and say to him these words (47) : ' The path has not shrunk on which Vālī, slain by me, has gone. Abide by the agreement, O Su., don't go the path of Vālī (48). Vālī alone has been killed by me in battle with an arrow.
yet I will also kill you together with your relatives if you break your promise (49). That only, O foremost of men, which is beneficial for the appointed task, that say, O best of men, hurry up, the time has already been transgressed (50). Make true what has been promised to he, O lord of the Vsn., considering eternal dharma, lest you see Vali today, having died and gone to the abode of Yama through the arrows dismissed by me (51).

Interpretation of context:

The sight of the approaching autumn with its beautiful scenery and the thought of Su.'s addiction to pleasure and the fear that his beloved wife might have perished in the meantime make R. almost swoon with grief. The sight of manifold manifestations of beauty and joy in nature and its creatures re-awakens in him intensively his painful longings for S., which he describes in a vivid manner, to L., who has just returned from the forest. After much sentimental musings on the autumnal beauty, he returns in his thoughts to Su. For this commencing autumn season, where the charm of nature is at its highest, is the time when military expeditions usually take place and for which Su. has promised his help to R. in searching for S., and yet he does not see any sign of Su.'s preparations.

Analysis of characterization:

R. refers to Su. first in terms of disappointment at his lack of compassion for the disheartening situation in which he finds himself, assuming even that it is out of a feeling of deep contempt for the supplicatory motive of his taking refuge to him that Su. is disregardful of his promise (vv. 34-35). But there is only a narrow passage from disappointment to anger, and as he tells L. to go to Kiskindhā and communicate his words of admonition, he, in his very speech, more and more flies into anger, branding Su. as a purusādhamā who kills the hope of those who go to him for solicitation, having, on their part, granted help to him at a previous occasion, as one belonging to those ungrateful men who, leaving the desires of their friends unfulfilled, out of contempt, are not even touched by carnivores after their death,
and even telling L. to threaten him with the power of the bow. Vv. 43–51 appear as though they were a fresh onset of R.'s moral attack on Su., again ranging over a scale of emotions from disappointment at Su.'s indifference and mercilessness, as a result of his addiction to entertainment to pleasure, to extreme wrath, in which he threatens, at times with a cynical tone, to kill Su. with all his relatives if he should violate his agreement. These last words of threat are characterized by a strange admixture of more calm and balanced words of admonition, side by side with a more forceful and cynical manner of speech. Of. v. 51:

\[
\text{kurusya satya\text{"} mayi v\text{"}an\text{"}svara prati\text{"}rut\text{"}a dharm\text{"}ayek\text{"}a} \\
\text{\text{"}sad\text{"}vat\text{"}a} \\
\text{m\text{"}a v\text{"}alina\text{"} pretya gato yamakesaya\text{"} tvamadya pas\text{"}yermama} \\
\text{coditaih saraih} \\
\]

Thus the whole passage has to be understood from the viewpoint of R.'s emotional upset. There is an essential difference between the characterization of Su. in the previous sarga and in this chapter. It is here the ascription of disloyalty to R., be it conceived in terms of indifference, lack of compassion, disregard of his duty, or vile ingratitude, as against the description of Su.'s complete forgetfulness of his duty in the previous sarga, that is constantly in the foreground. This variation of characterization is only natural. Su.'s coronation has led to his total engrossment in pleasures and consequently to a total neglect of his duty, which includes also a disloyalty to the friendship with R. As we have seen, it is this which H. alludes to, but even in this respect he criticises not so much Su.'s lack of good-will as his negligence in the sense of his losing sight of time. Now, in the eyes of R. immersed in agony (this is the inspiring scene which the bai\text{"}poet treats as a unit of its own and strives to bring to its climax), Su.'s behaviour, naturally, has to be seen much more as a gross breach of the most intimate friendship and promise of help. But we could not call it a reversal of characterization, for the two characterizations
are in no way contradicting one another. The only difference is that in the first Su.'s behaviour is seen in a more all-inclusive, comprehensive, hence objective, way, while in the second it is seen from a more personal, hence more subjective, angle of R.'s agony.

[It is characteristic that L., bursting into anger against Su. in his concern for his brother, brands the Yn. king in a similar and still more forceful way - so much so indeed that R., though having flown into anger for the same reason, has to remind L. to admonish Su. in a peaceful manner and has to pacify L.'s anger - without, however, any apparent effect. However, these introductory lines of s. 30 highlight much more L.'s than Su.'s behaviour.]

Classification:

Literary basis:

exposition: subjective - descriptive - explicit

tone: of affliction, disappointment and anger, constituting a tone of pathetic sentiment

Traits:

Su.'s breach of the most intimate friendship with R. and of his promise of help, being a manifestation - as a result of his addiction to entertainment and pleasure - of his indifference, lack of compassion, negligence of his duty and vile ungratefulness.

IV 30.21-22 (a)
34-43 (b)
31. (c)

Sugriva's reaction to the news of Laksmana's arrival and his anger
Translation:

Then the foremost of the monkeys entered Su.'s palace and reported L.'s wrath and arrival (21). The lustful monkey-chief, given to amorous pleasure in company with Tārā, did not hear then the words of those monkey heroes (22).

Having heard the words of L., Aṅgada, overcome with grief, went into the presence of his father and said - "This son of Sumitra has arrived" (34). Those Vns., seeing L. sounding, as it were, like a great flood, raised a roar as loud as the thunder-bolt, resembling the roar of a lion, in his presence (35). By this great noise the Vn. woke up, with his eyes red, being perturbed due to inebriety, agitated and adorned with a wreath of flowers (36). Then those two respectable and good-looking counsellors of the lord of the Vns., Plakṣa and Prabhāva, counsellors in artha and dharma, having heard the words of Aṅgada and come with him, announced that L. had arrived in order to blow hot and cold (37/38), propitiating Su. with words meant to conciliate, while sitting round him seated like Sakra, the lord of the Maruts (39) - "The two illustrious brothers R. and L., adhering to truth, have obtained your friendship, themselves being entitled to kingship, yet the bestowers of your kingdom (40). One of those two, L., stands at the entrance with his bow in hand, frightened by whom the Vns., trembling, release loud roars (41). This brother of Rāghava, L., has come, at the order of that R., as the charioteer of his words with determination as his chariot (42). Bowing your head before him, together with your son and your relatives, abide by your agreement, be an adherer to your promise (43).

Having heard the words of Aṅgada together with his ministers, self-possessed Su., hearing of L. being enraged, left his seat and, ascertaining the seriousness of the situation, said these words to the ministers knowing to give counsel, himself skilled in giving counsel and well-versed in it (1-2) - "I have not said anything evil nor have I done anything evil, I wonder why L., the brother of Rāghava, is angry (3). Has the elder brother of Rāghava been told by malignant enemies of mine always looking for vulnerable points, some unreal faults of mine (4)? In this case, all of you should, meanwhile, find out skilfully and slowly the intention of his, according to your intelligence and according to the proper way (5). I have, indeed, no fear of L. nor of Rāghava. However, the thought that a friend should be enraged for no reason causes me consternation (6). It is altogether easy to make a friend, yet difficult to keep a friend because of the fickleness of the minds. Love breaks even on a trifle (7). But for this reason I am afraid: What has been done in favour to me by the noble-souled R., I have not been able to do in return (8)."
Thus addressed by Su., the foremost of monkeys, H. spoke in the midst of the Yn ministers by way of his own argumentation (9) - "It is not at all astonishing that you, O lord of the monkey flocks, do not remember the loving and auspicious act of favour (10), but the heroic Rāghava, throwing far away his fear, has killed Vālī, possessed of prowess equal to that of Sakra, for the sake of your benefit (11). It is altogether out of love that Rāghava is angry, no doubt about that, and that he despatched his brother L., the enhancer of prosperity (12). You, being inebriated, do not know the time, you, the best of those knowing time. Blossomed are the dark Saptacchada trees, the auspicious autumn has commenced (13). The skies with their resplendent planets and stars are freed of clouds, and all the directions and rivers and lakes are clear (14). But you, O foremost of monkeys, do not know that the time for activity has come. You are inebriate, it is certainly for this reason that L. has come here (15). You have to bear now harsh words of the noble-souled Rāghava, who is afflicted and deprived of his wife, from another man (16), for as you have made an offence, I do not see for you anything else appropriate than to propitiate L. with folded hands (17). A king has to be necessarily told by his appointed counsellors what is beneficial, hence I give up all fear and say words which are definite (18). For Rāghava, enraged, when raising his bow, is able to put under his control the world with the Gods, the Asuras and the Gandharvas (19). Let him not be infuriated who should be propitiated again, particularly, by one who is grateful, who recalls the favour done to him earlier (20). Bowing to him with your head, together with your son and your friends, abide, O king, by your agreement like the wife by the will of her husband (21). O lord of the monkeys, it is not proper to neglect the order of R. and R.'s elder brother even in your mind, for your mind will know the manly power of him who has the power of the lord of the Suras, accomplished by Rāghava (22).

Analysis of characterization:

The first two texts describe in a vivid manner how Su. is so much lost in amorous pleasures and so much inebriate that only the blurring roars of the Yn. chiefs outside wake him up from his trance and make him at least listen to the news brought by Plakṣa and Prabhāva of L.'s arrival and his wrath on account of his brother - a news reported already twice before, which, however, Su. could not hear. Though Plakṣa and Prabhāva, somehow,
indicate Su.'s negligence of the agreement made with R. as the reason for L.'s anger (v.43), Su. reacts in a way that suggests he is ignorant of the cause of R.'s anger and suspects a calumny by malignant enemies of his. He even regrets that his friendship with R. should break up for no reason at all. But then he ends up by saying that the thought of not having been able to requite the favour done to him by R. causes him fear. From this contradictory reaction of Su. one could be inclined to infer that V. wanted to draw Su. somehow as a hypocrite, as someone who knows the faults he has committed, but does not want to admit them, pretends to be innocent and rather accuses his partner. This seems to be one of the interpretations possible. But I don't think it does justice to the text as it stands within the context so far. No doubt, s. 30 stresses the personal breach of intimacy with Su., but we have seen that this is done from the more subjective angle of R.'s emotional condition, which is depicted in a most vivid tone of pathos and constitutes a scene of its own. H.'s observation of Su.'s behaviour and his consequent admonition in s. 28 as well as his speech herein 31.10-22, together with the context of 30.21-22, 34-43. 31.1-10 in no way make any kind of evil-mindedness or lack of good-will of Su. their target, but rather his engrossment in pleasure and total forgetfulness of his duties, which is, in turn, the cause for his forgetfulness of carrying out his promise of help and for his ungratefulness towards R.'s service, particular stress being laid on his losing sight of time. Cf. above and 31.13-15. All these facts appear to exclude such an interpretation as stated above. But then how to explain the somewhat evasive reaction of Su.? In terms of simple human psychology: Su. has not done anything positively wrong. He has not nursed any evil intention against R. in the sense that he has intentionally stifled his resolution to help R. So he feels honestly upset and hurt at the thought that L. should be angry at him and that R. himself should have so little trust in his friendship. At the same time he feels and also admits
that he was somehow not efficient enough to return the favour done to him by R. It is very important to note that he says सक्याः प्रतिकार्तुः ने 'it was not possible to him to return the favour.' Hence it is far more natural to conclude that V. had the intention to describe Su. as a basically good-natured and honest Vn. king, but to such an extent given to pleasure and negligent that of his good and firm intention, when it comes to action, he totally loses sight of what he owes to R. and of the urgency to help him necessitated by R.'s emotional condition and, when admonished, is not struck with remorse at the thought of his negligence - how can he if his very nature is such? If this interpretation is correct, we may dare to conclude that V. thereby intended to draw a character-feature which he considered as 'genuinely monkeyish'. Let us remember that V., in all probability, did not intend to attribute that lofty standard of moral behaviour to the Vns. as he did to the Dāśarathis. We may find a support for this latter assumption also in the fact that neither the author nor any of the characters give at all thought to the fact that Tārā, Vālī's devoted wife, now functions as the beloved of Su. It is something taken for granted by him in the civilisation of the Vns.

Classification :

Literary basis :
(b) objective (towards the end subjective) — narrative (towards the end descriptive) — explicit
(c) first objective, then subjective — descriptive — implicit

Traits :
(b) Su.'s engrossment in pleasure and inebriety to such a degree that he awakens from his trance only through the blurring roars of the Vns.
(c) Su's engrossment in pleasure as the root-cause of his forgetfulness to fulfil his promise of help to R. and of his ingratitude towards his service / his reaction to the news of L.'s wrath with words which suggest that he is ignorant of the cause of R.'s anger, that he suspects a calumny by
some malignant enemies and regrets that his friendship with R. should break for no reason, ending, however by saying that the thought of not having been able to return R.'s favour causes him fear - all which brings to light his unreadiness to believe, and his being hurt at the thought, that he is not trusted in his good intentions, while he only shows a faint feeling of remorse at the thought that he has not been efficient enough to return the favour done to him by R.

Résumé of ss. 33 & 35.4-20. 37.3-19 + 39.10-14

Laksmana reproaches Sugriva bitterly
Sugriva conciliates Laksmana
Sugriva, carried in a litter and accompanied by a large number of Vanaras, greets Rama, who embraces him Rama encourages Sugriva to search for Sita's whereabouts 2)

Lakṣmaṇa, finding Su. surrounded by beautiful damsels and vehemently embracing Ruma, bursts into such anger that he starts reproaching Su. far beyond the accusations made by R., exposing to him the extreme meanness of one who does not return a friend's favour and makes false promises -

v.8 - yastu rājā sthito'dharme mitrāṇāmu-pakārinām / mithyā prati-jñāh kurute ko nṛsāmsatarastah // 8
A man giving a false promise to a horse or cow, kills 100 horses or 1000 cows, a man giving a false promise to a man kills himself and his people:

v.9 - śatamaśvānṛte hanti sahasraṁ tu gavaṁṛte / ātmānāṁ svajanaṁ hanti puruṣaṁ puruṣānṛte // 9
A śloka by Brahmā, angry at man's ingratitude, says that there is remission for a killer of a Brāhmin, a drinker of wine, a thief and a breaker of vows, but not for an ungrateful person:
As he has obtained the favour of R., but not returned it, he is anārya, kṛtagnā and mithyāvādī (v.16) etc. L.'s bitter reproach leaves a powerful negative impression in the minds of the audience about Su.'s ingratitude. This is what has given rise to a dosanivārana, an attempt, under the mediatorship of Tārā, at vindicating the basic goodness of Su., which stands out in the general range of context, but seems to be obscured much by L.'s accusation. The arguments speaking in favour of the lateness of this sarga are given p.152. At the same time, L.'s forceful reproach reflects his own spontaneous ire, arising at the thought of an injustice done to his brother - so typical of him. Just as R.'s accusation of Su., which arises out of an emotion of disappointment and anger, L.'s reproach, nourished by blazing anger, is meant to have its subjective perspective and to be functional within the frame of one particular scene. The author has one particular scene with one particular sentiment in mind and he develops it, prompted by an empathic inspiration of the moment, to its highest climax. Immediately afterwards, a new scene starts with a new sentiment, but more on the objective level and more in consonance with the general view of Su.'s character:

Su. conciliates L. with words expressing his gratitude to R. for having restored wealth, fame and his kingdom to him and his inefficiency in rewarding such a heroic deed. Yet, he assures R. that through his own unequalled power he will regain S. and kill Rv. and, though actually he does not need any assistance for achieving his object, he (Su.) will gladly and humbly follow him as an assistant. At last, he asks R.'s forgiveness
if he has committed any transgression with regard to trust or love - for, he says, what is there against which we do not sin? By this conciliatory speech of Su., L. is completely pacified. His answer is a total reversal of his previous accusation. L., who is now filled with delight and praises the great value of Su.'s help to R., his worthiness of being R.'s friend - knowing dharma, being grateful, not withdrawing from battle, his strength and power being equal to R. - asks him now to come with him to R. in order to console him, as he is deeply lamenting the loss of his beloved one, and confesses that it is for this reason that he has spoken such harsh words to him, and requests his forgiveness.

Now everything goes very smoothly. Seated on a litter, Su. and L. proceed, accompanied by many hundreds of Vns. armed with weapons, to R.'s Áśrama. Su. falls at R.'s feet, bu- R. raises him up and embraces him with love and deep regard, and encourages him to find out first the whereabouts of S., after which the needful would be done, entrusting the entire task to his guidance, for he, as he says, is his second friend, is heroic, wise, knowing the particulars of time, bent on his welfare, and has as his object to serve, and knows this object thoroughly. What a contrast between L.'s words of accusation, his later words of appreciative approval and R.'s affectionate speech of encouragement! And all this (at least originally) within a short range of scenes. This gives full and solid support to our observation made all along, that a characterization of Su. which is pointed at depicting his evil-mindedness evolves from the emotionally critical situation of another character, is therefore functional and restricted to the very scene drawn before the minds of the audience for its own sake - while it was the general intention of V. to draw Su. as a good-natured, helpful character, though with defects typical of him as the Vn. king, who, once engrossed in pleasure, completely neglects his duties and even his friends
so that he never carries out the good intentions he has in his heart.

Appendix:

Once more Su.'s character is made controversial, namely by Aṅgada, who, in his despair at not being able to trace S. and in his fear of Su.'s sternness and severe punishment, suspects Su.'s sincerity in dealing with him as well as in his relationship with Vālī, and abuses him notwithstanding H.'s advocacy of Su.'s righteousness. The relevant passages are 52.20-33; 53.19-21 and 54. For details of contents see s.v. H. pp. 478f. It is quite evident that Aṅgada's charges are meant to be subjective and not hidden allusions by the author.

From then onwards Su. is almost completely out of focus from the point of view of characterization. But he gives the orders and he does it in an efficient way. We see him angrily conveying his suspicion to R. against Vibhīṣaṇa, who introduces himself as Rv.'s younger brother and, upset by Rv.'s stubbornness to return S., requests R. to grant him protection. He is not the only one of the Yns., who is suspicious, yet he is the most stubborn one and even pleads for killing Vibhīṣaṇa straight — while Aṅgada, Sarabha, Jāmbavān and Mainda do warn R., yet advise him to test him through skilled spies. It is H. who, by way of a reasonable argumentation, proves the innocence of Vibhīṣaṇa, and then even Su. is convinced of the sincerity of Vibhīṣaṇa, and praises R. for his wonderful tenet of saranagataraksana. This whole episode, thus, plays with the fearful and suspicious nature of Su., which we have met right from the beginning in the context of his own misery, while here there is no such personal background.

In the old portions of the Yuddhakānda, which we consider here there is little mention of Su.'s activities though occasionally he is mentioned as a valiant fighter.
A SYNTHETIC VIEW OF THE AUTHOR'S CONCEPTION
AND PORTRAIT OF SUGRIVA'S CHARACTER
Conception

Our systematic analysis has revealed long explicit descriptions of Su.'s actions and reactions in connection with two main themes: his friendship with R., presenting itself to him when he finds himself in a state of feeling grossly humiliated by his brother VålI, and his life of pleasure and failure to fulfil his promise given to R. after VålI's death. These two themes are not merely two necessary stepping-stones in the process of the story (as e.g. the theme around VålI), but appear to have an edifying function of their own. On this basis, we conclude that V. had a motivation in conceiving a character like Su. for his story, prescinding from the question to what extent this conception may be due to an earlier model in the bardic tradition or to his own poetical imagination. Yet, though a certain pre-conception of the character of Su. lay at the basis for his presentation, V. made use of the spontaneous bardic pattern of projecting a vivid scene before the audience, which often involves a person and so gives ample opportunity for character-depiction. This principle is generally at work in such passages which are strongly determined by personal feelings, like R.'s accusation against Su., by affliction, disappointment and anger, L.'s reproach of Su., by blazing anger, or L.'s later eulogy, and is responsible for a certain fluctuation between apparently incompatible character-evaluations, especially in the context of Su.'s failure to fulfil his promise given to R. What a contrast between R.'s accusation and H.'s admonition, L.'s most bitter reproach, his later words of praise and gratitude and R.'s affectionate speech of encouragement. We have illustrated the interrelation between the tone of sentiment and characterization already in the example of VålI; so we do not further expose it here. It is a most dominant
feature in the Rm. Actually, this spontaneous bardic pattern of projecting a scene and bringing it to its climax, is the very base of the detailed structure of composition of the Rm. But it is not always fully applied. V. is not only a bard, he is a poet, who gives insight into human nature and experience, and for this purpose preconceives and integrates this bardic element, to a greater or lesser degree, into a unified whole. This is what we feel has happened with Su.'s characterization on the whole, yet, we also see how, in between, again and again the original principle of spontaneity is dominant.

With regard to the literary basis in which Su.'s character-traits are exposed, we notice that there is great conformity between the objective exposition in general and the subjective expositions made by Kabandha, by R. in s. 27, and by H. - which are either appreciative or moderately negative when it comes to the question of Su.'s negligence - contrasted with the subjective expositions made by Tārā, Vālī, R. in s.29, L. and Añgada - , which are fairly-to-extremely negative, making Su. an evil-minded character.

**Portrait**

Since all the difficulties of interpretation have already been answered in the course of the systematic analysis of characterization, we are not going to restate any controversial points, but merely to frame a comprehensive picture of the character-traits of Su.

Su. is, by his appellation and physical nature, a monkey. But more than in the case of Vālī, this physical nature of his
is put into the background, practically no allusions being made
to it at all except in the description of his roar of challenge,
in his fight with Vālī and in the battle with the Rk. warriors,
in particular with Kumbhakarna. On the whole, Su. is charac-
terized just like a human being, but no conscious effort is made
to put him on a super-human level like Vālī, though we find a
few allusions which might suggest super-human faculties:
Kabandha speaks of his power to assume forms at will, his
heroism, his unlimited knowledge (on account of his intelligence
he knows entirely all the places in the world of those who eat
the flesh of men, for nothing is unknown to him as far as the
sun, possessed of 1000 eyes, shines, III 68.19) and calls him
the veritable son of the Sun (III 68.16). In both narrations of
his fight with Vālī, Su. turns out to be as heroic and valiant as
his brother - in the first battle R. fails to distinguish Su.
from Vālī since both are alike in appearance, valour and speech -
yet at the end, is overpowered by him. These allusions can be
explained from the liveliness of the respective scenes. In
general, V. did not intend to emphasize any super-natural
dimension of Su.

Su.'s status is that of the king of the Vns., an appellation
which is constantly applied to him, with some variations, even
when he is not as yet in possession of the kingdom. In his heart
of hearts, Su. is a good-natured character. Before we see him
in action, Kabandha introduces him to R. and the audience as a
source of hope, as one whose helpfulness and gratefulness will
be boundless, who, as it were, will take upon himself the
initiative and accomplishment of the task of regaining S. as his
sole task. Though we see Su. fall short of this lofty ideal of
helpfulness in various respects, he manifests himself as amiable
from the beginning: With love and joy he declares himself ready
to enter into alliance with R., he is concerned about R.'s
affliction and tries to console him in various ways, even taking
recourse to a sermon on the virtues of steadfastness and manliness, which does not befit him at all because he is the last and least to be of stable mind in a situation of fear, but he does not do it out of an urge to correct the weakness of R. but out of friendship, knowing that his 'client' lives very well up to this virtue of steadfastness. But he feels that R. is emotionally upset, so he considers a reminder of his steadfastness, in which he would point out that even he, but an ordinary Vn., knows to restrain himself, an efficient means to bring him back to reason. Then, he responds to R.'s promise of help with grateful joy, a feeling of possessing the privilege of the Gods, and of utter confidence in R.'s patronage, and is happy in finding the ideal of the beauty and value of friendship realized in R.

Now, is this amiable side of Su.'s character an intrinsic part of his nature or merely a transitory state dependent on his optimistic hope of getting back his kingdom, which is dimmed when this optimistic view is dimmed and will altogether vanish as soon as his desires are fulfilled? The answer to this question has been positive to the first alternative, even in the context of Su.'s engrossment in pleasure and gross negligence of R.'s friendship. With his firm intention to help R., he promptly accepts the reminder of Hanumān and follows his proposal to mobilize the Vn. armies. He promptly issues orders to Nila to collect all the armies from all directions within a fortnight and then to look after the army and approach the elders to see to it that R.'s order be carried out. Though Su. again totally loses sight of the urgency to put his promise into action, he feels hurt at the thought that R. should have no more trust in him. After L. has launched his bitter attack against Su., the latter gives a calm and conciliatory answer: He first expresses his gratitude for R.'s act of favour and, though he knows himself inefficient in rewarding such a heroic deed and giving any
substantial assistance to R., he expresses his joyful readiness to follow him as a helper. And he also asks R. for forgiveness in case he has made a transgression with regard to trust and love. L.'s response is a total reversal of his previous accusation. Filled with delight, he now praises the great value of Su.'s help and his worthiness of being R.'s friend: 'He is one who knows dharma; he is grateful and does not withdraw in battle, and his strength and power is equal only to that of R. himself. He asks Su. to come with him to R. in order to console him, as he is deeply lamenting over the loss of his beloved one, thereby requesting his forgiveness, for, he says, it is for this reason only that he has spoken harsh words to him. Su. spontaneously consents, and after proceeding to R.'s Ashrama, he falls at his feet. R. embraces him with love and deep regard, and speaks words of encouragement, and entrusts the entire task to his guidance, 'for he is his second friend, is heroic, wise, knowing the particulars of time, bent on the welfare of his friend, one whose aim is to serve, one who knows his aim thoroughly.' Though after these events Su. is not any more in the centre of characterisation, he is the one who gives the orders, and he does it in an efficient way. Even then there are references which speak of Su. in a favourable way. On the other hand, it is also true that Su.'s amiable behaviour is more outspoken on account of his optimistic expectation. With this we come to the second side of his character:

Su. is emotionally unstable, and there is a reason for his instability: Humiliated and persecuted by his brother Valî, he lives in constant affliction and fear. Due to this state of mind he loses his power of cool reasoning and fear. Due to this state of mind he loses his power of cool reasoning in judging a situation. At the sight of R. and L., he is so frightened and suspicious of them that he considers them to be the spies of Valî, and no reasonable argument by H. who exposes Su's lightmindedness and instability of mind as something typical of his monkey nature, can convince him.
Nay, he imagines a whole scale of treacherous character-traits characteristic of kings to nourish his own suspicion. Even when he is in the highest realm of joy at R.'s assurance of his help, having a vision of hope that he will now regain his kingdom, he falls back again and again into a state of fear and depression by the mere thought of the humiliation and persecution he suffered at the hands of Vālī. And inspite of all the joy and hope he has expressed at R.'s repeated assurance of help, he suddenly falls into musing and doubt when remembering the unequalled power and heroism of Vālī. Not only does he induce R. to demonstrate his power before him after giving him an impressive account of Vālī's feat, and not only does R. stand the test given to him (he throws the corpse of Dundubhi 100 yojanas away), but Su. even insists on another, more convincing proof consisting in piercing 7 palmyra trees with one arrow as Vālī had done. It is only after R. has accomplished this task, too, and in a way excelling Vālī, that Su. regains his confidence in R., now being simply wonder-struck and filled with humble gratitude and exceeding joy. We have, up to now, considered Su.'s emotional instability as a result of his humiliation inflicted by Vālī. But this rather obstinate way of inducing R. to a demonstration of his valour since the sudden thought of Vālī's heroism disturbs his peace and confidence, the energy with which he raises his terrifying roar in the midst of his companions, appearing as if an inner call to self-encouragement, (which Tārā interprets as a sign of Su.'s shrewd and arrogant cowardice, who possesses the courage to challenge his brother only because he knows himself protected), and the reminder he gives to R. to fulfil his promise (after he has been disappointed by R.'s failure to act) - all these features manifest that Su.'s feeling of fear with its different shades of expression is a latent trait of his inner nature. Thus there is good ground to assume that V., beyond establishing a causal connection between Su.'s state of humiliation and the instability of his mind, intended to portray Su. as somewhat insecure by
nature. Not only H. hints at his monkeyish nature revealing itself in his light-mindedness and instability of the mind, but Su. indirectly admits it when he 'preaches' to R. that even he, knowing to control himself, only an ordinary Vn., how much more then R. ought to do so since he is noble-minded, disciplined, courageous. He admits it in so far as in actual life he does not prove himself at all worthy of his statement. So his self-designation as an ordinary Vn. with regard to moral behaviour is very true. The function of this statement of course should not be misunderstood. Its context has been discussed above. Much later, when Su. has long forgotten his calamity, we see him flying into anger and suspicion against Vibhīṣaṇa, who pleads for R.'s protection. Without making an effort to judge calmly the pros and cons of the situation, he straight away advises R. to kill him.

One of the crucial points of Su.'s character is his behaviour after his re-instalment as Vn. king. In a manner of unexpected of him, Su. loses himself in sexual pleasures and inebriety and becomes completely negligent of his kingly duties, which should be to acquire religious merits and wealth. He leaves his entire duty in the hands of the ministers without even caring to supervise them. Unable to transpose himself into the painful situation of R. and totally losing sight of the urgency of R.'s task, as his sense of gratitude for what he owes to R. has become dim, he forgets to carry out his promise of help even at the time when a king should be mindful of taking up his military activities. When reminded of this by H., he spontaneously orders Nīla to collect the Vn. armies with their leaders and then to look after the army himself and approach the elder monkeys to see to it that his order be observed. But it remains at this, and not taking any further initiative, Su. falls back into his life of pleasure. R. and L., in the context of their emotional condition, of course, take this negligent behaviour of Su. as a gross breach of their personal friendship, L. going so far as to
designate Su.'s ingratitude and falseness of promise as a mean­ness worse than killing a Brāhmin, drinking wine, committing theft or breaking a vow. Of course, these accusations were not designed to be real reflections on Su.'s character. We have seen the basic good-naturedness of Su. even in connection with this context. Rather, it is the very engrossment in pleasure and the total forgetfulness of his kingly duties which is also the cause for his losing sight of his sense of gratitude for what he owes to R. and of compassion for him in his painful situation, thus not seeing the urgency to help him. So he never makes any effort of his own to put into practice whatever good intentions he has in his heart. Though he is hurt at the thought that R. should mistrust him, he is not too remorseful either when he reflects that he has not yet rewarded the favour done to him by R. That mean, his negligence is so much inscribed in his blood that he is not aware of what nuisance has been caused by his behaviour. And it is this feature of character which V. intended to draw as a genuinely monkeyish feature. As the poet, in all probability, did not intend to give that lofty standard of morality to the Vns., Su. appears to be the living and lifelike representative of the Vns.
CRITICISM OF MODERN SCHOLARS' VIEWS
ON THE CHARACTERIZATION OF SUGRIVA
After drawing in a few lines Su.'s character in general, Iyer gives an implicit analysis of Su.'s character by following up his story in the Epic. We restrict ourselves to referring to one crucial point of divergency in Iyer's general outline of Su.'s character. We do not refer to incidents of later interpolations like s.24 Bomb, where Su. expresses his remorse at Vālī's death and accuses himself of having committed sin for which there is no expiation, or the description of Su.'s fight with Rv. etc., or any such questions which lie outside the realm of our literary criticism, like, e.g., why a friendship between R. and Su., two persons of so different rank and character, was possible at all.

"... He brought all his might to the service of Rāma without sparing. He did not spare himself at the least. His devotion, sincerity, enthusiasm, bravery and resourcefulness are equalled only by the similar qualities of Hanumān. Sugrīva thus fulfilled to the maximum the purpose for which he was pro-created by the sun-god. No wonder that Rāma did not know how to thank his ally adequately for the invaluable services that he had rendered. Rāma loaded Sugrīva with costly presents when the latter left for Kiṣkindhā after the former's coronation; but they were nothing compared to the assistance by the monkey-king. The credit for bringing about the destruction of the redoubtable Rākṣasa king goes not a little to the hands of the Vānara hosts..."4)

"After he was installed king of Kiṣkindhā, Sugrīva threw himself wholeheartedly into the business of finding out the whereabouts of Sītā and regaining her for Rāma. He mobilized the forces and sent out search-parties in all directions..."5)
Criticism: Iyer's interpretation endows Su. with too great a loftiness of character to conform with the multiplicity of behaviour-reactions depicted in the text. Actually, he does not even take into account the description of Su.'s addiction to amorous pleasure and his consequent forgetfulness of fulfilling his promise of help given to R. as being a real reflection of how V. intended to draw Su.'s character.

N. R. Navlekar

"When Sugrīva had realised his ambition, gained the kingdom and regained his wife, he dropped Rāma completely from his mind and abandoned himself solely to sensual indulgences. Treacherous and licentious before, he proved ungrateful and voluptuous afterwards. His love for his own wife was only skin-deep; what he passionately longed for was the lovely skin of Tārā. With her he sported day and night, leaving the kingdom to the care of his ministers...

When Sugrīva saw the fury of Lakshmana and heard his message, when he saw Hanumān and other supporters of his altogether out of sympathy with him, he realized the insecurity of his position. He knew full well that Rāma still held the people so completely under his hypnotic power that if he so willed it, he could raise the devil against him in no time and bring about a revolution in Kishkindhā in favour of Angada. He felt that he was standing on the brink of a volcano which might burst any moment and engulf him. Fear took possession of him and drove out all lust from his mind. His conscience was now fully aware. Trembling from head to foot he went down on his knees before Lakshmana and cried for mercy. Thereafter he put himself entirely at the service of Rāma and worked vigorously to help forward his undertaking, rather
through dread of punishment from him than from a sense of gratitude to him."

**Criticism**: This imaginative argumentation of Navlekar is so baseless that it does not need any commentary.

V. Raghavan

Contrasted with Vali, it would appear that Sugriva was a weak character: Albeit his strength, he is likely to get panicky, as at the cave-mouth, when ostensibly out of fear of Mayavin, he closed it; later mistook Rama and Lakshmana for Vali's agents and ran about forgetting the security of the place where he was; and still later, when angry Lakshmana thundered at his gates, asked the lady Tara to intercede. Equally prone was he to lose himself in wine and women; Lakshmana had no high regard for him... Nor are we able to appreciate the way he had his misgivings about Rama's capacity against Vali and went about satisfying himself. But strangely, like all such people who were not substantial, he covered up his gaps by a sternness of demeanour, word and action, attaining a reputation for severity; Sugriva-ajna is a byword for strictness and severity; Angada more than once in his bitterness, refers to this: tīkṣṇaḥ prakṛtya sugrīvah, kopano rājā tīkṣṇadandaśca vānaraḥ / [Dev.]

All this however would make Sugriva only an essentially human character. It is also not proper to judge him solely by the words of Angada and Lakshmana, both given to drastic opinions. We may therefore examine Sugriva more closely in the background of the main movement of the story.
Firstly, the episode of Kabandha acts as a vital prelude to the friendship of Rama and Sugriva... To one like Rama who knew nothing of the place or what next to do, Kabandha, with his detailed description of Sugriva, his character, prowess and knowledge of the universe, appeared to have drawn up every detail of what Rama should do and how he should conclude a pact of friendship with him before holy fire and arms. The account bears the seeds of the whole future story, including Sugriva's slight lapses and the need for Rama to be considerate towards him, for Sugriva was, Kabandha stressed, Nyayavritta, righteous, Satyasadha, true to his words, Mahavirya, of great valour, kritajna, grateful and Vinita, endowed with humility. More than this, Kabandha has a few precious lines on the sanctity of the Rishyamuka hill where Sugriva was abiding for the time being... What more is needed for Rama to be strongly impressed? Further, the whole episode of Kabandha... vouched to Rama that what Kabandha said was best and should be acted up to. There was no need to enquire about the comparative merits of Vali and Sugriva. In fact, the minds of both Rama and Lakshmana were strongly made in favour of Sugriva that soon after leaving Sabari's hermitage, they both say: 'I am impatient to meet Sugriva.......

On his part, how does Sugriva come off as a dutiful brother? Good brotherly relationship is one of the main values that Rama came to salvage in the domestic sphere... However much Sugriva's fear of Mayavati may justify the act, the closing of the cave-mouth against his brother, as in Valmiki, is hardly proper. And the question of taking the kingdom, Valmiki himself says that Sugriva did not do it by avarice, but, as Tulasi and Kambar, elaborate, on the pressure brought by the ministers. Both Tulasi and Kambar save Sugriva's behaviour here.

On the matter of women, how does Sugriva fare in the test? In Valmiki Sugriva himself, Tara and Angada mention that after the closure of the cave-mouth, Sugriva not only took the kingdom
and his own wife Ruma, but also his older brother's wife. Angada to whom this was particularly most shameful says in his bitter attack on his own towards the end of the Kanda:

*bhrāturŷeṣṭhasya yo bhāryām jīvato mahiṣīm priyām / dharmena mātaram yastu svīkaroti jugupsitaḥ /*

Sugriva does not confess it at the outset to Rama, but later reveals it, after the despatch of the monkey-units in search of Sita. But, according to Valmiki's origin, the only justification of this would be customary law and practice in the community.....

On his part, Rama emphasises through Sugriva two great ideals: one is the absolute protection that is due to one who has taken shelter, *Saranagata-rakshana*. One of Vali's great failures is that even when Sugriva fell at his feet and begged, he did not relent. Sugriva took refuge under Rama and, whatever stood against, Rama decided to protect him completely; and he did so, even risking his unsullied reputation in the controversial *Valivadha*. *Saranagata-rakshana* is illustrated here with no less significance than in the *Vibhishana-Saranagati*. Secondly *Sugriva-sakhya* emphasises the greatness of *sakhyā* or friend, and the sanctity of mutual obligations and reciprocal gratefulness, which cannot break the shifty opportunism of either the one or the other. In more than one context, Valmiki expatiates upon this. Sugriva himself says that the two friends are one, and whether in good state or in adverse circumstances, rich or poor, the friend is the greatest refuge... In fact Valmiki exalts it into a veritable rite, a sacred tie contracted before fire, as solemn and indissoluble as marriage, whereby the sorrows and joys of the two become identical..............."

**Criticism :** Raghavan's interpretation leads to the conclusion that, although Su. was a very weak character, R., owing to the urgency of the situation and impressed by Kabandha's lofty description of Su.'s character, entered into friendship with Su.,
and maintained this friendship not so much because he appreciated the loftiness of Su.'s character but rather because he was prompted by his ideals of *saranaga-raka계* and *sugriva-sākhya*. That this is Raghavan's interpretation of Su.'s involvement in the plot, becomes still clearer from his article on Vālī,\(^8\) where he tries to show that, from the point of view of V.'s plan, Su. had to be the inevitable friend of R., as Vālī had to be classed with the forces like the Rks. to be removed from the scene:

".... Kabandha's account of Su. produced such an impression on R. that R. spoke of Su. as dharmatma and was impatient to meet him. The two entered into a pact of friendship before fire, and the high importance that V. attached to friendship receives, at this juncture, some special stress in Tulasī. This choice of Su. smoothly and imperceptibly fits in with the two elements of the story, the fact that Su. and party had seen S. being borne off by air and possessed the piece of garment and jewels thrown down by her, and the fact that Vālī was a friend of the enemy, Rv...."

While appreciating Raghavan's effort to explain the different shades by which V. himself or various persons of his Epic characterize Su. from the point of view of the author's conception of the plot of the Epic, we have to criticize his tendency to reduce subjective characterizations, like e.g. the one by Kabandha, to mere 'means-for-an-end representations'. When Kabandha eulogizes Su.'s virtues, this is not a mere means to effect more quickly R.'s resolution to an alliance with the Vn. king, which would then lose its value - so to say mere words vanishing into the air like a soap-bubble, but it is also, and very much so, an introduction of Su. to the audience. Had it been the intention of the author to draw Su. only as a characteristically weak person, he would have restrained from any appreciation of Su. at places where Su. is not in the centre of characterization nor seen in connection with R. Raghavan's interpretation suggests that R. maintained his friendship with Su.,
guided by his principles of *sāraṇa-gata-rakṣaṇa* and *sākhyā*. It is nevertheless very strange that V. should make R. give freely vent to his appreciation of Su. simply under the guidance of these ideals, without making him see a really amiable character in him. To explain this strong emphasis on the goodness of Su., it seems to be much more natural to claim that V. intended to draw in Su. a good-natured and amiable character, however, with weak sides, than to reduce all the positive characterizations to mere means-of-an-end representations. See also what we said s.v. Rāma p359f about the function of *sāraṇa-gata-rakṣaṇa* in the formation of Rāma's friendship with Su. as compared to that in his friendship with Vibhīṣaṇa.

K.S.Ramaswami Sastri⁹)

"..... Sugrīva is the beau ideal of a good friend. His was the Sakhya-Bhakti (the devotion of comradeship) like that of Arjuna (Kiṣkindhā, V. 13, 14, 17). He states the ideal friendship thus and Rāma endorses the statement:

\[
ādhyā vaśi daridro, vā duḥkhitah sukhitośī pi vā /
\]
\[
nirdoṣāśca eadoṣāśca vayasyah paramā gatih // [Dev.]
\]

... But he is an impulsive person given to the pleasures of wine and women and forgets his promise to Rāma. Very soon, however, Lākṣmaṇa's anger brings him to his senses.................. Sugrīva is criticized with alacrity by the other Vānaras who say that he is a strict and severe man....."

Criticism: Though remaining very much on the surface, Sastri's interpretation of some of Su.'s character features is correct with regard to the essentials.
In an earlier, more comprehensive (though not much more deep-going article),\(^{10}\) Ramaswami Sastri has given some further illustrations, a good number of which fall within the frame of late interpolations, and he has also answered some of the controversial points raised by Srinivasa Sastri. See below.

It may be remarked here that, while Ramaswami Sastri launches sound counter-arguments, in a way similar to our argumentation, against one or the other controversial issue of Srinivasa Sastri, e.g. with regard to Aṅgada's criticism of Sugrīva -

"I think that we have here one of Vālmīki's acute psychological analyses of character. When he (Angada) realizes the old enmity and the certainty of punishment, everything about Sugrīva becomes black and he lays on the sombre colours very thickly. Thus Angada's desperation and despondency and defeatism makes him wholly unjust to his uncle and leads to such a bitter denunciation of Sugrīva by him....."\(^{11}\)

he gropes for other, rather artificial explanations in such controversial places which we recognize to be ultimately due to some late interpolations, e.g. in the question of Sūrya's assertion not to know anything about Rv. See below.

V.S. Srinivasa Sastri\(^{12}\)

\(^{10}\) "Falsehood with regard to his knowledge of Ravana. Sugrīva's statement that he was not in full possession of details concerning Ravana is certainly too wide, as he could not have been so ignorant as he marks out. And if we take the Uttara kanda story of Ravana's stay for a month with Vali as the latter's honoured guest into account, Sugrīva's statement is certainly false. But Rama did not suspect him, and"
Sugriva was not able to talk clearly for grief, and he is not to be lightly accused of any subterfuge at the very beginning of his friendship. There appears to have been complete understanding between him and Rama. 

(2) "Neglect of Rama's business. This charge is superficial. Sugriva had given orders in good time for the search for Sita to be started, and had ordered Hanuman or Nila or perhaps both together to attend to the business. His only mistake was that he lived his riotous life a little too ostentatiously for the comfort of Rama." 

".... Sugriva gives orders to his commander-in-chief to bring all the monkeys from every quarter of the kingdom, so that they all may assemble together, and says to Hanuman, "When the monkeys assemble here or while they are assembling, do everything yourself and do not wait for me to give the orders" .... This is an instance of Sugriva-ajna. The order must be implicitly obeyed. Any departure from his order will be at once visited with extreme punishment, nothing less. "If anyone comes here after the fifteenth day, his life is forfeit." Having given the order for the mobilisation of his army, he goes back to his harem. He ought to have remembered that he was dealing with a very human being. Rama loses his balance once more. He does not know what Sugriva has done within the margin of time allowed to him. He makes no inquiry. In his ignorance therefore his anger mounts up..."

(3) "Sugriva's excessive caution is shown in his objection to Rama accepting Vibhishana; but when Rama declares that any one who just comes and says 'please protect me' is entitled to his protection, Sugriva shows his good nature by heartily welcoming Vibhishana." "Sugriva was a person, therefore, in the first part of his career, of great caution and would not praise people readily. This appears also a little later,
when, along with Lakshmana, he expresses his desire that Vibhishana, should not be taken into the confederacy. He did not like that a man coming straight from the arms of Ravana should, without further trial of a very stringent character, be treated with confidence, thereby showing the utter contrast between his nature and Rama's...."17)

(4) "Brilliant as Sugriva was, a certain shadow rests on his reputation. Of the various accounts on which Angada indicted his uncle to Hanuman, some were unjust; but one charge was not altogether groundless. Sugriva closed the cave into which Vali had gone in pursuit of Mayavi, imagining from the blood that issued that Mayavi had killed Vali; and he allowed himself to be hustled by the ministers into the kingship! He was certainly hasty in this; his choice of the easier and more advantageous course shows a weak trait in his character at that time."18)

Criticism:

(1) Su.'s lack of knowledge regarding the person of Rv. does not pose any problem to the critical scholar who considers the Uttara-kāṇḍa as a late interpolation.

(2) Sastri's starting-point for his interpretation is based on a misinterpretation. After giving his order to Nīla to mobilize all the Vn. armies with their leaders from all directions, Su. does not address H., as Sastri supposes, but continues his directions to Nīla and, furthermore, does not imply any words suggesting that the person addressed should do everything himself and not wait for Su.'s orders. The Sanskrit context reads: vv. 28-32.
Vv. 30\textsuperscript{2} and 32\textsuperscript{1} merely express Su.'s request that, after the armies have been mobilized, Nīla should himself look after them (30\textsuperscript{2}) and with the help of Aṅgada should approach the elder monkeys to see to it that his order is carried out (32\textsuperscript{1}). This does not mean at all that Su. has done his complete duty, which is then left only to Nīla to be carried out. He has taken the initial step. But much remains to be done. At least, he has to take the final initiative of giving the order to proceed. But it remains at the order given to Nīla. Again he falls back to his life of pleasure and loses sight of the urgency of R.'s task, so that H. has to admonish him again. From the manner in which this feature of Su.'s negligence stands in the context, it follows clearly that V. intended to draw Su. in a decisively more negative light than Sastri would think. We have discussed this point in all details.

(3) The extremely rash way in which Su. reacts to Vibhīṣaṇa and his stern suggestion to kill him straight away, indicates rather more suspiciousness than mere precaution on the part of Su.
There is no reason to consider Aṅgada's charge (just like Vālī's charge) as anything more than purely subjective and functional relevance. There is just no basis in the text to see in Su.'s narration of his own calamity a hidden allusion by the author to some kind of dishonesty or advantage-taking on the part of Su.

1) S.24 Bomb, depicting Su.'s repentance, is only found in D₅₋₁₀ S, and has therefore been put into the appendix (App.I, No.15).

2) As the key passages have been dealt with and the main difficulties have been solved, the remaining passages bearing on the characterization of Su. are dealt with only by way of a résumé.

3) Sugriva, KK XXVIII 203-228.

4) Ib. p.203

5) Ib. p.207


11) Ib. p.8

12) pp.210-222. For reference we shall quote mainly the summary of his lectures, pp.XVI-XVII, as it states the problems in a brief, and more survey-like manner. Only crucial points of divergency are referred to. All points referring to late interpolations are also left out.

13) pp. XVI-XVII

14) p.XVII

15) pp.94-95

16) p.XVII

17) pp.212-214

18) p. XVII
HANUMAN
A SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS

OF THE CHARACTERIZATION OF HANUMAN
Prescinding from a few exceptions, H.'s character is not explicitly brought into the limelight till the account of his mission to Lanka. Throughout the Kiskindhakandā his characterization remains mostly implicit and restricted to his role of mediatorship in some form or other, though it definitely and strongly leaves an impression on the audience of his personality. However, we restrict ourselves to giving an inductive summary of those character-traits of H. prevailing in the Kiskindhakandā, and then proceed to enter into a detailed analysis of his characterization in the account of his mission to Lanka.

Hanuman's characterization in the Kiskindhakandā

We meet H. first in IV 2 as admonishing fear-striken Su. not to allow himself to be obsessed by unreasonable fear and lightmindedness, by which he shows only his fickle monkeyish nature, but to deliberate on everything as it is proper for a king. For details see s.v. Sugrīva pp 42f.

Inspite of Su.'s unreasonable rationalizations, with which he nourishes his suspicion, H. carries out Su.'s request to spy out the two intruders, in the disguise of a mendicant, by gestures and words, and he does it in a very psychological manner (IV 3), i.e. he addresses them eulogistically as rājārajas resembling the Gods practising tapas, who, on account of their appearances, are frightening the forest-dwellers, and abundantly praises their all-illumining brightness and god-like valour and heroism. Yet in between he puts some abrupt questions: How is it that they have come to this place when they are worthy of the kingship and resembling the immortals (v.92); that their arms are not adorned
with ornaments when they are worthy of being adorned with all ornaments (v.12)? In this way H. formally takes up some of Su.'s rationalizations and tries to unravel the apparent paradox between their god-like ksatriya outlook and their presence in this godforsaken forest. Yet, H.'s inquiry is more formal than personal and it is more a laying open of the strangeness of feeling of Su. and the Vns. than a reflection of his personal feelings. He himself is already convinced of their sincerity. This becomes clear from the second part of his speech (vv.18ff.) when he introduces to the duo Su. and his plightful situation and himself, the son the Wind, as Su.'s ambassador, and reveals his very purpose of coming in the disguise of a mendicant, expressed in terms of Su.'s wish to make friends with them. Thus, before H. has received any response from them, he has revealed everything to such an extent as shows that his intention from the beginning was pointed at opening up a relationship with them rather than at spying them out, for the sake of clearing suspicion. Thus H. is depicted from the beginning as an ideal saciva, well-versed in reconnoitring, but so with a feature of amiability. Accordingly, R., delighted at finding himself confronted with the saciva of Su., whom he has been searching for, responds cheerfully and requests L. to address H. with sweet words, thereby calling him vākyajña and snehayukta (v.25).

H., on his part, overhearing some anxiety expressed by R., immediately, as he sees a chance for Su.'s restoration of the kingdom - in a way which befits a clever saciva (vākyaviśaradah v.3) - takes up again his questions - directed to R. - about the why of their coming into the wilderness of the forest, before allowing L. to present R.'s case (IV 4.1-4). After hearing the case from L. in detail, H. passes the judgement that they, possessed of such intelligence, control of anger and self-restraint, are worthy of being received by Su., and gives the assurance that Su., having undergone a similar destiny, will assist them in their
search for S., and he requests them to come along with him to Su.
L. expresses to R. his confidence that H.'s cheerful and satisfied
response is an assurance of his speaking the truth and of R.
obtaining ultimately his object.

In this sarga another trait of H.'s character, thus, becomes
apparent: Next to his attitude of care for his king Su., for which
he displays a full gamut of skill, he shows a caring attitude also
for the supplicant and manifests his amiability in doing so—thus
being a sacīva with a deep sense of concern. H.'s cleverness is
not shrewdness but skill blended with amiability and concern—a
feature which emerges again in his introducing R. and L. to
Su. (IV 5.1-7).

We meet H. next in IV 21, consoling Tārā, who is overwhelmed
by grief over the fall of her husband Vālī. This consolation
possesses a stereotype outlook, revolving around three points:
All beings reap the fruit of their own actions and hence should
not be an object of mourning. Tārā should better see to the future
of her son Aṅgada and install him. Her husband has been loyal to
dharma. As a king, he has been righteous, conciliatory, generous
and patient, and hence he is sure to go to the world of those who
have conquered dharma. Enclosed in a complex of scenes permeated
with a strong tragic-pathetic sentiment, H.'s consolation is sub-
servient to the same sentiment and still adds fuel to the fire—
so that Tārā, in her reply, gives full vent to her devotion to her
husband, saying that she does not care for a 100 sons like Aṅgada,
that the kingdom of the Vns. now lies in the hands of Su. and that
it is not her duty, but the duty of a father to confer the kingdom
on Aṅgada. She, on her part, does not want anything else than to
lay by the side of her dead husband. Thus in this sarga, H.'s
consolation is functional, i.e. aimed at intensifying the pathos
of the scene, and gives little place to a revelation of H.'s
character.
H.'s moral admonition of Su. and reminder to him to carry out his promise of help given to R. (IV 28) reveals his psychological depth of counselling. Knowing that it is his exclusive addiction to pleasure and his utter negligence as a result of the attainment of all his desires that make Su. dumb to the urgency of R.'s task and not a sheer lack of good-will, he focuses his admonition on Su.'s neglect of his duty and his ungratefulness towards the friendship of R., thereby instilling in to his mind the sense and need to realize that a real friend must fulfill the desire of his friend in proper time, otherwise he is not keen on the object of his friend, and urging him to engage in his duty without any further delay of time. Su. promptly abides by H.'s proposal to mobilize the Vn. armies though it remains at this initial stage. For details see s.v. Sugrīva pp. This moral admonition of Su. by H. is, thus, again a reflection of both his skill and his concern for Su. as well as of his concern for R., in short, of a wise and considerate counsellorship. Accordingly, he is given attributes like niścitārtha'rthatattvajñāh, kāladharma-viśeṣāvat (v.6) and his words of admonition are designated as hitaṁ tatthyāṁ ca pattthyāṁ ca sāmadharmārthanītimat / pranayaprīti- saṃyuktāṁ viśvaśakṛtaniścayam.

When Su., upset at L.'s anger and hurt at the thought that R. should no longer trust in his friendship, asseverates his sincerity, H. again makes Su.'s addiction to pleasure and inebriety and has consequent loss of his sense of gratitude and his sense of time the target of his moral admonition. At the same time, he makes it clear to Su. that R.'s anger is the result of his love and advises him to propitiate L. with all his means. For details see s.v. Sugrīva pp. H.'s admonition is uncompromising, as, aiming at the welfare of Su., it urges him to accomplish his duty in frank words, and H. himself expresses that in v.18: 'A king has to be necessarily told by his appointed counsellors what is beneficial, hence I renounce all fear and say words which are definite.'
Yet it, at the same time, pays due respect to Su's psychological upheaval, and so assumes the nature of a true counsel.

When Su. is about to despatch the Vn. army led by Aṅgada, which in the original text¹ is the only search-party, he gives a special commission to H. (s.43), as he considers him as one whose course is irresistible on earth, in the atmosphere, in the sky, in the abode of the Gods and on the waters; as one who knows all the worlds together with the Asuras, Gandharvas, Nāgas, men and Gods, together with the oceans and mountains; as one whose velocity of course, energy and speed are equal to his father, the Wind-God; as one with whom no being on earth can match in energy, as one who is possessed of strength, intelligence, prowess, the gift to conform to place and time (deśakālānuvṛtti) and wisdom (naya). Impressed by Su.'s praise of H.'s qualities and his confidence in him, R. also feels confident that H. will accomplish the task of finding S., and joyfully hands over to him his ring as a mark of recognition for S., expressing his confidence in him as one possessing perseverance, truth and valour. Thereupon H., with folded hands, takes the ring, places it on his head, and saluting the feet of R., sets on his way, leading the Vn. army, appearing, as it were, like the spotless moon adorned by the stars in the sky, with R. calling out behind him that, as he (R.) is at the mercy of his power, he should do his best to find S.

While the Vns. are searching through the deserted valleys and caves of the Vindhya mountains, oppressed by thirst and hunger and disappointed at not finding S., H. takes much of the initiative to prudently encourage and guide the Vns. : He leads them into the pṛśabala, giving them hopes of finding water in it (IV 49.11 ff. and 50), and this is ultimately rewarded by their meeting with Svayaśprabhā and their receiving refreshments from her. Later, when Aṅgada, in his despair, at the sight of the limitless ocean, at not having been able to find out the whereabouts of S., expresses his
fear of Su.'s sternness and severe punishment and thereby accuses him of insincere dealings with him, and proposes to the Vns. to starve to death, and the Vns. accord with his proposal - while Tārā suggests to enter the cave where they would have no occasion to be afraid of anybody, an idea which is as well approved by the Vns., - (IV 52.20-33), H. finds it the most suitable occasion to fire off a speech of rebuke and exhortation on Aṅgada and the Vns. (IV 53). For the thought strikes him that Aṅgada, through the moral support of the Vns., has brought about the reversion of Su.'s kingdom, the more so as he sees that Aṅgada is accompanied by four divisions of army, that he is endowed with intelligence in all its eight essential qualities and with all the 14 character-qualities, that he is constantly invigorated in brightness, power and prowess like the moon is in brilliance, that he equals Brhaspati in intelligence and his father in valour, that he clings to the words of Tārā like Indra to the words of Sukrāchārya and that he is too exhausted to carry out the task of his master.

H.'s rebuke is pointed at thwarting Aṅgada's hope that the cave would provide for the Vns. a safe shelter from Su., and so he proclaims to him that the Vns., being fickle-minded due to their separation from wives and children and due to their pain of hunger, will not carry out his commands but will desert him, that he himself will not be able - whether by his policies of conciliation and generosity or the like or by punishment - to draw away Jāmbavān, Nīla, Suhotra and all the other monkeys from Su., since a weaker force, thought may uphold a post against a stronger one, can only defend itself, and L. is sure to break the cave with his arrows like the stalk of a leaf and will kill him - deserted of all his friends. On the other hand, he assures Aṅgada that, if he humbly approaches Su. together with the Vns., he will establish him in the kingship, since he is the next heir, and thereby defends Su.'s righteousness and amiability against Aṅgada's accusation of his sternness and insincerity in dealing with him:
dharmakāmaḥ pitṛvyaste prītkāmo drḍhavrataḥ /
śuciḥ satyapratijñāścā na tvāḥ jātu jāghāṁsatī // 20
priyakāmaścā te mātustadarthām āsya jīvitam /
tasyāpatyaḥ ca nāstvayavattasmadāṅgada gamyatām // 21

H.'s speech, both a rebuke and an exhortation, however, fails to have its complete effect on Āṅgada who unleashes a series of charges on Su., and refutes H.'s vindication of Su.'s virtues by asserting that the former has taken the wife of his elder brother, has purposely blocked the entrance of the cave etc. and reiterates the fear that he will meet with penalty of death at the hands of Su., for which reason he prefers to starve to death. And all the Vns. follow spontaneously Āṅgada's speech of despair and it is only through the arrival of Sampāti that the Vns. are prevented from a disastrous death.

H.'s speech and its negative effect serve to characterize three points:

1) H.'s irresistible firmness and loyalty to Su., his power to quickly size up the exigencies of the moment by taking recourse to an uncompromising, yet at the same time, exhortatory and conciliatory admonition to bring Āṅgada and the Vns., who are beside themselves for grief, to reason, an admonition which is at the same time a tacit attempt to prevent the Vns. from being drawn away from Su.

2) Āṅgada's obliqueness and stubbornness of mind as a result of the mental agony and despair weighing heavily upon him.

3) The fickleness of the Vns., who, failing to form a decision of their own, follow blindly Āṅgada's destructive speech instead of H.'s conciliatory exhortation.
Hanumān responds to Jambavan's exhortation to leap over the ocean and the appreciation he shows for his origin from the Wind-God by assuming a gigantic form and extolling his irresistible power and locomotion to assure the Vanaras of his successful mission.

Contents:

Jambavan, addressing the depressed Vn. army, said to H.: "O hero of the Vn. race, best of those versed in all śastras, why do you keep silent? You are equal to the Vn. king Sū., to R. and L. in brightness and strength, equal to Garuḍa, the foremost of the birds, whom I have often seen lifting serpents from the ocean, with your arms as strong as his wings and superior to him in valour and velocity, unmatched in strength, intelligence, brightness. The foremost of Apsaras, Puṇḍikasthālā, known as Añjana, the wife of the Vn. Kesariḥ and daughter of Kuñjara, who on account of a curse was a Vanarī but was capable of assuming forms at her will, once was walking on the summit of a mountain - when the Wind-God gently wafted her garments and, seeing her charms exposed, became infatuated with love and embraced her. When Añjana, being perplexed, asked who was wishing to violate her chastity, the Wind-God answered - 'Don't be afraid. By embracing you, I have only entered you in thought. You will bear a son endowed with heroism and intelligence.' Then, as a boy, on seeing the sun and thinking it to be a fruit, you leaped up towards heaven for 300 yojanas without being destroyed by its heat. But when Indra saw you flying in great speed through the sky, he, filled with anger, threw the thunderbolt on you and your left jaw was broken on the summit of a mountain. Hence your name H. Thereupon Vāyu grew angry and ceased to blow. Then the Gods in all the three worlds were agitated and propitiated Maruti. Then Brahmā gave him the boon that his son would not be destroyed by weapons, and Indra that he would die only at his will. Now, you, the son of Kesariḥ, born from his wife, but sprung from the breast of the Wind-God, are equal to him in brightness and power of leaping. We have lost our spirits. You are now to us like another Garuḍa endowed with skill and prowess... You are of us the one endowed with all qualities, you are valiant, the best of leapers. The whole Vn. army is eager to see your heroism. Rise
and leap over the ocean, your course is the best among all beings. All the monkeys are dejected, why then are you neglecting us? Stride like Viṣṇu with his three steps." Thereupon H., to the delight of the Vṇ. army, assumed a gigantic form. While being praised by the Vṇs., he expanded vigorously, brandishing his tail and increasing his strength. Of unexcelled form and brightness, he expanded like a lion in a mountain cave and shone like a column of smokeless fire. Then, arising from amidst the Vṇs., H. spoke: "I am the son of mighty and unequalled, swift-moving Vāyu, who cleaves the mountain-tops and pervades the sky, and none is equal to me in leaping. I can demaraate, as it were, the expansive sky and go round Meru a thousand times, I can by the force of my arms make the whole world to be inundated by the ocean and by the force of my legs and thighs stir up the ocean with crocodiles. I can go round Garuḍa in the sky a thousand times. I can approach the sun rising from the Eastern mountain before it has set and come back without touching the earth. By my terrific speed I can overstep all stars in the sky, I stir up the ocean and split the earth. I will make the mountains tremble when I jump, and I will seize the ocean, and the flowers of creepers, shrubs, and lotuses will follow me through the sky. All beings will see me moving through the sky as I will shoot up and drop down. You will see me, monkeys, appear like Mahāmeru, moving towards heaven, devouring, as it were, the sky, I will scatter the clouds, make the mountains tremble and stir up the ocean. I possess the strength of Garuḍa and Mārūta; prescinding from king Suparṇa and Mārūta, I don’t see anybody who could match me in leaping... I will see S. and I will go thousands of yojanas and return with nectar from the hands of Indra or Brahma, or after having blown up Lāṅkā." Then Jambavān praised and thanked H. for his encouraging words and conveyed the blessings of the saints and gurus and the Vṇs.’ well-wishings on him for his mission. Then H., the foremost of monkeys, addressed the Vṇs.: "These firm and huge peaks of mount Mahendra, a hundred yojanas away, will bear the bruise of my leaping. Then the son of the Wind-God ascended mount Mahendra — full of trees, creepers, flowers, fruits, birds and beasts. Hurt by his feet, the mountain roared like an elephant attacked by a lion. Waters gushed out, rocks fell, beasts were frightened, and trees trembled. Gandharva couples and Vidyādharas jumped up... Meanwhile the Vṇ. chief, possessed of power of speed, went, in his thoughts, to Lāṅkā.

Analysis of characterization:

In utter contrast to all previous references to H.’s characteristics, the characterization of H. enters with these two sargas a completely unexpected dimension (prescinding from the passage
where Su. gives a special commission to H., which may be considered a feeble introduction to this new dimension of H.): the dimension of his super-natural power of leaping, velocity and transmutation, and of his super-natural brightness, strength and valour. And this dimension is introduced not only by way of a eulogy expressed by another (Jāmbavān), a eulogy impregnated with adbhutarasa, but by way of such a bragging, bombastic style of self-assertion, so indulging itself in the realm of the fabulous, as we would not dare to expect of modest H. in the way he has appeared to us up to now. In fact, a sophisticated analyst would immediately add this feature of 'inconsistency' to the arguments already brought forward to consider part of the two sargas (H.'s birth-story etc.) an interpolation. We have shown earlier (p. 437) that there is no sufficient reason for such a position. A little intuition into the nature of a poem which has its heritage still strongly in the bardic tradition will reveal that this unexpected dimension in H.'s characterization has its ground in the bardic technique of composition, which bases itself on the pattern of spontaneity. We have referred to this already earlier to explain various features of Vālī's and Su.'s characterization. This pattern of spontaneity consists in projecting a vivid scene before the audience and bringing it to its climax by exhausting all the resources of poetic description following the inspiration of the moment. Applied to our case: V. intends to project the scene of H.'s leap to Lāmkā, which will arouse the thrill of the audience. Naturally, he will give a lively and attractive picture of H.'s power of locomotion and super-human strength even if he did not mention this feature of H. before, and he will do so by exhausting all the resources of his imagination which come to his mind in bringing out the importance of the mission of H. V. will even go so far as to make H. boast of his fabulous power of locomotion and strength, so as to encourage and arouse delight and wonderment among the Yns., which itself contributes to arousing delight and wonderment in the audience and thus brings the scene to its full
climax.

Classification:

Literary basis:
exposition: subjective (towards the end: objective) -
descriptive - explicit
tone: adbhutarasa

Traits:
H.'s super-natural power of leaping, velocity & transmutation, his super-natural brightness, strength & valour, his skill & possession of all qualities - inherited from the Wind-God and reaching the realm of the fabulous/his boastful and bombastic self-assertion of his fabulous power of leaping as well as of his super-natural brightness, strength & valour.

Hanuman's arduous exploits on crossing the ocean

The description of H.'s arduous exploits on crossing the ocean brings out, in a marvellous way, H.'s fabulous (though more earth-bound) power of locomotion and transmutation and all the other traits hinted at in the last sargas of the Kiśkindhā-kānda - with all gamuts of imagination being sounded and his full ingenious skill being invested by the author in his poetic depiction and attempt to arouse feelings of wonderment in the audience. An impression of this can be gained only by reading, for no amount of analysis will suffice to give an idea of the ingenious skill with which H.'s traits are depicted in this sarga. In addition to the traits already expounded in the two earlier sargas, there is, owing to the strong adbhutarasa with which this sarga is
imbued, particular emphasis laid on details of H.'s physical brightness of appearance, while leaping, and of his power of transmutation while overcoming various sea-monsters.

V 2-3, 5, 7-9

Hanuman in search of Sita in the city of Lanka

Résumé:

In these sargas V.'s characterization of H. remains in the background prescinding from the author's intention to portray H.'s unflagging effort in tracing S., for which he makes him display all his skill and energy, since the emphasis is laid more on his wonderment and delight at the splendour of Lanka and the revelling life of its people, which, though it is also designed to be a reflection of H.'s feelings, serves as a theme of its own to thrill the audience.

Still, a few traits of H.'s character clearly emerge: In general; his unflagging effort in tracing S., in which he invests all skill and energy. In particular:

A first feeling of despondency and doubt of his and R.'s mission at the sight of the soaring walls, seemingly inaccessible even to the Gods and Asuras, and yet his quick resolution to deliberate on some means by which he could enter the gates unnoticed by the guarding Rks.; his feeling sad at the sight of the inconceivable, wonderful beauty of Lanka, and yet his being cheered up at the thought of his eagerness to see S.
An emergence of a feeling of confidence, amidst the feelings of depression on seeing the splendour and seeming inaccessibility of the city of Laṅkā, at the thought of the prowess of the V. heroes and the heroism of R. and L. (V.3.12ff.).

His giving vent to his delight at the presumed discovery of S. in a manner which is characteristic of a monkeyish temperament, by striking his arms, kissing his tail, sporting, singing, running about, climbing pillars and falling on the ground (V 8.49-50).

Cf. v.50 - asphoṭayamāśe ca cucumba pucoham nananda cīkīda jagau jāgama

His correction and renunciation of the apish rashness of his estimate by reflecting on the impossibility that S., separated from R., would indulge in sleep, drink or any kind of luxury or approach any other man (V 9.1ff.).

The sudden emergence of moral scruples in his mind at the thought of seeing another's wife asleep, followed by the reassuring consciousness of the purity of his mind, which is unaffected by the sight of the beauties, and of the necessity of the circumstances which compel him to search for S. particularly among women (V 9.33ff.).
Résumé of ss. 10-27

Hanuman's despondency at not finding Sita; his reactions to the discovery of Sita and the approaches by Ravana and the Rakṣasas

1) Hanumān's despondency at not finding Sītā

Not finding S. any-where, H. falls into despondency, playing with the thought that she might have been put to death by Rv. as she did not want to renounce her chastity, or might have died out of fear at the sight of the Rks. Reviewing the futility of his efforts and the long time spent, he feels reluctant to go back to Su., who would give him severe punishment; imagines how, when he has crossed to the other side, all the Vs. would gather and ask him about his achievements, imagines what aged Jāmśavān and Aṅgada would say; feels that it is best for him in these circumstances to undergo prāyopaveśa. But in the midst of such broodings, immediately another thought arises in his mind: he must pluck up courage, for courage is the root of all glory, is the highest joy, is the spur to all achievements. And filled with courage, he resolves on making an effort, and searches all the places where he has not yet searched. And he leaves no corner unexplored, but the futility of his efforts leaves him again in a state of despondency. (V 10)

Now H. plunges into a soliloquy of musings and imaginations of all kinds: First he muses on the various possibilities of how S. may have incurred death on the journey through the air or in Lāṅkā, on how it would be a sin both to announce and not
to announce to R. that S. has been killed, has been lost or has died. Then he imagines in his mind how R., on hearing the sad news, would die on the spot, and L., Bh., Śatruighna, Ks., Kai., Sumitrā, would renounce their lives one after the other out of grief over the death of their relatives (L. on account of R. etc.), as well as Su. out of grief over R., and on account of him Rumā, Tārā, and on account of his mother Aṅgada, and how in the end all the Vns., overwhelmed with grief for their master, would put an end to their lives by breaking their heads with hands and fists, starving to death, entering fire etc. Such gloomy imaginations make H. hesitate to return to Kiskindhā - for as long as he does not return, R. and L. and the Vns. will be sustained with hope - and make him play with all kinds of ideas, to lead the life of a vanaprastha, or to enter a funeral pyre, or to undergo upaveśa and allow his body to be eaten by crows and wild beasts or to enter the water, a death considered by the ṛṣis, yet at once the thought comes to his mind that it is a sin to commit suicide, that he must forbear his life. But, trying to bear in mind his manifold sorrows for a moment, he feels unable to see an end to his grief. A thought of vengeance flashes through his mind: to slay Rv., or to drag him over the ocean and offer him to R. like a sacrificial animal to Paśupati. Then his reflection returns again to the idea of searching through the whole of Lāhkā till he finds S., or to live the life of a mendicant - when the sight of the Aśoka grove, which he has not yet searched through, awakes in him an immediate resolution to search through it and gives him confidence in the success of his mission. And, requesting the blessings of Brahmā and of the Gods and ṛṣis and of all the beings, he enters the forest. (V 11)

From an over-all point of view, we can characterize H.'s reactions to his failure to find S. in this way: H., in order to spot S., invests all his efforts, leaving no stone unturned,
but the fact that he sees his efforts frustrated fills him again and again with despondency. Reviewing the futility of his efforts, he is led to all kinds of gloomy reflections and imaginations - one disrupted from the other -, showing the agony of his heart and the depth of his feelings for R. and S. and for his kinsmen Su., Aṅgada, and the Vns. Yet, in the midst of the most gloomy reflections, fresh hope springs up in him and he promptly takes up new resolutions on continuing his search and feels confident that his mission will be crowned with success. Of course, all these broodings, though designed to be a reflection of H.'s psyche, are gathered from the depth of human experience of frustration and aim at evoking in the audience an intimate empathy with these scenes, which are imbued with a pathetic sentiment.

2) Hanumān's reaction to the discovery of Sītā (13, 15)

H., through his psychological insight and intelligence, quickly finds his ideas and expectations of S.'s appearance - which he has gathered through instructions from R. and through his own seeing of Rv. carrying a woman through the air, confirmed at the sight of the emaciated, sorrowful lady surrounded by Rākṣasīs in the Aśoka forest. He finds his reflection confirmed by discovering on her all the ornaments mentioned by R. except for those which she had thrown down on the mount of Rāyamūka and for her yellow piece of cloth.

The discovery of S. diverts his attention first to the thought of the four emotions which had gripped R.'s mind on account of S.: pity, compassion, grief and passion, and to the thought of how S. and R.'s minds are ever fixed upon one another in love, without which it would not have been possible for R. to live even for a moment. The sight of S. thus makes him rejoice and praise R. (V 13.47-52)
The rise of the moon allows H. to have a close-up view of the formidable-looking Rākṣasīs guarding S., who, plunged in grief and thoughts of her husband, looks dim but beautiful (expressed in beautiful comparisons), and the sight of whom fills him with tears of joy and thoughts of R. and L. (V 15).

3) Though we may infer that V. intends to show us implicitly how H. vibrates in sympathy with all the sorrows of S.'s heart in the face of Rv. and the Rākṣasīs — since in s.28 H. finds himself urged to console S. and encourage her with hopes —, his witnessing of the events is conveyed by V. in the style of a direct narration to the listener, with extremely few intercalated allusions to H. himself, and with his feelings remaining, thus, in the background.

V 28

Hanuman's reflections on how to communicate with Sita

Contents:

When H. had said all that and looked at the goddess-like queen, S., he fell into musings: "I have found the one for whom thousands and myriads of Vns. are searching in all directions, by, as a secret spy moving, observing the strength of the enemy, the city of the Rks., the power of Rv. As she, who has never seen grief before, does not know any end to her grief and longs to see her husband, I will cheer her up, for, if I go without consoling her, I will be committing a sin, for, not finding a rescue, she will renounce her life. But how shall I do that, when I see the Rākṣasīs all around. If I go to R. without talking to S., he will scorch me with his angry eyes. If I ask Su. to make preparations for war on account of R., his arrival will be in vain. However, I shall wait for a weak moment of the Rākṣasīs and then gently console sorrowful S. I am very small and a Vn.
in particular, and I will speak ordinary Sanskrit. If I speak Sanskrit like a dvija, S. will be frightened, taking me for Rv. Seeing my form and seeing me speaking, she, who is already frightened by the Rāksasais, will be still more frightened, and, considering me to be Rv., will utter a cry, whereupon the Rāksasais will gather and will try to seize and kill me. Seeing me in my own form jumping from branch to branch, the Rāksasais will be frightened and call the Rks. deputed by Rv., who will come with their weapons to fight. Trying to disperse the Rk. army on all sides, I shall not be able to reach the other side of the ocean, or swift fighters will capture me while I am leaping. They may capture S. and me or even kill her. R.'s and Su.'s aim will be frustrated, for S. will stay in a land the access to which will have been lost, a land which is guarded by the Rks, encircled and hidden by the ocean. If I am killed or captured, nobody will be able to help R., nobody will be able to jump 100 yojanas over the sea. I am able to kill thousands of Rks., but I shall not be able to reach the other side of the ocean. Furthermore, how engage in an undoubted task in a doubtful manner? If I talk to S., I am committing a great fault. If I do not, she will renounce her life. Aims obtained are frustrated, on account of the factors of place and time, through a messenger overcome with fear. A mind intent on different worthless aims does not appear to advantage. How should I arrange things that the aim is not frustrated, that I do not create any confusion, that the crossing of the ocean is not in vain, that S. hears my words without fear. Thus reflecting, thoughtful H. was immersed in thoughts (iti sancintya hanumāḥsacakāra matimānmatim // 40). As he saw that S.'s thoughts were fixed on R., he thought that, by naming her husband's name, he would not frighten her. So he decided to relate from his position in the Simēpā tree all about R., the foremost of the Ikṣvakus, with auspicious and pious words and in a sweet voice.

Analysis of characterization:

H. is portrayed, in this sarga, as intent upon consoling and cheering up S. - plunged in grief, but, at the same time, as weighing carefully all the ways and means of how to best communicate with S., without entailing any risk of frightening her or incurring an indiscretion which would lead to a frustration of the entire task, in short as revealing par excellence his nature of a prudent and discreet counsellor (cf. v.40^2 - iti sancintya hanumāḥsacakāra matimānmatim) - a trait which we have already come across, though to a less conspicuous degree. H. finds the need
of a most careful deliberation in the light of the conspicuous fact that, after so much trouble has been taken to trace S., one thoughtless move is enough to frustrate the achievements already made.

It would appear from some of the reflections that H. is over-anxious of negative consequences and too little self-confident of his valour, which he has so much boasted of earlier. Here we have again to take into account the oral pattern of spontaneity. What V. wanted to express, is the over-all prudence and discretion on the part of H. on the one hand and the discreet situation in which S. finds herself on the other hand. To do this, he will exhaust all his inspiration of the moment to make H. employ all his power of deliberation, and so it is but natural that, on account of these momentary inspirations of the poet, H.'s deliberations will be in contrast with some of his earlier prads, which had originated out of some other, equally instantaneous, inspirations of the poet. But how is it that, notwithstanding his most subtle carefulness not to evoke any situation which may lead to the frustration of his aim, H. later engages in creating destruction and slaughter in the city of Laikhā, by which he risks incurring all those dangers of a frustration which he was so careful to avoid earlier? So this we have to answer that later the situation which V. wants to show is completely different. S. knows that she will be saved. The situation is largely ascertained for H. In this consciousness of assuredness, H. is portrayed by V. as feeling exuberant and feeling like testing the strength of the Rks., thereby dealing Rv. and his Rks. a blow before leaving the place. Still one could object and say: Contrary to his own earlier deliberations, H. takes upon himself the risk that Rv. could make short work and kill S. Yet V. pays the cost of this lapse of H. in order to portray his exuberance and heroism, which at this turning point is a far more inspiring theme.
Classification:

Literary basis:

exposition: objective - descriptive - explicit

tone: of anxiety

V 29-32, 34-37

Hanuman's communication with Sita

Contents:

29 H. related with sweet and encomastic words the story of R. and S., closing with the words that, from what he had heard from R. about her appearance, colour and beauty, the one before him was S. Hearing these words, Jñanakī was highly wonder-struck and looked up to the Simśapa tree. There she suddenly beheld that inconceivably intelligent son of the Wind-God like the rising sun, casting glances aside, up and down.

30 The sight of the sweet-speeched monkey concealed in the branches - humbly waiting, appeared to her like a dream and made her swoon. Regaining consciousness, she reflected: "I have seen a loathsome dream: a monkey forbidden by the Śastras. May it be well with R., L., and my father Janaka. Yet, it is not a dream since, pained with grief, I have no sleep. Tormented with love for R., I see and hear all in the way I think of him constantly. I think it may be a desire, still I reason with my mind. Why does he not address me, distinctly showing his form? I bow to Vaṣasāmpati, Indra, Svayambhu, and Agni: Let what the Vn. has spoken to me be true!"

31 Then H., greeting S. humbly, addressed, with sweet voice, a series of guess-questions to her, like: "Who are you that, wearing a faded garment of silk, are standing holding a branch of the tree? Why do tears of sorrow flow from your eyes? Who of the Suras, Asuras, Nāgas, Gandharvas, Rks., Yakṣas, Kinnaras are you, who of the Rudras, Marutas, Vasunas are you, appearing to me to be a Goddess? Are you Rūhini, the best of stars, having fallen from heaven, abandoned by the Moon? Are you Arundhatī, endowed with all qualities, having enraged your
husband Vasistha through anger or ignorance? Who is your son, father, brother, husband? Are you bemoaning one that has gone from this to the next world? From the marks I observe, you are the queen of a king, a princess"—And he ended up by asking her to confirm his conclusion that she is S., abducted by Rv. from Janasthāna. This S. does, introducing herself and her life-story.

32 Hearing S.'s words, H. gave her a consoling answer by introducing himself as the messenger of R. conveying his inquiries about her well-being and L.'s greetings. When S. heard of R.'s and L.'s well-wishes, her whole body trembled with delight and she said — "The saying seems to be true that happiness comes to a man in this life even if he is a hundred years old." Delight sprang up in this meeting of each other, and they began to talk to each other with mutual confidence — when, at H.'s going closer and closer to S., she began to suspect him more and more to be Rv. Lamenting with great distress what she had told to H., she released the branch of the tree and sat on the earth. H. then greeted her, but she was greatly frightened, and, not looking up to him, heaving a deep sigh, she said to him — "You are Rv., having assumed a magic form. It is not auspicious that you torture me again. You are Rv., whom I have seen in Janasthāna, disguised as a parivrājaka. If you are a messenger of R., I ask you to relate to me the excellences of my dear husband R., for the story of R. is dear to me. You are taking away my mind like the current the bank of a river. O what a delight of a dream that I have since long been kept in captivity, now see a Vn. despatched by R. If I saw R. and L. in a dream, I would not swoon even if my dream were unpleasant. But I don't consider it to be a dream, for a dream would not cause so much elevation in me. Perhaps it is infatuation of the mind, or the going of the wind, or a transformation resulting from insanity, or a mirage, or insanity, or delusion? I can't understand myself nor the Vn." With such thoughts, she considered the Vn. to be Rv. and did not speak to him. Realizing S.'s anxiety, H. pleased her with words eulogizing R.'s greatness and love for S., on account of which he was despatched by him to enquire about her welfare, and assuring her that he will soon come with the Vns. and destroy Rv., ending up by saying that he is not Rv. and that she should renounce her suspicion and place confidence in him.

34 Once more H. addressed S. with humble words in order to create confidence — "I am a Vn. and the messenger of wise R., see this ring stamped with R.'s name. Be consoled for your grief will be alleviated." Taking her husband's ring and looking at it, she was delighted as if she had obtained her husband (expressed in beautiful words) and praised H. — "O best of the Vns., you are valiant, powerful and skilled, and your prowess is worth praising, as you have assailed alone this place of the Rks. and
have turned by your leap the ocean infested by crocodiles—a hundred yojanas wide—into an impression of a cow’s foot. I do not consider you an ordinary Vīn, since you are not afraid of Rv. You are worthy to be addressed by me. If you have been sent by R., he won’t send anyone, especially for me, without testing him and being sure of his valour. How glad I am that virtuous R. and L. are well. But if Kākūṣṭha is well, why does he not turn the earth with his anger like the fire of destruction at the end of the world? I hope R. is not agitated, distressed, I hope he performs excellent deeds, I hope he is not overcome with fear, does not lose consciousness in accomplishing his deeds... [a series of similar questions inquiring whether and expressing the hope that, everything is alright with R. concerning his emotional stability (undisturbed by agitation, fear and grief), his prowess and heroic enterprises, his relationship with his friends, his worship of the Gods, his continued love for her and eagerness to rescue her, his happiness of mind (undisturbed by grief on account of her), his inquiry of the welfare of Ks., Sumitṛa and Bh.,—and similar questions expressing the hope that Bh., Su. and L. will do their best to come to their help and kill Rv.] None is so dear to R., neither mother nor father nor anybody else, as I am to him. As long as I hear news of him, I wish to live." Hearing the words of S., H., of terrible prowess, addressed her — "R. does not know that you are here, but, hearing my words, he will quickly come with his Vīn hosts and free the city of Lāṅkā from the Rks. Even if Death or the Gods stand in this way, he will slay them. Meanwhile R. is overwhelmed on account of your absence, and like an elephant harassed by a lion he does not find happiness. I swear by the mountains, roots and fruits, by the Malayā, Vindhya, Meru and Mandara that you will see the lovely full-moon-like face of R. and himself seated on Praśravāṇa like Indra on the vault of heaven. In your absence R. does not enjoy meat or wine, but only subsists on fruits and roots and does not ward off from his body gad-flies, mosquitoes, insects and serpents. Always lost in thoughts and always absorbed in grief, he does not think of anything else. He does not get sleep and awakes with the sweet uttering 'Sītā'. When he sees a fruit or a flower or something else that delights a lady, he addresses you, saying 'O dear one', always overwhelmed with grief and uttering your name. R. makes every effort for regaining you."

Hearing the words of H., she said — "What you have said, is nectar mixed with poison—nectar, that he does not think of anybody else, poison, that he is absorbed in grief. Fate pulls man with a rope, as it were, whether he is in greatest wealth or in bitter misery. See how R. and L. are deprived of their senses for grief. When will R. reach the end of grief? When will my husband destroy Rv. and Lāṅkā and see me? Let it be told to him: As long as the year is not completed, I shall
live. This is the 10th month. Two months remain. Vibhīṣaṇa entreated Rv. with great effort to release me, but Rv. does not pay regard to it." Then S. relates how Vibhīṣaṇa's daughter, Nālā, once came to her and intimated to her that Avindhyā had warned Rv. of the extinction of entire Lāṅkā, but without success. After that, she expresses her confidence in R.'s prowess, which will lead to her quick recovery. When S. was thus conversing, with her face full of tears, H. answered - "At my words, R. will quickly come with the Vn. and Rksa hosts. Or : I will free you from the hands of Rv. : I will make you ascend my back and cross the ocean. For I have the power to even carry Lāṅkā together with Rv. I will present you to R. like fire presents sacrificial offerings to Indra. You will see today R., together with L., - endowed with energy like Viṣṇu at the slaughter of demons, R., who is very eager to see jīva, who is dwelling in the hermitage like Indra seated on the head of Śesā. Ascend my back, don't merely desire but strive after union with R. like Rohini with the Moon. None of the inhabitants of Lāṅkā will be able to follow my course as I return with you." When Maithili heard these wonderful words, her body was wonder-struck with joy and she said to H. - "How do you wish to carry me such a long distance to R.? I think that is your monkeyish nature. How do you wish to take me to R. when you possess such a small body?" Hearing these words, H. thought he had suffered a new humiliation: "She does not know my strength and power, therefore let her see what form I take at will." With these thoughts, the foremost of monkeys showed S. his own form, and then, jumping down from the tree, started to expand his form in order to create confidence in S. He stood before S., resembling mount Meru and Mandara, appearing like blazing fire. Resembling a mountain, with his face coppery red, with teeth and nails like the thunderbolt, the fierceful monkey said to S. - "I have the power to carry this city of Lāṅkā with its hills, forests, palaces and gates and with its leaders. Let your mind conform to this. Make R. and L. free from grief." Seeing his monster-like appearance, S. said to the son of the Wind-God - "I know your strength and power, I know your gait to be like that of the Wind-God, and your brightness like that of the fire. How could any ordinary man else come to this land? I know that you have the power to cross the limitless ocean and carry me. But it is necessary to determine (reflect on) the propriety of the accomplishment of this action. It is not proper for me to go with you. Your wind-like speed might cause me to lose my consciousness, and I might fall from your back into the ocean and be devoured by crocodiles and fishes. Seeing me carried off, the Rks., commanded by Rv., will pursue me, and, surrounded by them, who are weaponed, you, who are un-weaponed, will be in danger. Then you will not be able to protect me. While you are fighting with the cruel Rks., I might fall from your back, overpowered by fear. Then the Rks
may defeat you, or while you are fighting, I may fall, be captured and carried away by the sinful Rks. or even be killed. Or threatened by the Rks., I may even die, and all your efforts will be fruitless. Though you may be able to kill all the Rks., you will take away R.'s fame. Or the Rks., may seize me and conceal me in a place which neither the monkeys nor R. will come to know, and all your efforts will be in vain. But there is use in R.'s coming with you. The life of Naghava and his brothers and of your master depend on me. Deprived of their hope, R. and L., overpowered by grief and pain, with all the Rkṣas and Vṇs. will renounce their lives for my sake. Respecting my devotion to my husband, I would not like to touch any body else's body than R.'s. That I came into contact with Rv.'s body through force, for that - what will I do if I am helpless, unprotected and under the control of another. It is proper for R. to kill Rv. and the Rks. and free me. I have heard of and seen the valour of that great devastator in battle. Neither Gods nor Gandharvas nor serpents nor Rks. are equal to him in battle... Make my husband quickly come with I. and the leaders of the army. Make me - for a long time afflicted with grief for R. happy."

36 The foremost of monkeys, hearing those words of S., was delighted and said - "What you have said, is befitting and conformant with feminine nature and the modesty of virtuous ladies. Being a woman, it is not possible for you to cross the ocean - a hundred yojanas wide, on my back. And what you mention as second reason, is that it is not proper for you to touch any body else's body than R.'s. These words of yours are worthy of R.'s wife. Who but you would speak such words! Kakutstha will hear everything that you have said to me. I have told you all this for many reasons out of a wish for doing service to R., with love springing forth from my mind. As Lanka is difficult to enter and the great ocean is difficult to cross and I possess power, I have said all this to you. It is out of my wish to see you re-united with your husband today, out of love and devotion for my master and not for any other reason that I have said this to you. If you are not able to go with me, give me a token of recognition which R. will recognize." Thus addressed by H., S. related, in virtue of a token of recognition, - in direct words addressed to R. - an intimate story about a crow (Indra's son) who had plucked her breast with his beak and as a punishment was smitten by R. with the Brahma-mantra, but who through R.'s mercy was released of it and, in place of it, deprived of his right eye, - continuing with the words - "O lord, you uttered the Brahma-mantra on a mere crow for my sake, why then do you spare him who has taken me away from you? Show your energy and mercy for me. I have heard from you that compassion is the highest virtue. I know you possessed of great heroism, energy,
power, and resembling in depth the immovable ocean of a boundary unreachable ... Neither Nāgas nor Gandharvas nor Asuras nor Maruts are able to defy R.'s speed in battle. If that hero has some zeal for me, why does he not destroy the Rks. with sharp arrows, why does L. not, at the command of my husband, save me? If those two foremost of men resemble in brightness Vāyu and Indra and are difficult to be overpowered even by the Gods, why then do they neglect me? If they neglect me inspite of their power, I have, no doubt, done something evil." Then she requests him to give her loving regard to L., whose attachment to R. she praises in a beautiful eulogy. Then she continues saying - "Tell R. again and again 'I tell you, I will sustain my life only for a month. Save me from the confinement of Rv. like Viṣṇu saved Kauśikī from the netherworld.'" Then S. loosened a jewel from her garment and gave it to H. with the words "Let it be given to Rāghava.' Taking the armlet, H. fixed it on his finger, for his arm could not pass through. Then, going round her and bowing to her, he stood by her side. He was filled with great delight and, going with his heart to R., he indulged in reflections.

37 S. then said to H. - "This token of recognition is well known to R. Seeing it, he will remember the three and my mother and king D. If you are commissioned by R. to undertake this task, reflect on what is the best means to achieve it." Promising this, H., of terrible prowess, greeted her with bowed head and was about to go when S. with a voice stammering on account of tears said to H. - "Give my regards to R. and L., Su. with his counsellors and all the aged Vns. See to it that R. rescues me while I am still alive. Hearing my words filled with determination, R.'s manliness will be stimulated. Hearing words enjoined with my message, he will enjoin the sacred ordinance of his prowess." H., in his answer, again assured her of R.'s coming with the Vns. and freeing her after destroying the Rks., stressing R.'s unexcelled power in battle. Yet then, looking at him as he was about to set out, she asked him to kindly grant her these words filled with love for her husband - "If you think you should take some rest in some hidden place, you may go tomorrow. In your presence I feel released from my sorrows for the moment. But when you are gone, there is doubt in my heart about your coming back, a doubt as strong as the fear for my life. Grief caused by your absence will torment me again. I have doubt about how the Vns. and Rksas will cross the ocean. In the three worlds only Garuḍa, you and Maruṭa have the power to leap over the ocean. What solution do you see for accomplishing this difficult task? Surely you alone are able to accomplish this task with glorious success, but if R. should come with all the forces and conquer Rv. together with Lahkā, it would be conferring glory on me. Now see to it that R. engages his valour in a manner worthy of him." Hearing S.'s reasonable and purposeful words, H.
answered - "Be assured that the master of the Vn. and Rkṣa armies, the foremost of monkeys, Su., who is endowed with virtue and resolved on fulfilling your desire, will quickly come, surrounded with thousands of crores of Vns. The monkeys, possessed of valour and flying as fast as the thought of the mind, abide by his command. Their course is irresistible above, below and in oblique direction. Following the way of the wind, they have repeatedly gone round the earth with its oceans and mountains. There are Vns. superior to me and equal to me. There is none inferior to me in Su.'s presence. I have been able to arrive here, how much more then will they be able. Not the most distinguished, but only ordinary beings are despatched as messengers. Enough of your grief. With one leap the Vn. chiefs will come to Laṅka. The two lions among men, R. and L., will come to you on my back, appearing like the risen Moon and Sun and will destroy Laṅka. Having killed Rv. together with his hosts, R. will recover you and return to his city. Take courage. Soon you will see R. blazing like fire. Soon you will be united with him like Rohini with the Moon. Soon you will reach the end of your grief... [continued assurances in the same style]

Analysis of characterization:

We have given a comprehensive account of this complex of sargas since it will be also the basis for our analysis of the characterization of S. Later, we shall merely refer to the contents here. Now, however, we shall only speak about the characterization of H.:

31 H. reveals his skill in persuading S. of the actuality of his presentation. He does so by asking S. a series of such guess-questions (to which he does not expect an immediate answer) as are designed to intimate to S. that he has understood both her sorrowful situation as well as her high status. Though his first questions are, purposely, as yet somewhat remote from the truth, reckoning S. among the divine, he applies a kind of arunādhata method to come closer and close to the truth and finally so close that he merely needs to ask her to confirm his conclusion that she is S. abducted by Rv. from Janasthāna.
Thus, intending to demonstrate to S. his psychological intuition by way of a chain of questions seemingly imposing themselves upon him, he immediately and spontaneously succeeds in persuading S. of the actuality of his presentation which she first doubted.

--- The exposition is objective - descriptive - implicit.

32 H.'s first persuasions and his subsequent introduction of himself as a messenger of R., who inquires about her well-being are, though delighting her exceedingly, yet too frail as to exclude a sudden suspicion on the part of S. - the suspicion that they may be the cunning trick of Rv. W., however, does not intend so much to show some weakness in H.'s skill of persuasion than to show S.'s extreme hesitation as a result of so much grief and deception caused by Rv. H. finally succeeds in persuading S. of his sincerity by eulogising, in answer to her request to relate to her, as a proof of his sincerity, the excellences of R., with beautiful words R.'s greatness and love for S. and his concern for her welfare, as a proof of which he stands before her, and by assuring her of R.'s coming with the Yns. and rescuing her. As a confirmation of all this, he finally gives S. R.'s ring. But he succeeds not merely because he has unmistakeable evidence to show, but, to no less a degree, because his lofty evaluation of and deep insight into the greatness and goodness of R.'s character manifests his sincerity, for only a person possessing these values is able to give such a high appreciation. H. is thus portrayed as possessing the power to intuit and evaluate psychologically the greatness of R.'s character on account of and by the measure of his own greatness of character and apply it in a way that convinces S. of his sincerity, as a confirmation (not substitute!) of which he gives R.'s ring.

--- The exposition is objective - descriptive - implicit.

34 S.'s appreciation of H.'s great valour, power and skill, so marvellously exhibited in his facile leap over the ocean, and
fearlessness of Rv. is represented in a subjective - descriptive - explicit exposition.

As S. asks H. a series of questions inquiring whether, and expressing the hope that, everything is alright with R. concerning his emotional stability (undisturbed by agitation, grief and fear), his prowess, heroism and his enterprises, his continued love for her and eagerness to rescue her, his happiness of mind (undisturbed by grief on account of her) etc., thus intimating by her way of asking her fear that something has gone wrong with R., as he has not come to her rescue for such a long time, H. applies all his psychological skill to console and cheer up S. He draws her attention to the fact that R. is completely unaware of where she is, assures her and swears that, hearing his words, he will immediately come with the Vns. and destroy the Rks., and with beautiful words he draws a picture before her mind how her husband, plunged in grief and lost in thoughts on account of her, is totally disinterested in life and does not think of anything else than her and that he undertakes all efforts to recover her.

--- The exposition is objective - descriptive and somewhat explicit.

H.'s speech of consolation has a double effect: It is nectar mixed with poison. His words about R.'s devotion to her delight her while his words about R.'s absorption in grief sadden her. Seeing S. torn between lamentations and expressions of her confidence in R.'s prowess, which will lead to her quick recovery, yet her appearance being all-over marked by grief, H., while re-assuring S. of R.'s and the Vns'. arrival suddenly hits upon the idea that the best and shortest was to put an end to the pitiful and endless plight of S. and R. would be to offer to take her on his back and carry her to R. Thus, in view of the best interests of S. and R., he
persuades her to follow his proposal, picturing before her mind her quick reunion with R. and stressing that no Rx. will be able to follow his course.

--- The exposition is objective - descriptive - explicit.

What has V. in mind when he makes S. first doubt H.'s capacity to carry her such a long distance, for his possessing too small a small body, and label his proposal as characteristic of his monkeyish nature; and when he then - after H., who felt a little humiliated at S.'s ignorance, in order to create confidence in S., has proved with boastful words his strength and power of transmutation by expanding his form, appearing as bright as blazing fire and resembling mount Meru, and has boasted of his power to carry the whole of Laṅkā... with him - makes her reject H.'s proposal, inspite of her assuredness of his power to carry her across the ocean, by enumerating a scale of fears of entailing too great risks which may frustrate all efforts made and lead to the ruin of R.'s, L.'s and all the Vns.' lives; and makes her at the end indicate that, respecting her devotion to her husband, she would not like to touch anybody else's body than R.'s and wind up her rejection by expressing her confidence in R.'s prowess? Much, to answer this question, depends on how to interpret the author's intended presentation of S.'s psychology in her reaction to H.'s proposal. And again this interpretation depends on where to see the clue for S.'s basic hesitation. Is it more her fears described by her, or is it more her moral scruples which do not allow her to touch anybody else's body, or is it both in the same way? H., in his answer, expresses his delight at her words, which are worthy of her feminine nature and the modesty of virtuous ladies, and though he briefly refers to S.'s first reason, he stresses very much her second point and praises her highly for it -
Then he gives his reasons for why he has made such a proposal: his well-wishing concern and love for R., his wish to see S. reunited with R., the difficulty of entering Lanka and crossing the ocean, which would be alleviated by making the whole task short, and his feeling confident in accomplishing it. Thus, viewed from the angle of H.'s stress on S.'s virtue of chastity, the most natural conclusion is to assume that V., by making S. first ridicule H.'s smallness of body and monkeyish nature and later enumerate so many fears of possible risks while making her mention her moral scruples about touching somebody else's body, so to say, only by way of appendix, intends to show that S. hesitates to accept H.'s proposal primarily because of her moral scruples, but does not want to show this so directly and hence gives a series of rationalizations as a substitute for them. Thus V. delves once more into the depth of human experience and connects this human experience with the loftiness of moral virtues. If this interpretation is correct, it naturally follows that such allusions by S. which directly or indirectly go to show some weakness in valour on the part of H. (and have as their consequence his attempt to demonstrate his valour) are not meant to be hidden barbs at H.'s over-estimation of himself. If there is any hidden play, in these allusions and in H.'s demonstration, by the author with H.'s monkeyish way of acting, it is a play with H.'s over-zeal in his anxiety to put an end to the plight of S. and R., which makes him forget about the refined moral feelings of S. as the faithful wife of R.

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The exposition of this over-zeal of H. is, thus, partly subjective, partly objective - descriptive - implicit.
Realizing this basic scruple of S., H. does not at all show any misgivings, rather he feels elated at her virtue of chastity, and, stating the reasons for why he has made the proposal, asks, instead of it, for a token of recognition.

--- The exposition is objective - descriptive - explicit.

37 As H. is about to start off, but is prevented by S.'s grief-choked plea to give her regards to R., L. and all the Vns. and to see to it that R. will come to her rescue when she is still alive, H. again consoles her by assuring her of R.'s coming with the Vns. and stressing his unexcelled power in battle. But S. does not as yet seem to be comforted. For she asks H. to grant her a few last words, and these words, described by the author as filled with love for her husband and as reasonable and purposeful, reveal her fear and grief in apprehension of the absence of H. and her doubt about his coming back, about how the Vns. and R. will cross the ocean, as only Garuḍa, he and the Wind-God have the power to leap over the ocean. In answer to these apprehensions, H. gives S. a strong dosage of consolation by extolling the wonderful prowess, power, velocity and irresistibility of locomotion of the Vns. under the command of Su., who are all equal and in many cases superior to himself, he being only an ordinary messenger. We would absolutely miss the mark if we were to compare this passage to IV 66.7 and to maintain that V. depicted H. as contradicting himself: While H. first boasts that none is equal to him in his power of leaping, he now claims that none is inferior to him. The point is that S. is in grave doubts. Naturally, V. will make H. exhaust all his rhetoric skill required for the particular situation of the moment to remove her doubts in such an important matter. That's all.

--- The exposition is objective - descriptive - implicit.
Hanuman's motive for causing destruction in Lanka

Translation:

Being honoured by her with appreciative words as he was about to go, that Vn. left that place and reflected - "This task requires little that is left to be done, since this dark-eyed lady has been discovered. Leaving the first three means of overcoming one's enemy out of consideration, it is the fourth which is to be considered here. Neither is conciliation with the Rks. conducive to a good result, nor does bribery work or accumulated wealth, nor can people proud of power be subdued to dissension. But prowess, this is what appeals to me. Except through prowess, no assurance of this task can be had here, for, if the foremost Rks. are killed in battle, they somehow or other will become enfeebled here today. He who, being deputed to a work which ought to be carried out, accomplishes many things on his own part in consistency with earlier tasks has a right to do what should be done, for there isn't but one efficient reason for even a very small task, for he who knows his task in manifold ways is competent to fulfil the task. For only in this case, if I, on my part, resolutely go to the abode of the Lord of monkeys, knowing the peculiar nature of the enemy and of ourselves in battle, my master's order will be fulfilled. How would I wish that the ten-faced-one would bring his own strong army and myself together in battle. This excellent forest of this wicked Rv., resembling Nandana, pleasing to the eyes and filled with various trees and creepers, - this I will destroy like fire destroys a dry forest. After this forest has been destroyed, that Rv. will burst into anger. Then the lord of the Rks. will bring his great army with its horses, great chariots and elephants. Then there will be a great battle with tridents, iron spears and weapons. Then I, after meeting with those Rks. of impetuous valour in battle with unobstructed valour and destroying that army sent out by Rv., will happily go to the abode of the lord of the monkeys.

Analysis of characterization:

Two alternatives for interpreting V.'s intentions offer
themselves to one reading this passage:

1) H., possessed of insight into statesmanship and war-affairs, feels the necessity that beyond his immediate duty, which is to trace S., he ought to take some further steps towards the achievement of R.'s task, for which there is now little left that requires to be done, on his own account, without being so commanded by Su. His reflections revolve around the reasons which urge him to consider a destruction of the Aśoka-vana and a battle with the Rks. a necessary requirement: The Rks. can, in any way, be overcome only by prowess. No assurance of the task can be had except through prowess. If the foremost of the Rks. are killed already now, the Rk. army will be weakened. It is of advantage to know the peculiar habits of the enemy in battle.

2) H. feels exuberant after having successfully traced S., delivered R.'s message and assured her of the Vns.' coming, and in his exuberant spirits he feels an urge to test the valour of the Rks., to deal them a blow and to make a substantial preparation for R.'s task on his own account. Not that V. intends to show that, in the end, R.'s task is in fact substantially alleviated— for it isn't— but to foreshadow H.'s ardour for fight and pugnacity, which is so well brought out in the subsequent scenes and which the reader or listener feels his very words are breathing forth. All the reflections are self-justifications, in the guise of a necessity superimposing itself, for an urge of pugnacity in H., who, as a wise and responsible emissionary, though with a self-dependent character does not want to do any work that is not in consistency with the actual order of his master. Though, logically speaking, H. surpasses Su.'s order since the action which he is going to undertake entails risks which could lead to the death of S.—which he himself was so keen to avoid at an earlier stage,
I doubt whether V. in this passage intends to mark out this lapse on the part of H. as a theme. Surely he will mark it out as a theme somewhat later, when he relates how H., in his rage for revenge, burns all the houses of Lāṅkā. Then it possesses a much more fitting context, and the poet explicitly hints at the rashness which makes H. forget the risk of bringing S. into imminent danger. But now, at this turning-point of events, when H. feels assured that the situation is largely assured for R., the inspiring theme of the moment for the poet is to portray H.'s exuberant spirits and heroism, much more than to allude in a concealed manner to his lack of foresight.

Of the two interpretations, the second appears to be more justified in view of the whole context, as it is this very ardour for fight and pugnacity of H. which is one of the central features in all the subsequent scenes and in as far as this passage is the very prelude to these scenes and particularly the last lines of this prelude breathe a tone of determination to destroy and fight.

Classification:

Literary basis:
exposition: objective - descriptive - explicit.
nay, Herculzan,

power and rage of demolition ---
ardour for fight and revenge, and pugnacity ---
might, valour, heroism and skill in fighting the most
valiant warriors of Rv.; invulnerability from weapons on
account of a boon given to him by Brahmā :

Even Rv., while instructing his five army-chiefs and
Indrajit before their sallying-out, admits it, and
warns them of, and draws their attention to, this
super-natural dimension of valour, strength,
intelligence etc. of H., who is possibly a creation
by Indra to do mischief to him.
Cf. 44.6-12 -

Prahasta inquires for Rv. whether he is not Kubera,
Yama, Varuna in disguise or whether he is not a messenger
of Indra in disguise....
After killing Rv.'s five ace army-chiefs, Virūpākṣa, Yūpākṣa, Durḍhara, Praṅghasa, Bhāsakarṇa, and after his defeat of Aksa, the poet describes H. as kṛtakṣanah kāla iva praṇākṣaye (V 44.39; 45.39) --- proclamations to the Rks. and Rv.:  

First, there is his boastful and awe-imposing proclamation to the Rks., in the midst of his rage of demolishing the caitya-prāśāda and killing hundreds of Rks., of their imminent destruction at his own hands (V 41.5-9), of Su.'s arrival with countless Vns. like him and R.'s merciless destruction of Laṅkā, Rv. and the Rks. (V 41.14-18).  

Then there is his boastful prelude to his self-introduction in the court of Rv., during which he boastfully proclaims that, a Vn. by race, he has come here only out of a desire to see Rv., but finding it difficult to see him, he has destroyed the Aśoka garden in order to be able to see him, whereupon Rks. came to fight with him and he naturally had to kill them in self-defense. Since, on account of a boon granted to him by Brahmā, neither Gods nor Asuras can bind him with weapons, he has allowed himself to be captured, just to see Rv. And finally there is his self-styled proclamation of a message given to him by Su., describing the developments leading to his coming here and appealing to Rv.'s sense of dharma and tapas of old, which has endowed him with such unequalled power, in his own best interest not to molest another's wife, not to indulge in unrighteous and evil works unworthy of an intelligent person like him, but to give back S. lest she will be the deadly noose for the imminent destruction of him and all his Rks., together with the city of Laṅkā, at the hands of
R. and L., whose irresistible and unchallenged prowess and might, unmatched by the Gods, Asuras, men, Rks., Gandharvas, Yaksas, serpents, he paints in glowing colours (V 49) ---

his power of outwitting the enemy

first by ostensively showing himself defeated by the Brāhmāstra discharged by Indrajit and allowing himself to be captured, in order to get a chance to ruffle Rv. with a boastful oration (V 46ff.); then by patiently bearing the malicious pleasure Rks. feel in setting his tail on fire and parading him on their backs through streets and mansions - in order to get a chance to see the inaccessible places of Laṅkā; and then finally, as he finds the fire not burning but cooling his tail, which he attributes to S.'s compassion for him, R.'s power and his father's friendship with Agni, by making up his mind to teach the Rks. a lesson, lopping off his bonds and killing all the Rks. near him with an iron-bar from the gate and then leaping from palace to palace and setting the whole of Laṅkā on fire (V 51-52).

And all these descriptions are enriched with fanciful, detailed descriptions of H.'s formidable bodily appearances and movements accompanying his super-monkey activities, often creating a sentiment of Herculæan humour, and of the terror that fills nature, creatures and Gods and Asuras alike. No amount of analysis will give an idea of the poetic skill with which the author has brought out this Herculæan dimension of H. So we refrain from a detailed analysis and refer the reader to the original text.
Résumé of s. 53

Hanuman's bitter self-accusations betraying his anxiety that due to losing control of his rage in burning down Lanka he may have destroyed Sita

These self-accusations of H. betray the characteristic pessimistic and agonized tone of his brooding, marked here, in addition, with a distinct and very sharp tone of self-reproach, in which he goes so far as to say: *mayā khalu tadevedāḥ roṣadṛṣṭpradarśitaṁ / prathitaṁ triṣu lokēṣu kapitvamanavasthitam* // 11 characteristically followed upon by a ray of hope emerging from amidst the most gloomy reflections: 'As fire has not burnt his tail owing to the favour of R. and S., it will not touch virtuous S.'

The question arises whether V. had any more intention in this passage than to draw H.'s disposition of falling into pessimistic broodings as it has been drawn already at several previous occasions. Perhaps a retroreflective allusion to H.'s lack of foresight due to his overzeal in his rage of demolition while burning Lanka, an overzeal which infatuates him so much that he loses control over it and forgets to see to the protection of S. - the very aim for which he has come? Most probable, since we found H.'s overzeal alluded to already in earlier passages and since the reason which makes H. accuse himself is objective enough to evoke self-reproach. In any way, it is not H.'s lack of foresight as such which is brought out here, but his overzeal which infatuates it.
Appendix

S. 55 brings out features similar to those of s. 1, the only difference being the brevity of the description of the flight and the fact that there is less stress on exploits than on details and similes of H.'s fabulous power of locomotion and that these details and similes are somewhat different from those described in s. 1.

In the atmosphere of his successful mission and the Vns.' exuberant spirits, H. encourages the Vns. in their 'mischievous' act of drinking honey from the Madhuvana (V 60.1).

H.'s report to R. about S. (not mentioning any word about his heroic exploits and the great difficulties on his search), her mental agony and her feelings for R. (s. 63) as well as his faithful reproduction of S.'s message to R. and of his own speech of consolation to S. (ss. 65-66) bring out both his psychological skill and delicacy in communicating intimate news as well as his deeply involved love and sympathy for R. and S.

In the old parts of the Yuddhakanda H. is not in the centre of characterization, except that at times he emerges as one of the most valiant and heroic fighters against the Rks. - he kills Dhūmrākṣa, Akampana etc., and fights valiantly against the greatest Rk. heroes like Kumbhakarna and Indrajit -- and as an exhortator of the Vns. in desperate situations -- but even he himself is desperate at Indrajit's beheading of magic S. and, though he in his terrible revenge kills many Rks., he tells the Vns. to return since the object for whom they are fighting is no more --; or as a wise counsellor possessing psychological insight: E.g., when Vībhīṣaṇa introduces himself to Su. and requests for R.'s patronage and Su. and some of the monkey leaders are
suspicious of him and urge R. to test his sincerity, it is H. who tells the Vns. that a scrutinization of Vibhisana is impossible, unfounded, annoying, and that Vibhisana's resolute words and his cheerful appearance, not betraying any sign of wickedness, are a proof of his sincerity and integrity, for the expression of a face, though it may be veiled, cannot be entirely concealed since it, by force, reveals the innermost feelings of man. In this he manifests himself as the prototype of a psychologist counsellor, who, by his very first observation of a person, assesses correctly his character. (VI 11.22-59)

In s.101 H. delivers the happy message of R.'s victory to S., and he does it in a psychologically delicate manner, which makes S. speechless for joy. H.'s inquiry why she does not speak anything in reply to his words makes S. break forth in words stammering with delight and say that the happy news of R.'s victory has robbed her of her power of speech and that she does not find anything on earth (gold and all the riches of the three worlds) that would be a worthy reward for him. Greatly delighted at these words, the latter acknowledges S.'s high praise, saying that listening to such noble words of her which express her ever loyal devotion to the welfare of her husband, is worth more than gold and jewels and even more desirable than the kingdom of the Gods. And not out of a feeling of elation, but in humility, as the poet himself stresses, i.e., merely out of his over-anxiety to do S. a favour, he asks her to allow him to kill the Rakṣasīs, who have caused so much trouble to her. Her rejection of H.'s proposal, in which she refers to the Rakṣasīs' subjugation to the commands of Rv. and to the duty of all noble men of character to have compassion even with sinners, for there is no one who does not commit faults, and to abstain from retaliation and hīṃsa even against villains and persecutors of mankind, does not disappoint, but delight him, and he praises her great moral nobility (VI 101).
From now on, there is as good as no reference any more to H.'s character (H.'s account of events to Bh. is rather a stereotyped résumé of the contents of the Rm.), but at the description of R.'s distribution of presents the poet alludes directly to the noble character of H.: R. offers to S. a jewelled necklace, R. recognizes her desire of offering it to H. and so tells her to give it to anybody she likes. Then the poet says: That dark-eyed lady gave that necklace to H., in whom ever manliness, valour, intelligence exist. It is the poet's last elucidation before the audience of the noble character-traits of H. in a résumé-like manner. (VI 116.68-72)
A SYNTHETIC VIEW OF THE AUTHOR'S CONCEPTION
AND PORTRAIT OF HANUMAN'S CHARACTER
Our systematic analysis has brought out clearly that V., in drawing H.'s character, had two conceptions of him in mind: a more general and a more function conception. In the author's more general conception, H. is an ideal minister characterized by his skill in reconnoitring and his discretion in tackling affairs, his psychological depth of counselling, and his responsibility in his role of a messenger, all his actions being motivated by loyalty to and care for his master as well as by concern for R. and S., and being endowed with a gamut of ideal character-traits. Though V. often employs a pattern of spontaneity in explicating this side of H.'s character in different situations, its uniform outlook clearly reveals the author's distinct conception of H. as an ideal minister. Quite different and totally abrupt and unexpected in the course of the narrative, is the imaginative depiction of H.'s fabulous super-human power of locomotion, super-natural brightness, strength and valour, his Herculean power and rage of demolishing, his ardour for fight and pugnacity, might, valour, heroism and skill in fighting the most valiant warriors, and of his boastful and bombastic self-assertions etc. Anyone who is able to transpose himself into the situation of a bard will immediately say that this depiction of H. is functional, i.e. it appears only in such situations where the author finds an opportunity to project before the audience scenes of awe imbued with a sentiment of heroic wonderment, so as to thrill the audience. In projecting such scenes, the author, in order to bring them to their climax, exhausts all the resources of his poetic imagination following the inspirations of the moment. As he makes H. the hero of such scenes (be it on his own or on the basis of a certain tradition)
he will invest him with character-traits fully appropriate to the highly imaginative and fabulous timbre which pervades these scenes. Thus we can say that the depiction of H.'s super-human dimension is based on the pattern of spontaneity. Yet the consistency which emerges in all such similar scenes, nevertheless, shows that V. had some definite conception of H.'s supernatural dimension in his mind. Of course, the pattern of spontaneity is at work at all steps with regard to detailed explicitations of H.'s character-traits, and it is at large so in those scenes which describe H.'s pessimistic reflections or his communication with S., as these scenes are meant to have their own appeal.
Since H.'s character-traits are uniform in their outlook and can be roughly reduced to distinct patterns of conception in the author's mind, it will suffice to give a short delineation of these character-traits in correspondence with these two patterns, treating some of the other salient features of H. which do not fall within these two patterns and are largely due to the pattern of spontaneity, separately.

H. is an ideal minister in a three-fold respect, as a reconnoiteur, counsellor and messenger. Being endowed with a gamut of ideal character-traits, to which the poet alludes again and again in scattered remarks, H. manifests himself foremost as possessed of great skill in reconnoitring, and prudence and discretion in taskling affairs, of great psychological insight and skill in counselling and intimating messages (cf. his delicacy in communicating his messages to S. and R.), of great responsibility in carrying out his mediatorialship, all his actions being motivated by loyalty and care for his master and deep concern for his master's protégés, R. and S. It is these character-traits which prevail in the Kṣiṅkīdhāṅkāṇḍa, of which we have given an inductive summary on pp. 43 ff. Over and above, it is H.'s great psychological depth of counselling, ranging along a scale from mild exhortations over uncompromising moral admonitions to stern rebukes, in accordance with the exigency of the situation, but always paying due respect to the psychological disposition of the client. E.g., knowing that it is Su.'s exclusive addiction to pleasure and his utter negligence - as a result of the attainment of all his desires - that make him dumb to the urgency of R.'s task, and not a sheer lack of good will, H. gives Su. a moral admonition in the style of a reminder drawing his attention
to his neglect of duty and his ingratitude towards the friendship made with R., thereby instilling into his mind the sense to realize that a real friend must fulfil the aim of his friend in proper time, otherwise he is not keen on his aim, and urges him to engage in his duty without any further delay of time. Later on, when Su., upset at L.'s anger, asseverates his sincerity, H. makes Su.'s addiction to pleasure and inebriety and a consequent loss of his sense of gratitude towards R. and of his sense of time again the target of an uncompromising moral admonition, at the same time making it clear to him that R.'s anger is a result of his love, and exhorts him to propitiate L. with all his means. In both cases, H.'s admonition is uncompromising: it bluntly exposes Su.'s weak sides and urges him to make good his failure in unmistakeable terms. Yet, it also pays due respect to Su.'s inner emotional upheaval, thus assuming the true nature of a counsel. It is imbued with love for his master Su. as well as with concern for R. Not always is H.'s counsel effective (as in IV 2 and IV 53), but then it is not meant to show his failure but rather the stubbornness, fickleness and indiscretion of the party that does not listen to him. Cf. p. 479.

H.'s psychological insight and skill in communicating messages reveals itself especially in his dialogue with S., though it is occasionally coloured with an admixed timbre of his over-zeal, purposely brought in by the poet to enliven these scenes. We shall come back to this later. Yet, there are a number of scenes which clearly intend to show H.'s psychological skill of counselling and intimating messages without the admixture of side-trait of his character. The characteristic difference from earlier scenes of this kind is that H.'s psychological, understanding way of intimating his messages is first ineffective, by which the author apparently wants to show S.'s extreme hesitation and suspicion as a result of so much torture and deception at the hands of Rv., rather than H.'s failure to persuade S. V. makes
H., so to say, reveal more and more of his psychological skill till he comes to a point where S. can't but be convinced. Though he easily persuades S., from the start, of the actuality of his presentation by asking her a series of guess-questions which intimate to her that he has understood both her sorrowful situation as well as her high status, this first persuasion loses its hold soon and turns S. apprehensive of some cunning trick by Rv., but his lofty evaluation of, and deep insight into, the loftiness of R.'s character and virtues awakens in her the understanding that only a person possessing such virtues himself is able to rise to such an appreciation and convinces her fully of H. sincerity. Still more difficult than to persuade S., it is for H. to console and cheer her up, as doubts and painful thoughts disrupt her mental peace. Though he applies his psychological skill from the very first time she is tormented by some depressing thoughts that something may have gone wrong with R., as he is not coming to rescue her, to remove her doubts by assuring her and swearing that R. will come with the Vns. as soon as he has heard his news, and though his speech of consolation appears to have its effect, S. is torn between lamentation and expressions of her confidence in R.'s prowess. After rejecting H. 's over-zealous proposal to her to allow herself to be carried by him to R., an idea which arises in him only on account of this mood of hers, and expressing her trust in R.'s coming with the Vns., which she requests H. to urge upon R., she falls back into apprehensive and grief-forlorn thoughts again and again: Her very tale of recognition, which she entrusts to H., and which she requests him to communicate to her husband, ends in such thoughts, and, while H. is already about to set out, he is prevented by her reiterated plea to give her regards to R., L., Su. and all the Vns. and to see to it that R. will come to her rescue. H. again consoles her by assuring her of R.'s coming with the Vns. and stressing his unexcelled power in battle. But S. does not, as yet, seem to be consoled, for she asks him to grant her a few last words, which
reflect her fear and grief in apprehension of the absence of H. and her doubt about how the Vns. will manage to cross the ocean. In this pitiful situation of S. (strongly marked with a pathetic sentiment) V. makes H. employ the strongest dosage of consolation he has at his disposal: He extolls the wonderful prowess and power of locomotion of the Vns. and degrades himself as a mere 'messenger', for which role they choose only ordinary Vns.

H.'s delicacy in responding to S.'s rejection of his proposal — as he realizes her refined moral feelings — by praising her noble chastity as worthy of R.'s wife, and promising to tell everything to R., his delicacy in communicating to S. the most tender sentiments of R.'s love and agonized pining for his wife and in describing to her the greatness and virtue of R.'s character, his delicacy in communicating to R. S.'s agony and her feelings for him and in faithfully reporting to him her message, his delicacy in intimating to her the joyful news of R.'s victory — all this is yet another feature of H. falling within the frame of V.'s general conception of his character, a feature which, though closely connected with and largely part of H.'s psychological depth of counselling, is intended by the author to stand out as distinct in the portrait of H. Not without purpose does V. draw this beautiful, short scene at the end of the Yuddha-kāṇḍa: R. offers to S. a jewelled necklace. Recognizing her desire of offering it to H., he tells her to give it to anybody she likes. So she gives it to H., and the poet utilizes the occasion to elucidate once more the noble character-traits of H. in a résumé-like manner.

We have said at the beginning that H. manifests himself as possessing great skill, prudence and discretion in tackling affairs. Our inductive summary of H.'s characterization in the Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa supplies ample examples for this. Surely, in the general conception of V. H. figured as such. — At the same time,
it is true that in depicting H.'s Herculean dimension V. sacrifices this prudent outlook of H., so as to more strongly bring out his ardour for fight, pugnacity and rage of demolition. - A most conspicuous example we find in s.28 of the Sur.darakāṇḍa. H. is portrayed here as weighing carefully all the ways and means of how to best communicate with S. without entailing any risk of frightening her or incurring an indiscretion which would lead to a frustration of the entire task.

Totally abrupt and unexpected in the course of the narrative and embedded in an atmosphere of awe and of a world of fabulous imagination and imbued with a sentiment of heroic wonderment, is V.'s depiction of H.'s super-natural dimension. It is true that already earlier Su., while giving a special commission to H., alludes to him as irresistible in his velocity of course, energy and speed, as one with whom no being on earth can match in energy, who is possessed of strength, intelligence and prowess, the ability to conform to place and time, and wisdom, and it is true that this appreciation of H. on the part of Su. awakens confidence in him in R., who gives him his ring as a mark of recognition for S., and who expresses his confidence in him as one possessing perseverance, truth and valour, but all these words appear blood- and-life-less compared with the bombastic extravagance of Jāmbhavān's exhortation, H.'s self-assertion, the description of H.'s flight to Laṅkā or the Laṅkā-dahana episode, and at the most are a feeble introduction anticipating this new dimension of H. By way of a first characteristics of this super-natural dimension of H. it has to be said that no amount of analysis but only a reading will give an adequate idea of the ingenious skill and the gamuts of the author's imagination which are at work to give a full-blooded representation of his super-natural character. What we can give, is at most a dry skeleton of life-less character-traits. Another characteristics is the author's constant play with imaginative details of H.'s formidable bodily appearances
and movements accompanying his super-monkey activities, often creating a sentiment of Herculean humour. For this there is also no substitute but reading. In short, the character-traits standing out in these complexes of scenes mentioned above are: H.'s fabulous, unexcelled super-natural power of locomotion and transmutation, as well as his super-natural brightness, strength and valour (all inherited from his father, the Wind-God); his boastful and bombastic self-assertion of this fabulous power of locomotion, brightness, strength and valour of his; his formidable, Herculean, ardour for fight and revenge, and pugnacity; his formidable, Herculean, power and rage of demolition; his formidable, Herculean, might, valour, heroism and skill in fighting and defeating the most valiant Rk. warriors, his invulnerability from weapons due to a boon given to him by Brahma; his boastful, awe-imposing proclamations to the Rks.; his Herculean power of outwitting the enemy. As already mentioned, in the depiction of this super-natural dimension of H., his physical nature of a Vn., of a 'Herculean super-monkey' with the power of transmutation, is very much in the foreground, with the author playing with imaginative details of his bodily appearance, so as to create a sentiment of Herculean humour - a feature totally ignored in V.'s general conception of H.

Other salient features of H.'s character, apparently not falling immediately within the frame of either the general conception or the 'Herculean' conception of him, since they appear only in the particular contexts of H.'s search for S. and his communication with her and rather betray a general pattern of human experience (which the poet projects before the minds of the audience in vivid scenes fraught with emotion) than something peculiar to H., are:

- his repeatedly falling into despondency on viewing the overwhelming brightness of Lankā, and his giving way, out of
frustration over the futility of his efforts to trace S., to
the most gloomy and pessimistic musings and imaginations, all
disrupted from one another, showing the agony of his heart and
the depth of his feelings for R. and S. and for his kinsmen
Su., Añgada and the Vns; yet, in the midst of these most gloomy
reflections, his gathering of fresh hopes and making prompt
resolutions to continue his efforts — all this being a reflec-
tion of the depth of the experience of frustration;

- his rash outburst of delight at the pre-sumed discovery of S.
in a manner typical of a monkeyish temperament, yet his con-
sequent correction and renunciation of the apish rashness of
his estimate;

- his sudden submission to moral scruples at the thought of
seeing another's wife, followed by the re-assuring conscious-
ness of the purity of his mind as being unaffected by the
sight of the beauties;

- his over-zealous proposal to S. to ascend his back and allow
herself to be carried to R., prompted by his anxiety to put
an end to the terrible plight of S. and R., an anxiety that
makes him forget for a moment the refined moral feelings of
S. as the faithful wife of R.;

- his feeling humiliated at S.'s ignorance of his super-natural
power and his consequent urge to impress S. with his super-
natural strength and power of transmutation, prompted by his
anxiety to create confidence in her — perhaps a play by the
author with H.'s over-zealous monkeyish nature;

- his over-zeal and lack of foresight manifested in his rage of
demolition while burning down Lanka, a rage that infatuates him so
much that he loses control over it and forgets to see to the
protection of S.;
- his bitter self-reproach and falling into agonized and pessimistic musings in his anxiety that he may have destroyed S.;

- his over-zealous proposal to S. to allow him to kill the Rūkṣā, who have caused her so much trouble etc.

It appears at times that some of these weak, even 'monkeyish' traits of H.'s character take away something of the ideal character of H. But we should not forget that V., even when drawing an ideal character (even such an ideal character par excellence like R.), will delve deeply into human psychology, for it is the intention of the rhapsodist-poet, beyond his projection of lofty super-human ideals, to make the audience find their own human experience of grief, sadness, joy, wonder, hilarity reflected in the characters of the Epic.

We could best circumscribe H.'s character in a nutshell as follows: H. is an ideal flesh-and-blood character, foremost an ideal counsellor, with, at times, the super-natural dimension of a Herculean super-monkey.
CRITICISM OF MODERN SCHOLARS' VIEWS ON THE CHARACTERIZATION OF HANUMAN
(1) The original Rāma-ballads. The majority of critics who admit a historical foundation for the events related in the Rāmāyaṇa, consider the monkeys and bears of the epic as totemistic aboriginal races of Central India. A.V. Russell states that, even in modern times, monkeys and bears are among the thirteen most frequently occurring totems of the Central Provinces. In Chota Nagpur too the Oraons have Tigga and Heleman, the Mundas have Gari; all of them mean some species of monkey. It has been pointed out long ago by Pargiter that Hanumān is most probably a sanscritized form of the Dravidian word An-manti, which means male monkey.

Hanumān was therefore in all probability an aboriginal of Central India, whose totem was that of the monkey. He was the Courageous and Shrewd Counsellor of Sugrīva and the companion in the latter's misfortune. The two qualities stressed most of all in the oldest documents we possess are precisely his courage and his shrewdness....

(2) The Authentic Rāmāyaṇa. Several generations of balladists had sung the story of Rāma, considerably embellishing and enlarging it, before Vālmīki gathered these gāthās and moulded them into the Rāmāyaṇa. By that time the original totemistic meaning of the aboriginal names was lost: although they remained endowed with intelligence and the power of speech, the monkeys of the epic are often described as real monkeys. This introduces a preter-natural element into the Rāma-story; the Adbhuta rasa has come to stay and will be responsible for many other changes. How many of these elements were present in the original epic of Vālmīki is difficult to determine, but a careful reading of the vulgate Rāmāyaṇa does suggest that although the divine origin
of the monkeys was not referred to by Vālmīki, he or the early balladists must have considered Hanumān as some species of monkey and also given him the epithet of Vāyuputra. As regards the origin of this epithet the following hypothesis, proposed by Dr. Lüders, appears to be the most probable. At the time of the composition of the Rāmāyaṇa, the word Vāyuputra was used in the sense of Vidyādharā or Conjurer. The Mahābhārata too uses Vātika (Cf. III,243,3) in a similar case. The Sumagga Jātaka (No.436) relates the story of a vidyādharā and calls him Vāyussa Putta, without in any way suggesting that he is Hanumān or even a monkey. The wonderful feats of Hanumān (half-man and half-monkey), embellished by generations of bards, must have been responsible for his being given the title of Vāyuputra i.e. vidyādharā, conjurer, juggler. We come therefore to the conclusion that in the authentic Rāmāyaṇa Hanumān remained the courageous and shrewd counsellor of Sugrīva but in addition was accosted as Kapīkuṇḍara and Vāyuputra.

(3) The Vulgate Rāmāyaṇa. The itinerant singers of the Rāmāyaṇa have been responsible for many interpolations in the epic... As regards Hanumān, the chief addition in the vulgate is the story of his birth and youthful adventures. Basing themselves on the title of Vāyuputra, the bards made Hanumān into the real son of Vāyu and an apsara called Puṇjikasthalā who had been cursed to become a monkey and was known by the name of Aṇjanā.

Generally speaking the most striking character of later interpolations is a gradual increase of the preter-natural element. In the original Rāmāyaṇa e.g. Hanumān's jump was described as a most astonishing feat, but later on we find as a matter of course that all monkeys are kāmarūpī and ṛkāśagāmī. Hanumān's characterization makes no exception to this rule. His jumping at the sun immediately after his birth, burning down Daṅkā single-handed, flying to the Himalayas and bringing a whole
mountain to Lāṅkā, all these feats show that next to nothing has become impossible for him. "

Criticism: Bulcke’s starting-point for assuming a gradual development in the conception of H. with an increase of preternatural elements, from an original aboriginal of Central India with the totem of the monkey, the courageous and shrewd counsellor of Su., via an actual monkey (kapikuṇjara) and conjurer (vidyādhara) in the authentic Rm. of V., to the son of Vāyu and Aṃjana, the accomplisher of most wondrous exploits etc. in the Vulgate, is the presupposition that the Rm. reflects the later stage of a tale about actual historical happenings, in which R. made an actual covenant with aboriginals whose totem was the monkey. For the reasons — not at all cogent in our opinion — which make Bulcke believe in the historicity of the Rm. in its outline see Bulcke (1) To this we have to say: 1) It will never be possible to prove whether there is any historical kernel in the story of the Rm., and if there is, how much is ultimately due to fact and how much due to poetical imagination. This much, however, is unquestionable that V. completely personalized the story when he refashioned it. See our chapter 'Vālmīki’s Poetical Mission and the Message of his Character-Portrayals'.
2) Whether or not there is a historical basis in R.’s alliance with the Vns., it is very doubtful whether even the first bard to sing the R. story conceived these Vns. purely as totemistic aboriginals. As we have no confirmation for this remote possibility and no indication whatsoever in the Rm. suggestive in this line, it is much more natural to assume that the very first bard conceived H. and the Vns. in a way not so essentially different from the way V. did: Some more or less vague knowledge about totemistic aboriginal monkey-clans served the bard as a starting-point for his conception of the Vns. But as soon as he started depicting them, he, prompted by vivid imagination as a substitute for the lack of factual knowledge about them, depicted
them already as of a mythical and fanciful world. They, so to say, served him as models, but when he started depicting them, he immediately converted them into mythico-literary figures. This, we think, was not only the case with the Vāns., and the Rks., but with all those features which are of a nature suggesting a historical foundation. Whether or not there is a historical kernel in the R. story, there is surely much that reflects a historical atmosphere — an atmosphere which comprises both historical situations, primarily of a past age, and a historic spirit, primarily of a contemporary age. For this see p. 331

Bulcke's interpretation of H.'s epithet Vāyuputra as meaning 'conjurer' in the authentic Rm. is without foundation and has been criticized in the context of H.'s birth story. Cf. p. 163

M. K. Venkatarama Iyer

Iyer's article on H. is less a scientific analysis of H.'s characterization than an interpretative life-account of H.'s feats and services. Though remaining on the surface of interpretation, Iyer's estimate is nevertheless quite correct and good, except that it is at times blurred by a tendency to transplant features occurring only in the Uttarakāṇḍa and other late interpolations to places in the authentic parts of the Rm. with seemingly 'similar outlook' and draw general conclusions, e.g. when he, in a way similar to Srinivasa Sastrī's, applies the reference to H.'s amnesia in the Uttarakāṇḍa to several seemingly similar instances in the rest of the work: "Sugrīva could have been advised to take refuge in the precincts of the Āśrama of of Sage Matanga, which was a forbidden ground to Vālī. But
Hanumān did not remember it. When Vibhīṣaṇa sought refuge under Rāma, Hanumān could have mentioned how the former had interceded on his behalf when Rāvaṇa ordered his death. When Sītā was unjustly suspected by her husband, Hanumān could have countered it by what he had seen of her in the Āśoka garden. Lastly, when Rāma, on his return journey, stayed in the Ādrama of Bharadwāja and sent Hanumān to find out the attitude of Bharata and bring him word, Hanumān went to Nandīgrāma and stayed away with Bharata. He never brought word to Rāma. These lapses can only be attributed to the curse pronounced by the sages."

For criticism see both under Ramaswami Sastri p. 532 f and Srinivasa Sastri pp. 534 ff.

K. S. Ramaswami Sastri

"The character of Hanumān is one of the most loveable and admirable characters ever painted by any poet. He has a remarkable intuitive sense of what is most appropriate on each occasion. This supreme quality is rare. But even rarer is its combination in him with wisdom, nobility of mind, disciplined speech, supreme humility and heroic action. Vāyu (the wind-god, his procreator), Sugrīva and Jāmbavān bear testimony to his strength and valour, wisdom and skill... But the best estimates of his great qualities are found in the words of Rāma and Sītā. Rāma especially praises his learning and his clarity, appropriateness and perfection of speech .................................................................

These qualities are exhibited by him throughout the poem from the time when he first meets Rāma and speaks in such a way as to win his confidence and affection (Kiṣkindhā., III). It was by his wisdom that Rāma was led to seek the friendship of Sugrīva.
When he sees Sītā in the Aśoka-Vana, he speaks in her dialect about Daśaratha and Rāma without obtruding himself before her and frightening her by his sudden and unexpected appearance. When he speaks to Rāvana, he hints at much more than he says and Rāvana is astonished at his diplomatic skill, subtlety and suggestiveness. The greatest hit in that speech is his telling Rāvana, *You know Vāli already, Rāma slew him with a single arrow* ...

When in the war council each leader gives his opinion against the acceptance of Vibhīṣana, Hanumān keeps quiet till he is asked by Rāma and even then he speaks with deference and self-abasement and from a lofty angle of vision which is in consonance with Rāma's divine attitude. It is he who brings the life giving herb and saves the army at a critical moment.

These excellencies are all allied to the rarest and greatest human excellency, viz., limitless devotion to Rāma. He feels, speaks and acts like an instrument of God... His sole desire in life is to love God and Rāma blesses him and says that he will live as a Chiranjīva (an immortal) and as long as Rāma's story lives in the hearts of men (Uttara., XL.15,16,20,21)."

Criticism: Though Sastrī's analysis does not go very deep, it is correct in its essentials. Like most of the other scholars he does not dissociate character-features in the earlier Rāmāyana from those in late interpolations. We also do not accept interpretations like - "Hanumān's sole desire in life was to love God." Apart from the indefensibility of the assumption that R. is an avatāra in the early Rm., there is no indication whatever in the author's or H.'s words that the latter oriented his actions in devotion to God.
In an earlier, more comprehensive (though not much more deep-going) article 'Valmiki's Portrait Gallery - XVII', Ramaswami Sastri has given some further illustrations and has also responded to some of the controversial points raised by Srinivasa Sastri. See below. Ramaswami Sastri vehemently rejects the idea that Valmiki had an intention to delineate H.'s amnesia and failures to convince his counter-partners. It may be remarked here that, while he launches sound counter-arguments, in a way similar to our arguments, against some of the controversial issues of Srinivasa Sastri and he rightly points out—a fact which we have failed to recognize—that even in the Uttarakanda there is no curse by the rṣis to the effect that H. should forget other things than his prowess, his attempt to interpret away apparent instances of amnesia as they occur in late interpolations of the Yuddhakanda appears somewhat artificial, as he fails to recognize the deeper cause of incongruity: the mere fact that they constitute interpolated passages or are due to an interpolation. As an illustration of the way in which Ramaswami Sastri rejects, on well-grounded reasons, Srinivasa's position, we quote a few examples:

"Hanumān no doubt suggests Angada's coronation to Tārā (IV.XXI.11). That was evidently said to assuage her grief and not because of Hanumān's amnesia or loss of memory in respect of Sugrīva's interests. Govindarāja says: aṅgadāḥbhīṣoṣaṃ tu tārādṛṣṭaḥ khaṅkṣantarye dārśitam. Tārā replies to him: "I have no authority in matters of sovereignty. That power is in Sugrīva. In such matters the paternal uncle is the proper authority and not the mother." (IV.XXI 12 to 15). Vālī thereupon asks Sugrīva to rule the kingdom and to protect Angada (IV.XXII 5 to 7). Thus this is not a case of the failure of Hanumān's diplomacy. Angada was not the lawful heir. His turn for rule would come only after Sugrīva. There was no law of primogeniture here."
"It is then said that when Angada was very despondent as the period of one month given by Sugrīva was exceeded while wandering in Swayamprabhā's cave and he prepared to fast and die, Hanumān's advice did not succeed and hence there was a case of failure of Hanumān. I have already discussed this episode at great length. In Angada's then mood he was unwilling to heed sound advice. Who ever said that Hanumān would never fail? He failed in getting his advice accepted by Rāvana. He gave sound advice to Angada. If the latter did not heed it, how could that fact be urged against Hanumān?

Nor do I see any failure of Hanumān when Sītā refused to allow him to carry her on his back to Rāma. In his excess of zeal he offered to do so; but she convinced him that that would not be the proper course. How is there any question of success or failure here? Nor is there any question of failure when he tells Sītā that he wants to punish the demonesses who oppressed her and when she tells him that the higher and diviner law is the law of forgiveness."

V. S. Srinivasa Sastri

(1) "The curse laid on him by the rishis in early childhood, viz., that he shall not remember his strength till at the right moment he is reminded of it. The curse evidently had other implications. Hanuman's loss or failure of memory was not in respect of his strength only but of necessary particulars at time of need. This AMNESIA was a source of weakness in him. Instances of Hanuman's amnesia:
Forgot Matanga's asrama being a sanctuary.
Forgot that Sugrīva had done his duty and that he himself
(Hanuman) was at fault. Forgot Rama's promise to Sugriva to bestow Vali's kingdom on him, and suggested Angada's accession to the throne to Tara.  

(2) "Among Hanuman's Failures, two were conspicuous:

(1) Failed to get Tara to countenance Angada's coronation.

(2) Failed to turn Angada away from his resolve not to return to Kishkindha but remain behind in the vicinity of Swayamprabha's cave.

Failed in his attempt to persuade Sita to ride on his back and return to Rama.

Failed to get Sita to sanction his wreaking vengeance on the Rakshasa women."  

Criticism:

(1) Sastri bases his argumentation on a story of the Uttarakāṇḍa which describes the consequences of a curse by the rṣis on H.: H. began to molest the rṣis out of pride in his boons whereupon they cursed him to the effect that he would forget for a long time his real prowess. When there was a fight between Su. and Vālī, H. was on Su.'s side, for because of the curse he forgot his real prowess and remained inactive like a tied-up elephant. This the author applies to other apparent instances in the earlier part of the narrative. We know that the Uttarakāṇḍa is interpolated and hence this procedure of interpreting certain seemingly inexplicable factors as amnesia is highly doubtful. As a matter of fact, No. 1 of the instances mentioned by Sastri is found in a late interpolation. No. 2 is based on a misinterpretation. The reason for this we have given earlier in the context of Su.'s character. See pp. 468 f. And that fact that H., while trying to console Tārā, encourages her to forget the death of Vālī and to see to Angada's future and install him on the throne,
while it is the obvious expectation of everybody that Su, will ascend the throne, may not be taken as an instance of amnesia but rather as a means to divert Tārā's attention from her beloved husband, who is dead, to her beloved son Āgada, to whom the whole future is still open, thereby, however, unintentionally adding fuel to the fire, as Tārā, in her reply, will give vent to her full devotion to her husband, saying that she does not care for a hundred sons like Āgada etc. This interpretation appears to us much more natural than Sastrī's.

(2) Ad (1) see above.

Ad (2) By this the author does not stress so much H.'s failure than Āgada's stubbornness and obliqueness of mind as well as the Vns.' fickleness. Cf. p. 479.

For interpretation of H.'s other two 'failures' see pp. 508 ff. and 512. On the whole, Sastrī makes the mistake of being too hypercritical of the exterior efficiency of H.'s actions, while disregarding the psychological coherence between H.'s actions and the others' response or the inner depth of H.'s psyche, which the poet attempts to delve into.

1) See pp. 141 ff. The following portions are late interpolations: 39, 40 ff., 41, 42, 44 - 46.

2) Though s. 14 may be an early interpolation and does not break the homogeneity of the narrative, the lamentation it conveys is not of much depth, but betrays a conventional pattern.

3) Though s. 38 may be an early interpolation, it is a mere extension of earlier pathetic scenes. See, pp. 170 ff.

5) pp. 117 ff.

5a) Cf. the enlightening chapter on 'Heroic Poetry and History' in Boaara's work (pp.508-536), which is based on a critical evaluation of material presented in heroic poetry in the light of de facto historical data.

"Much heroic poetry has an element of the fabulous in it, and though this does not necessarily discredit the other elements, it raises doubts about the reliability of poets as witnesses to a real past. There is nothing to prevent a poet inventing if he wishes to do so, and in a non-scientific age the lack of a critical spirit makes such inventions more likely than not. The poets may honestly believe that they are telling the truth, but their idea of truth may be not the same as ours, and it is possible that we may be most disposed to doubt them when they speak with the greatest assurance in the belief that they derive their information from gods or spirits. The material of heroic poetry can be accepted as historical when it is confirmed by external evidence and hardly otherwise." (p.510)

"It is then clear that many of the characters of heroic poetry have a historical origin, and it is possible that others, on whom external information is lacking, may have a similar origin. On the other hand, when we look carefully into these historical elements, we find that the poets have taken many liberties with them and often departed from what actually happened. Indeed this is almost inevitable in an art which derives its materials from oral tradition and allows considerable freedom in the treatment of them. When a story is passed from generation to generation, it will surely change much of its character and suffer from omissions and additions. With nothing to guide him except his memory of performances by other poets the poet cannot but present his story in a new way, and the better he is at his art, the greater are his changes likely to be. Moreover, a story which reflects conditions of a past age may not be fully intelligible to a later generation and suffer just because a poet wants to make it clear and easy. But above all, the greatest enemy of historical accuracy is the creative and artistic spirit which likes to impose its own shape and pattern on given materials and to make something new out of them. Once this happens, much that the historian would think important may be lost, and the main point of a story transformed. Indeed the bard's whole view of history is not historical but dramatic. They do not see events as historians do; they are much more interested in personalities and vivid episodes than in great movements or the vagaries of politics. In reading their work we must look out for a tendency to shape material in the interest of artistic needs." (p.519)
"Heroic poetry, then, seems to be on the whole a poor substitute for history. Though it contains real persons and real events, it often connects them in unreal relations, and may even add unreal persons and unreal events when the fullness of the narrative demands them. This means, that except in a few exceptional cases, we have no right to approach heroic poetry as if it were a record of fact. Its materials are largely historical, but its arrangement and adaptation of them are not. But of course it has a great relevance to history in a different way. It does not record faithfully what happened, but it shows what men believed and felt." (p.535)

6) Hanumān. KK XXVIII 143 - 147, esp. p.144.


8) KK XX 619-622.

9) pp.621 ff.

10) pp 247-305. For reference we quote mainly the summary of his lectures on Hanumān pp. XX-XXII as it states the problems in a briefer and more survey-like manner. Only crucial parts of divergency are referred to. All the points referring to late interpolations are omitted.

11) p. XX.

12) pp. XX-XXI.

13) We leave out from our purview works like Iyengar, pp.159-164; N. R. Navlekar, A New Approach to the Rāmāyaṇa. Jabalpur 1957; M. V. Sridatta Sarma, Hanuman. VK LII 487-491; V. Srinivasan, Glory of Hanuman. BBJ VIII No.19 49-55. Iyengar's exposition is more an interpretative life-account than an analysis of characterization. Navlekar speaks only in a few occasional lines about H.'s character while interpreting the story (history) of Rāma in his own way - so that no clear picture about his view of H. emerges. Sarma gives only little place to H. as characterized in the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa within the frame of his article, and he dwells mainly on some exterior facets like Rāma's first meeting with H., H.'s birth story, only fleetingly mentioning some of H.'s character-traits without giving any deeper interpretation. Srinivasan's article is a eulogy on H., not a scientific analysis of his character.
THE VANARA HOSTS

The Vn. hosts as such are not characterized in a conspicuous manner. Being strictly under the command of their army-leaders, they do not possess any individuality of their own. Their character-trait are thus traits characteristic of a host (often more of a monkey-herd, 'harigana') and not the traits of individual personalities, and therefore are only few and of a common, often monkeyish, nature:

1) They feel panick-stricken and run amuck in face of alleged danger (a) and feel dissspirited in the face of difficulties (b), e.g. at the sight of the ocean (IV 63.7 ff.)

2) They manifest their fickleness of mind in their easy succumbing to Āṅgada's and Tārā's ill advice of either undergoing prayopaveśa or remaining in the cave, in their obstinacy to listen to H.'s well-meant exhortation and falling in with Āṅgada's rejection of H.'s advice and his rebuke of Su. (See s.v. Hanumān pa 418f).

3) They give vent to their exuberance of joy at H.'s successful mission by roaring and making wild gesticulations (V 55 end) and by indulging wildly in the enjoyment of drinking honey, an enjoyment accompanied by extravagant gesticulations of delirium and a mischievous pleasure in devastating the Madhuvana, and resorting to a kind of violence when being interfered with (V 59-62 passim).

4) They appear awe-inspiring, powerful and impetuous when in battle-array or on the march (a) - e.g. IV 30.23-27; VI 4: a most impressive account which is enhanced by the depiction of
the Vns.' exuberant gesticulations and their indulging in the enjoyments of drinking honey and eating fruits, and in various sportive activities: uprooting trees, tearing down creepers, climbing rocks, bathing in ponds and lakes etc.; VI 31.19 ff. and 33 ff. --, or while helping Nala to build the bridge (VI 15.14 ff.) (b).

5) They appear impetuous, valiant and heroic while fighting against the Rks. warriors, but easily lose courage in face of irresistible Rks. like Akampana, Kumbhakarna, Indrajit, Rv. etc. resulting in their running amuck, fleeing or taking shelter. But once encouraged, they take courage again, particularly in presence of R., L., H., Aṅgada, Su. etc., yet often lose courage again. At the defeat of a Rk. by R., L., or one of the others, they give vent to their exuberance of joy by roaring and sometimes wild gesticulations. This is a constantly re-occurring pattern in the battle scenes of the Yuddhakanda, with one or the other elements missing depending on the gravity of the situation.

6) They enjoy eating fruits and flowers on their way to Ayodhya.

A few instances to illustrate some of the more general traits:

ad 1a) Su. is frightened and disspirited and expresses his apprehension to the counsellors that the two intruders (R. and L.) are spies of Vālī in disguise. At that, the counsellors sojourn to the summit of the hill and encircle Su., while the retinue of the Vns. in their panic-stricken flight create a big tumult (IV 2.9 ff.). - At the sight of R., the retinue of Vālī's Vns. run away in sheer fright like animals from a herd, whose herd-leader has been killed -- so that Tārā asks them why they are running away, leaving their king behind, before whom they always used to march, and assures them that R. has killed Vālī from a
long distance. Yet, they are still so much frightened by R.'s Death-like appearance and the impact of his thunder-bolt-like arrows that they urge Tārā to hurriedly return to her son and protect him, to let the heroes protect the city and install Aṅgada on the throne lest the Vns. will take possession of the city of Vālī... (IV 19.5ff.) When the Vns. see I. ablaze with rage at their pulling up huge trees and rocks in self-defence, they run into hundred directions (IV 30.18-20).

ad 5) We have already mentioned that this pattern is constantly reoccurring in the battle-scenes with more or less variations, with one or the other elements missing depending on the gravity of the situation. In the first clash with the Rks. (VI 32), in some of the combats like against Dhūmrākṣa (VI 41-42), Prahasta (VI 45-46), the trait of the Vn. hosts losing courage is altogether absent. In some combats, as against Akampana (VI 43-44), the mere presence of one of the heroes makes them resume their courage. In the combats against Rv. (VI 87ff. passim), Kumbhakarṇa (VI 54-55) and Indrajit (VI 67-68 passim) the stress is more on the Vns.' succumbour to fear than on their valour and impetuousity. In the combat against Kumbhakarṇa we have a classical example of how the Vns., repeatedly lose courage and run away in fear, and only after being rebuked and encouraged by Aṅgada again and again or feeling assured of the presence of one of their leaders, resume their valiant and heroic fighting. In the battle against Indrajit the Vn. hosts' reaction is similar though they emerge as more brave and heroic.

In the delineation of these character-traits of the Vn. hosts the author consistently dwells on their physical appearance, movements and gesticulations, often as intended to be characteristic of monkeys, (even in battle-scenes, the Vn. hosts fight in a
manner reminiscent of monkeys: They attack the Rks. with teeth and nails, hurl trees and stones against them etc. In fact, R. orders the Vns. not to assume any human form VI 28.32 -

\[
\text{na caiva mānuṣaṁ rūpaṁ kāryaṁ haribhirāhāve /}
\text{eśa bhavatu naḥ saṁjña yuddhe'sṁītvānare bale // }
\]

so that, they, as a whole, emerge as less human - [than monkey-] like than individual heroes like Vālī, Su., H. or Āṅgada. It is only at the coronation of R. that the Vn. hosts as a whole are spoken of as assuming a human form (VI 116.29).

While the Vn. hosts as such are characterized in a common way, the Vn. chiefs (yūthapās) emerge at times as possessing some individual status of their own, though largely they are also characterized on a common pattern. Their common traits are brightness of appearance (e.g. IV 32.6), efficiency in directing the Vn. armies, valour and heroism in fighting against the Rk. warriors (Yuddhakaṇḍa passim). Even though some of the senāpatis appear occasionally as excelling in their valour and heroism, e.g. Nīla, there is no clear distinction between them in their capacities (except perhaps in the power of leaping, cf. IV 64.5ff.)

However, some of the Vn. chiefs, in addition to their heroic dimension, appear endowed with more individual traits. Jāmbavān, the chief of the Rksa, is a wise, aged counsellor, who guides the discussion among the Vn. chiefs about the means of how to cross the ocean, and, laudingly drawing their attention to the unexcelled power of H.'s locomotion, encourages and requests him to leap over to Laṅkā. Nāla, the son of Viśvakarman, is commissioned by the Ocean to build the bridge over the sea, Suṣeṣa is the medical doctor of the Vns., etc.

Āṅgada, for some time the commander-in-chief of the whole army, is the most individual character of the Vns. prescinding from Vālī, Su. and H. This is mainly due to his association with
Vālī and Su. In valour and heroism as displayed in the battle-scenes, he is next only to H. His character-portrait is, however, very fluorescent. Though he appears in many places as an efficient commander, exhortator and counsellor of the Vns. and is recognized by H. to be endowed with intelligence in all its eight essential qualities and with the fourteen virtues, he appears yet as moody, oblique-minded, suspicious and stubborn in situations of despair (see s.v. Hanumān p. 47 ff.) Thus, on the whole, he is perhaps closer to Vālī than to H. 2)
C

THE RAKSASAS
MARIGA
A SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS
OF THE CHARACTERIZATION OF MARICA
Resume of references to Marica in the Balakanda
(18.4ff; 19.18; 23.8-10; 29.9ff.)

In 18.4ff. and 19.18 Marica is mentioned as one of the two Rks. who (instigated by Rv. 19.18) spoil Viśvāmitra's sacrifice, and for the destruction of whom Viśvāmitra requests D. for R.'s assistance (18.8ff.)

In 23.8-10 Viśvāmitra, in his account of Tātakā, mentions how Marica, her son, became a Rk. on account of a curse by Agastya while Tātakā and her son were harassing the sage.

S. 29.9ff. gives a short account of how Marica and Subahu, assuming illusory forms, like clouds rushing on in the rainy season and covering the sky, come rushing on and rain thick blood over the sacrificial altar, and how R., discharging a Mānāvāstra on Marica's chest, flings him a hundred yojanas into the midst of the sea, where he keeps rolling deprived of his consciousness, and how he kills the other Rk.

III 33.36-37
III 34.21-22, 35

Marica as a conscientious and well-wishing sage dissuades Ravana from his evil plan

Translation:
Having gone to that other side of the ocean, the lord of rivers, he saw a hermitage in the interior of a solitary, holy, lovely forest (33.36). There he saw the abstemious Rk. called Marica, wearing a black deer-skin, matted locks and bark-garment (33.37).

Having heard his account of R., noble-souled Marica's face became shrivelled and he was greatly frightened (34.21). Knowing R.'s prowess in the great forest, he, with frightened and sorrowful heart, told Rv., with folded hands, the truth: words beneficial for him as well as for himself (34.22).

Having heard those words of the lord of Rks., learned Marica, skilled in speech, answered the lord of Rks. (35.1) "It is easy to find persons, O king, who always speak pleasing words, but one who speaks or listens to something that is unpleasant and wholesome, is difficult to meet with (2). Not having spies and being fickle, you certainly don't know R., possessed of great heroism and endowed with great merits, resembling Indra and Varuna (3). I wish that it will be well, O dear one, with the world of all the Rks. I wish that enraged R. will not deprive the world of the Rks. (4). I wish that the daughter of Janaka has not been born for the end of your life and that there will be no great calamity on account of S. (5). I wish that the city of Lanka will not perish with you and the Rks., having you as its lord, who is addicted to sensual pleasures and unfettered (6). For an evil-minded king like you, addicted to sensual pleasure, ill-behaved and under the spell of sin, kills himself and his own kindred and the kingdom (7). The enhancer of the joy of Ks. has not been forsaken by his father, nor is he in any way transgressing his limits, nor is he greedy or ill-behaved or disgracing the Kṣatriya (8), nor is he devoid of dharma and merits or harsh, nay, he is intent on the welfare of all beings (9). Seeing his father deceived by Kai., the noble-one set out to the forest, saying 'I will make my father truthful to his words' (10). Out of a desire to render service to Kai. and his father D., he abandoned kingdom and enjoyments and entered the Daṇḍaka forest (11). R. is not harsh, O dear one, or ignorant or unrestrained, falsehood is unheard of him, and you should not speak such (12). R. is dharma embodied, is virtuous, of true valour, the king of the whole world as is Vāsava of the Gods (13). How do you wish to take away by force Vaidehi, who is protected by her own brightness, like, as if you would, the lustre from the sun (14)? Don't enter R. taking the form of fire - blazing with brightness - R., whose arrows are flames, who is unassailable, whose bow and arrow are fuel in the battle (15). Don't approach, O dear one, R. taking the form of Death, whose bow is a blazing mouth designed to devour, whose arrows are flames, who is impetuous, carrying bow and arrow, heroic, and the destroyer of enemy hosts, at the cost of your kingdom, happiness and your dear life (16-17). For immeasurable
is that power of his to whom that daughter of Janaka belongs; you are not able to abduct her, whose refuge is the R.'s bow in the forest (18). An ever-devoted wife dearer to him than even his life, graceful S. is like the flame of blazing fire (19). What is the use of making this vain effort, 0 lord of the Rks.? If you are slain by him in the battle-field, your life is being forfeited thus, and life and happiness and kingdom are very difficult to obtain (20). So consult with all the righteous ministers headed by Vibhisana, and, when you have formed your resolution, have considered the relative strength and weakness of merits and demerits, and truly considered your own strength and that of Rāghava and ascertained your benefits, io what is proper (21-22). But I don't think it is proper for you to meet with the son of the Kosala king in battle, for listen further to these excellent proper and wholesome words, 0 lord of the night-rovers (23)."

Analysis of characterization:

Marīcaka emerges, in his attempt to dissuade Rv. from his intention to capture S. and do this by using him as a means, as a conscientious and well-meaning counsellor. Righteous himself through his living an ascetic life, he rightly assesses R.'s incomparable heroism and greatness of character against Rv.'s evil intention, which is prompted by his addiction to pleasure, viciousness and fickleness of character, as inevitably leading to the misfortune of Rv. and that of the whole Rks. world. Basing himself on this assessment, he does everything to inculcate this upon Rv. by exposing, and warning him of, the dire consequences (eradication of the whole world of the Rks. at the hands of R.) that lurking behind Rv.'s heedless proposal, and by disillusioning him of the erroneous presumption he cherishes that R. has come to the forest as a result of an expulsion by his father or has violated dharma or possesses any of the vices enumerated by Rv., whilst he lavishly portrays R.'s righteousness (he is dharma incarnate) and virtues, as well as S.'s un-touchable brilliance, and his fire-brand-and death-like heroism and valour in battle, against all of which Rv. will be sheer unable to accomplish his task and will bring upon himself the
destruction of his life, happiness and kingdom.

Marīca emerges, thus, as a conscientious and well-wishing sage. The question arises whether for V. this conscientiousness of Marīca is genuine conscientiousness or whether it is the result of a fear for his life and then a diplomatic trick to escape the wiles of Rv. For it is Marīca who is first and foremost affected by Rv.'s decision, and Marīca's reaction to this proposal of Rv. is one of fear and his words are labelled as beneficial for Rv. as well as for himself. Furthermore, in the following sargas (36-37) V. makes Marīca dwell on the motive of fear caused by previous meetings with R., and the very fact that Rv. selects Marīca to assist him in the carrying out of his evil plan and expects him to undertake the heinous trick of assuming the form of a deer, as well as also these two sargas prove that Marīca was not always that virtuous saint as he appears now and that a falling back into his old life is not unexpected if the Rk. turned to a saintly life. In fact, he finally succumbs to Rv.'s threats. In order to come to a solution to this problem, we have to make clear-cut distinctions:

1) Ss.36-37 are interpolations and hence do not manifest the original intention of V. in drawing Marīca's character.

2) Even then these two sargas need not be understood as manifesting Marīca's fear as the primary motive, but are better interpreted as showing an attempt to strengthen his efforts of dissuading Rv. from a heedless act which will bring misfortune upon him.

3) That Marīca has not always been a virtuous saint and finally will succumb to his Rk. wiles again in the face of Rv.'s threats, does not exclude the poet's intention to show Marīca as having been of genuinely firm and saintly character for some time. In fact, his succumbour to the threats of Rv.
in full apprehension that he will be killed by R., a succumb-
our not without a renewed attempt of dissuasion, in which he
boldly attacks the meanness of those counsellors who advised
him to rush to his own ruin and repeats his prediction that
Rv. will meet his destruction together with all the Rks., may
be interpreted as the resignation to the threats of one whose
wilfulness is incurable even by the most well-meaning counsel.
In fact, we see Mārīcā declare that he will be satisfied to
die at the hands of R., but he is expressing sorrow at the
thought of Rv. being destroyed with his whole army
(III 39.17ff.).

4) As for the reason of Mārīcā's reaction of fear, it may be
deduced from the context following that it is not the result
of mere personal fear of life, but the apprehension of dire
consequences entailed by Rv.'s proposal, - an aspect on which
the poet so much dwells.

5) This interpretation is also much more natural than the
assumption that Mārīcā's profound admonition, rising to such
a high estimation of human virtues, should be mere diplomatic
skill.

Classification:

Literary basis:
exposition: objective - descriptive - explicit.
Marica describes his encounters with Rama as a further attempt to dissuade Ravana from his determination to abduct Sita.

Contents:

Marica first relates how he, prompted by his heroism and his strength that is equal to that of a thousand snakes, roamed through the Dandaka forest, creating terror among the people with his parigrâha weapons and feeding on the flesh of râis, and how he one day met with R. while entering the hermitage of Visvâmtra, but ignored him on account of his childish appearance and rushed towards the sacrificial altar, whereupon he was hurled, unconscious, into the sea a hundred yojanas away by R.'s arrow, who however, spared his life. With the account of this unpleasant experience he connects a renewed warning of the dreadful disaster which will befall Rv. as well as all the Rks. if he should engage in battle with R. against his well-meant advice, and which Marica exposes to him in grim visions, advising him to be contented with his thousands of wives and not to deprive R. of his wife if he wants to enjoy respect, wealth, kingdom and life for long.

Immediately after this, Marica relates another encounter of his with R.: While roaming through the Dandaka forest in the form of a deer with sharp horns, blazing tongue and large teeth, and harassing râis and eating their flesh and blood, he came upon R. and S. living an abstemious life, and, having his former enmity in remembrance, immediately rushed upon R. R. discharged three arrows, which came flying with the velocity of Suparna and the Wind, but having previously experienced R.'s prowess, he cunningly stepped aside while the two Rks. accompanying him were killed. Since that time he has been living as an ascetic: Obsessed by fear, he sees R. - clad in bark, carrying his bow in his hand like Death the noose, in every tree, sees the whole forest pervaded with ten-thousands of R.s, sees R. in dreams and startles at names beginning with r like ratna and ratha. After this account of his encounter with R. and his consequent obsession by the fear of R., Marica ends up with the words - "I know his power, it is not proper for you to engage in battle with him. Fight with R. in battle or show forbearance; O Rk., if you want
to see me, you should not speak to me about R. If you don't attend to these words as they are being spoken by me, who am seeking the welfare of a friend, you will lose your life in battle today together with your relatives, slain by R. with swift and straight arrows."

Analysis of characterization:

We have already raised the question whether Marīca's fear of R. is not designed by the author of these two sargas to reflect Marīca's primary motive for his endeavour to dissuade Rv. In reply to this question we have to say: Definitely this is not intended in s. 36, which with its long-drawn warnings is exactly in line with the previous one, the only distinction being that Marīca illustrates his warnings with an incidence from his own experience. However, in s. 37 the personal aspect of Marīca's fear is so much more in the foreground that one might get the impression as if Marīca wanted to dissuade Rv. in order to escape from his own imminent destiny, that the proposal of Rv. conjures in him up the dreadful memory of his encounter with R. and arouses in him anew that mania of fear by which he has been haunted ever since those days of encounter with k. V. 19 –

ране ранена yudhyasva kaamāḥ va kuru rākṣasa /
na te rāmakathā kāryā vadi mām dṛṣṭumicochaśa)

also seems to indicate this line of interpretation. But still it is most doubtful whether this was actually in the mind of the author who interpolated this sarga, for he makes Marīca close with the same (though short) warning which constitutes the substance of Marīca's previous exposition, and makes him asseverate his well-meant intention in the same way. We come perhaps more closely to the truth if we assume the following explanation: The author of ss. 36-37 intended to extend Marīca's original speech of dissuasion (s. 35) by introducing two illustrations from Marīca's personal encounter with R., which has made a lasting impression upon him, so as to highlight his claim of the
invincible power and heroism of R., each of the two illustrations being rounded up by a reiterated warning of the grim disaster impending over Rv. if he does not listen to his well-meant advice. In order to highlight R.'s power, the author contrasts it with Mārīca's mania of fear, the result of a lasting impression of his encounter with him, prompted also by his intention to give the listener a glimpse into a weak side of Mārīca's character. But on the whole, he does not take away anything from V.'s conception of Mārīca as a conscientious and well-wishing counsellor.

Classification:

Literary basis:
exposition: objective - narrative § descriptive - explicit

Traits:
Same as in s.35/ Mārīca's former relentless cruelty in harassing virtuous sages and feeding on their flesh/ his conversion through an awe-some encounter with R. and his subsequent mania of fear of R., which has imprinted in him a lasting impression of R.'s prowess.

III 39. 40.1-3

Marica resigns to the wishes of Ravana after a last attempt to dissuade him

Translation:

Having been made to understand harsh words by the king, the night-rover Mārīca spoke harsh words to the lord of the Rks. (1) - "Which sinner has advised this destruction of yours together with that of your sons, your kingdom and your ministers, O night-rover (2) ? Which sinner does not rejoice with you being happy?
Who has advised you this gate to death by way of a remedy (3)? Surely, O night-rover, your enemies, lacking heroism, wish you to perish obstructed by one who is more powerful (4). Which mean person speaking ill-disposed words, who wishes you to perish by your own deeds, O night-rover, has given you advice (5)? Why, O Rv., are your ministers, deserving to be slain, not killed, who do not restrain you altogether when you mounted the wrong path (6)? For a king who is addicted to pleasure and has resorted to a bad path ought to be restrained altogether by virtuous ministers, but you, who ought to be restrained, are not being restrained (7). By the kindness of the king, ministers obtain justice, wealth, pleasure and fame, O night-rover, best of conquerors (8). But if it is the contrary, all that becomes futile, O Rv.; on account of the demerits of the king all the other people obtain misfortune (9). In fact, dharma and victory, O best of conquerors, are the king’s foundation; that’s why a king has to be protected in all conditions (10). The kingdom cannot be protected by one who is stern, O night-rover, or by one who is harsh or by one who is insolent, O Rk. (11). Ministers who are of stern advice are quickly ruined, together with him, in perils like chariots with slow charioteers (12). Many good people in the world, who practise true dharma, are, through the fault of others, ruined together with their attendants (13). Subjects protected by a harsh and stern king, O Rv., do not increase like sheep protected by a jackal (14). Certainly, O Rv., all the Rks. will perish, whose cruel, evil-minded and uncontrolled king you are (15). This is a ghastly bolt from the blue you have met with. What is there fortunate in it that you will perish together with your army (16)? Soon after killing me, this R. will slay you also. I have accomplished my object if I die slain by this enemy (17). Consider me to be killed at the very sight of R. and know yourself to be killed with all your relatives as soon as you have taken away S. (18). If you take away S. from the hermitage, assisted by me, neither you exist nor I, neither Lanka nor the Rks. (19). Though being restrained by me, who am desirous of your welfare, you will not bear these words, O night-rover, for men who are as good as dead, men whose life is doomed, do not accept the good spoken by their friends (20)."

Having spoken such harsh words, Mārica then, distressed out of fear of the lord of night-rovers, said to Rv. - "Let us go (1). As soon as I am seen again by that wearer of bow and arrow and sword, my life is destroyed by his arrow aimed at my destruction (2), but what can I do for you evil-minded one? So I go, dear one, farewell to you, O night-rover (3)."
Analysis of characterization:

In reply to Rv.'s scornful rebuke of Marīca's speech of dissuasion, which he brands as disrespectful and unbefitting - the more so as he has not asked his advice but his help, and to his stern command to him to act according to his instruction, failing which he (Marīca) will be put to death, Marīca acts courageously by countering Rv. with another final attempt to dissuade him: He makes it clear to Rv. that those counsellors who have advised him to abduct S. have done so with a devilish desire to see his ruin, that, owing to his lack of merits and his sternness and cruelty, ministers give ill-meant advice and do not restrain him from his wrong path, and all the people are doomed to misfortune because of his cruelty and viciousness. He winds up his account with the prediction that his instant death at the hands of R. - which at least will give him a feeling of satisfaction - will be followed by his (Rv.'s) destruction and that of all the Rks. But knowing Rv.'s obliqueness of mind too well, he feels the futility of his talk and resignedly succumbs to the will of Rv. in fear of his threats, but also in full apprehension of his death at the hands of R.

A succumbour in face of threats? A resignation in face of the futility of a well-meant advice? A willing acceptance of his apprehended destiny? Which of these three attitudes offering themselves as possible explanations to one listening to this last speech of Marīca is for the poet the attitude that holds good of Marīca? This question we have to answer in view of the whole context. V. conceives Marīca in spite of his elevated saintly role as a Rk.: He refers to his former cruelty and harassing of sages (III 41.4-5, which is a non-interpolated reference) and makes him act with full Rk. māyā again after his succumbour to the threats of Rv. (see s.40 and ff. passim) - so much so that Marīca even feels an urge to eat those deer which approach him
during his magic show - 40.26 :

\[\text{upagamya samāghrāya vidravanti āśē ṭaśā} /\]
\[\text{rākṣasah so'pi tānvanyānmpgānmpgevadhē rataḥ //}\]

So it is this feature which distinguishes Mārica as a Rk. that the poet must have had in his mind when portraying Mārica's reaction to Rv.'s threats. Though, prompted by a high conscientiousness and concern for the welfare of Rv., he makes all efforts to dissuade Rv. from his intention and even courageously counters Rv.'s threats with a new attempt to dissuade him, he - so V. wants to show - is not a hero but a Rk. in flesh and blood, and so he succumbs. But V. also clearly shows that his succumbour is not a succumbour of cowardice but of resignation and a succumbour which leads him straight to his destruction.

Classification:

Literary basis:

exposition : objective - descriptive - explicit

Traits:

Mārica's courage to counter Rv.'s threats with a new attempt to dissuade him, yet his final succumbour in the realization of the futility of any well-meant advice, a succumbour which reflects his ultimate Rk. nature, but is not a succumbour of cowardice but a succumbour of resignation in the full apprehension of his own death.
A SYNTHETIC VIEW OF THE AUTHOR'S CONCEPTION
AND PORTRAIT OF MARICA'S CHARACTER
Marica's characterization consists of two layers: an original Vālmīkian layer and an interpolated layer.

In the original layer, Marica is predominantly characterized as a conscientious and well-wishing sage-Rk., who, assessing R.'s unexcelled heroism and greatness of character against Rv.'s viciousness as inevitably leading to the destruction of Rv. and all the Rks., does everything to dissuade Rv. from his intention in the best interest of Rv.,—his own earlier cruel Rk. career, consisting in the harassing of sages in the Daṇḍakā forest, being merely implied in the fact that Rv. expects him to undertake the vicious trick of assuming the form of a deer and tempting S., and being alluded to occasionally as e.g. in L.'s premonition to S., but otherwise not being insisted upon. Marica tries to dissuade Rv. first by exposing, and warning him of, the dire consequences lurking behind his heedless proposal, by disillusioning him of the erroneous assumption that R. has come to the forest as a result of an expulsion by his father or has committed some kind of transgression or the like, while lavishly portraying his righteousness and virtues and Death-like heroism in battle, against which Rv. will be sheer unable to accomplish his task and will bring upon himself the destruction of his life, happiness and kingdom. When Rv. scornfully rebukes his dissuasion and sternly commands him to follow his instructions, failing which he will be put to death, he has enough courage to boldly counter Rv.'s threats with a new attempt to dissuade him, in which he makes it clear to him that those counsellors who advised him to abduct S. have done so with a devilish desire to see his destruction, that owing to his lack of merits and his sternness and cruelty ministers give ill-meant advice and do not restrain him from following a wrong path, and all the people are doomed because of his cruelty and viciousness, ending up with the prediction that his instant death at the hands of R. will be followed by Rv.'s own destruction and that of all the Rks.
Yet the realization of the futility of his well-meant advice to Rv. makes him succumb to Rv.'s threats and become a true Rk. again - he is not a saint of a heroic calibre, so the author wants to show - but succumb not like a coward, but as one who has given up and given up in the full apprehension of his own death.

The author of the interpolated layer has amplified Mārīca's attempt of dissuasion by making him give two illustrations of his former personal encounter with R., one of which has made such a lasting impression upon him that he has hence been obsessed by a mania of fear of R. - so as to make him highlight his claim of the invincible power and heroism of R., which is then followed by a renewed warning of the fatal consequences for Rv. The author has, thus, extended the portrait of Mārīca's character by giving us a glimpse of his former cruel Rk. activities and presenting him as of a nature extremely haunted by fear - without, however, taking away anything from 7.'s conception of him as a conscientious and well-meaning counsellor.

Various references in the Bālakāṇḍa draw Mārīca, on a line parallel to the interpolated layer in the Aranyakāṇḍa, as a Rk. harassing sages.

1) These two verses seem to be interpolated since a large number of mss. leave them out. Their function is precisely to express more emphatically the spirit conveyed by the last words of Mārīca's speech (s.39).
VIBHISANA
A SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS
OF THE CHARACTERIZATION OF VIBHISANA
V 50

Vibhisana dissuades Ravana from killing Hanuman, an envoy

Translation:

Having heard those words of the noble-souled Vā., Rv., infatuated with anger, ordered his execution, and that plan of his to be imminent, he, intent on doing his duty, reflected on what was to be done. Having determined his aim and having paid respect to the foremost of slayers of enemies in a manner that conciliatory, he, skilled in speech, then spoke the exceedingly salutary words—"O king, an execution of this monkey against dharma, is reproved by the custom of the people and worthy of you, O hero. Doubtlessly he is a haughty enemy, and an immeasurable offence has been committed by him. By the virtuous do not consider the execution of a messenger. Only many ways of punishment of a messenger have been considered (6). Disfigurement on the limbs, beating with a whip, shaving the head, as well as branding—these are the punishments they consider for a messenger, but execution of a messenger has not even been heard of by us (7). And how can one like you, whose mind is subdued by dharma and artha, whose aim is determined through the conviction of what is higher and lower, come under the subjection of anger, for the virtuous restrain their anger (8)? Neither in the exposition of dharma nor in social custom nor even in the understanding of the meaning of the śāstras is there anybody equal to you, O hero, for you are the best of all the Gods and Asuras (9). I don't see any merit in the execution of this monkey; let punishment be caused to fall upon those whom this monkey has been sent (10). This messenger, be he virtuous or not, who is directed by others, who speaks in the interest of others and is dependent on others, does not deserve execution (11). And also, if this one is killed, I don't see any other sky-ranger who would be able to come here again to the yonder side of the ocean (12). Therefore, let no effort be made to kill him, O foremost of conquerors of cities, your honour should direct his effort against the Gods together with Indra (13). If this one is killed, I don't see another messenger who would be able to incite to battle, O lover of battles, those two ill-behaved human princes, who are obstructed by a long way (14). You, who are invincible even by the Gods and Asuras, who are possessed of prowess, energy and
intelligence, 0 gratifier of the demons, should not destroy the future prospects of a battle (15). You have warriors who are bent on your welfare, heroic, concentrated, born in meritorious families, intelligent, the best of soldiers, and endowed with excellence, foremost among crores (16). Let some of your commander-in-chiefs, together with that one part of the army, approach and seize those two foolish princes, to demonstrate your power to the enemies (17).

Analysis of characterization:

Vibhīṣaṇa shows himself, in this first exposition of him by V., as a righteous and conscientious counsellor, whose conscience is aroused when he sees that his brother Rv. has lost control of himself in his anger and rashly decides to kill H. against all laws of dharma and social custom and against the better insight that the real guilt does not lie with the envoy, however provocative he may be, but with those who have commissioned him, and who thus dissuades Rv. from his intention by appealing to his good sense of righteousness, which he acknowledges, and by instigating him not to allow the chances of a battle with the culprits, R. and L., to be lost - which they would be with H.'s execution - by which he can demonstrate his power to the enemy. But in doing so, he manifests himself also as a full-blooded Rk. thinking in the spirit of, and being faithful, to his kindred, a Rk. who shares Rv.'s impressions of H.'s actions and speech as immeasurably provocative, who acknowledges Rv.'s cognizance of dharma, his knowledge of what is good and evil and his invincibility from Gods and Asuras, and who - far from intuiting that H.'s cause is in the right while that of Rv. is in the wrong 1) - himself advocates some punishment for H. in agreement with the customs, and who delights in and advocates the idea of a revenge on the real culprits, R. and L., by which Rv. can demonstrate his power to the enemy.
Translation:

Then Nikumbha, Rabhasa, the powerful Sūryaśatru, Suptaghna, Tajñakopa, Mahāpārśva, Mahodara, Agniketu, Durdhargā, the Rk. Rasmiketu, the lustrous, powerful son of Rv., Indragjita, then Prahasta, Virūpakṣa, the powerful Vajradātra, Dhūmrākṣa, Atikāya, and the Rk. Durmukha - all these Rks., taking hold of iron clubs, spears, darts, saktis, pikes, battle axes, bows and arrows and large sharpened swords, sprang up, exceedingly angry, and spoke to Rv. blazing, as it were, with brightness (1-5) - "Today we shall slay Su. and L., and mean H., who has assaulted (outraged) Laṅkā (6). Having restrained all those who have seized their weapons, Vibhīṣaṇa spoke with folded hands these words, after having told them to sit down again (7) - "An aim that cannot be obtained by even the three means of success employed against the enemy, 0 dear one, for that the wise consider heroic labour and time as appropriate (8). Heroic feats are accomplished (successful) when carried out according to the law, after a careful examination, against those who are mad or are attacked and repulsed by fate (9). But how do you wish to attack him who is vigilant, who is desirous of victory, is established in power, has conquered wrath and is unassailable (10). Who would believe the arduous deed accomplished by H. when leaping over the dreadful ocean shining like Nandana (11)! One should in no way underestimate the unlimited powers and heroic feats and the strength of the others, 0 nightrovers (12). And what harm has been done formerly to the Rk. king by K. possessed of fame, whose wife he has abducted from Janasthana (13)? If Khara, who overstepped his limits, has been killed by R. in battle, - it is a matter of course that creatures should protect their lives according to their strength (14). This is the reason why we are in great fear of Vaidehi. She that has been taken away should be set free, there is no use in an act that is the object of a quarrel (15). It isnot proper for us to engage in hostility with that heroic one following dharma; let Maithili be given to him (16). Let Maithili be given to him as long as he does not cleave with his arrows the city together with its elephants, horses, and thronged with many jewels (17). Let S. be handed over as long as his horrible, great and unassailable army does not attack our Laṅkā (18).
For the city of Laṅkā will perish and so all the heroic Rks. if R.'s beloved wife is not given herself (19). I propitiate you out of brotherly love, carry out my well-meaning and wholesome words; I am telling you, let Maithilī be given to him (20). Soon the prince will discharge his unfailing, tight-fastened arrows, furnished with new points and feathered parts resembling the rays of the sun in autumn, in order to slay you - let Maithilī be handed over to the son of D. (21). Rencounce anger, which destroys happiness and dharma and resort to dharma, which increases joy and fame. Be pleased, let us live with our sons and relatives, let Maithilī be handed over to the son of D. (22).

Analysis of characterization and interpretation of context:

With H.'s feat of destroying Laṅkā - allegedly unassailable and with the onmarch of the Vn. army, Rv. feels humiliated and, summoning his counsellors, he asks them about their advice of what they think is proper for him to do in such a situation. While all the counsellors urge him to engage in battle with R., appealing to his heroic feats of old, and impetuously express their readiness to kill R. and the Vns., Vibhīṣana, reading the signs of the time in the turn of fate against Rv., has won the insight that both Khara and Rv. have been in the wrong in their actions against R., and that a fight against heroic and dharma-mik R. and his Vn. army and a refusal to return S. will be suicidal for Rv. and all Laṅkā. It is on this background that he, in the interest of all Laṅkā and out of brotherly love, tries to pacify Rv. blind anger, which he sees has taken hold of him, and to restrain him from entering the dire consequences of it.

We see, thus, again Vibhīṣana as a righteous, faithful and well-wishing counsellor, but in contrast to his earlier characterization, his loyalty to Rv. is not a blind loyalty to his kindred, but a loyalty coupled with a deep responsibility and desire for their welfare. While such a portrait was definitely the intention of the author in drawing Vibhīṣana's
character, we have also to say that Vibhīṣaṇa's well-meaning speech serves as a contrast to — and serves to add fuel to the fire — to Rv.'s blind anger and passion, which go so far as to rebuke Vibhīṣaṇa as a treacherous kinsman and give a slap to Vibhīṣaṇa's most intimate, sincere and well-wishing concern for his brother in which situation there is no other possibility left for Vibhīṣaṇa than to quit —, and which, as they destroy Rv.'s very capacity to listen to any wholesome advice, in fact, give a slap to his very idea of summoning a council, foreshadow his inevitable doom. In this sense Vibhīṣaṇa's characterization is an immediate prelude to the characterization of Rv. himself.

Classification:

Literary basis:
exposition: objective — descriptive — explicit.

VI 10.12-21

Vibhīṣaṇa's anguish and farewell speech to Ravaṇa

Résumé:

Vibhīṣaṇa gives expression to his bitter anguish, in a most pathetic and beautiful farewell speech, at Rv.'s way of rewarding his well-wishing words spoken in loving concern for his welfare, and his brotherly love, which wanted to prevent him from his now inevitable doom, with such undeserved harshness and wounding insult. Cf. the beautiful verses 17^2 - 18:
na nasyantamupekseyam pradiptaṁ śaraṇaṁ yathā 17
dīptapāvakasākāsaiḥ śītaṁ kāścanabhūṣaṇaiḥ /
na tvāmicchāmyaham drastum rāmeṇa nihataṁ śaraṁ 18

Compare also Vibhīśaṇa’s self-introduction to Su. (VI 11.10-15), in which context Vibhīśaṇa refers to Rv.’s obstinacy to listen to his well-meant advice to return S., and his harsh abuse, a context which is marked with a tone of sadness (vv. 12-14).

VI 11.53ff.

Hanuman’s intuition of Vibhīśaṇa’s integrity

See s.v. Hanumān p.512.

VI 13

Contents:

Vibhīśaṇa, pleased at R’s assurance of giving protection to him, descended from the sky to the earth with his four counsellors and, falling on his feet before R., said – ‘I am a younger brother of Rv., and, having been humiliated by him, have gone for refuge to You, the protector (refuge) of all beings. I have renounced Lāṅka and all friends and wealth; my kingdom, life and joys are yours. I will assist you with all my might in the slaughter of Rks. and the assault of Lāṅka, and I will enter the army. Thereupon, R. embraced him, sent L. for water and anointed him as king of Lāṅka amidst the delight of the Vns. At H.’s and Su.’s inquiry of how to cross the ocean, Vibhīśaṇa gave the advice that R. should propitiate the Ocean for help, which advice was well appreciated by R., who then also asked L. and Su. about their opinion, whereupon Su. and L. praised Vibhīśaṇa’s
advice with the argument that without the building of a bridge over the Ocean Lanka would be inassailable even by Gods and Asuras and urged him to immediately carry it out.

Analysis of characterization:

Vibhīśaṇa's seeking the patronage of R. is a necessary consequence of the wounding humiliation he suffered from his brother, and of Rv.'s submission to anger and passion and his loss of dharma, which is a sure sign of his unfailing doom. In such a situation Vibhīśaṇa's righteousness and conscientiousness demand that he should follow the side of dharma, which is with R. and has completely deserted Rv. In this respect he differs from Mārica, who succumbs to Rv.'s will against his better insight. Mārica gives in, not without heroism, but Vibhīśaṇa is of a heroic ethical loftiness since he follows the call of dharma to the last. It would be wrong to demand from the author V. to draw a tragic Vibhīśaṇa, who, inspite of his failure to convince Rv. of his wrong, would cling faithfully to him to the end out of brotherly love. This does not correspond with the religious spirit of the Rm. In the eyes of V., Vibhīśaṇa has made the best decision he could, and that this interpretation is true, is attested by the frequent appellations the author gives to Vibhīśaṇa precisely in this context: v.2 dharmatmā Vibhīśaṇaḥ / v.3 vākyāḥ dharmayuktāṁ ca yuktāṁ ca / v.13 dharmaṁ, and by the very fact that he makes R. accept him with great affection, which he could not expect of him if he were to consider him not as one who seeks protection, but a traitor of his race. (The same problem of interpretation we have to face in the context of Indrajit's rebuke of treachery. We shall see that it has to be understood as reflecting Indrajit's character and not as a hidden play by the author with Vibhīśaṇa's treachery).
Taking this background into consideration which is rather implied, than explicitly expressed, in the preceding sargas, what are the character-traits brought out in this sarga? First and foremost Vibhīṣaṇa's humble readiness to offer R. everything, his whole self (beautifully expressed in V.5:

parityaktā mayā laṅkā mitrāṇi ca dhānāṇi ca / 
bhavadgataṁ me rājyaṁ ca jīvitaṁ ca sukhāṇi ca ),

and his promise to give him all assistance in the slaughter of the Rks. and the assault of Laṅkā - as a token of gratitude for R.'s acceptance of his seeking his refuge - ; and then his skill in giving counsel in a situation where, owing to his being a Rk., he is the competent person to give advice or to help out - a trait to which there are scattered references in the prelude to, and in, the battle-scenes themselves, e.g.

He sends Anala, Šarabha, Sampāti and Praghasa to reconnoitre the positions of the Rk. army and to communicate to R. their findings (VI 28.6ff.).

He gives R. an impressive account of the awe-inspiring heroism of Kumbhakarna, and advises him to announce to the Vns. that he is only a machine set up by the Rks. - in order to encourage them (VI 49).

He reveals grief-stricken R. the secret of Indrajit's illusory killing of a magic effigy of S. - Indrajit, in order to prevent the Vns. from interfering with his sacrifice at Nikumbhila, intended to confuse the Vns. by producing this illusion - and urges him to send L. to interrupt Indrajit's sacrifice and fight with him, for then Indrajit's death is certain according to Brahmā's saying 'That enemy who should strike at you while you are attempting to kill him without your completing the sacrifice, he will be the cause of your death (ss.71-72).
He then (after I. with Vibhīṣaṇa, H., Jambavān and thousands of Vns. have arrived at Nikumbhila) exhorts L. to cause panic among the Rk. army so as to induce Indrajit to interrupt his sacrifice (73.2ff.), and, while a bitter fight is going on between Indrajit and H., he tells him to take up his fight against the former (V 32-34, 74.1-6).

He exhorts the Vns., while L. and Indrajit combat against each other, to kill the followers of Indrajit, at a moment promising to be most decisive (VI 77.6-14):

\[
tatāh saṅcedavāno vai harīnraṅgaṇapriyān \\uvāca vacanaṁ kāle kālaṁ rākṣasaṁ varaḥ \]

Finally, R., thankfully declining Vibhīṣaṇa's invitation to stay with him for one day in Laṅka, praises the honour he has received through his counsel, efforts and friendship (VI 109.16 - compare also VI 100.9 - ), and Bh., at the reception, praises him with the words: \textit{distyā tvāyā sahāvēna kṛtaṁ karma suduṣkaram} (VI 115.36²).

VI 77.13-14²

Translation:

It is improper to kill the son of my father. I would wish that, renouncing my compassion, I could kill the son of my brother, but, though I am desirous of killing him, tears obstruct my eyes; only this powerful L. will soothe them.

Analysis of characterization:

These verses, which occur in the context of Vibhīṣaṇa's exhortation of the Vns. to kill the followers of Indrajit, are
designed to reflect the human heart of Vibhīṣaṇa: his grief and affection at the sight of his doomed nephew in conflict with his own intention, a conflict which restrains him from directly laying hands on his own relative (he does so later when attacked by him), though he does everything to ensure the final success and thus fulfills his promise.

Classification:

Literary basis:

exposition: objective - descriptive - explicit
tone: an emergent tone of affliction (ākṣabhāva)

VI 74.10-27

Vibhīṣaṇa rejects Indraji's rebuke of him as a traitor

Translation:

Having been thus addressed, the lustrous, intelligent son of Rv. spoke harsh words when he saw Vibhīṣaṇa there (10): "You have been born and bred here, you are my father's brother in person, how do you as a paternal uncle bear malice to me, a son, O Rk. (11)? You have no feeling of kinsmanship, no feeling of friendship and caste, O evil-minded one, no sense of correct evaluation, no feeling of blood-brothership, no dharma, you violator of dharma (12). You are vile, O evil-minded one, and deserve to be blamed by the righteous, you who have forsaken your own people and have resorted to the service of strangers (13). You, on account of your feeble intelligence, do not know this great difference — where is living together with one's own people and where taking refuge to mean strangers? (14). Even if another people is possessed of merits and one's own people is devoid of merits, the people of one's own even if devoid of merits is superior, while he who is a stranger is a stranger only (15). Of what a nature is this hard-heartedness of yours that you can abuse your own people, O younger brother, of Rv. (15) ?"
Having been thus addressed by the son of his brother, Vibhīṣaṇa answered—"Why, O Rk., do you disparage my character as if you did not know it (17)? Wicked son of the Rk. king, stop your abusing language out of respect. Even though I have been born in the race of the cruel Rks., I possess this first virtue of men, that non-Rk. character (18): Neither do I delight in cruelty nor in unrighteousness; how can you say a brother is abandoned by a crooked brother (19)? Taking away others' belongings, seducing another's wife and destruction of one's friends—these three vices lead to destruction (20). The terrible slaughter of mahārāṣis and war with all the Gods, pride, anger, hostility, adversity—these vices, destroying the life and supremacy of my brother, have covered up his merits like clouds cover up the mountains (22). Because of these vices, my brother, your father, has been forsaken by me. No more is this city of Lāṅkā, not more are you and your father (23). You are haughty, young and ill-mannered, O Rk.; you are bound by the fetters of Kāla. Tell me, what do you wish (24)? Today your misfortune has come. What will you say here? You are not able to enter the fig tree, O meanest Rk. (25). Having attacked the two Kakusthas, you will not be able to live. Fight with the king of men, I. Having been slain, you will perform your duty to the Gods in the abode of Yama (26). Show your energy exercised, apply to use all your weapons and arrows, for, having gone within the range of I.'s arrows, you, with your army, will not go away alive today (27).

Analysis of characterization:

The interpretation of part 1 (rebuke) depends on the interpretation of part 2 (rejection) since, if the poet is found to agree with Vibhīṣaṇa's justification, it is clear that Indrajiṭ's rebuke is a reflection on his own character—while, if the poet seems to suggest some form or other of rigidity in Vibhīṣaṇa's reaction, Indrajiṭ's rebuke is also a hidden suggestion of Vibhīṣaṇa's hard-heartedness. What is the criterion by which we can correctly intuit V.'s intention: It is dharma. Though the law of dharma is a very relative principle in the V. Rm. — as B. Khan has shown—it is, as we have already remarked earlier, against the spirit of the Rm. to assume that love of one's kinsman should go as far as to serve him against the better insight that he indulges in the grossest adharma against one who is an
embodiment of dharma, and hence is forsaken by Fate, which would be tantamount to conjuring the fate of one who is doomed and the retribution awaiting him upon oneself, and this being the case with Vibhīṣṭa, what alternative is left for him than to choose the path of dharma and follow it to the last? Besides, we have seen that this interpretation is almost cogently evident in an earlier context and it would be strange if the author should suddenly allude to some weakness in Vibhīṣṭa's character at a place so far from the critical point. On the other hand, it is natural that Indrajit should accuse Vibhīṣṭa as a traitor at this very moment when he sees him face to face in battle. From the point of view of Indrajit, his accusation of Vibhīṣṭa as traitor is natural. From the point of view of V., it is out of place, the more so as Vibhīṣṭa does show his brotherly love in as far as he does not lay hands on his personally. So Vibhīṣṭa's justification, even though it may assume some harshness (in return for the harsh rebuke of Indrajit), cannot be interpreted as hard-heartedness in any way, but has to be understood as a reflection of his firm adherence to dharma, and from this it follows that Indrajit's rebuke is a reflection of his narrow-minded kinship mentality.

Let us now, on this background, sketch the traits of Vibhīṣṭa's character as they are brought out in the second passage: There is first and foremost the self-assertive defence of his unflinching commitment to dharma, which is the impress of his character that distinguishes him from all other Rks., and which has impelled him to repudiate the vices committed by Rv., which are to bring about his doom, and to take the consequences of it: to flee doomed Rv.'s evil grip and take the side of dharma, i.e. to take refuge with R. Towards the end Vibhīṣṭa also reveals an inclination to give vent to his pent-up vindictive feelings in return for all the insults inflicted upon him by Indrajit, an inclination expressing itself in the
way he abuses Indrajit's pride and in the slightly sarcastic, provocative tone he rebukes him. This last trait is, however, more functional than personal. It serves to evoke Indrajit's irascibility, which itself is an effective prelude to the sentiment of awe of the subsequent battle scenes.

Classification:

Literary basis:

exposition: objective (first verses subjective) - descriptive - explicit

tone: of slight agitation.

Appendix

Vibhīṣaṇa's unwillingness 3) to carry out R.'s request to him to perform the obsequial rites for Rv. on account of the evil nature of his brother reflects his conscientious adherence to dharma, which, as it forbade him to assist one engrossed in adharma, consequently forbade him to do him the honour of performing the last rites, which would be some sort of admittance of his identification with him and a breach of his loyalty to R.

Cf. VI 99.33-34 -

bhṛatrūpo hi me śatrureṇa sarvāhite rataḥ /
ṛvaṇo nārhate pujāḥ pujyō'vi gurugauravāt // 33

nṛśaṁśa iti mām rāma vakaśyanti manuṣya bhuvā /
śrūtvā tasya guṇāṁ saṃvṛte vakaśyanti sukrte punah // 34

It is only after an assurance on the part of R., who is delighted at these words, that all enmities end with death, that there is no question of loyalties any more that Vibhīṣaṇa carries out R.'s request.
Vibhīśaṇa's hospitality manifests itself in various ways in the concluding sargas of the Yuddhakāṇḍa. 4)

1) If one compares Vibhīśaṇa's characterization in the context of the Laṅka-dahana episode and a reference in the Sundara-kāṇḍa (V 35.9ff.)

\[
\begin{align*}
vibhi\text{ś}aṇena ca bhrātṛā mama niryātanaṁ prati / 
anunītaṁ prayatnena na ca taṁkurute matim // 9
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
yeśṭha kanyanālā nāma vibhi\text{ś}aṇasuta kape / 
taya māmitaśākyatāḥ mātraṁ prahityā svayam // 11
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
avindhyo nāma medhāvī vidvān rakṣasapuṇḍgavāḥ //
dūrtimāṅśasilāvānyddho rāvaṅgaya susammataḥ // 12
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
rāmaṁśayamanuprayatam rakṣasaṁ pratyaśodayat / 
na ca tasyāpi duṣṭatāṁ śṛṇoti vacanāṁ hitam // 13
\end{align*}
\]

and analyzes them comparatively, we find that there is a logical contradiction. In the former, Vibhīśaṇa pleads for the return of S., in the latter, he shares Rv.'s feeling of the provocativeness of H.'s actions, by which he indirectly concedes Rv.'s abduction of S. as being lawful. This logical contradiction, however, does not hold good if one takes into consideration the different intentions flowing from the different momentary inspirations in each case. In the former, the author's intention is to show that Vibhīśaṇa, considering Rv.'s abduction of another's wife as unlawful, entreats him to return her. In the latter, the central point is the unlawful execution of an emissionary, which Vibhīśaṇa advocates against. At the same time, it is the author's intention to show — and this idea has to be brought out effectively by the poet at some place and it could not be done anywhere more appropriately than at the first real introduction of his personality — that Vibhīśaṇa, though he distinguishes himself from the other Rks.' in his strict adherence to dharma, is not a stranger to his kind, that he loves his brother Rv. and acknowledges his cognizance of dharma and social customs and that he also thinks in the spirit of the Rks. and thus shares the feeling of the provocativeness of H.'s destructive actions and scornful speech. Besides, Vibhīśaṇa's realization of Rv.'s unlawful abduction of S. is in itself not in a necessary causal relation with the realization that H.'s devastation of the Aśoka grove and his slaughter of Rk. warriors and R.'s direction to him to do so have their justification — until a point comes where fate itself reveals the truth that dharma has left Rv. and is at the side of R. But all the same we have to admit that there
is a disharmony between the two representations. Since the Rv, however, has its inheritance in oral narrative poetry, there is no reason to feel strange about it. Most probably V.'s conception of Vibhīṣaṇa as it is centred around the discussion between him and Rv., which is the author's more general conception of him, has been anticipated and stated in an abrupt way in the earlier reference for its own reasons, and so has not been harmonized with his conception of Vibhīṣaṇa's character in its genetic aspect, an aspect which is of a particular interest only in this particular scene.

2) pp. 132-218.

3) Vibhīṣaṇa's lamentation is not found in NW and has therefore to be considered as an interpolation.

4) A fairly coherent synthetic picture of the portrait of Vibhīṣaṇa, as the author has it in mind, is easily gained by a successive reading of the analytical chapters of interpretation itself, and as a separate exposition would come in the main to a repetition of those chapters, we prescind in this case from a synthetic presentation.
RAVANA
1

A SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS

OF THE CHARACTERIZATION OF RAVANA
Surpanakha appears before Ravana (Ravana introduced to the audience)

Translation:

Then Surpanakahā, seeing 14,000 Rks. of terrific prowess slain by single-handed R. and seeing Dūṣana, Khara and Trisūras slain in battle, she again raised a loud roar like a cloud, as it were (1-2). Seeing the deed of R., a deed so extremely arduous for others, she, greatly agitated, went to Lāṅkā protected by Rv. (3). She saw Rv. on top of the palace — Rv. possessed of blinding brightness, surrounded by his ministers like Indra by the Maruts (4); seated on an excellent golden throne resembling the sun, shining, as it were, like a large fire on a blazing sacrificial altar (5); him who is unconquerable in battle by Gods, Gandharvas, creatures and the noble-souled rṣis, is heroic, is like Death with opened mouth (6); him who is marked with wounds caused by the thunderbolt of Indra in the battle between the Devas and Asuras, his chest marked with scars torn open by the pointed tusks of Airāvati (7); him who has 20 arms, 10 necks, is beautifully dressed, of a broad chest, heroic, marked with the royal insignia (8); who is shining like a glistening lapis lazuli, adorned with ear-rings of shining gold, having well-built arms, white teeth, a large mouth, resembling, as it were, a mountain (9); whose body has been wounded by the hurlings of Viśnū's disk, thrown at him hundreds of times in the battle against the Gods, as well as by all the weapons of the Gods (10); who is a mover of immoveable oceans, a quick actor, a hurler of mountain-peaks and a destroyer of the Gods (11); is an extirpator of religious laws, a seducer of others' wives. One who is possessed of all divine astras, one who constantly causes obstacles to sacrifices (12); one who, after entering the city of Bhogavati and defeating Vasuki, took away Takṣaka’s beloved wife, having subjugated her (13); who, after going to mount Kailāsa and defeating Kubera, took away his chariot Puspaka travelling at one’s will (14); who, possessed of heroic power, impelled by anger, destroys the gardens of the Gods, the divine Caitvarātha forest, the Nalini and the Nandana forests (15); who, with his arms resembling a mountain-peak, prevents the illustrious Sun and Moon, the subduers of enemies, from rising (16); who, having practised penance for 10,000 years in the forest, possessed of courage, once offered his heads to
Svayambhu (17); who is free from the fear of death in battle at the hands of Gods, Gandharvas, Piśāchas, birds, serpents, except from death at the hands of man (18); who, possessed of power, destroys holy Soma - excellent with merits - by the Brahmāstra at sacrifices, the seats of oblations (19); that Rākṣasi saw - her brother, cruel and powerful Rv., the destroyer of accomplished sacrifices, the killer of Brahmīns, Rks. of evil character, cruel, pitiless, bent on the detriment of the people, the source of fear for all beings for all the worlds (20-21'). To that illustrious one, the lord of the Rks., son of the Paulastya race, clad in celestial clothes and ornaments, adorned with a celestial garland, to that possessor of bright and large eyes - noble Surpāyakāhā, mutilated, stupefied with infatuation on account of fear, after appearing before him, fiercely spoke these harsh words (22).

Analysis of characterization:

In this sarga the author directly introduces in a nutshell the whole character of Rv. He does so by depicting a mosaic of character-facets all of which merge into one dominant character-picture, which can be best described as ghora. This terrifying nature of Rv. comprises two aspects, the aspect of awe-inspiring super-natural heroism (a) and that of harassing cruelty (b), of which the latter aspect, though being brought out distinctly from the first, is often associated with the former (c) and the former is often depicted as implying a haughty abuse of power (d) leading to the terror of all the worlds so that he is called sarvabhūtānāṁ sarvalokabhayāvaham v.20. We may then classify the various character-facets, without, however, forgetting their unitary foundation in Rv.'s ghora nature and the fact that the various aspects are brought out not successively, but more or less in one bunch:

a) Rv.'s awe-inspiring brightness of appearance and royal splendour;
Rv.'s terrifying physical appearance (10 necks, 20 arms, etc.);

a) and d) Rv.'s unexcelled super-natural heroism, valour and power:
his invincibility from Gods and super-natural beings;
his carrying the scars of his valiant fights against all the Gods;
his extraordinary super-natural capacities: moving immoveable oceans, hurling mountain-peaks, possessing all divine astras;
his world-shocking, terrifying feats of the past (the defeat of Vāsuki and abduction of Takṣaka's wife, the defeat of Kubera and abduction of his chariot Puṣpaka, his austere 10,000 years' penance and offer of his heads to Brahmā - (as a result of which he received the boon of being unconquerable by Gods and super-natural beings except by man) and of the present (the destruction of the gardens of the Gods, the prevention of Sun and Moon from their rise, the destruction of Soma);

b) Rv.'s cruelty and ill-treatment of the people;
b) and c) Rv.'s violation of the sanctity of dharma and his harassing of the righteous:
his extirpation of religious laws;
his obstruction and destruction of sacrifices;
his violation of others' wives;
his killing of Brāhmins.

Classification:

Literary basis:

exposition: objective - descriptive - explicit
tone: of heroic wonderment (adbhutavirarasa) with an overtone of a terrific sentiment (bhayanakarasa).
Surpanakha upbraids Ravana of being oblivious of the impending calamity

Translation:

Then distressed Surpanakha angrily spoke these harsh words to Rv., the lokaravana, in the midst of his ministers (1) : "Being intoxicated (negligent), wantonly addicted to sensual pleasures and unruly, you do not know, as you ought to know, the terrible danger that has arisen (2). The people (subjects) do not think highly of a king addicted to sensual pleasures, licentious and greedy, just as they do not do of the fire of a burning-ground (3); a king that does not himself perform his duties at the proper time perishes along with his kingdom and with those duties (4). People shun a king who has no competent spies, who is hardly to be seen and not self-dependent, from far like elephants the mud of a river (5). Those kings who, not being self-dependent, do not protect their country (dominion) - they do not shine forth with their wealth like mountains conceived in the ocean (6). How will you, without proper spies and being fickle, by quarreling with the self-possessed Gods, Gandharvas and Danavas, be king (7) ? Those kings whose spies, treasure and statesmanship, O best of conquerors, are not in their own power are like ordinary people (8). It is for the fact that kings see all their distant aims by means of a spy that kings are called far-sighted (9). I consider you to be devoid of competent spies and surrounded by vulgar ministers (counsellors) since you do not know that your own people, Janasthana, has been destroyed (10); that 14,000 Rks. of terrific prowess have been killed by single-handed R. as well as Khara together with Dusana (11); that protection from fear has been granted, the Dandaka forest has been turned into an abode of peace and Janasthana has been outraged by R. - acting with indefatigable exertion (12); that you are greedy and intoxicated and dependent on others, O Rv., as you do not know that terror has arisen in your own dominion (13). All the beings stop following a king who is stern, little generous, intoxicated, haughty or deceitful, in calamity (14). Even the king's own people kill a king in calamity if he is a man possessed of extreme haughtiness, unapproachable and self-conceited (15). If he does not perform his duties and is not afraid in times of danger, he will be quickly deprived of his kingdom and will be poor like straw (16). One may make use of dry wood, clods and dust, but no use can be made of kings who
have fallen from their throne (17). Like a cloth that has been used or like garlands that have been squeezed, so he who has been deprived of his kingdom, though he is powerful, is useless (18). A king, however, who is vigilant, who knows everything, whose senses are controlled, who is grateful and virtuous, he remains a king for a long time (19). A king who, though he sleeps with his physical eyes, is awake with the eye of statesmanship, whose anger and favour are clearly distinguished, is honoured by the people (20). But you, Rv., are evil-minded and deprived of these qualities since you do not know about this terrible slaughter of Rks. through spies (21). He who despises others, who is addicted to sensual pleasures, who does not know the true nature of the apportionment of place and time, whose mind is unfit for the determination of merits and demerits, will, not after long time, fall into misery, with his kingdom gone to ruins (22)." Examining in his mind the faults thus exposed by her, that lord of the night-rovers, Rv., possessed of wealth, pride and power, reflected for a long time (23).

Analysis of characterization:

Śūrpaṇakāḥ upbraids Rv. of being oblivious of his kingly duties to such an extent as not to know the great terror caused by R.'s destruction of 14,000 Rks. including Khara and Dūṣaṇa, and in this context blames his intoxication, addiction to sensual pleasures, unruliness, greed, dependence on others, unconcern regarding the protection of the country and the reconnaissance of enemies through spies, his fickleness, quarrels with the Gods, Gandharvas etc., his haughtiness and self-conceit, his failure to know the proper apportionment of place and time, to determine merits and demerits etc., as responsible for his obliviousness, expounding thereby that kings possessing these vices are not respected by their people, that, far from manifesting their kinglyness, they are like ordinary people and, being useless, are quickly dethroned or even killed by their own people in times of calamity - while kings who are vigilant, who know everything, whose senses are controlled, who are grateful and virtuous, remain kings for a long time.
It is evident that Śūrpaṇakhā's accusation is not prompted by her moral convictions — her character is anything else than moral — but is tactical, i.e. has the purpose to arouse Rv.'s anger and incite him more quickly to action, ultimately to satisfy her vengefulness. Her point is not to expose Rv.'s vices as vices, but as the root cause for his obliviousness, which in its turn, according to her, has led to such a great catastrophe. By delving into the depth of Rv.'s moral weaknesses and bringing them into a causal connection with the disaster caused by R., on the one hand, and designating them as the characteristic-traits of kings who are doomed in their role of kings, on the other hand, she naturally effects the most spontaneous reactions in Rv. Nevertheless, though Śūrpaṇakhā's charges are tactical, most of these very charges do seem to be characteristic-traits of Rv.'s character: For some of them correspond with the general character-picture presented by the author in the previous sarga. And these and some others are, by their very nature, more or less directly conducive to the obliviousness with which Śūrpaṇakhā upbraids the king and are thus to be understood as realistic reflections of Rv.'s character. So we can say that through Śūrpaṇakhā's words upbraiding Rv.'s weaknesses — a mere tactical trick to induce the Rk. king to a spontaneous reaction — the author himself gives a further elucidation of Rv.'s actual personality, perhaps with some shift of stress in viewing the causal connection between Rv.'s vices and his obliviousness of kingly duties. Namely: Though these vices are all causes for his obliviousness, the ultimate root for this obliviousness of his lies in his haughtiness and self-conceit, which provide him with the opportunities of a sensuous, self-complacent kingly life leading to the neglect of all the precautionary measures of circumspection a king is supposed to take. It is precisely this haughtiness which, among other things, sounds so ridiculous in Śūrpaṇakhā's mouth, and it is one of the characteristic features the author himself
ascribes to him in an epithetic manner in the concluding verse of this sarga: kṣanādācareśvarah / dhanena darpena balena cānvito ... v.23. As all the three epithets betrays somehow the same idea in a mutually supplementary way, they seem to be something more than mere embellishing epithets in the very context in which they occur.

Classification:

Literary basis:

exposition: subjective - descriptive - explicit

Traits:

Subjectively: Rv.'s obliviousness of kingly duties as a result of intoxication, addiction to sensual pleasures, unruliness, greed, dependence on others, unconcern regarding the protection of the country..., fickleness, quarrel with the Gods..., haughtiness and self-conceit, and a failure to know the proper appointment of time and place...

for the poet: Rv.'s obliviousness of kingly duties as a result of haughtiness and self-conceit - which provide him with the opportunity of a voluptuous, self-complacent life ( = the vices above) leading to the neglect of all circumspection.

III 32-34

At the instance of Ravana, Surpanakha supplies him with information about Rama, Laksmana and Sita and gives him counsel, prompted by which he goes to call on Marica.

Résumé:

In ss.32-33 the author brings out Rv.'s irritability in reaction to Šurpaṇākha's upbraidal aimed at arousing his anger
and inciting him to act, as well as his succumbour to passion in reaction to Šūrpanaṅkha's alluring description of S.'s charming beauty and her inducement of him to abduct her - both aimed at arousing his passion. In the first instance, he instantaneously inquires about the heroic nature of R. without taking reference to any aspect of the charges brought by Šūrpanaṅkha (s.32 beginning). In the second, he weighs the pros and cons of the plan proposed by Šūrpanaṅkha and also acquaints his ministers with it, but without making much fuss decides in favour of it (s.33 beginning).

In the description of Rv.'s journey (s.33.7ff.), the author refers to his awe-inspiring brightness of appearance and physical strength.

In the exposition of his plan to Mārīca, Rv. manifests the following character-traits:

1) his presumptuous attitude of disparaging R. as a prince possessed of all sorts of vices, who was banished by his angry father (despite any such information from Šūrpanaṅkha) and who indulged in the cruel act of slaughtering Khara's army - an attitude which reflects his irascibility as well as his self-righteous subjective way of viewing things;

2) his evaluation of Mārīca as the shrewd magician he was of old, failing to recognize his inner conversion to a saintly life;

3) his dependence on others to carry out his vile intentions.
III 35-37

Marica dissuades Ravana from his evil plan

For contents see s.v. Marica.

Résumé:

Though Marica tries his best to bring Rv. to reason and does so with responsibility and concern for his welfare, he does not shun from bluntly exposing Rv.'s vices since he has to impress upon him the dire consequences his intention entails. From this point of view, Marica's subjective characterization corresponds with how the author himself intends to portray Rv. The character-traits alluded to by Marica are:

Rv.'s presumptuous attitude of disparaging R.'s character while failing to realize his own viciousness - an attitude which reflects his self-righteous, subjective way of viewing things;

his self-conceited haughtiness and, rooted in it, his unconcern about the protection of the country, his fickleness, addiction to sensual pleasures, unruliness and viciousness - a haughtiness which blinds him to the idea of R.'s superiority over him (s.35, with slight traces of one or the other element in ss.36-37).
**III 38**

Ravana repudiates Marica's counsel and threatens to punish him with death if he disobeys

Translation:

But Rv., though addressed with these proper and befitting words by Marica, did not take the medicine, desirous, as it were, of death (1). The king of the Rks., driven by Kala, said harsh, unbefitting words to Marica - speaking wholesome and beneficial words (2) - "These words which you are saying to me, O Marica, are absolutely futile like seed sown on a barren spot (3). But your words cannot prevent me from fighting with evil-natured foolish R., who, above all, is a human being, who, having abandoned his relatives, kingdom, mother and father, listening to an ordinary woman's words, all of a sudden went to the forest (4-5). At all events, I must take away S. - dearer to him than life, from that slayer of Khara, in your presence (6). Thus my resolve is fixed and remains fixed in my heart, and no Gods, even together with Indra, or Auras can withhold it (7). If asked about merits or demerits, you should tell, accordingly, the ominous dangers or the means of success for the assurance of this task (8). But when asked, a wise counsellor should speak with raised and folded hands, as one who wishes the welfare of his king (9). And a king should be told words which are favourable, full of sweetness, beneficial and enjoined with politeness (10). But beneficial words which are spoken with destructive-ness, which are devoid of respect, O Marica, a king deserving respect does not welcome (11). All-powerful kings assume the five forms of Agni, Indra, Soma, Yama, and Varuna, namely heat, valour, gentleness, punishment, kindness (12). Therefore, kings have to be respected and honoured under all circumstances, but you, disregarding dharma, have taken recourse only to delusion (13). Out of wickedness you speak such harsh words to me who have come here (approaching you). I am not asking you about merits and demerits and what is proper to me, O Rk., but now you have to render me assistance in this task (14).... [Rv. outlines the plan] Having so performed this task, go where you wish, O Rk.; I shall give you half of my kingdom, O virtuous Marica (18). Follow, O dear one, the auspicious way to this task for the sake of your prosperity. Having obtained S. without fight and deceived (escaped) R., I shall return with you to Lakhā after accomplishing my aim (19). At all events, you will do this work even through my force, for one who opposes a king never lives
in happiness (20); if he encounters him, his life is in danger, For if you quarrel with me, your death is certain. Consider this properly in your mind; do what is wholesome in this case (21).*

Analysis of characterization:

The central character-trait which the author elucidates through Rv.'s own words is Rv.'s meanness to scorn and rebuke the well-meant, beneficial advice of a conscientious counsellor, an attitude which reflects his stubbornness and irascibility at the instance of any objection raised against his self-willed resolution, an attitude which is, thus, rooted in his presumptuous and self-conceited attitude of disparaging the opponent's (R.'s) point of view, making him blind to any objective assessment of R.'s personality and of things as they stand, despite all elucidation of the personality and heroism of R. by Māīca. It also reflects Rv.'s presumption due to his status as a king in that he is more concerned about flattering etiquettes than about hearing the truth, in that he demands that his counsellors should approach him with reverence under all circumstances and tell him the merits and demerits of an engagement only when they are asked and then with all humility and propriety, never daring to utter any shattering words devoid of respect. And last but not least it reflects the tyrannic dictatorship of a king who turns a request into a command, with threats of penalty of death in case his client fails to obey mixed with blandishing promises in case he obeys.

Classification:

Literary basis:
exposition: objective - descriptive - explicit
Marica resigns to the wishes of Ravana after a last attempt to dissuade him

Résumé:

See s.v. Marica.

Marica and, through Marica V., attacks Rv.'s obliqueness of mind in listening to the destructive advice of ill-disposed counsellors instead of accepting the good spoken by a friend, and, by this, his stubbornness of mind. As in contrast to this, V. shows in 40.4-6 Rv.'s delight (satisfaction) when his wilful desire is complied with.

Ravana approaches Sita

Contents:

Rv. assumed the appearance of a parirājaka and approached S. - bereft of R. and L., like darkness approaches twilight - bereft of sun and moon. At the sight of this cruel sinner, trees did not tremble, the wind did not blow and the Gāvarī ceased its course. As Rv., an insuspicious sinner in an auspicious guise, drew near to S. like Saturn to Citra, and like a well hidden by grass stood watching her charming beauty as she was sitting in her hut and weeping, he was pierced by the arrows of Cupid and, citing the Veda, praised her with humble words spoken in seclusion [direct speech in the original]. He first pays a long and detailed tribute to her exquisite physical charms, saying that he has not seen a Goddess or Gandharvī or Yaksī or Kinnarī or woman of such beauty, and confesses that her beauty, her youth and lonely stay in the forest have stirred up his mind,
thereby intimating that it is not proper for her to stay in this forest which is the abode of fierce Rks., who can assume different forms at will, but that she should stay in beautiful palaces and prosperous city-parks. Paying tribute to her excellent appearance and excellent husband that she must have, he asks her which of the Rudras, Maruts, Vasus she is, as she appears to him to be a Goddess. But as this is not the abode of Gandharvas, Gods, Kinnaras but of Rks. and of monkeys, lions, elephants, tigers, bears etc., he wonders how she has come here alone and lives without being afraid, and finally asks her who she is, whose wife she is, from where and why she has come to the Dandaka forest. After receiving such compliments from Rv., S., as she, from his external appearance, took him to be a Brähmin, honoured him with all hospitality due to a Brähmin and offered a meal to him. While being offered meal, Rv., seeing charming S., fixed his mind on taking her away. Meanwhile, S., waiting and looking out for R. and L., saw only the green forest but not R. and L.

Then S., asked by Rv., introduced herself after considering in her mind that, since he is a Brahmāin and her guest, he may curse her if she does not answer him ......................

As soon as she ended her speech with the question addressed to Rv. who he is, to which clan he belongs and why he is travelling alone through the Dandakā forest, Rv. revealed his identity, saying - "I am Rv., the lord of the Rks., before whom all the worlds with the Gods, Asuras, birds etc. are struck with fear. Seeing you of golden hue and dressed in silken garment, I do not find any pleasure in my wives, become my principal queen of the many excellent ladies I have taken away. I possess the great city of Lāhākā encircled by the ocean and resting upon hill-tops. There you will rove with me in the forests and you will no more desire to stay in this forest. 5,000 female servants adorned with all ornaments will wait upon you if you become my wife, O S."

Analysis of characterization:

In s.44 V. draws a Rv. who is instantaneously smitten by the arrows of Cupid at the sight of the charming beauty of S. In fact, the upsurge of his erotic passion, which is mixed with an overtone of adoration, is so strong that it betrays itself un-mistakeably in his compliments to S. in what is supposed to be a salutary speech, inspite of his dissimulation as a parivrājaka. While the author reveals this to the attentive listener, it remains concealed to S., who is illusioned by Rv.'s disguise
though she can't help feeling a little strange about the erotic compliments he pays to her.

This upsurge of passion in Rv. comes to its full break through as soon as S., after introducing herself, invites him to stay and asks him about his person, and it reveals itself not only as a mere lustful passion kindled by the physical charms of S., but also as a passion of adoration filling him with the ambition to woo for her and win her love. This adoring passion, however, is far from being a giving love, it is pure greed of possession and is self-conflictingly tyrannic, i.e., though he tries to win and buy her love with all blandishments, he, so the poet means to say, does not tolerate her freedom to reject him. Further, Rv.'s very intention, by its very nature, implies a passion that bids defiance to dharma and wifely fidelity, that is insolent and cruel.

Classification:

Literary basis:
exposition: objective - descriptive - implicit § explicit
Traits:

Rv.'s erotic passion aroused at the sight of the charming beauty of S., a passion is not merely lustful but also adorant, filling him with the ambition to win her love, but adorant in the sense of being greedy of possessing her and being self-conflictingly tyrannic (implied), and so by its very nature, a passion which bids defiance to dharma and wifely fidelity, is insolent and cruel (implied).

III 45.32-43

For translation see s.v. Sītā pp 573 ff.
Résumé:

This abominable degradation of Rv. in the mouth of S., as a natural result of her indignation at his exorbitantly mean and insolent intrusion upon her, is meant to be somehow a reflection on the character of Rv. in the way the poet himself intends to portray him; i.e., it is the poet who, in the words of S., slights Rv. in some way or other. The picture of Rv. as it emerges in these lines is the picture of one who has the exorbitant presumption, insolence and meanness of aspiring the wife of one whose greatness of personality is a world above the abominable lowness of character of his own.

III 46

Ravana reiterates his proposal by bragging about his awe-inspiring all-powerfulness and heroism and royal wealth

Translation:

Furious about S. speaking such harsh words, Rv., knitting his eye-brows on his forehead, replied (1) - "I am the step-brother of Kubera, O excellent lady, I am, prosperity to you, the valiant (powerful) ten-necked Rv., for fear of whom all creatures, Gods, Gandharvas, Pisāchās, birds and serpents at all times run away as if in the fear of death (2-3), by whom - prompted by anger - my step-brother Kubera, who for some other reason had been involved in a duel with me, was overpowered and defeated in battle (4). Having abandoned his flourishing residence, Kubera, oppressed by fear of me, dwells on the excellent mountain Kailāsa (5). To him belongs that excellent vimāna-going at will, called Puspaka, captured by my power, on which I go through the sky (6). Only on seeing my face enraged, O Maithill, the Gods with Indra at their lead run away in panic (7). Where I stay, there the wind blows in fear, there the
hot-rayed sun becomes cod-rayed out of fear (8). Where the leaves of the trees stand motionless and the waters of the rivers stand calm (still), there I stay and rove about (9). On the other side of the ocean is my excellent city called Laṅkā, filled with fierce Rks., resembling the Amaravatī of Indra (10); a beautiful city, encircled by a white wall, shining, with golden private chambers, with gates made of lapis lazuli (11), thronged with elephants, horses, chariots, resounding with the sounds of tūryas, beautified with gardens full of fruits and trees of all desires (12). Dwelling there with me, 0 princess S., you won't remember the human ladies, 0 high-mined lady (13); enjoying human and divine pleasures, 0 excellent lady, you will not remember R., an ordinary man, whose life is fading away (14), who, being the eldest son but weak, has been banished into the forest by king D. after making his favourite son rule (15). What will you do, 0 large-eyed one, with that senseless poor ascetic R. expelled from the kingdom (16). You ought not to reject the lord of all Rks., who has come here personally out of love, pierced by the arrows of Cupid (17). For having rejected me, 0 timid one, you will fall into agony like Urvāśī having kicked Purūravas with her foot (18)." - Having been thus addressed, Vaidehi, enraged and with eyes reddened, spoke these harsh words to the lord of the Rks. in secrecy (19) - "How do you, calling God Kubera - honoured by all beings - your brother, wish to create misfortune (20)? Certainly all Rks., 0 Rv., will perish, whose cruel, evil-minded, uncontrolled king you are (21). It is possible to live after carrying away Saci, wife of Indra, but it is not possible to live after carrying away me, the wife of R. (22). One may live long after raping Saci of incomparable beauty from the hands of Indra, but there is no escape for you, 0 Rk., after raping one like me even if you have drunk amṛta (23).

Analysis of characterization:

This sarga is a master-piece of psychology because in it Rv.'s whole character imprints itself. Though Rv. has been most bluntly told by S. what she thinks of him and has been degraded in the most humiliating way, he still carries on to win her love, being overcome with a strong feeling of passion and adoration for her. But he has no better means than to brag about his all-powerfulness and heroism, before which the Gods, Gandharvas, Piśāchas etc. run away in fear etc., about the glamour and magnificence of his city Laṅkā, which, in his poor imagination,
would make S. forget human ladies and R., but an ordinary man, no better means than to disparage R. as a poor ascetic banished on account of his weakness by his father, who gave preference to his favourite son, useless for S., or to haughtily appeal to her conscience that she ought not to reject the lord of the Rks., who has personally come to her out of love, otherwise she will repent like Urvasī after killing Purūravas. Rv. thus not only exposes his ridiculous manner of courtship, a courtship which, though it springs not only from lust but also from feelings of adoration, is but mere greed to possess her and reveals an exorbitant presumption, self-conceit, insolence and an extreme perversity — manifesting itself in the poor idea of a devoted wife's conjugal fidelity, and thus (this is implied) bids defiance to all laws of dharma and proves itself self-conflicting and tyrannic. In fact, the poet himself puts Rv. to ridicule when he makes him say —

sarvarāksaśabhartāraṁ kāmāteṣvamihāgatam /
na manmathasārāviṣṭaṁ prayākhyātuṁ tvamārhasi //

While Rv. means to say: I have humbled myself to come to you, driven by love, and you ought to accept this unique offer of my love, otherwise you will repent — the poet means: You have come here, driven by lustful passion and greed to possess her, to impose yourself upon her, and if she is not willing, she will see the consequences. So he manifests the very depth of his presumptuous, self-conceited, infamous and tyrannic nature.

Classification:

Literary basis:
exposition: objective — descriptive — explicit § implicit
III 47-52

Ravana abducts Sita

Résumé:

As S.'s patience is at his end, and, angrily upbraiding her for her ignorance of his world-famous heroism and prowess, he, while exorbitantly bragging about his power to raise the earth with his arms, to drink the ocean and to kill Death, and then assuming his own ghoric form, standing before S. in his terrifying brightness of appearance and furiously staring at her with his red eyes, once more proposes to her, with presumptuous words about his fame in all the three worlds and his worthiness of being her husband, hoping that she would yield to him at least now that she sees him standing with all his awe-inspiring brightness before her. In order to persuade her, he also strikes a tone of blandishment, assuring her that he will never do her any harm, and appeals to her good sense to give up her human attachment and grant it to him, thereby expressing his inability to understand for what merits she should be attached to a man with a short span of life, who at the words of a woman has come to the forest, leaving behind kingdom and relatives. But this very thought makes him feel S.'s firmness and his incapability of winning her love, and so, forgetting all about the finer side of his attachment, he takes recourse to the only means a passion-stricken, love-sick tyrant has got, whose courtship has remained unsuccessful: forceful abduction. In this, his whole character manifests itself: his self-conflicting passion adorning and tyrannic at the same time, his exorbitant presumption and self-conceit, his perversity of mind manifesting itself in the extremely poor idea he has of a devoted wife's conjugal faithfulness, his disrespect of dharma,
and his infamous tyranny, roused by the futility of his courtship, which trampling down all the repulses and feelings of the adored one, has no other means to counter-react than to take recourse to force and cruelty. (47)

In depicting Rv.'s forceful abduction of S., the poet brings out Rv.'s ghorig physical appearance, cruelty and ruthlessness - causing terror among all creatures and awaking their pity for S. (47.15ff., 50).

For the context of Jaṭāyu's appeal to Rv.'s conscience (s.48) and his second challenge to him (s.49.19-27) see s.v. Jaṭāyu p.368. In this, Jaṭāyu exposes Rv.'s sin of touching another's wife, the wife, moreover, of a virtuous king like R., - a sin so grave that it will entail his destruction (and that of all the Rks.), a sin that is a scandal to the people following the king in all matters, and the way of behaviour of a coward thief. In the description of the fighting episode as such (s.49) the poet manifests Rv.'s irascibility, relentlessness and ruthless hard-heartedness.

While Rv. flies through the air, S. bitterly censures the shameless, thiefly cowardice, sinfulness and infamy of his act of abduction of another's wife, as well as his vicious disregard of dharma, the destructive consequences of which she predicts and depicts to him in provocatively sarcastic and abasing words, with, however, no effect on Rv. (s.51)

S.52, which describes Rv.'s arrival with S. in Laṅkā, his direction to the Rāksesās to treat S. gently and his order to some of the Rāksesas to go as his spies to Janasthāna, elucidates the following modes of his behaviour: his adorant passion for S., which instigates him to order the Rks. to treat her with all gentleness, on the one hand; his vengeful idea of persecuting R., for killing Khara and his army, up to his death, before
which he shall not find sleep, and the accomplishment of which will give him the blissful feeling of a poor man on securing wealth, as also his cruel delight in the successful capture of S. and the commencement of hostilities with R., on the other hand.

III 53-54

These sargas are similar in structure and character to V 18-20, which are a repetitive variant of the former, except for greater modifications in S.'s reply to Rv. As the latter sargas are more comprehensive and richer in the psychological characterization of Rv., we shall give a treatment only of them, referring in an appendix to one or the other trait portrayed in the former but not in the latter.

V 3-9

Résumé:

Almost the whole of this section contributes in some way or other to depict the glamour and splendour of Rv.'s wealth, luxury and revelry, in particular his amorous debaucheries, the latter mostly in s.8, which also depicts the splendour of his royal attire and the brightness of his physical appearance. The poet draws all gamuts of poetical imagination, an impression of which can be gained only by reading.
H anum an se es R ava na a p p roach ing

Résumé:

In this sarga the poet brings out the following character-traits of Rv.: his amorous passion roused at the first thought of S. after his rising from bed;

his inebriate appearance as a result of lust, pride and drunkenness;

his royal splendour in the midst of a retinue of inebriate-looking queens following him out of attachment symbolizing his revelry of life and amorous debaucheries;

the incomprehensible strength and manliness, and dazzling brightness of his physical appearance.

Translation:

That Rv. induced that concealed distressed and cheerless ascetic lady with sweet words accompanied by facial expressions revealing his internal feelings (1) - "Seeing me, you, possessing thighs like the trunk of an elephant, want to make yourself, as it were, invisible, holding your breast and belly (2). I love you, O large-eyed one, respect me (think highly of me), O dear one, O you endowed with all bodily excellences, you who captivate the minds of all people (all the world) (3). Here there are no men, no Rks. assuming forms at will. Let your fear be removed, which has arisen on account of me (4). It is no doubt, O timid one, the Rks.' own dharma at all times to cohabit with others' wives.
or to carry them away by violence (5). And thus it be - I shall not touch you, Maithili, being unwilling, even if it may be that my carnal desire in my body should act according to its desire (at will) (6). O queen, don't have any fear of me, have confidence, O dear one, and truly offer yourself; don't be absorbed in grief (7). Wearing a single braid of hair, sleeping on the ground, meditating, wearing dirty clothes, fasting out of place, these things are not proper for you (8). Enjoy variegated garlands, sandal-perfumes and agallocha, and various dresses and celestial ornaments and highly costly drinks, carriages and birds, and singing, dancing and musical instruments, by obtaining me, O Maithili (9-10). You are a jewel of a woman, don't be like this; decorate your body, for how should you, when you obtain me, be unworthy, O well-shaped one (11)? This youth of yours, O lovely one, is passing away. What has passed away does not return, like a rapid stream of water (12). I think that sculptor Viśvakarman has ceased after forming you, for there is none equal to you in beauty, O lovely one (13). Which man, be it even the Grand sire incarnate, could ignore you after meeting you, Vaidehi - resplendent with beauty and youth (14). Whatever limb I see of yours, O you possessed of a face resembling the moon, there my eye is fixed upon, O large-hipped one (15). Be my wife, O Maithili, give up this infatuation, be my foremost queen among the many excellent wives (16). Whatever jewels I have carried away from the worlds by force, all these, O timid one, are yours, as well as this kingdom and myself (17). Having conquered the whole of the earth crowned with manifold cities, I shall bestow it to Janaka for your sake, O lady (18). I do not see anybody else here in the world who could be of equal strength to me; see my extraordinarily great and irresistible heroism in battle (19). Gods and Asuras, often and often defeated by me in battle, with their flags being crushed, are unable to stand against my hostile activities (20). Desire me, let yourself be decorated today and let shining ornaments be attached to your body; let me see your perfect beauty adorned with decoration (21). Endowed with decoration and polite conduct, enjoy pleasures, O lovely one, to your heart's content; drink, timid one, and be merry and distribute, according to your wish, the earth and wealth (22). Amuse yourself with me without fear and give boldly orders to me; let also the friends of yours, when you are amusing yourself, by my authority amuse themselves (23). See my wealth, splendour and fame, O my good lady; what will you do with R., my dear, clad in rags (24)? R. has lost victory and glory, and is a forest-roving ascetic sleeping on the bare sacrificial ground; I doubt whether he lives (or not) (25). Also, R. will not get a chance to see you, O Vaidehi, you who are concealed like the moon-light by dark clouds before cranes (26). And also, Raghava will not be able to acquire you from my hands, as Hiranyakasipu acquired Kirti, who was in the hands
of Indra (27). O lady with lovely smile, lovely teeth and eyes, you take away my mind, O timid one, like Suparna does a snake (28). Seeing you dressed in a faded silk-garment, lean and undecorated, I do not find any pleasure in my own wives (29). Command, O Jānaki, over all the wives I have - dwelling in the female apartments, endowed with all excellences (30). For those wives of mine with dark long hair, the most excellent in the three worlds, will attend upon you like Apsarases on Lākṣmī (31). Whatever jewels and riches Kubera has, O you with lovely eyebrows, enjoy them and the worlds, O lovely-hipped one, and me, to your heart's delight (32), R., O queen, is no match to me with regard to penance, power, valour, wealth, brightness or fame (33). Drink, amuse yourself, be merry, enjoy pleasures, I shall bestow on you a store of wealth and the earth; amuse yourself with me, O lady, to your heart's delight, and let your friends, when you meet them, amuse themselves with you (34). You, whose body is adorned with a golden, stainless necklace of pearls, sport with me, O timid one, through forests, walking along the sea-shore spread with masses of flowering trees and filled with bees (35).

Hearing those words of that savage (fierce) Rk., S., being afflicted and distressed, said in return gently these piteous words (1). Beautiful ascetic S., being afflicted with grief, weeping and trembling, only thinking of her husband - a wife loyally devoted to her husband - said in return with a pleasant smile, putting a blade of grass between them - "Turn away your mind from me and divert it to your own people (3). You are unworthy to desire for me like a sinner for fulfilment (perfection). I must not do a deed which is reprehensible for a faithful wife, who has obtained a meritorious family, who has been born in a noble family (4)." Having thus spoken to that Rv., glorious Vaidehi, taking her turn against the Rk., resumed her speech (5) - "I am not a worthy wife if I am the wife of another, of you. Have right regard for dharma, and righteously follow the vrata of a virtuous man (6). The wives of others should be protected like your own, O night-rover. Making yourself the standard of comparison, find pleasure in your own wives (7). A man who is not content with his wife, who is fickle, whose senses are stirred up, who is wicked, such a man another's wife brings to ignomy (8). Here there are no virtuous people, or, as one whose mind has been guided wrongly, you do not follow the words of a virtuous man, the wholesome advice spoken by the wise (9). Prosperous kingdoms and cities which are in the position of a king who is ignorant, who is bent on an evil course, perish (10). Thus this city of Lāṅkā, filled with heaps of jewels, which is in your possession, will soon perish through your own fault alone (11). Creatures rejoice, O Rv., at the destruction of a short-sighted sinner killed by his own deeds (12). In the same way, people who have been humiliated, will with great delight slay you, you sinner: Fortunate that you have met with
this destruction, you savage (13). I can neither be enticed by supreme power nor by wealth. I am solely belonging to R., as light solely belongs to the sun (14). Having made the revered arm of that lord of the world my pillow, how shall I use the arm of somebody else as a pillow (15)? I am the lawful wife belonging only to that king, as knowledge belongs to a learned Brahmā, who has accomplished his stage of a brahmacāri (16). Well, Rv., unite me, who am distressed, with R., like, a stately elephant in a forest with a female elephant (17). It is proper for you to make this foremost of man, R., your friend if you wish to obtain royal stability and if you do not desire your ghastly destruction (18). May be, the thunderbolt of Indra discharged, may be death, spare a man like you for a long time, but not so that angry king R. (19). You will hear the twanging sound of R.'s bow sounding like the rattling of the thunderbolt discharged by Indra (20) ... My husband, the subduer of enemies, will carry me away from you, like Viṣṇu carried away shining Lakṣmī (glory) from the Ṛṣiras with his three steps (24). After Janasthāna has been turned into a deserted place and the Rk. army been destroyed, you weakling have committed this wicked deed, O Rk. (25). Entering the empty hermitage of those two brothers, foremost of men, who have gone (roving in the forest ), you have taken me away, you meanest person (26). For you are not able to withstand the sight of R. and L., like a dog cannot withstand the sight of tigers after getting their smell (27) ... Whether you have gone to the mount of Kubera or rather his abode or whether you have gone to the hall of king Varuna, you will doubtlessly not escape from R., like a tree struck by fate from the fire of lightning (30)."

Having heard these harsh words of S., the lord of the Rks. then spoke in return these offensive words to lovely-looking S. (1) - "The more conciliatory a man is, the more he has to yield to women, the more he speaks sweetly, the more he is rebuffed. The love which has sprung up in me for you restrains my anger, like a good chariot his running horses on the road (2-3). Perverse is the love of men: There arises, they say, compassion and affection with regard to that person with whom it is concerned (4). For this reason I shall not kill you, O lovely one, though you deserve to be killed, deserve to be despised, being devoted to a feigned ascetic. For all the harsh words you speak to me you deserve ruthless death, O Maithilī (6)." Having thus spoken to Vaidehi, Rv., the lord of the Rks., filled with raging anger, gave this answer to S. (7) - "Two months is the limit I have given to you—which I shall keep waiting for, after that you have to enter my bed, O excellent lady (8). But if after these two months you do not wish me to be your husband, your cooks will procure you for my breakfast (9).' Seeing that Janakī terrified by the lord of Rks., those large-eyed Deva and Gandharva maidens were sad. Some comforted S. - terrified by that Rk. - with lip gestures, others with their eyes and faces (11). Comforted by
them, S. spoke to Rv., the lord of the Rks., these words beneficial to herself and assuming lofty tones due to her pride in her virtuous conduct (12) - "Certainly you have no people; since, being so unrighteous, they do not avert you from this wicked deed (13), for who but you in the three worlds would even in his mind desire me - being the wife of that virtuous one, like Saci is of Indra (13). O meanest Rk., wither going, will you be released from that evil (sin) which you have spoken (uttered) to the wife of R. - possessed of infinite brightness (15)? Like a proud elephant and a hare associated in the forest, so are R., an elephant, as it were, and you, O mean one, a hare (16). As such, are you not ashamed of insulting the lord of the Iksvākus? Surely you shall not attain the aim of that eye of yours (17)! How is it, you mean one, that this fierce, ugly, dark-red eyes of yours stare at me and have not fallen on the ground (18)? I am the wife of virtuous R. and daughter-in-law of D.; how is it, you sinful one, that your tongue does not tear while speaking to me (19)? But since I do not have R.'s commission and because of my practising tapas, I do not reduce you to ashes, you who deserve to be burnt to ashes by the fire of my brightness (or: I do not reduce you to ashes by the fire of my power to burn you to ashes) (20). You are not able to take me away from that wise R.; the enactment of your death has been fixed, there is no doubt about that (21). How is it that the crime of seducing a wife has been committed by you, a hero, a brother of Kubera and possessed of strength, and this by alluring R. away (22)?"

Having heard S.'s words, Rv., rolling his fierce eyes, looked at Jānaki (23) ... [description of his awe-imposing ghorić and wrathful appearance] Staring at S. with eyes reddened with anger, Rv. said to S. - sighing, as it were, like a snake (28) - "You being attached to one who is possessed of evil conduct and has renounced his aim, I shall destroy you today, like the sun the morning twilight by its rays (29)." Having thus spoken to Maithili, king Rv., the satrurāvana, then commanded all the frightful ghorić-looking Rkṣasī (30) ... [a description of the Rkṣasīs according to their variegated hideous monstrosities] "That S., the daughter of Jānaka, quickly becomes subjected to me, to that you see quickly, all of you Rkṣasīs, and unitedly (34). Bring round S. by fair and unfair means, by conciliation, bribery and the like and by sowing dissensions as well as by raising the stick (35)." Having thus directed them again and again, the lord of the Rks. thundered at Jānaki, his mind being filled with passion and anger (36). Then the Rkṣasī Dhānyaśāhī quickly approached and, embracing Daśagrīva, said these words (37) - "Sport with me, O great king; what will you do with that woman? The body of a man lustful for a woman who is unwilling is tormented; splendid delight comes to one lustful for a woman who is willing (36)." Thus addressed by the Rkṣasī, the mighty one was carried away by her and entered the palace resembling the hue of the blazing sun (or: entered the shining palace resembling the hue of the sun) (39). Then those daughters of
the Gods and Gandharvas and Nāgas enclosed Daśagrīva and entered that best of houses (40). That Rv., after reviling (threatening) pious and firm Maithili trembling (with fear), left S., infatuated with passion, and entered his shining abode (41).

Analysis of characterisation:

For the sake of clarity we shall analyse separately the sections of Rv.'s and of S.'s speeches, though, with regard to characterization, both breathe a similar spirit and both reflect the intention of the poet himself.

Rv., in his courtship of Sī, reveals the whole psychology of his amorous passion. The poet has exemplified this already at a number of previous occasions. He has brought out all the different traits of Rv.'s passion either explicitly or implicitly with different emphases, but perhaps nowhere he has illustrated each one of these traits with such vividness. The listener already knows that at the basis of Rv.'s amour is his sexual passion. So the poet, already before describing his actual meeting with S., very vividly depicts this weakness of Rv. (s.16) and then, while describing Rv.'s attempt to seduce S., does not fail to make him confess even to S. that her physical beauty stimulates him sexually. But the poet did not want to leave it at a merely sexual passion of Rv., which would make short way with S. He wanted his character to really fall in love with S. with all the manifestations characteristic of love, and since the most characteristic feature of these manifestations is that of the lover's adoration for his beloved, he wanted to depict Rv.'s passion not as a merely sexual but also as an adorant passion. Why? He has not given us a direct clue to this, but most probably he has chosen to do this, as the proper consequences of S.'s awe-inspiring personality. S., who is an embodiment of all excellences, physical excellences as well as
moral virtues, should naturally arouse feelings of adoration for her even in a brutal savage like Rv. So far so good. But how far does the poet want Rv. to go in his adoration of S., and of what nature does he want this adoration to be? When we look into Rv.'s very method of courtship, we immediately feel that he lacks all altruistic feelings of love, that, already having her in his power, he merely pursues his ambition to win her love, to win a response from her, that he is intent on ultimately taking possession of her by whatever means possible, fair or foul, without giving her any alternative, without tolerating her freedom to reject his proposal. In short, his adoration for S. is coupled with a greed to possess her and with tyranny. As this tyranny of the 'object' of his veneration comes in conflict with his very adoration of her person, as passion it creates a psychological conflict with his own self, we can circumscribe Rv.'s passion perhaps best as self-conflictingly adoring and tyrannic. An adoration which is exclusively rooted in a greed to possess, and which takes recourse to tyranny as the last but unavoidable means, is naturally filled with an ambition to win a response from the adored one and so demands desperate efforts of persuasion. It is these efforts of persuasion and this ambition to win a response from S. which the poet makes the central features of Rv.'s courtship, and by doing so, he not only exposes and ridicules the kind of love which determines Rv., but he exposes and ridicules the very nature of Rv. himself; for Rv.'s desperate attempts to persuade S., attempts which lack all the fundamentals of virtue and dharma, cannot but reveal the perversity of his mind.

Let us now give concrete illustrations of each of the traits of Rv.'s psychology of love, which we have outlined schematically:

- Rv.'s sexual passion: cf. 16 passim; 18.3,5-6,14-15 --
- Rv.'s adorant passion: cf. 18.3-7 §ff; 13-16§ff., 26-29§ff. --

- Rv.'s adorant passion which is of a nature that prompts him to pursue his ambition to win S.'s love, but reveals itself as a mere greed to possess her:
  
  implicitly throughout the passages indicated,
  very explicitly in 18.24-27 --

- his desperate attempts to seduce her by taking recourse to the following means: trying to soothe her fears and instill into her a feeling of confidence in him:
  18.2; 18.4-7;
  blandishing her with the presumptuous promise of endowing her with all the splendour he has, i.e. by putting all the riches and luxuries, comforts of life at her disposal:
  cf. 18.8-12, 17-18, 21-23, 32-35
  and making her queen over all his wives:
  cf. 18.16, 30-31;
  bragging about his unexcelled power and heroism, which even the Gods are unable to withstand:
  cf. 18.19-20;
  disparaging R. as a miserable forest-rover, useless for S., a world away from his own awe-inspiring wealth, glory and power, as one who will never succeed in regaining S. from his (Rv.'s) all-powerful hands:
  cf. 18.24-27, 33; --

- his recourse to tyrannic threats, on failing to win her love, which is thus in conflict with the very adoration he cherishes for S., with the very encouragement he has given to her not to be afraid of him:
  implicitly foreshadowed throughout in
Rv.'s very act of abduction and in his previous threats, explicitly foreshadowed in 18.26ff., explicitly expressed in 20.2-9, in part - 5-9; 20.23-36\(^2\) —

- his exorbitant presumption, self-conceit, insolence and perversity of mind, revealing itself through a passion that defies all the regards of dharma and virtue and all respect for a devoted wife's fidelity to her husband - and this after so many blunt upbraidals by S. herself - and showing the absurdity of his passion:

expressed throughout with different stresses, the absurdity of Rv.'s passion as a whole being very explicitly brought out in 18.5-7, 24-28; 20.2ff.

Appendix: Rv.'s courtship of S. in III 53 - 54 is basically the same as in this complex. All the elements of Rv.'s love are present, though presented in a different order and in a different manner of poetical expression and imagination. The only major difference is that the aspect of adoration is more vividly brought out and its absurdity is more exposed to ridicule in the first courtship, e.g. when Rv. says in III 53.16-18 —

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yadidaṁ rājyatantram me tvayī sarvam pratiṣṭhitam /
jivataṁ ca visālakṣi tvam me prāṇairgarāyaśi / 16
behnāṁ strīsastrasānaṁ mama yo'śau parigrhaḥ /
tāsāṁ tvamīśvarīṁ sīte mama bhāryā bhava priye / 17
sadbhu kim te'nyayā buddhyā rocayaṁ vaco mama /
bhajasva mābhítaptasya prasādaṁ kartumarhasi / 18```

as also Rv.'s perversity of mind when he says in III 53.27:

\[ \text{duskrta\textasciitilde yatpur\textasciitilde karma vanavasena tadgatam /} \\
\text{yasca te sukrto dharmastasye\textasciitilde phalamapnuhi} //27 \]

There is also more stress on the glamour and splendour of Rv.'s wealth, which he in a presumptuous manner displays to S. to entice her.

S.'s characterization of Rv., within the frame of her upbraidal of him, comprises the following elements:

1) his abominable sinfulness\(^3\) and fickleness of mind, consisting in the lustful desire for and abduction of another's wife and perversity of mind in disparaging a devoted wife's fidelity to her husband, a crime which will inevitably bring destruction upon him as well as on the whole of the Rk. race, much to the relief of those who had been humiliated by him;

2) the abominable inferiority of Rv.'s power and prowess to those of R. and L., who will bring about his destruction;

3) the shameful cowardice of robbing S. in the absence of R. and L.

Appendix: S.'s reaction in III 54, as compared with here, is mainly in line of point 2 as also of point 1, with the addition that S. abuses Rv.'s exorbitant presumption and baseness of aspiring for her, who is inviolable to him like a sacrificial altar to a Candala, i.e., a world above the abominable lowness of Rv.'s character.
Classification:

Literary basis:
exposition: a) objective - descriptive - explicit & implicit
   b) subjective - descriptive - explicit & implicit

Resume:
Rv.'s reaction to H.'s provocatively-styled appeal to him to return S. reflects the same spirit which pervades the scenes of Rv.'s reactions to the successive reports of H.'s rage of devastation: his destruction of the Adokavana as well as his slaying of the most valiant Rk. troops and warriors, cf. 40.22-23;

Hanuman is impressed by Ravana's grandeur

Resume:
The author depicts, with rich poetic imagery, the following character-features of Rv.: the splendour of his royal attire, the awe-inspiring, dazzling brightness of his appearance and awe-inspiring aura of his physical strength, valour and auspicious marks, in paradoxical antinomy with the viciousness (adharma) of his activities casting a spell of terror among beings.

Résumé:

Rv.'s reaction to H.'s provocatively-styled appeal to him to return S. reflects the same spirit which pervades the scenes of Rv.'s reactions to the successive reports of H.'s rage of devastation: his destruction of the Adokavana as well as his slaying of the most valiant Rk. troops and warriors, cf. 40.22-23;
40.36; 42.18-19; 44.1-4; 45.1; 46.1-12. Taken as a whole, these reactions of his are characterized by an engrained irascibility that is aroused once it is occasioned by events that appear as a provocative curtailment of his power, an irascibility which, becomes the more intensified in its relentlessness, the more alarming H.'s destruction becomes, - to such a degree that even the realization of H.'s heroism (he suspects him to be a spy of Indra or the like) does not prevent him from sacrificing the best of his warriors in order to subdue H., that at best it makes him warn some of the warriors to be on their guard in their fight (cf. 44.1-14; 46.1-12). In fact, Rv.'s encouragement of Indrajit, with which he connects a subtle warning to be cautious (46.1-12), betrays the very relentlessness of his anger once it has been kindled. Similarly, it is this irascibility of Rv. which drives him to take H.'s admonition, which by itself is already designed to be provocative, as a further provocation and to give an outlet to his anger in taking the most cruel revenge possible. It is important to note that, since the over-all impression of these scenes is centred around H.'s Herculean rage of devastation on the one hand, and Rv.'s irascibility on the other hand, the poet in this complex of scenes does not so much highlight the cause behind Rv.'s irascibility, namely the obliqueness of his character, but he plays with it only in the background. For were he to put this aspect as well right in the foreground, the feature of irascibility would lose much of its effect. It would then be a mere consequence of the perversity of his character, but not so much an already innate feature of his Rk. nature, be it or not as an outcome of that perversity. No doubt, the perversity of Rv.'s character plays an over-all role in the characterization of Rv., and his irascibility and adharma are constantly associated with it, but in this complex of scenes, the feature of irascibility has its own forceful reality for reasons of creating an atmosphere of thrill in the audience. That this interpretation is correct, is shown by the
fact that the author intends to effect a tension between H.'s rage of devastation and Rv.'s reaction. The poet not only portrays H. as a Herculean hero, but in doing so, also as a provocateur. Vibhīṣaṇa himself finds H. occasionally provocative. See, p. 563. Finally, the Rk. king listens to the advice of Vibhīṣaṇa not because he is convinced of the adharma of executing an envoy, but because he visualises a sadistic compensation as an outlet for his anger — taking the place of an execution (51.1-5). He unmistakeably betrays this sadistic urge when he responds to Vibhīṣaṇa's speech with the words:

\[ \text{samayaguktaḥ hi bhavatā dūtavadhyā vigarhitā} , \]

but at the same breath continues saying:

\[ \text{avaśya tu vadhādanyah kriyātāmasya nigrāhah} \quad /2 \\
\text{kapānāḥ kila lāṅgūlamiśtaḥ bhavatī bhūṣaṇaḥ} \quad /3 \\
\text{tadasya dīpyatāṁ śīghraṁ tena dagdhena gacchatu} \]

V 50

Vibhīṣaṇa dissuades Ravana from killing Hanuman an envoy

For translation and analysis of characterization see s.v. Vibhīṣaṇa pp. 562 ff.

Résumé:

Vibhīṣaṇa, though he criticizes Rv.'s anger, which has driven him to a rash decision against all laws of dharma and social custom, acknowledges Rv.'s basic cognizance of dharma and social custom, his knowledge of what is good and evil etc. Of course,
such an acknowledgement is primarily meant to exercise a sense of conscientiousness in Rv., is meant to be a diplomatic means of conciliation, but it is also somehow Vibhīṣaṇa's conviction because he loves his brother and wants to prevent him from misfortune. The question arises whether the author himself, through the words of Vibhīṣaṇa, intends to light up a positive side in Rv.'s character, apart from the given context: The question is difficult to decide. If the author speaks through Vibhīṣaṇa, I would say he wants to convey something like this: There is some basic greatness of personality in Rv., a greatness which has endowed him with such awe-inspiring power and glory, but he has come under the influence of presumption and adharma.

VI 10.1-10

Rāvana condemns Vibhīṣaṇa as a treacherous kinsman

Translation:

When Vibhīṣaṇa had spoken these well-controlled, beneficial words, Rv., driven by Kāla, spoke these harsh words to him (1) — "One may live together with an angry enemy or a snake, but not with one who talks like a friend but serves the enemy (2). I know the disposition (nature) of kinsmen in all the worlds, O Rk.; these kinsmen always rejoice at the calamities of kinsmen (3). For kinsmen look down upon one who is the most eminent, who is efficient, learned and virtuous, O Rk., and despise a hero (4). Kinsmen are always delighted at each other's misfortunes, endeavour to kill each other, have their hearts concealed, are frightful and causing fear (5). I have heard of slokas recited by elephants when they saw men holding a noose in their hands somewhere in a lotus grove; listen to me relating them (6) 'Neither fire nor other weapons nor nooses cause fear in us, but false kinsmen, possessed of self-interests, cause fear in us (7). They will tell the means of how to capture us, no doubt about that, and so the fear of kinsmen is known to us as being more injurious than all fear (8).' There is wealth
(prosperity) in kings, there is self-restraint in a Brāhmin, there is fickleness in women, and there is the fear arising from a kinsman (9). It is therefore not desirable for you, O dear one, that I am respected by the world, that I am born for sovereignty and that I am standing on the heads of enemies (10). If another were to speak such words like this, O night-rover, he would not exist at this very moment, but shame to you, defiler of the race (11)."

Analysis of characterization:

This speech of condemnation is not only a master-piece of poetry, it is a master-piece of psychology, in which the poet makes his character manifest the whole of his perverse psyche:

an exorbitant obstinacy to listen to any wholesome advice that goes against his own wilfulness, which thus gives a slap to his very idea of summoning a council;

a perversity, wrath and a wounding harshness that go as far as to accuse his own brother, who has spoken out of a loving concern for his welfare, of being a treacherous kinsman envious of his greatness;

an obstinacy and a perversity that are rooted in an exorbitant delusion of self-conceit.

Classification:

I

Literary basis:

exposition: objective - descriptive - explicit
VI 31.51-61

Rama directs Angada to communicate his ultimatum to Ravana

Contents of ultimatum:

You senseless fool, you who have lost your splendour and sovereignty and are desiring death, the sin (evil) you have done to the rśis, Gods, Gandharvas, Apsarases, Nāgas, Yaksas, and kings - you haughty fellow have done out of delusion. Now your pride resulting from the granting of a boon by Svayambhu has gone, for I, depressed on account of your abduction of my wife, am carrying out your death-penalty, stationed at the gate of Lāṅkā. Now display the pūrṇa by which you, with magic deceit, deceived me and took away S. If you do not submit and return S., I am going to deprive this world of the Rṣis., and Vibhisana, the best of the Rṣis., who has come over to me, is going to be the ruler of Lāṅkā. You, that are vicious, sinful, uncontrolled and are helped by fools, will be unable to enjoy the kingdom even for a moment. Or, take courage and fight, resort to your prowess. Then you will be subdued by my anger and find your expiation. Even if you enter the three worlds in the form of a bird, you will not escape my eye and will not return alive. I am speaking for your welfare. Perform your funeral rites. Have a good look at Lāṅkā, for your life rests in my hands.

Analysis of characterization:

Though the ultimatum is styled provocatively and breathes the anger and conviction of R., it gives an idea of how the poet intended to explain the polarity between Rv.'s glory of old and his evil nature which is going to destroy him: The obtainment of Brahmā's boon has filled him with delusion and pride, and in the delusion of his presumption he has become subject to all kinds of evil deeds in defiance of all laws of dharma and of all respect for virtues, and though he is prosperous in his glory and is puffed up with it, this sinful, evil nature of his - reaching its climax in the brazen sin of carrying away R.'s
devoted wife - meets with his inevitable humiliation and destruction in the form of R.

Classification:

Literary basis:
exposition: subjective - descriptive - explicit
tone: provocative

A resume of Ravana's reactions in the course of the battle scenes

VI 31.71-72 ff. When Rv. hears R.'s provocative ultimatum from Âgada, he gets so enraged that he straight away orders Âgada to be executed. He, however, does not succeed since Âgada, while allowing himself to be seized by four ministers, jumps up with them - striking at him - to the top of the palace, the impact of which hurls them down before Rv.'s very eyes, and then crushes the tower of the palace. At this Rv. gets terribly enraged and disspirited, apprehending his own destruction (31.79).

VI 32. The news of the Vns.' siege of LaÂkâ (1-2) fills him with anger, and as he ascends the top of his palace and sees the earth covered on all sides with Vns. (2-4), he deeply broods on the ways and means of how to defeat them. But as he is looking at the Vn. hosts drawing near in millions, crushing palaces and gates and shouting victory to R. (detailed description of the onmarch vv. 5-24), each batch protected by ace army-chiefs, Rv. is filled with rage, and he orders the immediate issue of all the Rk. armies (25).
The death of warriors like Dhūmrākṣa, Akampana, Prahasta etc. fills RV. in each case with anger and sorrow, but instead of making him thoughtful, this drives him to more and more desperate actions, drives him to send out the most efficient senāpatis one after the other, and also, as in Prahasta’s case, to encourage them by representing the Vns. as fearful, fickle-minded and unruly (45.8ff).

When almost all of the ace-chiefs have been killed, RV., extremely sorrowful, takes recourse to a desperate means : He wakes up Kumbhakarna from his sleep and beseechingly entreats him : VI 50.13-17

(Cf. the whole context of s.50) When Kumbhakarna, after a heroic battle, is slain by R., RV. swoons with grief and gives way to a most heart-rending lamentation at the unbelievable death of his brother (s.56), and, in utter despair almost to the point of giving up his life, he for the first time feels a deep remorse for rejecting Vibhīṣaṇa’s advice.

But RV. does not relent. (We do not know whether, and if so, how many senāpatis RV. sends out, according to the original Epic, before Indrajit is slain. See pp.203-209) He has utter confidence...
in Indrajit and so promptly requests him to slay R. and L. - 'ordinary men in comparison to him' - the conqueror of irresistible Indra (67.2-3). But when also this hero, the very likeness of himself in prowess, is killed, he, for a long time, loses his consciousness at this unbelievable news and, regaining his consciousness, gives vent to his grief in a most heart-rending lamentation. Yet this grief kindles a fire-like rage in him - in a way that his form, ghoric as it is by nature, becomes possessed by the fire of rage, the form of angry Rudra himself, as it were, and - a living image of grief and blazing rage - appears like Death about to devour all things moveable and immoveable - painted in most vivid images by the poet (80.4-21). For this terrible grief and rage he finds an outlet by presumptuously assuring the Rks., who are too frightened to approach him, that, on account of the boon given to him by Brāhma for his austere penance for 1000 years, he is indestructible by Gods and Asuras in battle, and that the armour given to him by Brāhma cannot be pierced even by the power of the thunderbolt, that, with the bow and arrow given to him by Brāhma in the war between the Devas and Asuras, he shall destroy R. and L. this very day, and by giving expression to his resolve to kill S. straight away. He is rushing towards S. with upraised sword, and would have killed her - were it not for the counsellor Supārśva, who, at the pitiable sight of S.'s distress, does his best to dissuade Rv. from the heinous crime of killing a woman, (80.22-57).

At the news of R.'s slaughter of countless Rks. sent out by Rv., the Rākṣasīs break forth in bitter lamentations and feelings of despair, deploring the tragic course of events - starting from Śurpaṅkha's inducement of Rv., and criticising his haughtiness that has infatuated his mind on account of the boon (of protection from Devas, Dānavas and Rks.) granted to him by Brāhma, a haughtiness which has made him unmindful of asking protection from man as well, and which has made him relentlessly
obstinate against reading the signs of death - a death predicted by the wise and old, who have heard of Mahadeva's promise to the Gods that for their welfare a woman will be born for the destruction of the Rks., which woman is Jānakī (s.82). When Rv. hears these lamentations, he becomes terribly enraged, and, to find an outlet for his rage, he tells Mahodāra, Mahāpārāva and Virūpākṣa to summon the warriors and get ready for fight, and, when this has been done, he assures them presumptuously that today he is going to take revenge for the death of Khara, Kumbhakarna, Prahasta and Indrajit, that today he is going to annihilate the Vns. (expressed with various effective images) and offer their flesh to the birds of prey. "Eing my chariot and bow and let those Rks. who have not yet entered the battle follow me!" (83.1-20) While Rv., surrounded by hosts of Rks., on his chariot marches on to the battle-field, to the terror of the Vns., who flee in panic, all sorts of ominous portents appear, but blind to his impending doom, he proceeds without considering all these evil signs (21-37). Then Rv. causes havoc among the Vns., as does Sugrīva among the Rks., who finally kills Virūpākṣa (83.38ff.— 84). At this, Rv. is filled with anger and sorrow, and exhorts Mahodāra to sally out (85.2-5). When both Mahodāra and Mahāpārāva are slain (ss.85-86), Rv.'s patience is at its end, and with the words that today he shall remove his intense grief by cutting down the tree which is R. with all its flowers and brāhbes, he rushes towards R. (87.1-5).

Thus, as a whole, Rv.'s reactions can be described in this way: The anger and grief aroused in him at the death of one Rk. warrior after the other drive him to more and more desperate actions. He feels deeply grieved and almost despair of his life at the death of his brother Kumbhakarna and of his son Indrajit. He hears the voice of repentance in his heart in an intense moment of grief, he hears the lamentations of the Rākṣasīs and their prediction of his death, he sees ominous portents at his
march-out, but he does not relent, and he runs straight into his own disaster. Over and above, it is an exorbitant irascibility which commands all the actions of Rv. during the battle-scenes. To be sure, at the bottom of this irascibility of his is his over-presumptuousness of himself due to the boon given to him by Brahmā, which has made him relentlessly obstinate against reading the signs of fate. But when we look into his way of reaction, we discover a spontaneous irritability as the first characteristic feature of his response. Definitely, the poet intended to portray Rv.'s irascibility also as a forceful element of its own, as being part of his very nature - though he did causally link it up with his haughtiness and perversity in many scenes, sometimes more, sometimes less explicitly - , and this so particularly in the battle-scenes, which are dominated by sentiments of heroic wonderment (abhutavārārasa) and furor (raudrarasa) and are designed to thrill the audience to the core of their heart. The very force of Rv.'s irascibility is seen from the fact that at certain times his rage is so severe that he finds an outlet to it only either by an outrageous attempt to take an immediate cruel act of revenge, as when he resolves to kill Aṅgada reporting R.'s ultimatum or when he proceeds to kill S., or by a presumptuous appeal to his invincibility guaranteed by the boon given to him by Brahmā, or by a presumptuous prediction of his wholesale destruction of R., L. and the Vns. - which sounds like a delusive inner voice of Fate.

A resume of Ravana's yuddhavīra

We are here barely outlining the traits which characterize Rv.'s chivalrous heroism. Of the magnificence of its display no amount of analysis but reading alone can give an adequate
impression:

There is, over and above, Rv.'s formidable super-natural heroism, martial lustre, valour, and skill; his inexhaustible astra-bala, his relentless pugnacity and power of resistance - a heroism which, reaching its climax in the final duel with Rv., a duel that has no equal among beings, a duel that thrills Gods and men alike, would well-nigh have withstood that of Rv. - were it not for Fate acting against him (which is expressed in various ways).

There is secondly Rv.'s unquenchable bellicose fury, roused whenever he sees his attacks inefficient and whenever he is smitten by an astra of his enemy - a fury in which he goes as far as to insult in the meanest way his own charioteer, who, seeing Rv. exhausted and weak, has driven him away from the battle-field in order to save him.

Resume of concluding estimative remarks about Ravana's character

The vilāpa of Rv.'s consorts (s.98), containing laments over the tragic fate of Rv., imply some kind of assessment of Rv.'s personality, independent of their karunātmik character, which the poet through these lamentations conveys to the listener, namely: Rv., a heroic personality (the very dearness of the Rk. women to him is an indirect expression of this), unconquerable by Gods and Asuras, has been killed by Rv., a human being, because in his haughtiness he committed a nefarious deed, and, though urged by all well-wishers to return S., blinded by the delusion of his haughtiness, did not pay heed to them, so turning the wrath of fate on him.
Similar considerations can be made with regard to the Mandodarī-vilāpa (s.99), though here the sentiment of karunā is by far the most dominant element in this sarga: An invincible hero, whose angry face not even Indra could stand, who struck terror among Gods and Gandharvas, who conquered the three worlds, has been killed by an ordinary man, R. (Mandodarī suspects that R. was not an ordinary human being, but Indra in disguise), and has caused the destruction of many Rks. as a consequence of the nefarious crime of desiring and abducting S., an embodiment of virtues (in disrespect for his own wife Mandodarī), and as a consequence of being filled with relentless wrath and not listening to the well-wishing words of Mandodarī and Vibhīṣaṇa.

Similar sound R.'s words (which may be taken for the words of the poet himself) spoken to Vibhīṣaṇa as a reply to his refusal to bury his brother (s.99):

\[
\begin{align*}
adharmanṛttasāmyuktaḥ kāmameṣa nisācareṇaḥ / 
tejāsvi balavāṇādurah saṅgrāmesu ca nityaśeḥ / 37 
datakratumsūryaṁ Mahāṛṣi ca nāparaṁ saṁgrahaḥ / 38 
mahātma balasampannoṛavaṇo lokaravānaḥ / 
manuṣyāṁ vairāṇi nirvṛttatam naḥ prayoj nanām / 
\end{align*}
\]
2

A SYNTHETIC VIEW OF THE AUTHOR'S CONCEPTION
AND PORTRAIT OF RAVANA'S CHARACTER
Conception

It is quite evident from our analysis that V. had one uniform conception of Rv.'s character in mind. Though the pattern of spontaneity is constantly at work, endowing this conception with a variegated mosaic of scenic details, and at times brings out some particular trait or traits more effectively than in other places, particularly in scenes with a strong sentiment, all the scenes which deal with Rv.'s character breathe the spirit of the whole personality of Rv. In other words, the aura of the whole choric personality of Rv. is in some way or other present in all these scenes. This is all we can say about V.'s conception of Rv. as such, leaving it to imagination to say whether he inherited this uniform conception of Rv. or has built it up himself.

There is a great conformity between objective and subjective expositions in the sense that the latter basically agree with what the author intends to convey, prescinding from the expositions in the mouth of some toady Rks., which we have not treated in our analysis at all. A large part of the objective expositions are not descriptions by the poet himself, but self-revelations of Rv., i.e. speeches which reveal the very heart of Rv., and which, thus, are as objective as the former. Of course, self-revelation does not mean 'what a character says about himself', but 'what he manifests of himself'. A character may say something about himself, which is in utter contradiction to what he actually does, and what he actually is. This is so very characteristic of Rv. He says so many nice things about himself, but his very actions prove the opposite. That means, what he says of himself does not express what he does and is, but expresses the opposite of what he does and is. This, of course, does not apply exclusively to all the aspects of his character, but to a good many of them, mainly (but by far not exclusively) to the aspect of his cruelty and tyranny. They, so to say,
possess an ambivalence in themselves - Rv. says one thing, but the poet, through the very words of Rv., says something else.

Portrait

Though Rv.'s character is represented by the poet in a variegated mosaic of scenic details, a synthetic portrait of it is easily framed precisely on account of the author's uniform conception of Rv., the more so as we see that most of the elements are already virtually, not dynamically, present in the first introduction of Rv.'s personality to the audience, and that the ghoric spirit of his personality pervades right through and unifies these elements. And since we find that this ghoric spirit continues to hover in some way or other over all the scenes dealing with Rv. right to the end of the Yudhakanda, we can consider it as the essence of the personality he emanates, as the starting-point for our unfolding of his character.

Rv., thus, is a ghoric personality with the polarity of a twofold dimension - heroic on the one hand, tyrannic on the other - the dimension of his awe-inspiring brightness of appearance, his unexcelled heroism, which surpasses that of the Gods and Asuras, and his royal glory, on the one hand, and the dimension of his harassing cruelty, exorbitant presumption, vicious disregard of dharma and virtues, and his perversity of mind, on the other hand, of which the first dimension finds its final annihilation through the second. Of course, from the very start we find the two dimensions intertwined. The former is already polluted by the latter, is in part already an expression
of the latter, and the former lives on in the second in the continued manifestations of Rv.'s awe-inspiring physical appearance and royal glory amidst all evil actions, and more genuinely so in his final battle with R. But that allows us, and the poet has given definite indications of this, to unfold the 'historic' personality of Rv.:

Rv., by nature a Rk. endowed with super-natural power, brightness of physical appearance, valour and heroism, has, by an extraordinary austere penance of 10,000 years, obtained from Brahmā a boon of invincibility from Gods, Asuras and other super-natural beings. This extraordinary boon has aroused in him a delusion of an exorbitant presumption and self-conceit, which not only has made him unmindful of making a request also for invincibility from man, but has led him to an abuse of his power to an extent that he has created terror among Gods, Asuras and other super-natural beings, many of whom he has humiliated or defeated in an abominable manner. Besides that, it has led him to a tyranny of ṛṣis and virtuous people (destruction of Brāhmins, abduction of others' wives etc.), to a violation of all regards of dharma and virtues, and so to a perversion of his whole mentality, and has made him indulge in a voluptuous and sensual revelry of life to the neglect of all circumspection and kingly duties. Being irascible by nature at any kind of intrusion into his realm of power, without any concern whatsoever to investigate where the guilt lies, and being subjected by the influence of sexual passion, he easily submits to Surpanakhā's enticing inducement to abduct S. Shrewd (cunning) as he is, he chooses to take the assistance of Māroa, a Rk. known through his skill of magic power, and, failing to assess his inner conversion to a saintly life, he approaches him in the expectation that he would render him assistance without any hesitation. In his presumptuousness, irascibility and his self-righteous subjective, perverse way of viewing things, he disparages R. as a miserable
prince possessed of all vices, who has been expelled by his father, and who has indulged in the cruel act of slaughtering Khara's army. When Mārīca as a well-wishing and conscientious counsellor attempts to inculcate upon him the dire consequences of evil intention, and for this has to disillusion him of the erroneous assumption of R.'s weakness and moral debility and has to expose, as a contrast, his own (Rv.'s) vices, namely his self-conceited haughtiness, his fickleness, unrighteousness, addiction to sensual pleasures etc., so as to make him see his inferiority in all respects to R. (which would necessarily entail his own destruction), Rv. meanly and scornfully rebukes Mārīca's well-meant advice. By this, he already reveals the whole scale of the evilness of his character as it has invariably imprinted itself in his nature: For the very stubbornness and irascibility he manifests at the instance of the slightest objection raised against his self-willed resolution reflect not only a deep-going presumptuous attitude of degrading the opponent going hand-in-hand with a self-glorious perversity of viewing things wilfully and a still deeper intolerant, presumptuous self-appeal, but reflect already that total submission to tyranny and relentless-ness - being the ultimate outflow of the perversity of his mentality - which is bound to lead him to his own destruction. It is this which makes Mārīca despair of his endeavour and submit to the wilfulness of Rv., and causes Vibhiṣaṇa to desert him. Tyranny, relentlessness and irascibility now take complete command over Rv. Though the personality of S. arouses in him an adoration for her that transcends his sexual passion, though he feels an ambition to court for her love, - this adoration in Rv., by the very method of its courtship, is a self-revelation of its absurdity, as nothing but a greed to possess her, a greed that viciously tramples down all regards of dharma and virtues, and the ideal of a devoted wife's fidelity to her husband, is a self-revelation, thus, of the exorbitant presumption, self-conceit and
infamy (in the words of S.) and the total perversity of his character, and is, with the spirit of tyranny lurking over the adored person and breaking forth with ruthless cruelty (abduction, threats of killing her and harassments by the Rākṣasīs) as this courtship is rebuffed, a contradictio in se, an adoration which is in conflict with itself, as it forbids him, on the one hand, to make short work with the adored person and, on the other hand, does not find the desired outlet, is thus in the grip of tyranny. And the poet very effectively depicts Rv.'s abduction of S. as the climax of his heinous crimes, as the crime which entail his inevitable destruction. S. abominably degrades Rv.'s lowness of character and severely upbraids his shameless cowardice, infamous defiance of dharma and virtues etc. There being a vicious circle between his adoration for S. and his tyranny of her, since despite all her rebuffs the former disposition makes him pursue his ambition again and again, and, as it is unsuccessful, drives him to take to tyrannic threats again and again. Rv. becomes more and more relentless. Being by nature irascible, Rv.'s irascibility, on the background of this increased relentlessness - it was already aroused tremendously at the instance of H.'s rage of devastation and destruction - will now develop into a most forceful reality when he sees himself challenged by R. himself. Here the most gently styled and most affectionately expressed advice of Vibhīṣaṇa, given at the request of Rv. himself, causes him to condemn his own brother in the meanest way as a treacherous kinsman envious of his sovereignty. An exorbitant presumption is now coupled with a more relentless wrath. From now onwards it is wrath which (so to say, as the spontaneous expression of a more deeply rooted perversity) commands all actions of Rv., and which, with the death of one warrior after the other, leads him to more and more desperate sacrifices of heroes. An intense grief over the death of the greatest and dearest heroes of his, a feeling of remorse at an intense moment of despair do not make him relent. Nay, it is grief itself over the dearest of all,
Indrajit, which but kindles his rage, - making him appear a living image of grief and rage incarnate - , which drives him to find an outlet for it by an outrageous attempt to enforce an immediate cruel act of revenge. It is the grief of the Rk. women which occasions his anger to drive him to the last, to take the revenge into his own sole power - commanded, by the delusive voice of his trust in the boon of invincibility. And Rv. does show all his formidable heroism, valour and power in a way that thrills Gods and Asuras, but, awe-inspiring as it is, it is a struggle of bellicose fury against a fate that he has conjured up against himself.
A CRITICISM OF MODERN SCHOLARS' VIEWS ON THE CHARACTERIZATION OF RAVANA
"The qualities that we see in Ravana are thus, mainly, valour which was fouled by a tendency to cruelty, stratagem amounting to trickery which seems inconsistent with real valour, infatuation for beauty which thought no procedure for winning a woman unfair, distrust of friendly counsel when it seemed to counter his wishes, and insolent belief in his own invincibility. He had the feeling that one should enjoy oneself while youth lasts. He had the stubbornness that refuses to admit error whatever the cost. These qualities in Ravana were, however, of an order worthy of the great king of Lanka. In magnitude they equalled his great record of success and achievement and made him a worthy opponent of the heroic Rama. The poet's imagination has reached in this character also the heights which it reached in the delineation of Rama and Sita and of Hanuman and Rama's brothers.

In the midst of many bad qualities there was in Ravana one that was good. This Rakhsasa who brought Sita by trickery and force did not use force to take her to his bed. Persons who imagine that they know all of human nature find it impossible to believe Valmiki here. Such doubt has always been felt and people have found it necessary to state reasons for Ravana's forbearance. It is suggested in the Ramayana that the reason was a curse that Ravana had received from a woman whom he had forced, that the next time he violated a woman he would die. We read of primitive populations having a taboo in this matter. A woman brought by force is to be given a year to make up her mind. She should not be compelled before the year is over, Ravana in the story gives a year's time to Sita. It is possible there was a curse and he feared it. It is equally possible that there was this custom in his race. It is possible that it was from
restraint and consideration, more than because of such fear or custom, that he desisted from forcing Sita. But more than consideration or taboo or custom was a certain trait in Ravana's character of which Valmiki leaves us in no doubt. Ravana was not a savage who could derive pleasure by forcing a woman who did not care for him. He had known the pleasures of the bed at the best, and was aware that they were worthwhile only with a willing partner who shared desire. He did not desire the company of Sita, disconsolate, with her hair uncombed, for Rama. He desired a Sita who would have abandoned all thought of Rama and who would have lost her heart to the splendours of Lanka's king. He wanted a Sita who would be proud of being first among his queens and of loving him. This is why he described her beauty to her, and told her that her face was spoilt by her tears, and begged her to become gracious. Ravana was not a low-minded churl, unable to imagine Sita who might become willing, and not above using her reluctant person by force. He was a connoisseur in love. A lover of good food does not grab coarse victual. The company of a reluctant woman was to Ravana unenjoyable like coarse food. It would also appear that Sita inspired in Ravana a feeling different from that which he felt for the women he had seen previously. Something in her produced in his mind great respect as well as great desire. He, therefore, was disinclined to treat her rudely. Even when she spoke hard words and he was angry he did not treat her cruelly. "You deserve severe punishment for this" he said "but the man who loves feels pity for the person he loves, so I do you no harm." This was no doubt due to an element of goodness in Ravana's character. This element made it possible for Sita to live in honour to join Rama again. If Ravana had been the ruffian to force her to be his, as he had been to abduct her, Sita would have had to forsake life. Valmiki thus in his picture of Ravana painted the complexity of a nature great even in its errors.......

"
Criticism: Very good on the whole, though not complete. However, Iyengar's explanations concerning Rv.'s forbearance in not laying violent hands upon S. are all somewhat peripheral. There are indications in Rv.'s courtship of S. of his being a connoisseur of love. One may also easily get the impression that there is some element of goodness in Rv.'s gentle approach. But we think these are not the ideas which the poet wants to convey. It is primarily, as the author rightly remarks, because "Sita inspired in Ravana a feeling different from that which he felt for the women he had seen previously. Something in her produced in his mind great respect as well as great desire ...", that Rv. has a feeling of adoration for her and that he feels an ambition to woo for her love, and this ambition does not leave him inspite of the most abasing rebuffs dealt out by S. But, nevertheless, Rv.'s adoration is an adoration coupled with tyranny. Whether coarse or refined, cruelty remains cruelty. So I don't see where the goodness of Ravana lies.

P. D. Chidambara Iyer⁶)

Chidambara Iyer's interpretation of Rv.'s character, in the light of modern psychology, as the "unfortunate victim of cruel circumstances, a neurotic suffering from a bad inferiority complex," who, as he was the most powerful individual, had, in order that the world may be protected from his anti-social activities, to be removed by an "equally powerful individual who was comparatively free from complexes and who was poised in his life,"⁷), is, though it bases itself on some stories in the Uttarakāṇḍa, the nature of rationalizations for Rv.'s psychological development, far away in its perspectives even from the intentions of those late interpolations of the Uttarakāṇḍa period - so that it cannot be even considered a trustworthy psychological
analysis of Rv. of the Rāvaneśīs, much less than an analysis of characterization of Rv. in the early Rm. as such.

M. K. Venkatarama Iyer

"Rāvana was a great man, but unfortunately he lacked the human touch. In him we find great qualities of daring and courage completely divorced from love and compassion for fellow mortals. He lacked the sense of right and wrong, of good and bad, of what is worthy and what is unworthy. To upset the established order, to violate every accepted canon of decency, to cause unnecessary suffering to others, to harass the innocent and the righteous, to abduct women and molest them, these and other abominable cruelties came as naturally to him as breathing to all people. Such offences were in his day's routine. It did not occur to him at all that what he was doing was quite contrary to the norm of the universe. He does not seem to have realized that life is sacred and that honour is even more sacred. What was dominant in him, was his lower nature, always craving for sensual pleasures, material comforts and worldly success. Lust for sex, lust for battle and lust for possessions - these were the ruling passions of his mind. It was peculiarly constituted and completely lacked the moral sense. It is what we call the demoniac frame of mind. A man possessed of such a mentality is always self-centred, selfish in the extreme, highly egotistic, always seeking to have his own way and not hesitating to bend other people to his will, by peaceful means if possible, by the use of force if necessary. They are the Asuras in whom the one quality most conspicuously lacking is compassion .................

Rāvana's ancestry is very noble ..................
Being born in a noble family Rāvana had the initial advantage of an impressive and commanding personality. He was tall and well-built. His speech was majestic as Hanumān testifies... He was every inch a prince. His port was regal and his looks commanding. The glitter of his palace, its choice lay-out its being filled with all conveniences, the golden throne, his shining robes, his authoritarian glance and his stentorian voice—all invested him with special grandeur. He was also a powerful personality. His mere presence was enough to strike terror in the hearts of the men around him

In addition to these natural advantages, Rāvana had acquired merits as well. He was well-read in the Vedas and Vedānta as Vibhīṣaṇa testifies

[story of his penance according to the Uttarakāṇḍa]

... This assurance given by Brahmā went into his head made him puffed up and elated. It is said that power corrupts a man and absolute power corrupts him absolutely. By slow and imperceptible degrees this accession of power made Rāvana descend into evil ways. First he wanted to make sure whether the boons granted to him were real or merely apocryphical

[story of Vaiśravaṇa according to the Uttarakāṇḍa]

After settling down as king of Lāṅkā, Rāvana introduced a sound system of public administration

Having settled all the affairs at home, he set out on a campaign of conquest

After these military victories, Rāvana's adventure was against women

After these curses Rāvana changed his ways and became an
accomplished suitor. He tried to conquer the hearts of his captive women by coaxing and cajoling them, by deft flattering, by the offer of tempting things and courting them in soft and well-chosen words. When Sītā was a captive in his Aśoka pleasure-garden he tried to win over her heart by telling her that he would conquer the whole world and make a gift of it to her father, Janaka. He told her also that all her people were free to come to Laṅkā and bask in the sunshine of his prosperity. In making this offer he exhibits a shrewd insight into the psychology of women. He knows their weak point and cleverly seeks to exploit it for his nefarious ends. No wonder that some women succumbed to his adulations and willingly submitted to him. In his search for Sītā, Hanumān had occasion to see how these women, after drink and revelry, were lying down in a promiscuous manner. They gave him the impression of being quite happy. It was positive proof of Hanumān's winning manners. He says he would not be surprised if even Sītā had yielded to Rāvana's overtures. After the death of Rāvana the ladies of the harem felt greatly bereaved and rushed out into the open loudly lamenting their lot. There is no doubt that their grief was genuine. Rāvana had endeared himself to them...  

"... We must also remember that Rāvana was an over-sexed personality. The fire of lust was not extinct even in his old bones. It was always smouldering and could burst out into sudden flame when temptations came in his way. He had dozens of women in his harem and yet he speaks as if he never had his fill of satisfaction. They had become stale, but his lust ever remained fresh. He was therefore always on the look-out for "pasture new*. When he caught sight of Sītā, he experienced a thrill all over his body such as he had never felt before and, being beside himself with love, he decided to go all out to annex her by any means. It is such headstrong passion that always brings ruin. Rāvana's unholy love for Sītā marks the climax of his career of
crime. In thinking that Sītā was like the other women whom he had captured Rāvaṇa overshot the mark and got into trouble. It is therefore the most important episode in his life. It forms consequently the central place of the story...

Rāvaṇa's laying violent hands on Sītā is a fitting and most logical climax to his career of crime

Neither taunts nor advice can prevail against a nature which is essentially evil. Lust (Kāma) wrath (Krodha) and greed (Lobha) are the essential constituents of such a nature. These have been described by the Lord in the Gītā as the 3 gateways to hell. "All beings follow their nature. What can repression do?" If that nature happens to be essentially evil nothing can prevail against it. Even repeated reverses in the war did not bring Rāvaṇa to his senses. Soldier after soldier, warrior after warrior went to the field, but did not return. Even the death of renowned heroes like Prahasta, Akampana and Atikāya did not awaken him. One could have expected that the defeat and death of Kumbhakarna and Indrajit would make him realize his folly and retrace his steps. But they did not. On occasions it appeared as if he was beginning to repent; but there were evil-advisers at hand always ready to goad him on to evil ways. His own doggedness and perversity stood in his way. And so, here we have the spectacle of a man rushing to his doom with his eyes wide open ..........................................................  

Like Macbeth, Rāvaṇa fought to the last ditch. "I will fight till my flesh is hucked from my bones" says Macbeth and these words could be well put into the mouth of Rāvaṇa also. Rāvaṇa's heart was hard like steel and nothing could daunt him or make him lose courage. The fall of so many heroes did not depress him. From one point of view it may look somewhat amusing that Rāvaṇa should continue to cherish hopes of ultimate success
when indications were all to the contrary. All the leading warriors were gone. Only old people, women and children were left behind in Lāṅkā. The coffers were empty. Supernatural warnings and premonitions of impending calamity were to be found in plenty. A lesser man would have hesitated to risk his life. But Rāvaṇa was made a sterner stuff. Like a true hero he fought till the last ounce of energy in him was exhausted. That shows his grim determination to fight to the finish. It is a matter for admiration and not for amusement or a superior smile.
Rāvaṇa had great faith in himself and the might of his arms. A true hero never retracts though all the odds are against him.

Thus Rāvaṇa fought and fell. But it was a glorious fall... That he proved himself to be a foeman almost equal to Rāma, that to the last he kept up a brave fight, that the issue was hanging in the balance, that his opponent found himself equally matched and that he stood in need of Agastya's inspiring Mantra and that Indra had to send his charioteer and a bunch of arrows and that Mātaī had to whisper in his ears to shoot the master-weapon (Brahmāstra) - all this is enough to prove Rāvaṇa's greatness as a fighter ..........................................................."\textsuperscript{10}

Criticism: On the whole, Iyer's exposition is good, in particular as regards his ethical considerations. It, however, does not penetrate enough into the psychological depth of V.'s characterization of Rv. Iyer outlines very well the general character of Rv. He rightly remarks that Rv., great as he is, is dominated by his lower nature or his demoniac frame. Perhaps the author has overlooked here one important element, namely his pride or presumptuousness, which is often described as the root-cause of his lower nature (however, the author has mentioned this later). But it is true that presumption already includes a lack of compassion, i.e. a demoniac nature, and so the author's delineation may be considered quite adequate.
We do not agree with the author's artificial attempt to reconstruct step-by-step the development of Rv.'s enterprises and associate with it a corresponding step-by-step ethical development. The fault lies mainly in basing his study on the Uttarakāṇḍa, which for a critical reader is a later interpolation. A typical example of the flaw of this method is the attribution of Rv.'s courtship of S. to the mere application of a shrewd insight into the psychology of women and the exploitation of it for nefarious ends, so to say, to the shrewd routine of his accomplished courtship - rooted in a mere sexual passion - consisting in coaxing, cajoling, deft flattery etc. The author altogether overlooks the deep psychic feelings of adoration which are going on in Rv., and which determine the intensity as well as the desperate perseverance of his courtship - feelings which cannot be explained by a mere routine that is itself based on mere sexual passion, but must be rooted in something deeper. Rv. does use connoissant means, no doubt, but they do not constitute the all-in-all of the psychology of his courtship. Furthermore, they altogether fail, lacking all insight into the heart of a devoted wife, and by their desperate re-employment lose completely their character of connoissance. Cf. our detailed analysis of Rv.'s passion pà 404 ff. But the author comes to this interpretation precisely on account of a passage in the Uttarakāṇḍa, according to which Rv., due to some curse, changed his ways and started conquering the hearts of ladies instead of ravishing them straight. You see the influence of an uncritical method!

The author tends to describe Rv.'s grim relentlessness in fighting to the last, though being the expression of his doggedness and perversity, to use his own words, as the relentlessness of a true hero, who never retracts, though all the odds are against him. I would be rather inclined to characterize the heroism of Rv. not as the heroism of a true warrior, but as the heroism of a blinded bellicose warrior, whose irascibility
(the spontaneous expression of a more deeply-rooted perversity) has so obsessed him that he can no longer free himself from its grip.

K. S. Ramaswami Sastri

"Rāvaṇa is a mighty character and is inferior only to Rāma in prowess. He had conquered innumerable mighty foes all over the world during his Digvijaya and established a mighty and prosperous and unassailable empire in Lanka. He was a very learned person and he had practised many difficult austerities and obtained diverse boons. He did not ask for immunity from death at the hands of men as he regarded them with contempt; but he got a boon from Brahma of immunity from death at the hands of all other beings. Hanumān was profoundly impressed by Rāvaṇa's greatness though he realized his unrighteousness (Adharma) also (V.49.17 to 20). When Vibhīṣaṇa pointed him out to Rāma, Rāma also felt his majesty (VI 59.26 to 28). Vibhīṣaṇa bears testimony to Rāvaṇa's spiritual knowledge and performance of sacrifices.

But Rāvaṇa was an autocratic and despotic and tyrannical ruler. No one - not even his ministers - could stand up to him. In Rāma's council of war, he sought the opinion of his associates. But in Rāvaṇa's council of war they were asked to find out ways by which Sītā could be kept and Rāma and Lākṣmaṇa could be slain (VI.62,25 and 26). Rāvaṇa was, further, a very lustful and very cruel man and oppressed all good men and especially sages.......

His primary defect is his sensuality. Whenever he sees a beautiful woman, he is keen about including her in his harem. He himself tells Sītā that it is the Dharma of the Rākṣasas to enjoy or capture the wives of others ... (Sundara., XX.5.).
But in Canto LX of the Sundarakāṇḍa, the poet says that none of the women were averse to him, excepting Sītā (Sundara., IX.70).

Yet another characteristic of Rāvaṇa was his pride. He had great contempt for all, but he had the utmost contempt for men. He says that he would be torn into two rather than render to any one:—

\[
\text{dvīdā bhajyeyamapyesah na nameyam tu kasyacit} \\
\text{[ Dev.] (Yuddha., XXXVI.11).}
\]

He knew Rāma's prowess but preferred to die rather than to bend (Yuddha., CX.7).

His valour and power were peerless and struck terror into the hearts of all. The battle between him and Rāma are described by the poet in verses whose rigour is not equalled anywhere else in literature. Finally he says that its only equal is itself, just as the sky and sea have only themselves to be compared to them...

Thus Rāvaṇa is the embodiment of arrogant and egoistic power and sensuality, though there is an element of heroism in his pride and in his courage. He possessed piety but his piety did not go hand in hand with his morality. He exercised autocratic power over living beings and complete control over the forces of nature; but he did not use such power for the good of the world but for his own hedonistic pleasures.

Another curious riddle in regard to the combat between Rāma-Rāvaṇa is found in the verse quoted above:—

\[
\text{jetavyamiti kākuteḥo} \\
\text{martavyamiti rāvanah} \\
\text{[ Yuddha., CIX.7].}
\]

Rāma's aim was to conquer and not to kill, and he could make Rāvaṇa pure and, if Rāvaṇa returned Sītā, he would have been satisfied. Why did Rāvaṇa fight on with a great resolve to die? Govindarāja says:—

\[
\text{martavyamiti maraṇamavaśyambhāvīti} \\
\text{svaśyakatvārthe tavyaḥ}.
\]

Rāvaṇa courted death because he knew that he was sure to die at the hands of Rāma. Why did not the
poet attribute the will to conquer to both the combatants? Did Rāvaṇa feel that the previous battles made it clear to him that the battle must end in his defeat and death? Or was it that death of his sons and others had made life distasteful to him? Or did he call to mind that even Vālī, who defeated him, had been slain by Rāma with a single arrow? Or did he realize that Rāma was really God Viṣṇu who had appeared on earth to destroy unrighteousness and exact righteousness? I believe that the last feeling was then uppermost in his mind. He had already felt and said:—

\[
tāṁ manye rāghavaṁ vīra nārāyaṇamanāmayam / (Yuddha., LXXII.11). 'I consider the valiant Rāma to be none else than Lord Nārāyaṇa, who is untouched by misery.' Rāvana must have felt that he would be purged of his supreme sin and attain the highest heaven if he suffered death at the hands of God Incarnate and must have welcomed death at Rāma's hands as leading to purification and liberation and salvation..........................."

Criticism : Very good, but still somewhat on the surface. Sastri makes the conventional mistake of overstressing Rv.'s sexual passion in the context of his courtship of S., and of overlooking the element of adoration.

Sastri's interpretation of the verse netavyamiti kākutstho martavyamiti rāvaṇah in the light of Rv.'s expectation of death at the hands of R., who in reality is God Viṣṇu, in order that he may be purified from his supreme sin and attain to the highest goal, is based both on a misinterpretation of the verse itself as well as a wrong connection of it with a passage that is not even part of the archetype (App.I (No 38).21.3\(^+\)). martavyamiti rāvaṇah is simply the expression of Rv.'s determination to fight to the last, while netavyamiti is the expression of Rv's determination to make the long-desired victory over R. a reality. That's all.
Sastri's exposition is much disturbed and often distorted by his inclusion of the Uttarakanda and other late interpolations for the consideration of Rv.'s characterization. As a consequence, it is impossible to criticize all such issues which include late interpolations. And this is the case with almost all the issues. On the whole, Sastri's interpretation, inspite of its extensive-ness, remains far too much on the surface, failing to penetrate to the depth of the psychic roots, while, on the other hand, it very often overstresses some of the unimportant or even unintended perspectives.

Here a few issues with which we strongly disagree: "..... Having lost all big men, Ravana did not lose heart, and was still for continuing fight, and when all had been destroyed, he was there himself. That was the extraordinary nature of the man. Knowing that doom was approaching him, that he was losing general after general and warrior after warrior, still he held on un-daunted and unbeaten."13)

".... Ravana discloses himself and his passion for her.

\[
\begin{align*}
tvām tu kāñcanavarnābhām dṛṣṭvā keuṣeyavāsinīm & / \\
ratīṁ svakesu dāreṣu nādhigacchāmyanīndite & / \\
bahvīnāmuttamastrīṇāṁmāhṛtanāmitastataḥ & / \\
\text{śarvāsāmeva} & \text{bhadraṁ te} \text{mām āramahīśi bhavi} / \text{III} 47.27-28
\end{align*}
\]

He makes a proposal direct to her. We must remember that in those days there was no rule against polygamy. What he offered to Sita was, according to the notions of the time, fair and honourable marriage...."14)
Criticism:

ad 1) It is not correct to say that Rv. knows that doom is approaching. Doom is approaching, but, blinded by wrath, he does not want to believe it. At best, it can be said that there is a sub-conscious apprehension of it in Rv., which he wants to suppress by all means.

ad 2) May be or not. But what the author intends to convey, is definitely a proposal that is adharmic, that bids defiance to the faithfulness of a devoted wife.

1) The term is coined to connote briefly the essential nature of Rv.'s personality.

2) In 20.23-36 V. brings this aspect of Rv.'s tyrannic love in association with his ghoric nature as such: his blazing anger, ghoric physical appearance and brightness, and tyrannic cruelty, which he depicts in ghoric pictures, while in 20.2-9 he makes him repent the affection and compassion expressed towards one who actually deserves to be killed for her rejection of his proposal - an indirect barb by the author at the perversity of his love.


4) Not in the limited sense 'despotic', but in a general sense.

5) pp.164-171. Iyengar presents this characterization of Rv. after giving an interpretative sketch of his life-story. The extract is from pp.167-170.

6) Rāvana (a study in the light of the new Psychology) ABORI XXII 45-68.

7) p.66.

8) Rāvana. KK XXVIII 75 - 80; 106-111. Iyer gives a short characterization at the beginning, and proceeds to interpret Rv.'s life-story with interspersed character-elucidations. In order to give the reader an impression of Iyer's
exposition, we first quote a section of his general characterization, and then proceed to quote such passages which give the starting-point of each of the various events in Rv.'s life and describe more in detail those character-
elucidations.

9) pp.75-79.
11) Valmiki's Portrait-Gallery - XX . KK XXI 131-135. Cf. also Valmiki - India's First World-Poet - XIX. KK XXXII 41. - We omit details which are associated purely with the Uttarakanda, questions of allegorical interpretation and such as refer to the problem of Rv.'s ten heads. We do not enter at all into the controversy about the contradictory description of Rv. as sometimes ten-headed, and sometimes (in most places) one-headed, of which the former is probably a popularisation of the epithet daśagrīva in a comparative sense, - because we believe that V. himself is responsible for this popularisation, that, not being concerned to give a uniform description of details as regards Rv.'s physical appearance, he has made use of it in such passages where the ghoric nature of Rv. was to be brought out particularly. This popularisation could not be due to interpolation since any attempt to separate the various scenes would result in a total dissolution of context.

12) pp.306-354. Summary XXII-XXVI.
13) p. 329.
14) p.345.
V. has characterized almost all the Rk. senāpatis on a uniform pattern and somehow in the likeness of Rv. They are, so to say, lesser or greater images of Rv.'s personality. The more closely they are related to Rv., the more they resemble him in greatness and the more also they are endowed with individually. To these top-figures belong Khara, Aksa, Prahasta, Kumbhakarna and Indrajit. Before we sketch the characters of these top-figures, we mention in what domains their likeness of Rv. finds its expression in them: It is first and foremost an awe-inspiring skill, power, valour and heroism in battle, associated with a ghoric splendour of physical appearance, strength, and a relentless bellicose wrath and embitterment that characterize these senāpatis. In fact, many of them appear solely in the context of war, i.e., they do not constitute so much personalities in themselves, but are chessmen in the waging of war. Yet those characters which appear also outside the context of the battle show many other of the characteristic traits of Rv. They are full of presumption, are cruel up to the core, are cunning and viciously trample down all regards of dharma and virtue, are of fickle and perverse minds.

Khara is a very authentic image of Rv. in his various states of mind. He shares with him an exorbitant presumption; a tyrannic cruelty towards sages and an attitude of defiance towards dharma and virtues; an extreme irascibility, which is aroused at the sight of disfigured Śūraṇa and transformed into blazing wrath - mixed with an exorbitant presumption - when Śūraṇa, in her vengeful despair, belittles and abases him over against R., in order to drive him to immediate action; a relentless bellicosisty based on an exorbitant haughtiness - which
makes him blind to the most ominous portents and prompts him to ridicule them and to boast before the Rks. that he, who has never been defeated in battle, who in his anger could kill even Indra, will now kill with ease those two ordinary men, R. and L., a self-preservation which prompts him to ridicule R.'s provocative reprimands and to belittle him as a foolish despicable Ksatriya, who is obsessed by idle self-glorification on account of slaying 14,000 Rks., and thereby to boast exorbitantly about his own invincible strength, which will crush R. and revenge the 14,000 Rks. --; a ghoric brightness of physical appearance and strength, a formidable display of valour, heroism, power, skill, bellicose fury and valiant resistance in fighting against R. We can say that Khara's individuality consists precisely in his likeness to Rv., in his being through and through a bellicose demoniac hero endowed with an extreme degree of relentlessness and presumption. (III 18-29 passim)

Aksa is the youthful reincarnation of Rv. in his resplendent brightness of appearance, strength and royal majesty, as well as in his formidable heroism, valour, skill and bellicose anger, displayed in his duel against H., which is so formidable that the whole universe is frightened and that even H., gazing with wonder and amazement at Aksa, has to kill him, though reluctantly, in view of his the ever-increasing prowess. (V 45)

Prahasta, the foremost and most intimate of Rv.'s counsellors as well as commander-in-chief of the army, bears, resembles Rv. both in heart and character, and has a strong attachment to the Rk. king. Possessed of presumption and a derogatory attitude towards the Vns., he enhances Rv.'s pride by appealing to his invincibility from Gods, Dānavas and other super-natural beings -- if these are unable to assail him, how
much less the Vns. — and by boastfully assuring him that he him-
self will free the world from the Rks. (VI 8.1-5). When asked
and encouraged by Rv. — finding himself in a critical situation —
to sally out, he — while now pretending to have dissuaded Rv.
at the council of war — expresses his readiness to sacrifice
even his life, sons, wives, and wealth in love and gratitude
for him. And assuring him boastfully that on this day the birds
will feed on the flesh of the Vns., he courageously sallies into
battle. Endowed with an awe-inspiring physical appearance, he
proves his formidable prowess and skill as a heroic fighter in
the likeness of Rv., but is finally overpowered and killed by
Nīla. (VI 45-46)

Kūmbhakarṇa is a titanic, Herculean Rk. monster
with character-features in the likeness of Rv. Unequalled in the
gigantic monstrosity of his appearance, the terror of Gods,
Dānavas, Yākas, Gandharvas etc. — who mistake him for Kāla him-
selv—the vanquisher of Yama and Indra, he has been born as a
titanic hero and has exercised his formidable, Herculean Rk.
nature right from his birth: He devoured thousands of creatures
in his hunger — so that the creatures, greatly alarmed, approached
Indra, and when Indra struck Kūmbhakarṇa with the thunderbolt,
the latter in his rage revenged himself by tearing Airāvata's
tusk and striking Indra on the chest, at which Indra, along with
the Gods, Dānavas, brahmaṇgis and creatures, went to Brahmā and
complained to him about Kūmbhakarṇa's wickedness, saying that, if
he continued to devour creatures like this, the earth would soon
be bereft of creatures. Then Brahmā cursed him to the effect
that he would lie asleep like a dead person, but, at the request
of Rv., relaxed the curse by granting him one day, after every
six months on which he would be allowed to roam over the world
and consume beings like raging fire.
The moment he is aroused from his sleep by the Rks., Kumbhakarna devours one Vn. after the other, so that Vibhīṣaṇa proposed to R. to encourage the Vns. by announcing that Kumbhakarna is not a living being but a machine set up by the Rks. (VI 49).

As a Herculean Rk. monster, Kumbhakarna possesses the presumptuous mentality of R., with the distinction that his frivolity surpasses all limits. When Rv. entreats him to help him out of the crisis in which he finds himself due to the fact that most of the Rk. heroes have been killed, Kumbhakarna encourages him to renounce all anxiety as long as he is there and comforts him by assuring him of the utter destruction of R. and the Vns., thereby bragging in the most frivolous and insolent manner, a manner that exceeds even the frivolity of Rv., as e.g. that with his invincible prowess he will encounter even Indra, Yama, Agni, Vāyu, Kubera and Varuṇa, that with his mere arms he will slay Indra etc. (VI 51 latter part)

Kumbhakarna's sally into the midst of the Vns. is the sally of a roaring, titanic, man-eating monster, is like that of Garuḍa into the midst of snakes, like that of fire burning dry woods in summer. It is only through Aṅgada's constant exhortation of the Vns. that they, after losing courage again and again and fleeing Kumbhakarna with panic, continue their valiant fight against him. Even some of the most heroic Vn. senāpatis, like Dvivida, H., Nīla, fail in their attempt to overpower him and receive blows making them swoon. With thousands of Vns. over his body, he casts them into his mouth and, as they are coming out through his ears and nostrils, tears them to pieces. He carries Su., who, after fighting valiantly against him, is deprived of his senses as Kumbhakarna strikes him with a mountain peak, away in his hands and parades him through Lāṅkā, to the delight of the Rks., is however outwitted by Su., who, after tearing his ears
with hās nails and biting off his nose, forces Kumbhakarṇa to 
drop him. In his bellicose fury, he is unable to distinguish 
Vns. and Rks., and so consumes both. Kumbhakarṇa's furious and 
embittered combat with R. bears semblance in its awe-inspiring 
heroism, valour and relentlessness to that of Rv. with R., but 
more than it is the case in the combat between Rv. and R., the 
titanic dimension of Kumbhakarṇa is brought out by the poet. In 
fact, Kumbhakarṇa is more a Herculean titan than the accomplished 
fighter that is Rv. By the force of its weight, Kumbhakarṇa's 
mountain-like head crushes houses, temple gate-ways and the city 
gate, while his Himalaya-like body reaches the bottom of the 
ocean, crushing crocodiles, serpents and a multitude of fishes. 
(VI 54-55).

Indrajit is the very heart-beat and youthful reincarnation of Rv., more than any of the other Rks. His very 
name is symbolic for the unexcelled formidable power and skill in arms, heroism, valour and irresistibility he is endowed with, 
thanks to a stock of astras secured by him through a boon by 
Brahmā, on account of which he is the cause of terror among the 
Gods, Asuras, Gandharvas, many of whom, among them Indra, he has 
conquered in a humiliating manner. Though he is not able to 
kill the Herculean super-monkey H., who moves beyond the range 
of his arrows, he binds him with a Brahмаstra and brings him 
before Rv., not of course realizing that in doing this he is 
outwitted by H. (V 46). But the most formidable aspect of his 
power consists in his ill-famed magic power, by virtue of which he, 
after duly performing his fire-sacrifice for victory at 
Nikumbhila, is able to fight the enemy while remaining invisible 
himself. After performing such a sacrifice, Indrajit, at the 
request of Rv., sallies out, bragging that on this day he will 
slay R. and L. and bereave the world of all Vns., to the delight 
of his father. And in fact, as he covers up all the directions
with his arrows, while he himself remains concealed behind a screen of smoke, with no sound of his bow-string and the chariot audible, he causes terror among the Vns., many of whom are killed by his arrows, and even R. and L., while being wounded by Indrajit's arrows, are unable to slay him. (VI 67)

An embodiment of magic power, Indrajit is at the same time an embodiment of cunning and sadistic cruelty. Producing an illusory image of S. - seated on his chariot, with the intention to stupefy the Vns., he drives out to the battle-field, and, before the very eyes of H. and the Vns., sarcastically announces, in answer to H.'s condemnation of him as the most wretched murderer of women, that he will slay S., for whatever is painful to an enemy ought to be done -

\[
\textit{na hantavyāḥ striyaśceti yadbravīṣi plavahgama} / \\
\textit{pīḍakaramamitrāṇām yatsyātkartavyameva tat} // 27
\]

and beheads that magic effigy of S. with his sword, triumphantly calling upon H. to see the wife of R. slain by his wrathful hand. (VI 68)

Indrajit's magic power is a symbol of his all-powerfulness, which stands and falls with it. Yet this magic power of Indrajit is not an intrinsic possession of his. It has to be constantly renewed by the meticulous completion of a sacrifice for victory at Nikumbhilā, failing which, he, if he is attacked, loses the power of the Brahmaśiras and his invincibility, and is doomed to die. Knowing this, Vibhīṣaṇa exhorts L. to cause panic among the Rks., so as to induce Indrajit to interrupt his sacrifice at Nikumbhilā, and with this Indrajit is doomed. But though Indrajit sees himself frustrated in the accomplishment of his sacrifice, his relentless wrath, rooted in an exorbitant pride in his all-powerfulness and a derogatory attitude to belittle and abuse the enemy (an attitude to which belongs also his wrathful and
contemptuous denunciation of Vibhīṣaṇa as a traitor - which reflects his narrow kinship - mentality and perversity of mind), makes him, just as it is the case with Rv., blind to the signs of his own destruction, and involves him in an embittered battle against fate, a battle, to be sure, that displays all the majesty of the formidable prowess, heroism, power, and skill that is his, a majesty that is second only to that of Rv. in his combat against R., but that awe-inspiring as it is, is a struggle of bellicose fury against fate. (VI 71-78 passim)

There are a few Rk. warriors who, at times, show traits different from the pattern we have shown. But they are not in the centre of characterization. There is e.g. Supārśva, who, moved by the pitiable sight of S.'s anxiety as Rv. approaches her with upraised hand to kill her, dissuades Rv. from committing the crime of killing a woman. However, Supārśva has more the function of a deus ex machina than of being a character in himself. In fact, he is far away from a personality like Vibhīṣaṇa, for he does not persuade Rv. to return S., but exhorts him to fight against R., holding out to him the prospect that, after killing R., S. will be his. (VI 80.50-56)
The Rākṣasīs are referred to and characterized at entirely different levels, according to different scenes and contexts. There are

a) the forest-roving, hideous Rākṣasī monster Śūrpaṇakhā, who is enamoured of R.;

b) the Rākṣasī beauties of Rv.'s harem;

c) the terrible, hideous-looking Rākṣasī guards, one of whom is compassionate Trijaṭā;

d) the despairing Rk. women of Laṅkā;

e) the devoted queen-wife of Rv., Mandodarī.

ad a) Śūrpaṇakhā, the sister of Rv., embodies the ghoro monstrosity of appearance, the absurd perversity of amorous courtship and the relentless revengefulness as they may be said to be characteristic of the Rks. In her amorous passion she resembles somehow Rv., but she distinguishes herself from him by the fact of her Śūrpaṇakhā-hIDEO ugliness and by the utter primitiveness and unsophisticated nature of her courtship, which the poet exposes to the ridicule of R. and L. and also of the audience. The absurdity and ridiculous primitiveness of her passion is marvellously drawn by the poet and made the centre of a whole character-study: Śūrpaṇakhā's love is love at the first sight, and the love of a 'witch' who is ugliness, coarseness and vice incarnate for a 'prince' who is an embodiment of beauty, refinement and virtuousness. Asked
by R. about her person, she turns her introduction into a spontaneous love-proposal, which she, in her extraordinary presumption, stupidity, cultural primitiveness and barbarous disregard of dharma and wifely devotion, and cruelty, supports by bragging about her wonderful power, by disparaging S. as ugly, vile, dreadful and pot-bellied (which, in the intention of the poet, are the attributes of Sūrpanākha herself, and with which he describes her at other places) and by announcing to R. that she will immediately eat her up together with his brother, so that he (R.) can roam about freely with her through the Dandakā forest. Realizing her primitiveness, R. and L. pull her legs. R. says that he is married, and to be a co-wife would be surely unpleasant to a woman like her — while, if she courted for his younger brother, who is unmarried, handsome, youthful, ignorant of conjugal felicity and desirous of taking a wife, she would not be a co-wife. Unable to grasp the joke, she tries it out with L. — which shows the exorbitant primitiveness of her idea of love as well as her stupidity. But L. fools her in his own manner, saying that, since he is the servant of R., she would be a maid-servant, and therefore it would be preferable for her to be the younger wife of R., for he would surely discard that 'ugly, vile, dreadful, pot-bellied, old wife' of his after obtaining her, the paragon of beauty. Unable to grasp L.'s chaff of her either, she upbraids R. of not showing her the appropriate affection by discarding that 'ugly, vile, dreadful, pot-bellied, old wife' of his, and announces that she will devour S. before his very eyes, so that she can sport with him as his only wife to her heart's content. In her barbarous disregard of dharma and in her ruthless Rakṣasaurik wrath and cruelty, she puts her words into practice and rushes towards S. But R. prevents her and directs L., with the admonition never again to tease
cruel, ill-famed ladies, to disfigure her. L. chops off her ears and nose, whereupon she raises a terrible yell and runs to her brother, falling prostrate before him on the ground. (III 16-17) With grief, wrath and revengefulness aroused in her, Śūrpanākhā becomes relentless in her pursuit of vengeance, leaving no stone unturned till her vengeance is satisfied. First she urges Khara, by arousing his pity for her defamed appearance and his anger at the one who has disfigured her. (III 18) When Khara's 14-Rk-strong army is killed, she bursts into a hysterical lamentation in his presence, pathetically expressing her anxiety at the disaster struck by R. - in order to arouse Khara's pity - and exerts pressure on him by giving threats of committing suicide if he will not sally out immediately to slay R. and by despisingly expressing her apprehension to his very face that, after all, he is a weakling, who is unable to fight R. - all this to arouse his bellicose fury and induce him to immediate action. (III 20) When Khara, with 14,000 Rks., is slain by R., she runs straight to Rv., upbraids him of being oblivious of his kingly duties and the great terror caused by R.'s destruction of 14,000 Rks. including Khara and Dūṣana, and blames him of all the vices he has while eliciting R.'s heroism - so as to effect in him a most spontaneous reaction of anger, on the basis of which she can instill into him a passion for S., which will of itself force him to action and satisfy her revengefulness. (III 31-32)

ad b) The damsels of Ravana's harem (many of which are not Rākesasīs but Devagandharvakanyā, Nāgakanyā etc.) are uniformly characterized as being endowed with radiant beauty, charm and royal splendour. and as being love-sick for their lord Rv., a paragon of splendidous beauty, lordliness and majestic glory. Though this amorous
passion of Rv.'s concubines is intimately linked with, and expressed in, sexual revelry, they do manifest a deep psychic attachment to Rv., as the poet indicates at several places, which is confirmed by their heart-rending lamentations and gesticulations of grief over the dead body of their lord (V 7-9 passim; 16; VI 98). That V., however, had no precise conception in his mind when portraying the wives of Rv., is shown by the fact that in v.10 he makes H. present them as: 

\[
\text{virūparūpā vikṛtā vivarcasā mahānānā dīrghavirūpadarśanāḥ ... rākṣasarājavośito} \]

V.'s characterization of Rv.'s wives is thus based almost exclusively on the pattern of spontaneity, which allows him to delineate them in altogether different ways with the variance of context.

ad c) The Rākṣasī guards of S. are characterized as possessing extremely hideous, terrifying, monstrous appearances of the most varied types, as being extremely fond of wine, meat and blood, and cruel to the core of their hearts (cf. V 15; V 20.31-33). According to the directions given by Rv., they pester S. with persuasions, and brags about Rv.'s unexcelled power, or with blandishments or abuses, and tyrannize her with threats to tear her to pieces and eat her up (V 21-22). But one of them, Trijaṭā, is different. Having had a dreadful dream about Rv.'s and other Rks.' miserable destruction, she has realized the greatness of S.'s devotion to her husband, and so admonishes the Rākṣasīs to renounce their tyrannic attitude, to comfort her and entreat her, so that they may be delivered from fear at the time of the destruction of Laṅkā (V 25). After this we do not hear any more about these Rākṣasī guards except at two places, which, however, do not throw much light on their characterization.
ad d) The Rākṣasa women in their despair at the death of their relatives, are not so much characterized as typical Rk. women, but as women in general, agonized, to the despair of their lives, at the death of their dear ones - cased by the insane wrathfulness of their king.

ad e) Mandonari, the queen-wife of Rv., is a devoted wife of her husband. Sensual though she is, she distinguishes herself from the others by her critical attitude towards her husband's abduction of S., in which she is prompted by her concern for the welfare of her husband. Her persuasion of Rv. to return S. does not so much breathe the spirit of jealousy alone, though she feels offended by Rv.'s passion for S. to the neglect of herself, who is 'far superior to S. in rank, beauty and kindness' - v.16

naś kulena na rūpeṇa na dāksīṇyena maithilī /
mayādhikā vā tulyā vā tvam tu mohanna buddhaye /,

but the spirit of anxious concern for Rv. as her husband. However, she is flesh and blood of Rv., for, though, in her piteous lamentation over the death of her husband, she de­plores his sinful act of abducting S., an embodiment of virtue, and his relentless wrath, which did not allow him to listen to her well-wishing words, as the cause for his and the Rks.' destruction, she is convinced of the greatness of her husband and says:

kāmakrodhasamutthena vyasanena prasādginā /
tvayā kṛtamāda sarvanāthaḥ rākṣasāḥ kulam // 22
na hi tvāṁ śocitavyo me prakhyaṭa-balapuruṣaḥ /
strīsvabhāvattā me buddhiḥ kāraye parivartate // 23
sukṛtaṁ duṣkrtaṁ ca tvāṁ gṛhitvā svāṁ gatiṁ gataḥ /
ātmānānuṣocāmi tvadviryogena duḥkhitām // 24

Mandonari is thus a devoted and passionate wife of Rv., anxiously concerned for his welfare, yet she is flesh and blood of him in his Rākṣasurīk mentality. (VI 99)
THE RAKSASA HOSTS

The Rk. hosts as such are not characterized in a conspicuous manner, even as compared to the Vn. hosts. Their character-
traits are mainly behaviour-reactions common to a fighting host and, to a lesser extent, traits which are characteristic of the Rks. as a whole:

(a) a formidable display of impetuosity, astrabala, valour and heroism, and an exuberance of martial spirit - expressed in roaring and wild gesticulations, on the one hand, and a losing courage in face of irresistible heroes of the enemy side (less conspicuous than in the case of the Vn. hosts), or running helter-skelter for fright and grief at the death of some of their heroes, on the other hand;

(b) a ghoric or hideous appearance, an exorbitant presumption, relentless embitterment and bellicose fury.

As opponents of the Vn. army, the Rks., though being superior in their skill in arms, are inferior to the former, as a whole.

Outside the battle scenes, Rk. hosts appear as a band of forest-roving, hideous-looking, flesh-eating monsters terrifying the lives of sages and good people.
D

COURTLY CHARACTERS
A SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS
OF THE CHARACTERIZATION OF KAIKEYI
Manthara persuades Kaikeyi to secure Bharata's installation and Rama's banishment

Manthara, Kai.'s maid-servant from her father's house, who since her birth had stayed together with her, ascended the palace and saw all Ayodhya filled with a spirit of festivity. Filled with joy, as she was intent on gaining wealth, she asked a nurse why R.'s mother was distributing wealth to the people and why that excessive joy of the people. At the cheerful reply of the nurse that the king was going to invest R. with the heir-apparentship, evil-looking Manthara, burning with rage, descended from the top of the palace and, entering Kai.'s room, said - "Stand up, you foolish one, why are you lying? Calamity is befalling you. You brag about your good fortune when the appearance of it is ominous. Your good fortune is passing away like the stream of a river in the hot season." When Kai. heard these harsh words from wrathful, evil-minded Manthara, she fell into great anxiety and said to Manthara - "Aren't you happy? Why do I see you with sorrowful face and exceedingly grieved?" Then Manthara became angry, and, assuming an air of deeper sorrow, as she desired her favour, answered in a manner in which she would cause her anxiety - "A great misfortune has happened that will bring about your destruction. King D. will install R. in the heir-apparentship. I am immersed in fear, grief, and sorrow, burning, as it were, with fire, I have come here for your welfare. If grief overcomes you, grief also overcomes me. If there is prosperity to you, there is also prosperity to me. You are born in a royal family, you are the queen of the king; how is it that you do not know the cruelty of a king's customs. Your husband is righteous with words, but deceitful; gentle with words, but ruthless. In your presence he cheats you with vain conciliation, but in his heart of hearts he will favour Ka. That wicked one, who has sent away Bh. to your relatives, knows to establish R. in the kingdom without any obstacle. As a mother desirous for others' welfare, you have been carrying in your lap - like a snake - an enemy who is only by name a husband, for in the way a snake or an enemy acts when left alone, so you have been treated by king D. Sinful and deceitful in his conciliatory words, he is going to install R., and you with your relatives are doomed. Attend to your safety in time, save your son and also me." At these words of Manthara, Kai. was exceedingly joyful, gave her an ornament and said
cheerfully - "You are telling me the most gladsome news. What shall I give you to thank for this gladsome news? R. and Bh. are equal to me. Therefore I am rejoicing that the king will install R. in the kingship. There is nothing more delightful to me than your auspicious words. I shall give you an excellent boon, choose one." At this Mantharā, beside herself with rage and grief, threw away the ornament and reprimanded Kai. - "How is it that you rejoice in the midst of an ocean of grief. With R.'s installation in the heir-apparentship, Ks. will revel in the highest joy, and you will attend upon her as maid-servant. All the excellent consorts of R. will rejoice, but your daughters-in-law will be dejected at the loss of Bh. Seeing Mantharā speaking thus, queen Kai. with great delight praised R.'s virtues - "R. knows dharma, is grateful, truthful and pure. Being the eldest son of D., he deserves the heir-apparentship and like his father he will protect his brothers and ministers. Bh. also will obtain the ancestral kingship a 100 years after R. You will be in prosperity at this festive occasion. Why are you then grieved? For R. obeys me more than even his mother Ks." When Mantharā heard these words of Kai., she was filled with grief, and, sighing long and heavily, said to Kai. - "It is out of stupidity that you don't know in what an ocean of grief, sorrow and misfortune you have engulfed yourself. After R., R.'s son will be king, Bh. will be excluded from the dynasty of kings, for not all the princes are installed in the kingship, but either the eldest or the most qualified. I have come for your sake, but you don't listen to me. Why do you wish to present me with gifts on the occasion of the prosperity of your co-wife? Surely R., after securing the kingdom, will send you either to another country or to another world. You ordered Bh. to be brought to his maternal uncle when he was a boy. Now it is on account of closeness of relation that attachment arises even in inanimate objects. There is great brotherly attachment between R. and L. Therefore, R. will not do any evil to L., but he will do so to Bh. Therefore, let Bh. leave Rajagṛha and go to the forest. But it will be better concerning your relatives if Bh. obtains the kingdom from his father-lawfully. How will your son, reduced to poverty, live under the sovereignty of prosperous R., his enemy? How will your co-wife not repay her enmity - which arose when you, on account of your pride, insulted her in your position as the fortunate wife of D.? Therefore, devise a means of securing the kingdom for your son and find a reason for demanding R.'s banishment." At these words, Kai. was ablaze with anger, and, taking a long and deep sigh, she said to Mantharā - "Today I shall banish R. to the forest and make Bh. be consecrated in the heir-apparentship. Tell me the means by which Bh. will obtain the kingdom and R. will be excluded from it." Then evil-looking Mantharā, with a view to stifling R.'s object, assented, at which Kai., raising herself a little from her bed, insistently repeated her request for her advice. Then Mantharā reminded her
how she had once saved D.'s life and had received two boons, which she had declined, saying that she would ask for them when she wished, and now the king had agreed to this proposal. Then she said: "Ask your husband for these two boons: Bh.'s coronation and R.'s banishment for 14 years. Enter the house of wrath, lie down on the open ground with dirty clothes, don't look at him and don't speak to him. You are the beloved wife of your husband, for your sake he will even renounce his life. He is unable to provoke your anger and to look at you being angry. He is unable to neglect your words. Be careful not to take any jewels as appeasement, but insist on the two boons bestowed upon you by D. in the war between the Devas and the Asuras, and, if R. himself offers you a boon and raises you from the ground, make first D. give his word and then ask for your boon. When R. has gone to the forest, he will be a-rāma and Bh. will be king, with his enemies destroyed. By the time Bh. returns from the forest, your son will have struck strong roots and will have been accepted as the king. This is the proper time, so prevent the king from crowning R." Thus instigated by Manthara to accept the meaningless as meaningful, Kai. cheerfully praised the hunch-back's exceeding intelligence and concern for her welfare, saying that she had never realized the evil design of the king and never had realized how crooked and evil those close to her were, and then sounded a eulogy of her physical charms (a eulogy of insipid platitudes) and promised her to adorn her hump with ornaments of gold and her face with a golden tilaka and lovely ornaments, and to bestow upon her elegant dresses... When Manthara heard these praises from Kai., she urged her to quickly attend to her design, as it would be useless to build a bridge when the water has already flown out. Then she went with Manthara to the chamber of wrath and, throwing away all her precious ornaments, sat down on the ground, and said to Manthara: "Either you will report me dead to the king or Bh. will obtain the earth."

Analysis of characterization:

We witness in these sargas the transformation of a loving and high-souled queen-mother, whose affection is equally distributed between her own son Bh. and R. and the other princes, and who responds to Mantharā's repeated attempts to arouse her suspicion and hatred against D. and R. - by trying to make her believe that R.'s installation in the heir-apparentship is the result of a well-planned, evil intrigue against Bh. and herself -
first with exclamations of joy and asseverations of her love for R. and her regard for his virtues, into the most embittered, hard-hearted, jealous and vindictive petty-patroness of her son, a Kai. who, relentlessly determined to get Bh. enthroned and R. banished for 14 years according to Mantharā's advice, is unwilling to stop short before a complete attainment of these two boons except by renouncing her own life. How has this transformation taken place? Externally, it would seem, by the evil agency of Mantharā's cunning and mendacious persuasions alone. But if we visualize the scene more deeply, we see clearly that it was V.'s intention to show how Mantharā succeeded in evoking a latent weakness of Kai. buried in the depths of her heart, namely, a deep-rooted ambition. For as long as she is sure that one day Bh. would get the kingship after R., she is immune to any persuasions whatsoever. But the moment Mantharā can convince her it is not so, a long-cherished hope latent in the back of her mind breaks down in Kai., a hope which has been the sole support of her humane and friendly attitude towards her relations and her optimistic, cheerful outlook on life. With this hope breaking down, all her apparent humaneness, affection and cheerfulness change into embitterment, jealousy, hard-heartedness and relentless vindictiveness against those whom she imagines to be agents of a foul intrigue against her. This abrupt change of her outlook has its root in a deep-going ambition, the success or failure of which determines the whole of her psyche and of her morality, for, if her nature were permeated with a genuine sense of righteousness and virtue, such an abrupt change, brought about by the disillusion of one of her long-cherished hopes, would be impossible. And I think that V. meant this disillusion of a latent ambition to be the causal nexus to Kai.'s transformation. We see a grain of her innate ambition also in Mantharā's allusion to an old enmity of hers with Ks., which had arisen when she, in her pride of being the favourite wife of D., insulted Ks.\textsuperscript{1)} This interpretation of Kai.'s transformation as being due to an
innate ambition, besides the external agency of Mantharā, is important because we have to assess against this certain statements made and explanations given by R., (mainly II 19) which show Kai. in a much more favourable light by putting the blame on fate. Are these explanations identical with the intention of V., or do they rather reflect R.'s firm adherence to satya-dharma as well as his respect for the motherhood of Kai.? In the context of the analysis of R.'s characterization the answer will be an emphatic yes to the second alternative. In fact, he himself realizes that Kai. has cheated her husband: II 21.8 -

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{kaikeyyā vañcito rājā mayi cāranyamaśrite} \\
\text{bhaktyā ca parityakto na núnam vartayasyati}
\end{align*}
\]

But this respect of R.'s for Kai.'s motherhood as well as his adherence to satya-dharma do not take away anything from the depravity of Kai.'s character, which is testified by the very presentation of her character itself, as well as by the many curses which the poet through various characters inflicts upon her. V. agrees with R.'s spirit of forbearance and with his motherly respect in as far as they motivate R. in his personal determination to fulfill his sonly duty by obeying the word of father and making true the promise given to Kai., but not in as far as they prompt him to acquit Kai. of her guilt.

Classification:

Literary basis:
exposition: objective - descriptive - explicit

Traits:
A deep-rooted ambition for power, the disillusion of which, through the evil agency of Mantharā's cunning, mendacious persuasions, causes her apparent humaneness, love and cheerful outlook to turn into embitterment, jealousy, hard-heartedness and relentless vindictiveness against those whom she imagines to be the agents of an intrigue against her
As king D. entered Kai.'s apartment to tell her the gladsome news, and saw his youthful wife, who was more precious to him than his own life, lying on the ground, he was tormented with grief, and, filled with love, he began to stroke her with his hands. Being filled with passion, he said to her - "I don't know why you are angry. Has anybody insulted or abused you that you are paining me by lying on the dust? I have very proficient doctors, tell me, what ails you? Whom do you want me to do a favour, or who has offended you? Which person that ought not to be killed should be killed, or which man that ought to be killed should be set free? Which poor man should be made rich or which rich man should be made poor? I and all my obedient servants are yours. I shall not deny you any desire even at the sacrifice of my life. Tell me what you wish." At these words of D., Kai. gained confidence, and, desirous to speak out her ill-desire, began to torment her husband still more forcefully: - "I have not been insulted or abused by anybody. I wish that you fulfil some desire of mine. If you wish to do it, take an oath. Then I will tell you what I desire." Then D., filled with love, became submissive to his wife and said smilingly - "You don't know that there is nobody dearer to me than you excepting R. Take hold of this heart of mine and say without fear what you intend. I shall fulfil your desire, I swear by your virtue." At this, Kai. rejoiced and uttered that terrible desire of hers - "I am announcing boons which you had given me at that time; listen to my words: Let Bh. be consecrated instead of R., and let R. this very day go to the forest as an ascetic wearing deer-skin and matted locks for 14 years." When D. heard these hard-hearted words, he was agitated and bewildered like a deer seeing a tigress, and, sitting down on the naked earth, fell with a deep sigh, unconscious, with his senses agorized with grief. Regaining his senses after a long time, he addressed Kai., burning with anger - "You vile and wicked lady, destroyer of this race, what evil has been done to you by R. or by me?"
R. considers you always like his own mother, why then are you bent upon his misfortune? In my ignorance I brought you to my place like a poisonous snake for my own destruction. When all the world praises R.'s virtues, for what offence shall I abandon my dear son? I can renounce Ks., Sumitra or even my life, but not my dear son. Great is my joy when I see him, but when I do not see him, I lose my consciousness. The world may live without sun or moon or water, but my life cannot abide in this body without R. Give up your evil resolve. I touch your feet and head." Subdued by his inordinate wife, the helpless king, filled with grief, fell on the ground, touching the outstretched feet of Kai. While the king was lying on the ground, undeserving of such a treatment, Kai., in the guise of misfortune, now that she had obtained her desire, fearlessly pestered her husband again - "You are boasting of being truthful, and firm to your vows; how is it then that you wish to withhold my boon?" Then D. answered, trembling with anger - "When I have died after R. has gone to the forest, you will attain your satisfaction and be happy. When I say it is the truth that R. went to the forest to fulfil the desire of Kai., it will be considered untrue. I shall be ill-famed and fall into disgrace with the people." While he was lamenting, immersed in grief, with his senses roving about, the night fell, and though it was lit by the orb of the moon, it did not light him up in his grief. With his eyes fixed to the sky, he prayed that the night may not pass, for he did not wish to see cruel Kai. Then again he beseeched Kai. with folded hands to have mercy upon him, but wicked Kai. did not pay heed to the pitiable laments of virtuous D. Then the king, seeing Kai. speak so harshly, at the thought of R.'s exile, again fell on the ground, unconscious. When sinful Kai. saw her husband lying on the ground - agonized with grief, she said to him - "Why do you lie on the ground, after giving me a promise, as if you had committed a sin. People knowing dharma say that truth is the highest virtue. I exhort you to follow dharma by adhering to truth. You know how Saibya attained to the highest gati by offering his body to a bird, how king Alaka unhesitatingly plucked his eye and gave it to a Brahmin skilled in the Vedas, at his request. The lord of the rivers has truth as his governing law; by adhering to truth in due accordance, he does not transgress his boundary. If you do not carry out your agreement, I will renounce my life in front of you." Thus, unable to shake off his fetters cast around him by fearless Kai., the king with agitated heart and pale face, addressed Kai., hardly able to summon his courage - "Here I renounce your hand which I took before the fire and your son Bh. together with you." Kai., of sinful conduct, besides herself with rage, said to the king - "What sickening words are you uttering? Send for R. immediately, and, when you have consecrated Bh. and made R. go to the forest and thus freed me from any rival, you will have done your duty." Thus driven (impelled) by Kai. like a horse by a sharp whip, the
King repeated again and again—"I am bound by the fetters of dharma. My consciousness is gone. I only wish to see my dear virtuous son, R." Then Kai. herself said to Sumantra—"Go and fetch R.", and the virtuous king, his eyes reddened with grief, looked towards the charioteer and spoke (gave his consent). Sumantra, however, hearing D. lamenting and seeing him distressed, stepped a little aside, and, since the king was unable to speak out of affliction, Kai. herself gave the reply—"Sumantra, I want to see handsome R. Fetch him quickly." Thinking that he has been ordered to fetch R. by Kai.—anxious to see his consecration, Sumantra, with pleased heart, left the palace.

Analysis of characterization:

In her imagination that she is the victim of a foul intrigue, an imagination brought about by the disillusion of a long-cherished, latent hope of hers to see her son Bh. enthroned after 100 years's reign of R. and in her consequent effort to secure her lost ambition, Kai. employs all cunning: By arousing the pity of her husband, whom she knows to be infatuated with love for her and unaware of her intentions, she psychologically induces him to promise her to fulfil whatever desire of hers, and makes him confirm his promise with an oath, and thereby fetters him with his own words to the two boons which he had once upon a time conferred upon her, and which she had declined in order to ask for them when she so desired. And she displays thereby such inexorable feelings of embitterment, vindictiveness and hardenedness that she remains as hard as stone to D.'s pitiable lamentations for his son R. and his entreaties to reverse her cruel intention, and that she, as if she were delighted to see his heart broken with grief, makes a mock of his reputation of being satyasandha, drdhavrata and dharma, and threatening him with suicide, pesters him with her repeated instigations to abide by his promise to carry out her stern resolve. And when D. at last succumbs, helplessly moaning that he is bound by the fetters of dharma, that his senses are failing him, and he wishes to see once more his dear son, Kai. herself directs Sumantra to fetch R.,
Almost all the following expositions of, or references to, Kai.'s character serve to display further the perspectives of her cunning and crookedness, on the one hand, and of her embitterment, vindictiveness and inexorable hard-heartedness, on the other hand, expressed in her ruthless and relentless attempt to secure her ambition.

In II 16 we see how Kai., with shameless cunning, makes use of R.'s restless state of mind at D.'s sorrowful appearance, his anxiety to know what has happened to his father and whether he or Kai. has offended him, and his impatience to do whatever his dear father desires, even at the sacrifice of his life - and she knows very well that R. would never swerve an inch from his promise - , to tell him that the king at the time of war between the Devas and Asuras had given her two boons, and that at that time she had asked him for Bh.'s consecration and R.'s banishment - a blunt lie which covers up her own crookedness and pretends to expose D.'s twilight policy - and that, if he wishes to make his father
truthful to his promise, he should abide by his order - which Kai. explicitates. When R., with a response of heroic equanimity and love for his father D., cheerfully and loyally accepts these words, but fails to understand why his father does not welcome him like before, why he has not told him his intention himself, and why he keeps his eyes pressed on the ground and sheds tears when it is the inmost desire of his (R.'s) heart to do whatever favour to him, his father, benefactor and king, when he would offer S., the kingdom and even his life to Bh. on his own account, and how much more so if he is asked by his loving father and if he thereby can help to maintain his promise and fulfil a desire of Kai., - Kai., instead of acknowledging the heroism of these words of R., urges him to delay no longer and immediately send messengers to Bh., for, until he has reached the forest, his father, who is unable to talk to him out of shame, will not take bath and eat. What a blunt lie! She does as if D. were desirous to see R. go to the forest as soon as possible, but out of shame and a bad conscience did not dare to reveal his intention - while it is actually she herself, who, in her desire to see her ambition accomplished, is too impatient to wait any longer for the installation of her son on the throne, and in this impatience of her ambition does not shun from employing the most crooked and ruthless means.

For s.19 see s.v. Rāma-p- and our conclusion s.v. Keśikeyā pp 802f., 806ff., 808ff.

S.32 gives us a glimpse of Kai.'s sternness towards any measure that would contribute to the comfort of R. and lead to the inconvenience of Bh., and a glimpse of her impatience to see R. exiled, in which she reveals an indiscretion which is diametrically opposed to the discretion with which R. treats her: When king D., in his agony, orders Sumantara to send along with R. the four armies, mistresses of the house, merchants,
wrestlers etc. as well as all the citizens and all the amenities of city life, Kai. lodges a strong protest, saying that Bh. will not accept a kingdom that has been emptied like a vessel of liquor of which has been drunk, and at D.'s ironical question- yahantaṁ kim tudasi māṁ niyujya dhuri māhite -, she gets so wild that she demands D. ought to banish R. like Sagara his son Asamanja - an impertinent demand and an impertinent comparison, as an old high state-official, Siddhārtha, giving expression to the indignance of the people, protests when he hears Kai.'s command. When R. declares to his father that he is going to the forest as an ascetic renouncing all luxury and living on forest fruits, and so all these amenities are of no use for him, that, instead, he is giving everything to Bh., and he asks for a bark-garment, a hoe and two baskets, Kai., with a spontaneous 'gesture of helpfulness', brings him personally the bark-garment.

Kai.'s heinousness, hard-heartedness and cruelty is brought out vehemently in a number of curses which the poet, in the mouth of various characters, invokes upon her, e.g. 37.6-9; 43.5-6; 60.3-6. Ks.'s lamentation over her dead husband in 60.3ff., in addition, brings out Kai.'s greed very strongly:

\[
\begin{align*}
sakāmā bhava kaikeyi bhūṅkeva rājyamahākṣam / 
\text{tyaktva rājānamekāgrā nrāmsee duṣṭacārini} / \text{3} 
\text{bhartaraṁ taṁ parītyajya ka stri devatamātmanā} / 
\text{icchejīvitumanyatra kaikeyyāstyaaktadharmānaḥ} / \text{5} 
\text{na lubdho budhyate doṣānkimpākamiva bhakṣayan} / 
\text{kubjānimittaṁ kaikeyyā rāghavaṇāṁ kulaṁ hatam} / \text{6}
\end{align*}
\]

In s.66 V. shows us to what extent Kai.'s ambition has transformed her moral and psychological attitude towards her own son. In her eager expectation to see Bh. on the throne, she not only experiences no grief for her dead husband, but even projects her own heinous ambition on her own son Bh. and expects him to rejoice joyfully her announcement of the news of D.'s death. When Bh.,
however, contrary to her expectation, indulges in grief, and addresses various questions and requests to his mother regarding D. and R., thereby expressing his loving devotion to them, and, at Kai.'s implicit hint, in her reply that R., with L. and S., has left the place, with grave concern and anxiety inquires about their whereabouts — Kai. still, in spite of all these gestures of humane love and concern by Bh., goes on projecting her own heinous feelings on Bh., still imagining that ultimately her announcement of R.'s and S.'s going to the forest, and particularly so if he knows this has been caused at her own instigation and for the sake of her own son, would immensely delight Bh. In fact, her unconcealedly triumphant final disclosure of this after her earlier, as yet more concealed, though not less hopeful, intimations marks the highlight of her psychological projection, in her mistaken belief that the soul-baring revelation of her petty-ambition would, in virtue of its alluring prospect for her son, dispel ultimately all his agonized reactions. All this shows how ambition has transformed her psychologically and morally to such an extent that she has lost sight of Bh.'s moral righteousness and humanism, and projects her own ambitious feelings on Bh., even though Bh.'s manifestations of grief for D. and of devotion to R. are quite contrary to her own imagination of how her son should react. Though she has revealed herself as most cunning in her dealings with D., apprehending all his psychological reactions, her unholy ambition has completely shut her eyes to the psychological disposition of her own son. V. has drawn thus a good example of how ambition can make one cunning towards others, but blind towards oneself.

Ss.67-68, describing Bh.'s reproach of his mother for her heinous wickedness and his rejection of the throne, as well as his lamentation over the misfortune brought about by Kai., bring out very forcefully the far-reaching effect as well as the exorbitant extent of Kai.'s heinousness and cruelty. The main
idea is this: Treated with all affection by R. like his own mother and by Ks. like her own sister, Kai. in her boundless greed (ambition), has requitted this affection with such heinousness and cruelty as to expel R., the embodiment of virtue and dharma, the darling of the people, to the forest, and has thereby caused immeasurable grief to D., Ks., Bh., to the whole clan, to the whole kingdom. In her unholy ambition for her son, she has caused the death of her husband and brought heart-rending grief and disgrace to her son, whose righteousness and goodness, whose attachment to D. and R. she has failed to realize and whose reputation she has spoiled. She has deprived a mother of her son, the dearest friend a mother can have in her life -

\[
\text{agnaprasya\text{\textasciitilde}gana\text{\textasciitilde} putro h\text{\textasciitilde}day\text{\textasciitilde}cc\text{\textasciitilde}pi jayate} / \\
\text{tasm\text{\textasciitilde}at priyat\text{\textasciitilde}ar m\text{\textasciitilde}tu\text{\textasciitilde} priyat\text{\textasciitilde}va\text{\textasciitilde}na tu b\text{\textasciitilde}ndhav\text{\textasciitilde}a} / / 14
\]

which is a crime immeasurable in its cruelty, a crime for which she deserves the darkest place in hell as a punishment.

With this, V.'s exposition of Kai.'s character is as good as completed. We do not know whether the author intended to impregnate certain stray allusions to Kai. with any further light illuminating her behaviour after her ambition was stifled, namely, whether there was any inner conversion or so. The question is difficult to answer, but most probably V. did not intend to throw any further light on Kai.'s character, otherwise he would have had ample opportunity to do so, but he simply refrained from it, considering that her role was over, that in the way her character was situated she had to accept her failure whether she liked it or not. Whether the author meant to indicate some radical conversion on the part of Kai. - since he includes her among the other queens to fetch R., and since they are spoken of as setting out on their mission with delighted hearts - cf. 77.6

\[
\text{ka\text{\textasciitilde}key\text{\textasciitilde} ca sumit\text{\textasciitilde}ra ca kausalya ca ya\text{\textasciitilde}asvini r\text{\textasciitilde}m\text{\textasciitilde}nayanasa\text{\textasciitilde}mah\text{\textasciitilde}ra yt\text{\textasciitilde}vy\text{\textasciitilde}yanena bha\text{\textasciitilde}svata} // /, as consoling S. and as filled with tears
\]
of affection of the sight of R.'s grief - cf. 96.13ff. -
evamértāṁ sapatnyastā jagmūrāvasya tāṁ, tada / 
dadrūscāśrame rāmaṁ svargaccyutamivāmbaraṁ // 13 
sarvabhogaiḥ parityaktaṁ rāmaṁ samprekṣya mātaraḥ / 
ārtā mumucuraśrūṇi sasvaraṁ ēkakarśitāṁ // 14 - 
and when taking his leave - cf. 104.25 -
tāṁ mātaro bāṣraghīṭakaṁthyo duḥkhhenā nāmantrayituṁ 
hi sekaṁ / 
sa tveva mātri bhīvādyā sarvāv rudantuśūṁ svāṁ pravīveśa 
rāmaṁ // 14 - 
and since he includes her among those to greet R. at his return 
to Ayodhya, cannot be proved since V. never speaks of Kai. 
separately, except in one passage, namely at the occasion of 
Bh.'s introduction of his mothers to Bharadvāja, 86.16-28. At 
this occasion Kai. is referred to as follows:
vv. 16-17:

asamṛdhena kāmena sarvalokasya garhitā / 
kaikyeśa tasya jāgraṁ ca sar▫anau savyapatrapā // 16 
tāṁ pradakṣiṇāmāgamyā bhagavantaṁ mahāmuniṁ / 
adūrādbharatasyaiva tasthau dīnānanāstadā // 17

vv. 24-25:

yaśyaṁ kṛte nāravyāghrau ḍivenāsanīto gatau / 
rājaṁ puraviṣāca svargāṁ daśaratho gatau // 24 
āśvāryakāmaṁ kaikyeśaṁ prabuddhiṁ / 
mamaitāṁ mātaraṁ viddhi pṛṣaṅgāṁ pāpāneścayāṁ / 
yatomaṁ hi paśyāṁ vyasanaṁ mahādātmanāṁ // 25

vv. 27-28:

bharadvājo mahāṛiṣṭaṁ bruvantaṁ bharantaṁ tada / 
pratyuvāca mahābuddhirāṁ vacanamarthavat // 27 
na doṣenāvaṇantavya kaikyeśaḥ bharata twāyā / 
rāmapravrājanaṁ hyetatsukhodarāṁ bhavisyati // 28
Is there any indication of a radical conversion in any of the three passages? The answer has to be an emphatical no. The words of v.17 cannot be said to imply anything more than that Kai. feels depressed or ashamed, and for that she has all reason to do. Bh.'s reproach almost excludes the possibility of an inner conversion, for then we would expect him at least to mention her conversion also, just as we would expect him to be much more gentle in his rebuke of Kai. while disputing with R., cf.98.46-47. And Bharadvāja's request to Bh. not to find fault with his mother is spoken in connection with the happy end which the sage visualizes through his magic power. 'Let the past be past, the future will be happy.' Does this imply a conversion on the part of Kai., and this so as intended by the author V.? I would not dare to draw this conclusion. I would rather infer from the silence of any further expositions of Kai.'s character after Bh.'s reproach of her that V. stopped characterizing Kai., since her ambition had no further scope for development, and she had no further role to play in the story, and that those few allusions to Kai. where she is mentioned as one among the queens to accompany Bh. on his mission to bring back R. are not meant to illumine any particular character-trait of Kai., and that the allusions to her in the context of Bh.'s introduction of the queens to Bharadvāja serve rather to highlight Bh.'s resentment and Bharadvāja's attempt to pacify him by prophesizing the happy end of R.'s exile, than to imply a hidden allusion to Kai.'s conversion. However, we shall gladly submit to any opposite argumentation which can successfully prove that V. meant Kai. to have undergone an inner conversion after her failure to install Bh.
A SYNTHETIC VIEW OF THE AUTHOR'S CONCEPTION
AND PORTRAIT OF KAIKEYI'S CHARACTER
Though owing much to the pattern of spontaneous inspiration, V.'s conception of Kai.'s character is uniform up to the point where Bh. disillusioned her ambitious hopes. We have argued that with this Kai.'s characterization as such has reached its end, though an abrupt end. If we were to ask ourselves how is it that V., after such a vivid exposition of Kai.'s character, does not intend to bring her portrait to its completion when this would be of such an interest to the reader, even though her main role in the story has ended, we would have to answer by saying: Precisely because her role has finished, her characterization has also finished. This is a consequence of the partly bardic nature of the poem. The bard is constantly concerned with projecting fresh and vivid scenes with a variety of sentiments before the audience, so as to awaken in them feelings of thrill in various dimensions. Now 'Kaikeyī's film' has come to an end, a new 'film', which has already started, has reached its break-through.

As we meet Kai. in her first response to the repeated, cunning persuasions of Mantharā destined to make her imagine to be the victim of an intrigue by D., she appears to be the ideal of a loving queen-mother, for the great enthusiasm with which she welcomes Mantharā's news of R.'s consecration, to the utter embarrassment and bewilderment of the hunch-back, and for all the loving affection and humaneness she manifests and asseverates
for R., who is as dear to her as her son Bh. So it comes like a bolt from the blue when that same loving, humane and cheerful Kai. all of a sudden succumbs to the evil agency of evil-minded Mantharā, who succeeds in disillusioning a latent hope of hers, the hope for Bh. to be enthroned one day after 100 years' reign of R. A deep-rooted, but vehement ambition has been awakened in her, and as she sees her ambition threatened and imagines herself the victim of a foul trick by D. and his consorts, she turns into the most embittered, jealous, hard-hearted and relentlessly vindictive petty-patroness for Bh., determined, in her impatience to see her ambition fulfilled, not to shun from employing the most oblique, shameless and indiscreet cunning and the meanest deceit, and from pestering her victim D. with the most cruel, ruthless pressures in order to drive him to succumb to her wiles, delighted, as it were, in inflicting grief on her imagined enemies. Though she is treated with motherly respect by R., who, ever intent on resorting to what is dharma and truth, and on fulfilling the desires of his father and his mothers, with heroic equanimity and love, accepts these words, and on account of his heroic regard for dharma and truth and his noble respect for Kai. as a mother, makes fate responsible for all the turn of events and consequently also for her cruel ambition, her hennousness, wickedness and hardheartedness is painted with loud colours by the poet: In fact, the way in which she responds to the heroism of R.'s words and gestures is so indiscreet that it gives an outright slap to his nobility. Not only does she, instead of acknowledging his noble, heroic words, urge him to delay no longer, not only does she act as if D. were desirous of seeing R. expelled as soon as possible, but out of shame and a bad conscience did not dare to reveal his conscience - which is a blunt lie -, and in all that she does not hide her impatience to see R. expelled, but she even wildly protests against any measure that would contribute to the comfort of R. and lead to the inconvenience of Bh., and by way of an extremely impertinent and indiscreet
comparison in the very presence of R. demands that R. ought to be banished by D. like Asamañja by his father Sagara. More than that, Kai.'s heinousness, hard-heartedness and cruelty, rooted in her violent greed, is brought out most forcefully by a number of curses which the poet, in the mouth of various characters, inflicts upon her. V. also exposes how Kai.'s ambition has transformed her moral and psychic attitude towards her own son to such an extent that she fails to realize his lofty ideals of righteousness and humaneness, and expecting him to welcome her cruel decision, projects her own ambitious feelings on him, against all his manifestations of grief for D. and of devotion to R. Though she has revealed herself as most cunning in her dealings with D., apprehending all his psychological reactions, her unholy ambition has completely shut her eyes to the psychological disposition of her own son. V. has thus drawn in her an example of how ambition can make one cunning towards others, but blind towards oneself. The poet closes her chapter by giving us a final glimpse of the extent and the effect of her sin (pāpa) in Bh.'s bitter lamentation. In her boundless greed, she has 'rewarded' the most affectionate treatment which she has received from R. and Ks. with such heinousness and cruelty as to cause immeasurable grief and calamity to D., Ks., Bh., to the whole family, to the whole nation, as to cause the death of her husband and spoil the reputation of her son, and as to deprive a mother of her only son, the dearest she can have in her life.

1) The fact that in 60.6, 71.13 and 72.8 Mantharā is referred to as the cause for the misfortune which has come over the house of Ayodhya does not contradict this. Mantharā is the external agent, but her agency would not have influenced Kai. had she not aroused in her a latent but intense ambition for power. In fact, in the context of all the references, Kai. gets her severe share of rebuke also.
Manthara, the hunch-backed maid-servant of Kai., as a wretch, an embodiment, as it were, of evil look and evil mind. Driven by an ambitious desire for status, which she would obtain with Kai. becoming the main queen, she is so upset at the prospect of R.'s consecration as heir-apparent that she is determined to arouse Kai.'s ambition and make her believe that she is the object of a foul intrigue by D. and his consorts, and so to instigate her to take revenge on her imagined enemies and to force her husband to establish her own son Bh. on the throne, while expelling R. to the forest. And she is relentless in her effort and, crooked and cunning as she is, she knows, though she does not succeed in her first attempts, to tickle Kai.'s vulnerable point of ambition and to infuse her poison into it. And having succeeded in persuading her, she gives her all the advice necessary to ensure a 100% success for her.

1) I think it is not correct to interpret her motive as one of a desire for Kai.'s welfare, though in II 7.15 she is referred to as sa visannatarā bhūtvā kubja tasyā hitaisinī, and Kai. praises her with similar words in II 9.29: tva meva tu mamarthesu nītvayuktā hitaisinī / pāham samavabuddhyevam kubje rajhaścikirstitam. Though hitaisinī in a normal context has the meaning 'desiring the welfare of somebody', I feel that in II 7.15 V. intends to play with this word by imbuing it with the ironical meaning 'seeking benefit from her'. For, if her motive were an altruistic desire for Kai.'s welfare, prompted by a mistaken suspicion of D. and his consorts, it would not be explainable why Manthara should still persist
in arousing the suspicion of her mistress when she expresses her happiness at R.'s installation and her affection for him. Moreover, the poet does imply the greed of Manthara when he gives a description of her as being over and over adorned with precious ornaments and royal garments and a girdle, as looking like a female monkey tied with a rope, and of the humiliating treatment she suffers from the hands of Satrughna. Cf. s.72. And I think the poet smiles ironically through the words of Manthara when she says - II 7.17-18:

śāmyagāde bhaye magna duḥkhaśokasamanvitā/
dahyamanānaleneva tvadhātārthamihagata // 17

tava duḥkhena kaikeyi mama duḥkhaṁ mahaṁbhavet /
tvadvṛddhau mama vyṛddhiśca bhavedatra na saṁśayah // 18

and of Kaikeyī - II 9.28-30:

kubhe tvāṁ nābhijānāmi āreṣṭhāṁ āreṣṭhābhikheṣaṁ /
prthivyāmasi kubjānamuttama buddhiniścaye // 28
tvameva tu maṁartheṣu nityayuktā hitaṁśiṁ /
naṁ samavabuddhyāṁ kubhe rajaśakāśīśaṁ // 29
santi duḥṣaṁśtitaṁ kubja vakrāṁ paramapāpiṁā /
tvāṁ padyamiva vātena sannatā priyadāraṇā // 30

which is followed by a eulogy consisting of insipid platitudes.
A SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS
OF THE CHARACTERIZATION OF KAUSALYA
II 4.32-41

Kausalya's joyful reaction at the news of Rama's consecration

Résumé:

When R. enters Ks.'s apartment, he finds her together with L., Sumiträ and S. praying to Lakśmī and meditating on Lord Viśṇu, and, as he intimates to her the joyful message of his consecration, mother Ks., though she has received the news already earlier, now gives expression to her joy at the fulfilment of a long-cheffished desire of hers, with the attainment of which all her opponents have been defeated, expression to her joy, that, as her supplications to Lord Viśṇu have been fruitful, her son is going to attain to the glory of the Ikṣvāku kingdom. What the author intends to express in these lines, is not the egoistic petty-ambition of a queen-mother working to secure a 'protégé-privilege' for her son - for Ks.'s son is the eldest prince and it is his birth-right to follow in the footsteps of his father D. - , but the joy of a loving queen-mother - proud of the great privilege of her first-born son - bursting out as her long-cherished expectation of the great proud day of her son's consecration in the heir-apparentship has come true, and all her fears of possible intrigues on the part of opponents, as they are the custom in royal houses, fears which have subconsciously arisen in her heart and have ruffled her expectation, have vanished, and all her fervent prayers for the welfare of her son have been fulfilled.
When R. entered the apartment of his mother Ks., he saw her, with devoted heart, making an oblation to fire and reciting mantras. In fact, the whole night she had been standing in silent meditation and at day-break she was worshipping Visnu, praying for the welfare of her son. At R.'s sight, Ks., filled with affection for her son, said to him - "As your father, truthful to his word, is going to consecrate you in the heir-apparentship, you have attained to the life and fame of the old virtuous rajarshis and the dharma of the dynasty." At this, R. answered to her with humility and respect - "0 queen, you certainly don't know that great calamity has come over me and this will conduces to the grief of you, S., and L..." At this, Ks., unaccustomed to grief, lost her senses and fell to the ground like a plantain-tree, and, after R. raised her from the ground and brushed off the dust from her body with his hands, sorrow-afflicted Ks. said to her son in the presence of L. - "If you had never been born, the only grief I would suffer would be the grief of being a childless woman. Not finding any happiness in the manliness of my husband, I sustained my life through my hope for a son. But now, though being the eldest, I will hear many heart-piercing insults from my younger co-wives, and what is more painful for a woman than this? Even in your presence I was insulted, how much more will I be when you have gone away; surely I am going to die. 17 years since your birth, I have passed in expectation of an end to my grief. With fasts, meditation and many hardships I have reared you up in agony with great difficulty, and all that to no purpose. Certainly my heart is like steel that it does not break, like a river-bank when touched by floods in the rainy season. Certainly there is no place for me in the abode of Yama, as death does not desire me. Certainly death does not come before time. But this is my grief that all my vows, gifts, restraints, austerities which I have undertaken for the sake of off-spring have become useless like seed sown on barren soil. If one could obtain death when one is oppressed by heavy grief by one's own will, I, being separated from you like a cow from her calf, would have joined already the assembly of the dead."
As L. heard these heart-rending lamentations of Ks., he was distressed and tried to console her with words appropriate to the situation ................. When Ks., overpowered by grief, heard these encouraging words of L., she said to R. - "You have heard what your brother L. has said; if you approve of it, do what is to be done next. You should not leave me alone - overwhelmed with grief, listening to the unjust words of my co-wife. If you are anxious to practise dharma, serve me by staying at home and thus practise dharma which is unexcelled. The great sage Kasyapa obtained heaven by serving his mother at home. I am as deserving of respect as is the king, and I do not allow you to go to the forest. With your separation from me, I do not want life or happiness; it would be better for me to eat grass with you. If you go to the forest and leave me alone in grief, I shall seek death by fasting, for I shall not be able to live, then you will go to hell like the Ocean, the lord of rivers, for committing an unlawful act." As Ks. was thus lamenting, virtuous R. spoke to her words endowed with righteousness - "I have no power to violate the words of my father. I entreat you with bowed head, I am anxious to go to the forest. Rsi Kandu in obedience to his father's words, killed a cow, knowing it to be dharma. And in our dynasty of old, Sagara at the command of his father performed a great slaughter as his sons dug the earth. And R., the son of Jamadagni, killed his mother Repuka with an axe at the words of his father. It is not I alone that follows the word of a father. I shall follow this path gone by the ancestors. This is the duty which I have to do on earth, not in any other way. Nobody is forsaken following the words of his father. After speaking these words to his mother, R. turned to L. ..................... After these affectionate words to L., he turned again to Ks., with bowed head and folded hands - "Allow me, mother, to go to the forest; I entreat you by my life; give me your fare-well blessings. Having fulfilled my promise, I shall come back to the town again. After entreating thus his mother and instructing his younger brother, he made a circumambulation round his mother in his heart.

(21) Seeing virtuous R. so insistent on observing the words of his father, Ks. spoke to him words choked with tears - "How should he who is born from me to B., who has never seen grief, who is kind to all beings, live on grain when hiservants enjoy cooked food? Who will believe it, who will not have fear when hearing that meritorious R., the beloved son of the king, is sent into exile. Like fire burns grass at the end of the rainy season, so the fire of sorrow will consume me forsaken by you. As a cow follows a calf wherever it goes, I shall follow you wherever you go." At this, R. answered - "The king has been deceived by Kai., and when I have gone to the forest and he has been abandoned also by you, he will surely die. It is cruel on the part of a wife to forsake her husband, you should put this idea out of your mind. As long as my father, the lord of the earth, lives, you
The virtuous R. saw his mother approve of his words, he said again to her: "It is my duty as well as yours to accomplish the words of my father, for he is king, husband, preceptor, the foremost lord and master of all. And after spending these 14 years in the forest, I shall abide by your words. Hearing these words, Ks., overwhelmed with grief, said to her dearly beloved son, her face filled with tears: "I shall not be able to live in the midst of my co-wives. If you have decided to go, out of regard for your father, take me to the forest like a wild female deer." As she was thus crying, R., himself weeping, answered: "As long as a woman lives, her husband is her God and master. The king is your and my master. And noble-souled Bh. also, who is kind to all beings, will attend upon you, for he is ever bent on dharma. See unfailingly to it that, after my departure, the king does not out of grief for his son fall into affliction. A wife that does not serve her husband, even though she is engaged in religious vows and fasts, will attain to the place of sin. A wife should obey her husband, always intent on his welfare. This is the law that has been seen in the world, that has been heard in the Vedas and laid down in the sāstras. Honour for my sake the Brāhmīns - strict in the observance of religious vows, spend thus the time in expectation of my arrival. You will obtain the highest desire after my return if D., the first of those possessed of righteousness, keeps alive." When R. had spoken these words, Ks., overwhelmed with grief for her son, said: "Go my son, be intent on your object, may prosperity be with you always." Ks. spoke these auspicious words when she saw her son resolved with all his heart on going into exile, and she was anxious to give her fare-well blessing.

Interpretation of context and analysis of characterization:

At the outset, we have to say that V.'s characterization of Ks. is not a complete exposition of her character, but rather the pathetic representation of her as a loving mother crushed by the pangs of her agony at the separation from her son. It is from the view-point of a pathetic sentiment that we have to interpret all her reactions of agony as they follow the traumatic news of R.'s banishment. This is a traumatic shock indeed, and the poet has brought out this point very well: Absorbed in meditation and prayer to Viṣṇu for the welfare of her dearly beloved son, and filled with the supreme joy and pride of a
loving queen-mother expecting the proud hour of her son's coro-
nation, and losing herself in happy visions of his future fame
and glory, visions to which she gives delightful expression as
R. enters her chamber, - in such moments of the highest Elysian
feelings it is that she encounters the most painful, unpre-
cedented pangs of mental agony of her life. Her reaction is
naturally one of an overwhelming feeling of grief and mental agony,
the power of which deprives her of her consciousness and strikes
her on the ground. When she is raised from the ground and re-
gains her consciousness, she gives way to such gloomy and pessi-
mistic feelings as to give the impression that certain unpleasant
experiences of her past life, experiences of being neglected by
her husband in favour of the other queens, experiences which she
suppressed through the counter-balance of her love and hope for
her son, are now aroused again in her mind and become so vigorous
that she feels as though all her life was but a life of never-
ending pain and gloom, with her hope for her son alone sustaining
her to carry on; and, since this last ray of hope has now been
extinguished, she feels it would have been better for her never
to have borne a son, for then she would have only to suffer the
pain of being a childless woman, but not the pain of a queen
humiliated and insulted by her younger co-wives. This traumatic
news of her son's banishment awakens in her the most gloomy
imaginations, imaginations which she has entertained in certain
moments of unhappy experiences, but which she now projects on
the whole of her life. Everything is black and dark for her,
all her life useless, all her religious vows and austerities in
vain, and no relief from this burden of grief, no mercy even on
the part of death. When L. hears these heart-rending lamentations
of Ks., and, considering in his mind the unwarranted injustice
behind the order of D., in his flaming love for R., consoles her
by promising that he will see to it that justice is done and all
obstacles to R.'s coronation are removed at any cost, Ks.
approves of these words, and like L., like any other human being
in such a situation except a dharmavīra, a hero of righteousness and forbearance like R., she feels that grave injustice has been done to her son and that it is necessary to revolt against a dharma which is the product of the injustice and cruelty of her ambitious co-wife. And it is understandable that in this mental agony of her, in her feeling that her son is the victim of injustice, she, out of deep love for him, takes recourse to a little bit of cunning, namely to an attempt to bind him by reminding him that it is as equally a high duty of a son to serve his mother as is obedience to his father and by expressing her formal disapproval of his going to the forest and declaring that, if he fails to listen to her order, she will seek death by fasting, and then he will go to hell for committing adharma. Persistent though this attempt appears, it is not the shrewd cunning that is determined to win the argument, in fact she could not hope so, for in her heart of hearts she must know that the highest duty of a son is to follow the word of his father, but a cunning that flows spontaneously out of her agony and love for her son and is inspired by L.'s consolation. Ks. takes R.'s reminder that the highest duty of a son is to follow the words of his father with a silent gesture of approval, for in her further manifestations of grief she does not make any more appeal to R. to refrain from going into the exile. Meanwhile, a heavy debate is going on between R. and L. R., in his heroic adherence to dharma and forbearance of injustice, declares obedience to the words of his father as unalterable dharma, over-looking, in his high-minded respect for Kai. as his mother, all the meanness of her character and attributing it to fate, while L., in his human mentality, considering the injustice behind what R. considers to be his dharma, cannot but feel like revolting against a dharma that is the product of injustice and cruelty and a fate that turns the most virtuous into the most miserable, while it makes the most evil persons prosper. Whether L. likes it or not, R. rejects his brother's persuasion by insistently
reaffirming that to follow the words of his father is the path of truth. But Ks., though she realizes and appreciates R.'s high-minded intention, does not find consolation, for the painful thought of R.'s ascetic life in the forest, so in contrast with the luxurious life he has been hitherto accustomed to, and the painful thought of his separation from her make it almost impossible for her to admit this to happen. And so she entreats R. to allow her at least to follow him like a cow follows her calf. Though R.'s admonition to put this idea out of her mind, as it is cruel on the part of a wife to forsake her husband, and to abide by the eternal law of a wife to attend upon her husband meets with her approval, and R., realizing her approval, adds the remark that it is her as well as his duty to obey the word of the father - for he is king, husband, preceptor and the lord and master of all - and that after his 14 years of exile he will come back and abide by her words, she abruptly falls back into her lamentation as she imagines her isolation from her son and her exposure to the insults by her co-wives - before she finally yields to R.'s repeated exhortation to abide by her eternal duty as a wife to attend to the welfare of her husband.

To sum up: All these various reactions on the part of Ks. in response to the traumatic news of R.'s banishment are but the natural reactions of the mental agony of a queen-mother, who, like by a bolt from the blue, is deprived of all her hopes she has cherished a life long for her son, feeling as though all her life has been a life of suffering and as though with her last ray of hope extinguished, everything has broken down, and, who, inspite of all encouragement, can find consolation only with great difficulty, helplessly looking towards the impending hour of her separation from her son and his life of unprecedented, undeserved hardships.
Ks.'s prayerful fare-well stotra on behalf of R. (s.22), which is a combination of prayers requesting the blessings of the Gods and other super-natural beings, of apotropeical entreaties to the creatures of the forest, and of general auspicious wishes for success, prosperity and a happy return, rounds off and sums up a mother's life-long self-sacrificing love for her son, a love which, having come under the strain of agony and having failed to dissuade R. from his heroic commitment to dharma, now pours out once more, in a last bid to implore the Gods and creatures for his protection and for all blessings on him for his fateful journey, the very thought of which has brought so much agony to her.

Ks.'s counsel to S. not to disregard her husband in his calamity as her fare-well gift is not at all an expression of distrust, but the concern of a mother for the marital welfare of her son and daughter-in-law, a marital welfare that, owing to the nature of a life amidst extraordinary hardships, may be exposed to trials and difficulties. And at S.'s beautiful asseverations of her faithfulness and devotion to her husband, Ks. sheds tears of grief and joy, joy at having such a virtuous daughter-in-law, and being assured of the happiness of the couple's marital life even under austere circumstances, grief
at the visualization of their separation. (34.19-28)

Resume of passages describing Kausalya's agonies after Rama's departure

From the way V. has characterized Ks. in her mental agony, we can easily foresee how it will break forth again as the dreaded moment of the departure of her dear son comes actually true, and how it will assume notes of great despair.

In II 35.32 the poet describes pathetically how R. sees his mother running after the chariot and crying with desperate voice 'O Rāma, Rāma, O Sītā and Lakṣmāṇa'.

When D., filled with grief at the loss of R. vanishing from his sight, is at his request seated on the bed of Ks. to find consolation, feeling as if his vision has left him with R.'s departure (II 37), Ks. also gives vent to pitiful lamentations and gloomy visions, imagining how Kai. will roam about harassing her like a snake set free; recalling to her mind the cruelty with which she has deprived R., L. and S. of their glory, and exposed them to unbearable privations and hardships, and, as if to chase away for a moment all oppressing thoughts of grief and despair, she conjures up happy visions of that glorious day when Ayodhyā will see the triumphant return of the trio - only to fall back into smarting pangs of conscience as she remembers that in her youth she once cut off the udders of cows, thus preventing the calves from drinking their mother's milk - as a result of which, she thinks, she has been deprived of her only son by Kai. (II 38).
When Sumantra conveys R.'s messages and consoling exhortations in a very touching manner and gives a pathetic account of L.'s words of protest against D., of S.'s silent tears at his parting and of the gloomy, melancholic atmosphere pervading all beings, and of the agonized lamentations of the citizens of Ayodhya, D., in utter despair of grief and remorse, bitterly accuses himself of having conjured this great calamity by following infatuatedly the dictate of sinful Kai., without consulting his counsellors and friends, implores Sumantra to take him to R., as without him he cannot live even for a moment, and, invoking with grief-choked voice R., L. and S. 'who do not know that he feels as though he were dying with grief, an orphan left by them', he sinks down on the bed of Ks., deprived of his senses (II 52-53). When Ks. hears the pitiable, heart-rending lamentation of her husband, she trembles with grief and despair, as if possessed by an evil spirit, and implores Sumantra to take her to R., S. and L., or she will go to the abode of Yama. When Sumantra, to console her, converts his tone of pathos and pessimism into a tone of cheer and optimism and gives her a charming account of how happy the three actually feel amidst their ascetic austerities, she, notwithstanding, remains uncomfor ted, as the agonizing thought of her separation from R., L. and S. and of their austere life of isolation in the forest - so vividly impressed upon her by Sumantra's pathetic account a short while ago - still rings in her ears. And she turns in anger and grief towards her husband and bitterly accuses him of the wrong done by him to R., conjuring up gloomy visions of their life amidat hardships and terrors in the forest, of the disgust R. will feel after coming back to Ayodhya and taking over the treasure of kingdom enjoyed by others, and gives vent to her feelings of despair at her total isolation as a wife, lamenting that she has lost all refuges a woman has in her life, her husband, her son and her relatives, through her husband, who has completely destroyed her with her son, has destroyed
the kingdom with all its ministers and citizens. (II 54-55). Ks.'s harsh accusation causes D., who, in the depression of his grief at the thought of the misery that he has allowed to overcome R., has given himself to bitter self-accusations, and who so gravely takes to heart her accusations, to lose himself in thoughts as to the cause of his 'perversion'. And, as he discovers in his memory an awe-some deed in his youth as the cause for the calamity he has brought on R., he requests his wife for mercy and forgiveness, his wife who is 'devoted to dharma and compassionate to all, even to enemies'. Ks. is deeply touched by these pitiable, self-accusing words of her husband, and, feeling deeply sorry for her harshness, she tearfully suppli- cates his forgiveness, thereby expressing her high-regard for his righteousness and truthfulness, and confessing that all this happened under the unbending influence of sorrow that has been swelling more and more in her heart the last 15 nights ever since the day when R. went into exile, a period appearing, as it were, like 15 years (II 56)- a sublime example of how a loving wife, who in a moment of grief and despair has hurt her husband with her harsh accusations, remorsefully acknowledges her transgression, and turns again with love and affection towards her husband despite the almost unbending power of grief swelling in her heart.

As Ks. pitifully laments over her dead husband, she bursts out with contemptuous accusations against Kai. See 60.3ff. Her grief, which has been swelling in her heart into greater and greater intensity ever since the time of the departure of her beloved son, now breaks out with new force, explodes with sparks of embitterment and wrath at the sight of that wretched co-wife of hers who has brought this ocean of grief over her and the whole house.
As the poet describes Bh.'s meeting with Ks., he makes her address Bh. with words that appear to show traces of resentment, if, directly as well as indirectly, not of blame, against Bh.
Cf. II 69.6-11:

bharataṁ pratyuvācedaṁ kausalyā bhrādudhkhitaṁ /
idad te rājyakāmasya rājyaṁ prāptamakṣṇakam /
samprāptaṁ bata kaikeyyā sīghraṁ krūreṇa karmanā / 6
prasthāpya cīravasanaṁ putraṁ me vanavāsinam /
kaīkeyī kaṁ guṇaṁ tatra paśyati krūrādārśiṁī / 7
ksīpraṁ māmapi kaīkeyī prasthāpyitumarhati /
hiranyanāho yatrāste suto me sumabāyaśāḥ / 8
athvā svayamevānaṁ sumitrāncaraṁ sukham /
agnihotraṁ puraskṛtya prasthāye yatra rāghavah / 9
kāmāṁ va svayamevādyā tatra māṁ netumārhasi /
yatrāsau puruṣavyāhrastapyaṁ me tapaṁ suteḥ / 10
idad hi tava vistirpaṁ dharmadānānyasamācittām /
hastyaṁvarathamānāṁ rājyaṁ nīryātitaṁ tava / 11

Especially, her insistence that Kai. or Bh. himself should take her to the forest, or she will go herself together with Sumitṛā, are, in addition to being an expression of a desire to escape from her woeful life in Ayodhyā and find solace and refuge with her beloved R., an unspoken indication that, being persona non grata, she wants to pave the way for others. It is difficult to say whether the poet means her to do this by conviction or only in order to test Bh. Neither can we say that Ks.'s remorseful answer in vv. 31-32 proves the first alternative, nor that v.2 proves the second -

mama duḥkkhamidaṁ putra bhūyah samupaṭāyate /
śapathaiḥ śapaṇāno hi prāṇānapaṛṇataṁ me // 31
dīṣṭāṁ na calito dharmadātma te sahalakṣmanāḥ /
vatsa satyapraptiṁno me sataṁ lokānavāpsyaśa // 32
āgataṁ krūrakāryāyāṁ kaīkeyyā bharataṁ sutah /
tamaṁ draṣṭumnicchāṁ bharataṁ dīrghadārśiṁ // 2
The two alternatives of interpretation are possible. To decide which is the correct one will mean to read the ideas of the author which he conceived in his mind when composing this passage. In any way, V. makes Ks. speak under the influence of her emotional state of mind, that is her deeply engrained mental agony. In such a situation it is understandable that she should project her resentment against Kai., whether now consciously or not, i.e. with full conviction or not, also on Bh. even though she has had a good opinion of him earlier, since he is the one for the sake of whom R. has been unjustly deprived of his kingdom and so cruelly humiliated, for the sake of whom misfortune has befallen the whole house of Ayodhya.

Ks.'s agony is too deeply engrained in her heart as not to find an outlet in all possible ways and project itself even on those who are only indirectly connected with the misfortune that has befallen her. The poet has made this agony of hers the central theme of her personality - so much so that he makes her lament even on the journey to R. at any occasion that conjures up in her mind pathetic imaginations about R.'s, L.'s and S.'s life amidst hardships and austerities, and particularly so at the sorrowful meeting with the trio themselves. (mainly s.96)

1) Since the characterization of Ks. is the characterization of her mental agony, which is unfolded at various occasions, a fairly coherent synthetic picture of her portrait as the author has it in his mind easily emerges from a successive reading of the analytical interpretations themselves, and so we prescind from a synthetic presentation.
DASARATHA
A SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS
OF THE CHARACTERIZATION OF DASARATHA
Dasaratha's character introduced

Résumé:

As the poet launches the Rm. while conjuring up before the minds of the audience the enchanting splendour and majesty of the city of Ayodhyā, he draws an excellent atmosphere to focus on the theme of his story. Within this background of the splendour and glory of Ayodhyā, he introduces the first character D., so to say, as the starting-point of the story of the Rm. He does so by first extolling the sublime virtues and personality of the king and then focussing on the ideal qualities of the citizens of Ayodhyā, impinged upon them by this radiating greatness of character. For the latter see s.v. Associated Chapters p.

We can summarize the ideal qualities of D.'s character by saying that he embodies all the ideals of an ideal Kṣatriya: A heroic, powerful atiratha of the Ikṣvākus and vanquisher of enemies, possessing riches comparable to those of Indra and Vaisravana, yet bent on sacrifice and dharma, and the peer of a mahārṣi in self-restraint, he wisely protects and rules his kingdom to the satisfaction of all, being loved by townspeople and countrymen, over whom the greatness of his personality radiates in a way that it permeates the hearts and minds of all citizens and transforms them into an ideal people.
Dasaratha's fatherly affection and concern for Rama

Résumé:

D. has great fatherly affection for his son R., and it is exceedingly enhanced at the thought of the immense popularity of R. with the people, who adore him as an ideal personality with no equal in the world. It is in this fatherly affection and adoring elation that D., himself having grown old and weary, looks forward to the prospect of R.'s consecration and for that purpose summons distinguished citizens and chiefs from different provinces to put forward the wish of his heart. So great is his affection for R. that, when the citizens and chiefs enthusiastically express their unanimous acclamation, he wants to know the motive of their joy (II 2.16-17). This is a psychological device by the poet of intimating D.'s desire - prompted by his fatherly affection - to hear from their own lips an encomium on the ideal personality-traits of his beloved son. Indeed, the poet brings out this idea very well in the words - teṣāṁ manaḥpriyaṁ/ajānavatvam jñāśūṁ 'as if not knowing the desire of their hearts and desirous to know it', meaning that D. knows the motivations of their hearts very well, but wishes his heart to be lulled by the soothing words of their praise, as also in D.'s joyful response to their eulogy (II 3.1-2).

D. reveals his deep affection and loving concern for his son not only in the cheerful, affectionate manner in which he intimates his resolution to R. and, though knowing his sublime virtues, gives his paternal counsel to him on how to perfect his moral qualities (II 3.16-18), but also in his haste in having
his dear son consecrated in the heir-apparentship immediately and without any further deliberation, as on consideration with the counsellors he finds that the moon is to enter Pusya the very next day, before any possible obstacle may thwart his plan. While intimating to R. his decision to install him immediately, he mentions his terrible dreams which are haunting him, suggesting death or change of mind, revealing themselves as the eruption of a deeply engrained subconscious anxiety that his own exceeding fancy and fondness he has always been cherishing towards his younger wife might somehow or other lead to the frustration of his plan, which would be a stroke unbearable to his heart so affectionately beating for R., an anxiety, which, though unfounded, yet with all such thoughts in the background, induces him to go even as far as to consider his son Bh. a possible danger - II 4.25:

viproṣitaśca bharato yāvadeva purāditah /
tāvadevābhīṣektaste, prāptakālo mato mama //25,

though at the same time he expresses his confidence in his righteousness - but

kim tu cittaṁ manuṣyaṁ manityamita me matiḥ /
setām ca dharmāṇāṁ kṛtaśobhi ca rāghava //27

The poet thus reveals not only D.'s special affection for R., at the cost of which he would even suspect his son Bh., but also shows how a bad conscience has nestled in his heart on account of his preferential treatment of Kai., a treatment that has filled him with the apprehension of possibly having to yield to the fruits of his own infatuation, to the very detriment of his beloved son, at a moment when he may be physically (death) or psychologically (change of mind) unable to resist.

Annotation:

Some scholars consider that D.'s haste evokes a much deeper
psychological disposition of D. - which at the same time happens to be the very bija of the Rm. itself - , a psychological disposition which the poet wants to bring out merely by a device of unspoken self-revelation and one or the other suggestive statement in the mouth of a character here and there in the Rm. Basing themselves on v. 25, on the (seemingly) otherwise inexplicable haste of D., on the (seemingly) otherwise inexplicable fact of his sending away Bh. and Śatrughna, on the fact that Mantharā succeeds in persuading Kai., up to then a loving and high-souled queen-mother to R., only when she is told that Bh. would not obtain the kingdom even after a 100 years of reign of R., on the curse of the andhamuni, which should have its effective consequences, and on the statement by R. in the context of the Bharata-Rāma-sāhvāda that D. had promised the kingdom to Kai.'s son at her marriage as a bride's prize to Kekaya, they draw up the following picture as being the poet's unspoken exposition of the subconscious background of D.'s psychology, as well as of the very bija of the Rm.: D. did not get a son. So he married a third queen, which was not a marriage of love, but a marriage of a pre-planned design. Naturally, he had to be prepared for any stipulation Kai.'s father would make. D. willingly accepted. But later when he sees R. growing up with all the qualities of an ideal Kaśatriya loving, and loved by, all the people, in perfection excelling all his other sons, and sees that even Kai. is full of affection for R., he, for these reasons, and being extremely fond of his R., is resolved on installing R. as long as Kai. would consider it her own heart-felt wish to have R. installed and would not make any claim of her right. For this reason he tacitly sends Bh. and Śatrughna to Kāgrha and, without prior knowledge of the queens, especially Kai., summons distinguished citizens and chiefs from other provinces to advocate his desire and ask them for their opinion. When they unanimously approve of D.'s choice, he is strengthened in his own determination. But the apprehension of the possibility of
his death or of Kai.'s insistence on the promise given to her father by now has resurged so strongly in him that he persists in the immediate coronation of R., lest any obstacle may thwart his plan, even before Bh. may have time to reach Ayodhya. The whole conflict of the Rm. takes its origin in this imposed twilight-policy of D., it, so to say, launches the whole story. And the fact that Kai. yields to the persuasion of Mantharā, who is purposely brought in by the poet to instigate the otherwise impossible change in Kai., has its only explanation in the fact that Mantharā opens her eyes to the fact that her husband is playing a foul trick upon her by for all time depriving her of the right granted to her by him earlier. Such a picture, as presented, finds its confirmation in the wide-spread parallelism of the theme of a king's hankering for a son in Indian Epic and classical literature.

Criticism: We fully grant that such a picture in itself would be throughout logical and reasonable. We cannot however, to the best of our conscience, advocate it for the following reasons:

1) R.'s statement is absolutely isolated and made at an occasion long after the initial conflict which has set the story moving. On the other hand, it is natural that R. should make a tentative deduction in this direction from D.'s behaviour and use it in virtue of a persuasive argument - joined with the already expounded argument of the two boons granted to Kai. at the Deva-Asura-yuddha. We simply cannot understand how the poet should base such important issues as the understanding of the characters of D. and Kai., and the whole understanding of the origin of the story, on a veiled, unspoken self-revelation of the subconscious by D., and on a single, subjective, statement in the mouth of R. in the context of a persuasive argumentation, when he, had he intended
so, would have had ample opportunity to expand on this aspect, particularly so, in the mouth of Kai., yet, on the other hand, he takes all pains to depict an altogether different picture before the minds of the audience, to whom he addresses himself personally and spontaneously as a rhapsodist. What is more objective? To take as revealing the intention of the author what he, at large, exposes before the audience, and re-adjust some singular subjective statements, which might suggest something else, in the light of the context in which they stand, or to trust in a single subjective statement to the extent of re-adjusting the general picture presented in the mould of the impression left with the listener? It should also not be forgotten that purely persuasive statements find their place side by side, or mixed up, with other, more objective, persuasive statements throughout the Rm. This is part of the very nature of persuasion.

2) Taken as such, D.'s 'indecent haste' can be interpreted as the eruption, with the vision of dreams suggesting death and change of mind, of a deeply engrained subconscious anxiety that his own exceeding fancy and fondness he has been cherishing for Kai. may somehow bear fruit in the frustration of his plan—so dear to him. And, on this background, he goes so far in his anxiety as to even consider Bh. a potential danger, though he would be inclined to show his confidence in him. It is enough to trace D.'s apprehension psychologically to his preferential treatment of Kai., on account of which he fears, he may yield to the fruits or fetters of his own infatuation at a moment when he may physically (death) or psychologically (change of mind) be unable to resist, and not to a still more remote, previous promise to Bh, which is haunting in his mind.

3) Though we grant that the scene of Bh.'s and Śatrughna's departure sets the stage for the development of the conflict,
we must say that there is nothing in it that would suggest any concealed pre-arrangement by D. First of all, it is not on his own initiative that they go, but on the invitation of Yudhājit or, more precisely, of Kekaya himself, both of whom are very happy at their coming to Rājagṛha. Secondly, the poet expresses quite definitely the idea that D. takes fancy also in Bh. and Śatrughna, in saying that he kept them in his loving memory and considered them dear like R. and L. —

II 1.7-9:

\[
\begin{align*}
tatrāpi nivasantau tau tarpyamāṇau ca kāmataḥ & \\
nhvātarau smaratāh vīrau vṛddhaḥ daśarathaḥ nrpam & \\
rājāpi tau mahātejāḥ sasmāra prōśītau sutaṣu & \\
ubhau bharatāśatrughnau mahendraṁvarunopamāu & \\
sarva eva tu tasveṣṭāścatvāraḥ puruṣūṛagabhaḥ & \\
svaśārīrādvinirvṛttāścatvāra iva bāhavaḥ &
\end{align*}
\]

a saying from which he would have prescinded had he had any intention to play with D.'s concealed design.

4) The fact that Manthara succeeds in persuading Kai., up to then such a loving and affectionate queen-mother to R., need not be based on Kai.'s realization that her husband is playing a foul trick by depriving her of her rights — for why then does she not use this argument either against D. or against R., nay, why does she even take recourse to the blunt lie that at the time when D. granted her the boon she asked him for Bh.'s coronation and R.'s banishment —, but can be as well and much better explained on the basis of the disillusion of a long-cherished hope latent in the back of her mind, a hope which, having its foundation in her preferential treatment by her husband, has grown to an unspoken matter-of-course expectation, the disillusion of which would appear like a foul trick. On the other hand, it is very difficult to explain Kai.'s transformation by the mere external agency of Manthara and
the complete absence of a latent ambition in her. And what about a statement like II 64.9 -
ätmakāmā sadā caṇḍī krodhanā prājñāmāṇinī /
arogā cāpi kaikeyī mātā me kimuvāca ha // 9 -
which Bh. makes, so to say, out of his subconscious acquaintance with the character of Kai.?

5) We admit that the presentation of D.'s psychology is suggestive and may give rise to different speculations. And so it did with later poets. But that is a general characteristic of the development of the R. story, taking its origin from the Rm. of V. So many features, either beyond or only marginally in the intention of V., became very important, even main issues in classical literature.

Finally, we want to say that the whole issue is a question of intuition into the mind of the author. This is the final criterion, but if our intuitions are different, we are bound to go in for different interpretations. Sometimes this is not so important, but in this case it is. On the attitude we take towards this question, depend the evaluation of the characterization of D. and Kai., even of R., but more than that, our whole understanding of the crisis of the story itself.

II 10-12. 16

Contents :

See s.v. Kaikeyī pp. 665 ff (ss 10-12) and pp. 668 ff (s. 16).
Analysis of characterization:

As with regard to Kai., so also with regard to D., these three sargas are a marvellous piece of psychological characterization. Not only do we see the king of Ayodhya fall from the heights of joyful expectation to the depths of mental agony, but we also witness the polarity of his heart. For, on the one hand, he manifests an extreme fondness and blind passion for Kai.—to such an extent that, when he sees her lying on the ground given to grief and sulks, he, under the influence of blind pity and love, not only sympathetically strokes and caresses her and tries to find out what is wrong with her, but offers to grant her any favour even to the extreme of killing an innocent person or setting free a criminal or similar things if she should wish so, and irremediably falls into the clutches of her cunning, as she requests him to confirm his promise by an oath, thus binding him with his own words. Yet, on the other hand, when D. hears Kai.'s cruel desire, he awakes from his slumber of infatuation. His heart being broken with grief and agony at the unbearable, unprecedented thought that his beloved son, who is part of his own self, is to be banished on account of the cruel, selfish desire nursed by his young wife, and that he himself has given his promise under the clutches of her cunning wiles, he sways between blazing anger and bitter accusations against Kai.'s inexorable vileness and hard-heartedness, and agonized lamentations and entreaties to her to reverse her cruel intention, repeatedly losing his consciousness on account of the overwhelming pressure of grief, while Kai. not only remains as hard as stone to his lamentations and supplications, but, as if delighted to see his heart broken with grief, she makes a mock of his reputation of being satyasandha, drdhavrata and dharmajña, pesterling him with her repeated warnings to abide by his promise to carry out her stern resolve. Under such circumstances, D. has no other option than to succumb, not on account of his infatuation for Kai.,
as some modern authors wrongly interpret, but out of frustration over the inexorable stubbornness and cruelty of his young wife, who by her cunning has tied him with the indissoluble fetters of his own promise, fetters which he cannot shake off without grossly breaching the sanctity of dharma. True as it is that he has allowed himself to be captured by the cunning wiles of Kai. under the influence of his blind passion for her, he is forced to conform to Kai.'s design once he has given his solemn promise to fulfil any favour for her - unless she herself reverses her intention. This being not the case, D. is helpless like a horse driven by a sharp whip, as the poet himself says. The pathetic manner, in which V. represents D.'s despair-ridden agony, leaves no doubt that this is the only correct interpretation of D.'s motivation for his surrender to Kai.'s resolve. If, later, certain characters in the story mention in their criticism of D. his addiction to kāma among the causes for the expulsion of R., we have to bear in mind that this either reflects the purely subjective opinion of the character, or suggests one of the ultimate reasons for the fact that things could take such a tragic turn. If D. himself, in moments of despair and depression, accuses his own infatuation for Kai. of being responsible for R.'s banishment, this reflects the psychology of D.'s agony, and not an objective situation reflecting the intention of the author.1)

After this, D. is left a broken man, who, with his senses failing him for grief and agony, is unable to communicate to his own charioteer his desire to have a last sight of his beloved son (II 12.20), is unable to look at or speak to R., who has been summoned by Sumantra at the words of Kai., except to mutter 'O Rāma' (II 16.3), is unable even to react against Kai.'s meanest falsifications of D.'s intentions (see p.669 ) by anything more than to sigh with grief (II 16.43 :
It is natural that the poet should make those characters who are most closely associated with R., like his mother Ks., his brothers L. and Bh., or the people of Ayodhya as a whole, flare up in wild accusations against D., when he on whom all the people look up as their greatest, most virtuous and most beloved hero, he who only a short while ago has been acclaimed as the heir-apparent to the throne under the festive jubilation of all the people of Ayodhya, is told to undergo the most undeserved hardships, owing to the mean desire of D.'s youngest wife, and this with the acknowledgement of the king, whose passion for the latter is well-known. For they do not, or not immediately, know the background of all the happenings, or are, even if they are acquainted with them, not readily willing to accept them. On this background, these accusations have to be interpreted as subjective opinions, and do reflect the truth about D., as V. intends to bring it out, only indirectly and partially. The following are the most important accusations:

Resume of various accusations against Dasaratha

It is natural that the poet should make those characters who are most closely associated with R., like his mother Ks., his brothers L. and Bh., or the people of Ayodhya as a whole, flare up in wild accusations against D., when he on whom all the people look up as their greatest, most virtuous and most beloved hero, he who only a short while ago has been acclaimed as the heir-apparent to the throne under the festive jubilation of all the people of Ayodhya, is told to undergo the most undeserved hardships, owing to the mean desire of D.'s youngest wife, and this with the acknowledgement of the king, whose passion for the latter is well-known. For they do not, or not immediately, know the background of all the happenings, or are, even if they are acquainted with them, not readily willing to accept them. On this background, these accusations have to be interpreted as subjective opinions, and do reflect the truth about D., as V. intends to bring it out, only indirectly and partially. The following are the most important accusations:
In s.17, Ks., in her unbearable grief and agony, presents a most gloomy picture of her life - a life, as it were, of never-ending pain and misery due to her husband's total neglect of her and her co-wives' abuses of her, with only her hope in her son sustaining her to carry on. It is evident, as we have already seen on 68ff, that this depiction of Ks.'s laments is designed to be a piece of emotional, psychological characterization. In her overwhelming grief she projects certain moments of unhappy experiences, experiences of her husband's neglect of her in favour of Kai. and similar experiences, back over the whole of her life, maintaining as if everything has been black and dark for her.

S.18.1-15 portrays L.'s wild anger at the atrocious injustice committed by D., who has lost all sense of judgement as a result of his uxoriousness to, and infatuation for, Kai., and his promise to Ks., that he will see to it that justice is done and all obstacles to R.'s coronation are removed at any cost. It is evident that, according to the intention of the author, this passage serves purely to characterize L. and not in any way D., except perhaps for the fact that it is meant to show how D.'s passion contributed in the long run to the unhappy developments. But even that I would rather question in this very context.

S. 20, which represents L.'s attack on R.'s attitude of forbearance towards a dharma that is the product of injustice
and cruelty, and a fate that turns the most virtuous into the
most miserable, while it makes the evil prosper, - an attack in
which he does not refrain from accusing D. together with Kai.
of foul play against R. - cf. II 20.8 :

\begin{verbatim}
papavoste kathaṁ nāma tayoh śāṅkā na vidyate /
    santi dharmopadāṁ śākṣṇā dharmatmāṁ kāṁ na budhyase //
\end{verbatim}

II 20.18 :

\begin{verbatim}
aham tadāśāṁ chetsyāmi pitustasyāśca yā tava /
    abhiṣekavighātena putrājyāya vartate - ,
\end{verbatim}

and promises to root out all opponents in order to secure R.'s
coronation, is meant to be as subjective a piece of psychological
characterization of I. as 18.1-15; and more than the former, it
excludes any hidden allusion by the author to a character-facet
of D.

30.10-11 :

\begin{verbatim}
adye nūnāṁ dasaratāḥ sattvamūvidāṁ bhāṣate /
    na hi rājā priyaṁ putrāṁ vivāsrayitumārhati //
    nirguṇasyāpi putrasya kathaṁ syādvipravāsanam /
    kim punaryasya loko'yaṁ jīto vṛttena kevalam //
\end{verbatim}

and 43.4 :

\begin{verbatim}
śrīvanvāco manusyaṁ grāmasadāvāśavāśināṁ /
    rājānaṁ dhigdaśaratāṁ kēmasya vaśamāgatam //
\end{verbatim}

reflect the indignation of the citizens of Ayodhya as well as
of the villagers at the banishment of R. While the former find
it incomprehensible how a son, and moreover such an ideal son
like R., can be banished by a father, concluding that D. must be
possessed by an evil spirit\(^2\), - the latter make D.'s well-known
passion for Kai. responsible for R.'s expulsion, besides Kai.'s
heinous wickedness. As such, these two passages can be inter-
preted purely as manifestations of the people's indignation
at the cruelty and injustice to which their darling R. has been exposed, without, however, being meant to be objective representations of D.'s guilt. Perhaps, there is a hidden intention by the poet in 43.4 to say that D.'s passion for Kai. has contributed to the unhappy turn of events, but even that we cannot prove in any way from the reference.

That the above interpretation regarding the intention of the author behind accusations in the mouth of certain characters against D.'s infatuation for Kai. is true, is most clearly seen from the way Bh. reproaches D.'s infatuation in II 98.50ff. - cf. 50-51:

ko hi dharmarthavorhīnamīḍraṁ karma kilbigam /
striyāḥ priyacakīraṇuḥ sankūryāddharmajña dharmavit //
antakāle hi bhūtāni muhyantīti purāśrutih /
ṛājhaivaṁ kurvata loke pratyakṣaṁ sā śrutih kṛtā // - ,

and R., in his answer, refutes it as untrue, saying that father at the time of marrying his mother promised to the king of Kekaya that he would bestow the kingdom upon the son born of that marriage, and also that he promised her two boons when she saved him in the war between the Gods and Asuras (II 99.13-14). Though much of R.'s argumentation results from his idealistic respect for his elders, tending to tune down all blame on their part, which is so evident in the case of Kai., and though even the Reference to D.'s promise to Kekaya, which we do not find anywhere spoken by the poet or even by Kai., is meant to be a pious fabrication by R., we can rely on this passage cum grano salis as reflecting the intention of the poet himself, since it is in consonance with the tenor prevalent in objective expositions of D.'s character, where the guilt is clearly associated with Kai. and not with D., though D., against his own intention, by his foolish passion for her has hastened its outcome. Again, it is possible that the poet wants to evoke in the description of
Bh.'s reproach of D.'s infatuation — besides his intention to characterize the latter's indignation and revolt for justice — some associations between D.'s passion-ridden conduct and the influence which it had, against his own intention, on the developments leading to R.'s banishment.

Resume of scenes depicting Dasaratha's agony at the departure of his beloved son

Since all these scenes, whether short or long, are permeated with a tone of a pathetic-tragic sentiment, they are, more or less, uniform in their description of the gravity of D.'s grief, as well as in the exhibition of psychological insight and the display of poetic embellishment which gives expression to it. As a real picture of the poet's illustration of D.'s mental agony can be gathered only by reading, we restrict ourselves to giving the different aspects of D.'s pangs of grief.

Ss.31-32. When R., L. and S. pay their fare-well visit to D., who has assembled with all his wives, the king, as he sees his son approaching, rises from his seat and runs towards him, but, overwhelmed with grief, he falls on the ground, unconscious. When he regains his consciousness, and R. requests him to permit him, L. and S. to go to the forest, the thought that he has been responsible for the atrocious expulsion of R. through his boons weighs so heavily upon him that he feels as if, by his infatuated love for Kai., he has ruined R.'s life. It is this feeling of resignation and remorse that prompts him to tell R. to enthrone himself in Ayodhyā and imprison him — words which are not meant to say what they say, but simply express his total resignation.
in this hopeless situation, mixed with feelings of remorse for having himself, though against his better intention, borne his share to the unhappiness of R. On the other hand, he well realizes and appreciates the heroism of R.'s determination in observing his words, and also recognizes the enhancement of spiritual glory ensuing from his ascetic forest-life. R. re-affirms his determination to go to the forest, he allows him to go his way, away safe and unhurt, in that as for the sake of felicity and prosperity, but, with the same breath, beseeches him to stay at least one more night. This reflects very well human experience. For, a father who loses his son and knows that he has to undergo innumerable hardships, though he actually deserves the choicest comforts, cannot but be broken with grief, first on account of the sheer unbearable pain of separation from his beloved son, and secondly on account of the apprehension of his hardships - no matter how great the reward of spiritual glory arising from ascetic austerities in fulfilment of his father's words would be, and no matter how great his joy would be he (R.) asserts to find in pursuing such a life. How well this point is brought out by the poet, is shown by the fact that R., to comfort the king, gives expression to the exuberant joy he finds in fulfilling his father's words, i.e. in making them true, and in living an ascetic life in the forest, and that, having no other desire than this, he does not wish for the kingdom or happiness or even for Maithili, at the cost of making him untruthful. (s.31 end). Yet D., in his disconsolateness, orders Sumantra to send with R. the four armies, mistresses of the house, merchants, wrestlers etc. as well as all citizens and all the amenities of city life, so that R. may not feel the hardships of forest-life (s.32 beginning). Surely a father cannot be but happy at such heroic words of his son, but, however heroic and genuine these words may be, he cannot envisage them in his human affection and concern for him, his son, who is the pride of his life, and who now is expected to undergo the most unprecedented miseries of
his life. We have given here an interpretation of D.'s psychological state of mind as it is beyond the poet's explicit representation, for we cannot but feel impregnated with this impression while reading these texts, and we feel that the audience of V.'s time must have experienced the same feelings, for any human person who has a heart and knows what it means to part from one's dear ones will identify himself with D. as he is depicted in his grief by V.

In the same sarga (32) we see how D., in a blend of feelings of grief and sarcastic revengefulness, snaps back at Kai. when she protests against his direction to Sumantra to send the people of Ayodhya, along with all the amenities of city life, with R., asking why she rebukes him when, after all, he is carrying the burden which she has put on him, in other words, asking her by what right she, beyond the inhuman burden she has already laid upon him, dares to ask for more - which is none of her business, and of which she has not made any explicit mention in the declaration of her boons. Similarly, when Siddhârtta contemptuously runs her down for her impertinent comparison of R. with Asamañja, D. with mixed feelings, feelings of grief and resignation, on the one hand, and feelings of sarcastic revengefulness, on the other hand, replies to her that he himself will accompany R. to the forest, leaving behind the kingdom, pleasure and wealth for her and Bh.'s enjoyment.

Ss.34.1-11; 14-15; 35.24-38 describe the disconsolateness of D.'s grief in face of the gruesome reality of R.'s departure: Hearing R.'s touching fare-well speech, in which he requests his father to look after aged Ks. and comfort her, since she has never experienced calamity in her life before, whenever she is immersed in grief on account of him, D., himself no less disconsolate than Ks., is so filled with grief that for a while his senses fail him, and he is unable even to look at or speak to R.
And, when he comes to himself, he accuses himself of all kinds of sinful acts he must have committed in his youth, which are the cause of this misery, and broods on the inexorable agony of mind Kai. has brought over him and all the people. The burden of these tormenting thoughts again robs him of his senses, and when he recovers, he gives straight orders to Sumantra to fetch the chariot in order to expedite once and for all the agonizing reality, the thought of which is no longer bearable to him. (II 34.1-11). And as Sumantra arrives, he makes a desperate bid to procure at least some precious garments and ornaments for S. (14-15). As Sumantra drives on, followed by the moaning people of Ayodhyā, D., together with his wife Ka., runs after the chariot in desperate grief, and cries out to the charioteer to stop, while R., unable to bear the pitiful sight of his father and mother, urges Sumantra to drive faster, telling him to say to the king if he should ask him that he could not hear him on account of the tumult - till D., persuaded by the counsellors, immersed in grief and with a last look after his son, returns to the palace. (II 35. latter part)

S.37 depicts the darkness of grief and agony which has over-cast D.'s mind, as R., like part of his own heart, has vanished out of his sight, as the dreadful hour of parting has irrevocably and abruptly come to its conclusion with a father looking after the chariot vanishing with his son into the distant: It is a moment so unbelievable and yet so true that D. is totally over-powered by grief, that, when he sees Kai. to his left, he forbids her to touch him and announces his repudiation of her as a wife and relative, and of Bh.'s obsequial gifts if he were to find delight in the obtainment of the kingdom, that, as his thoughts revolve around his son gone into the wilderness - his son who by now must have left the boundaries of Ayodhyā, while the imprints of the horses are still visible, he is tormented with pain and remorse, and lost in thoughts of the undeserved austere hardships
his son, once the pride of his life, would be exposed to, deprived of the rightful deserts of royal comfort and glory. It is the pain of separation and the visualization of R.'s hardships which, as they flash through his heart, overcast him with the darkness of despair. With his senses failing him in this emotional night of darkness, he begs to be brought into Ks.'s apartment, where, sitting on her bed to find consolation, he gives vent to his grief for R. with grief-stricken exclamations and gesticulations, feeling as though his vision has left him with his losing sight of his son.

In 51.20ff., Sumantra finds D. forlorn in grief for R., and as he conveys to him R.'s message, he (D.) falls on the ground, with his senses failing him due to the overwhelming power of grief, and it is only through the encouraging words of Ks., who spurs him to freely speak out his heart to the charioteer since the cause of his fear, Kai., is not here, that D. now feels an urge to empty his heart and asks Sumantra all kinds of detailed questions concerning R.'s, L.'s and S.'s way of life, their emotional states of mind and their messages (II 52.1-9). But as Sumantra, himself disconsolate with grief, adds a very touching note to R.'s affectionate greetings, consoling messages and exhortations, which he conveys to the king, and, moreover, gives a pathetic account of L.'s words of accusation against D., of S.'s silent tears at his departure, of the gloomy, melancholic atmosphere pervading all beings, and of the agonized lamentations of the citizens of Ayodhya, he only adds fuel to the fire (which will finally give the death-blow to D.) - so that D., in utter despair and remorse, accuses himself bitterly of having conjured up this great calamity by infatuatedly following the dictate of sinful Kai. without consulting his counsellors and friends, and, imploring Sumantra to bring him to R., since without him he cannot live even for a moment, and invoking with grief-choked voice R., L. and S. - 'who do not know that he feels like dying with
grief, an orphan left by them', he sinks on Ks.'s bed, unconscious. (II 52.10 - 55.26). When Sumantra, in order to console grief-stricken Ks. imploring him to take her to R., converts his tone of pathos into a tone of cheer and gives her a charming account of how happy the three feel in their ascetic life, she, notwithstanding, remains un comforted, as the agonizing thought of her separation from R., L. and S. and of their austere life of isolation in the forest—so vividly impressed upon her only a short while ago by Sumantra's pathetic account—still rings in her ears. And she turns in anger and grief towards her husband and bitterly accuses him of the wrong done by him to R., conjuring up gloomy visions of their life amidst hardships and terrors in the forest, of the disgust R. will feel when coming back to Ayodhya and taking over the treasure of the kingdom enjoyed by others, and gives vent to her feelings of despair at her total isolation as a wife, saying that she has lost all refuges a woman has in her life, her husband, her son and her relatives, through him (D.), who has completely destroyed her with her son, has destroyed the kingdom with all its ministers and citizens. (II 54 - 55). Ks.'s harsh accusation causes D., who, in the depression of his agony, at the thought of the misery that he has allowed to overcome R., has given himself to bitter self-accusations, and who so gravely takes to heart her accusation, to lose himself in thoughts as to the cause of his 'perversion'. And, as he discovers in his memory an awe-some deed in his youth as the cause for the calamity he has brought over R., he requests his wife for mercy and forgiveness. Ks. is deeply touched by these pitiable, self-accusing words of her husband, and, feeling deeply sorry for her harshness, she tearfully supplicates his forgiveness, thereby expressing her high regard for his righteousness and truthfulness, and confessing that all this happened under the unbending influence of sorrow that has been swelling in her heart more and more for the last 15 nights ever since R. went into exile. (II 56). But the remembrance of this awe-some deed in his youth, (cf. Andhamunivadha),
which he considers to be the cause for the calamity he has brought over R., together with the agony of his grief, haunts D. lost in self-accusations, and grips his mind subconsciously to such an extent that, though he has been brought under the spell of sleep by the gravity of his grief, it arouses and oppresses him like a nightmare in the midst of the night, and, to find relief, he empties his heart by expressing his remorse at having frustrated R., for which he suffers this agony, and requesting her to listen to the tragic story how he, through his inattentiveness, mistakenly killed the only son of a blind hermit-couple, who then entered fire for grief over their dead son, a story which he relates with deep empathy, showing how in his grief he has personally identified himself with the parents of the hermit boy, and made their agony his agony, how the curse pronounced by the blind sage before entering the fire — that he would die for grief over his son — has become efficacious in him. And accordingly we see D., experiencing the loss of his senses as the sign of approaching death and give, a last time, expression to his innermost pinings for R., and see him imagine the happiness and fortune of those privileged to see the glorious day of R.'s return, and see him with his last thoughts on R. breathe his last. (This scene, in so far as it describes D.'s experience of the loss of his senses as the sign of approaching death is a variant — with even detailed assonances — of the earlier scene where D. experiences the loss of his senses as a sign of the feeling that part of his self has died with R.'s departure. The latter scene has the function of a climactic anticipation of the former. The loss of sight of his son brings D. to the edge of death. The experience of the loss of his senses is the experience of a psychological death. Sumantra's report gives him the last blow. The experience of the loss of his senses now is an experience of approaching death.)

Thus the poet himself, with masterly psychological ingenuity, presents (implicitly) in the description of D.'s self-accusation
the convergence of the subjective as well as the objective side of D.'s psychology of grief? He describes how, on the one hand, a fault committed by D. in his youth, a fault which has brought agony and death - on account of grief for their son - to the blind hermit couple, has led to D.'s agony and death on account of grief for his son; and how, on the other hand, a deeply rooted self-accusing voice of repentance in D.'s heart, a deeply engrained tendency to accuse himself for the banishment for R. (for which, objectively, he is not immediately responsible), first appearing to be a psychological reflection of the gravity of grief and despair weighing down upon him, manifests itself more and more as the recalling voice of karma demanding requital for his past inauspicious deed, and how, with D.'s psychological realization of it, the enactment of the power of karma reaches its final conclusion. D., thus, is involved with the fate of R. and of his own, which remotely the fruit of a rash and negligent act committed by him in the distant past. A through and through noble character otherwise, endowed with the greatest virtues (often referred to as such even in the passages referring to his lamentations), and beloved and respected by all people, he has by this one deed, in addition to some other human weaknesses (passion for his younger wife etc.), conjured upon himself an eve of life so full of grief and agony as seem to be undeserved for a man of so eminent nobility and goodness. Surely, in drawing the personality of D., Y. intended to portray a character with whom the audience would feel pity and sympathy, with whom particularly the old people, so easily pressed down by the plights of grief and sorrow on the late eve of their life, would identify themselves.
A SYNTHETIC VIEW OF THE AUTHOR'S CONCEPTION
AND PORTRAIT OF DASARATHA'S CHARACTER
Conception

As we read through the scenes highlighting D.'s character, we cannot but get the impression that the author's characterization of him is organically interwoven with the description of the dramatic events round the theme of R.'s banishment. And yet, at the same time, D., amidst the description of these events, emerges as one of the most dramatic characters of the Rm., a character with whom the audience could identify themselves in their own sorrows and grief. It is clear that (unlike in the case of Vālī) V. did not leave the character of D. purely to the mercy of the pattern of spontaneity, i.e. to the intrinsic momentum of its being involved with the story (see s.v. Vālī p. 397), but had a clear and distinct conception of it in his mind, which is also attested by the fact that it presents itself in a rather uniform pattern, and has for its own scenes occupying a series of sargas. But since D. is not an all-round personality as others, but is mainly presented as a character evoking karunā, he retains his identity very outspokenly, even though, or precisely because he is left immersed in the current of the 'drama' and hardly possesses any independent characterization (except in his introduction to the audience). We said that V. had a clear and distinct conception of D.'s character in his mind. It is, however, nonetheless true that with regard to details of presentation the author takes very much recourse to the pattern of spontaneity, for much of D.'s presentation falls within scenes of lamentsations, and, more than any other type of descriptions, scenes of lamentsations are the most stereotyped, i.e. contain in themselves a store-house of psychological patterns, which, designed to arouse the emotions of the audience, can be applied to many situations. But that does not mean that they are nothing
more than conventional patterns (in some cases they are). It is precisely the art of the bard-poet, and especially a bard-poet like V., to enliven stereotyped patterns, which he has to have constantly in store, with his deep insights into human nature and experience as they would best pertain to the psychological situation of the character at a particular instance, in short, to create a personal, life-like portrait true to human experience with the means of stereotyped psychological patterns. And we have to say that V. has done this in a masterly way in the presentation of D.'s psychology of agony. He has succeeded precisely because of his clear conception of D.'s character, as well as because of his deep intuitive and personal ingenuity with which he has impregnated his application of the pattern of spontaneity.

**Portrait**

D.'s personality flashes up first in the midst of an atmosphere of enchanting splendour and majesty, with which the poet captivates the minds of the audience as he launches the story of the Rm. Surrounded with such an aura of majesty, D. is briefly, but vividly, introduced as an ideal king embodying all the ideals of a true Kṣatriya. A heroic and powerful atiratha of the Ikṣvākus and vanquisher of enemies, possessing immense royal riches, yet bent on sacrifice and dharma, and the peer of a maharṣi in self-restraint, wisely protecting and ruling his kingdom to the satisfaction of all, and being loved by townsfolk and countrymen, he is a radiant personality, whose greatness of character permeates the hearts and minds of all the citizens of Ayodhyā and transforms them into an ideal people.
This is the first and only introduction of D.'s personality. From now on, his character is highlighted as a character involved in the current of dramatic events - starting from his deliberations on the consecration of his son and leading up to and ending with his death. A D. endowed with fatherly affection and concern for his son ends up in a D. broken with grief and agony for his son.

D.'s heart beats with fatherly love for his son and it is elated with fatherly pride, enhanced by the thought of the immense popularity R. enjoys with the people, who adore him as their ideal personality with no equal in the world. This fatherly affection, being enhanced with elation, fills him with the concern and resolution to transform his love into action by conferring that right and honour on his son which conduces to his greatest glory, that is, by consecrating him in the heir-apparentship. And with paternal concern for the welfare of his son in his heart, he anxiously persists in his immediate consecration, as his anxiety, deeply engrained in him, that his own infatuation for Kai. may will-nilly lead to the frustration of his plan - so dear to his heart - unless he puts it immediately into action, violently erupts with his vision of inauspicious dreams suggesting death or change of mind.

Such a paternal and loving D., lulling himself in the heights of joyful hope, is thrown into the gruesome depths of the darkest mental agony by Kai.'s unprecedented, eye-opening declaration of her cruel, selfish desire to have his dear son, who is part of his own self, banished and have Bh. installed. He now realizes himself shaken from the slumber of infatuation that had filled him with blind passion for Kai. (to the extent that he offered to grant her any favour whatsoever, even to kill an innocent person or to release a criminal in order that she may give up her sulks) as to bring him irremediably under the clutches of her cunning, trap him with the fetters of his own
promise. While his heart is beating with grief and agony and struggling between angry rebukes against her vileness and beseeching entreaties to reverse her cruel design, Kai not only remains as hard as stone, but, as if delighted in seeing his heart broken with grief, makes a sarcastic mock of his reputation of being truthful, and pesters him with her repeated warnings to abide by his promise. And so, the pitiable king is forced to succumb in his frustration at the inexorable stubbornness and cruelty of his young wife, who has tied him with the indissoluble fetters of his own solemn promise, fetters which he cannot shake off without grossly breaching the sanctity of dharma.

D. is left a broken man and the poet's further characterization of him is the characterization of the psychology of the grief-and-remorse-ridden agony of a father helplessly awaiting the gruesome hour of his separation from his son and thinking of the austere hardships his son, the pride of his life, is going to be exposed to, bereft of his rightful deserts of royal comfort and glory. And the poet unfolds the inner struggle of D.'s heart with masterly psychological insight in all its eruptive as well as tender manifestations (see the systematic chapters). With the hour of parting drawing closer and closer, D.'s disconsolation increases, manifesting itself, on the one hand, in his being weighed down more and more by feelings of total dejection and of remorse, feelings which increasingly announce themselves as a voices of a bitter self-accusation, and, on the other hand, in a desperate attempt to alleviate R.'s hardships and in violent emotional eruptions. And yet, R. has done everything to console his father, has tried to remove all shadows of grief and self-accusation from his mind by expressing the exuberant joy he finds in fulfilling the words of his father and living an ascetic life in the forest. And father D. very well appreciates the heroism of R.'s determination, and also recognizes the enhancement of
spiritual glory which will ensue from his ascetic forest life, but, however heroic and genuine the determination of his son may be, however great the reward of spiritual glory may be, D. is an aged father, and he cannot envisage the pain of separation from his beloved son and these inhuman hardships in his human affection and concern for him, the pride of his life.

As D. sees the chariot vanishing into the distance, as the gruesome hour of parting has irrevocably and abruptly come to its end, it is a moment so unbelievable and yet so true that wild pangs of pain and despair convulse his heart till he is crushed down by their weight and his mind is overcast with the darkness of grief and agony, and he, as he feels that his senses are failing him, begs to be brought into Ks.'s bed-room to find consolation, where with a last outcry of pain, in which he gives expression to his feeling that with R. part of his self has died, he sinks down, unconscious, on the bed. Finally, grief-forlorn D. receives his death-blow when Sumantra, himself disconsolate with grief, confers a very touching note to R.'s consoling messages and exhortations, which he conveys to the king, and moreover gives a pathetic account of L.'s words of accusation against D., of S.'s silent tears at his departure, of the gloomy, melancholic atmosphere pervading all beings, and the agonized lamentations of the citizens of Ayodhya on his return. (As a completion of the portrait of D.'s character read pp. 716 ff.).

1) When in s.47 R. all of a sudden, in a manner so totally unexpected of him, falls into altogether pessimistic musings, drawing a gloomy picture of the destructive agency of Kai., and thereby also criticizes D. as having expelled him on account of his infatuation for a woman, this obviously meant to show how even R. has his gloomy moments, and not to throw any side-light on D.'s character. In fact, the picture of R. emerging in this sarga is an exceptional picture in its kind.
2) Compare the lamentation of the ladies of Ayodhya in II 36.6:
    aho niścetano rājā jīvalokasya sampriyam /
    dharmyaṁ satyavrataṁ rāmaṁ vanavase pravatsyati //

3) Though D. is no doubt a prominent character, we prescind from the critical chapter since only very few, though very important, issues are a matter of a possible controversy. But these issues, so we think, have been answered to the best of our conviction. Otherwise, the characterization of D. is at large the characterization of the psychology of his agony. But this does not need so much a critical discussion as an insight into the human experience of sorrow and grief. And the only meaningful thing to do, rather than to judge those authors who have written about D.'s character as to how far they are right or wrong, would be to ask how far they have identified themselves with the sorrows and the agony of D.
Visvamitra is characterized as a powerful and illustrious brahmareśi of awe-inspiring brightness, who has attained this state through the practice of extraordinary tapas, who is endowed with highest fame and virtues, and possessed of the most powerful astras, but who yet is harassed by two Rks., who constantly spoil his sacrifice, and who, unable to prevent them from doing so, turns to D. and requests him for youthful R., whose unexcelled prowess he knows, and he assures D., would destroy the Rks. As awe-inspiring as are his power and appearance, so is his anger when D., impelled by fear, does not want to comply with his request despite the sage's assurance of R.'s power and victory. (I 17.22 - 20 passim)

As Viśvāmitra sets out with R. and L. on his way to his sacrifice, we see him assume the role of an affectionate guru of R., a guru who not only caters to youthful R.'s needs and curiosity, but also cares for the prospect of his future. He invests him with the mantras Bala and Atibala, teaches him to perform the daily ceremonies, and, above all, satisfies R.'s curiosity by instructing him with sacred lore and stories about the hermitages and sacred places which they pass by, or by explaining other curious experiences they meet on the way. He directs R. to kill the monstrous Yakṣinī Tāṭakā, and when the latter hesitates for scruples of conscience, he gives him an exhortation on the necessity of her execution. Viśvāmitra acknowledges this deed of R. by presenting him with excellent astras and instructing him in their use. But more than that, he shows his acknowledgement for R.'s heroic victory over the Rks.
Marica and Subāhu, though it manifesting itself in a silent, concealed manner, - this character-trait of Viśvāmitra emerges from the narration itself without any explicit reference to it by the author, yet is implicitly intended by him - in as much as he, in a fatherly-like concern for the happy prospect of R.'s future, directs him to the court of Janaka to try his luck in breaking the bow, directs him, in his foresight, to a happy union with the most excellent jewel of a wife, S. And not only that, he even requests Janaka for the daughters of Janaka's younger brother for Bh. and Śatrughna. (I 21-30 passim. 71)

Vasistha, the king's loyal ṛtvik and alert counsellor, though characterized, mostly implicitly, by his ever-devoted services to D. as also to Bh. as a priest and counsellor, and his wise and alert counsel in matters of religion and politics, emerges as an important figure when crucial issues are at stake, particularly so on two occasions: When D., through his reluctance to allow his son to accompany Viśvāmitra, arouses the anger of the latter, Vasīṭṭha intervenes and successfully persuades D. to be faithful to his promise by assuring him of R.'s unexcelled prowess and his being well-protected by Viśvāmitra, who is renowned for his supreme astra-bala (I 20). When the Brāhmaṇ chiefs are at a loss as to whom to install in the line of the Ikśvākus to counter-mine the dangers of a kingless state, and ask Vasīṭṭha for advice, he spontaneously decides on Bh., and, making arrangements to fetch Bh. from Rājagṛha, directs the envoys to convey to him his desire to see him, but, in order not to precipitate Bh.'s grief, cautions them not to mention anything about R.'s exile or D.'s death. (II 61-62) So then, he requests Bh., in the name of the citizens, to accept the kingship, but he is badly put down by him since Bh. feels that he was demanding from him to pursue a sinful path. See p.750. (II 75 - 76)
Sumantra, the king's ever-devoted charioteer and counsellor, is characterized by the author in his intimate attachment and devotion to R. Not only does his love and devotion express itself in his affectionate service to him and in his deep sympathy with his relatives and the citizens of Ayodhya in their grief at his banishment, but, moreover, he has a heart to understand the deep psychic feelings of R., and a heart to appreciate his lofty virtues and idealistic regard for dharma and truthfulness. So, when he is torn between the pressure of the people urging him to go slow, as they want to have a last look of their beloved R., and the pressure of R. urging him to drive faster, he willingly obliges the latter's request since he understands the great pain R. feels while parting from his relatives, and his inability to stand their pitiable sight (II 35.18-38 passim). So also, he looks hesitatingly at R. when Bh. orders him to spread kusa grass to undergo a fast (II 103.12-15). But all the same he deeply experiences the agony which R.'s separation has brought about himself, and it violently erupts in him when R. bids him to go back to Ayodhya, and, while gratefully acknowledging his devotion to him as he sees him weeping from far, requests him to be a source of consolation to D., and to convey his greetings, consolations and exhortations to D., Ks., Bh. etc., which he explicitates. Now, all the grief pent up in his heart bursts out as he feels that his attachment to R. is too strong and the idea of separation from him too painful as that he could carry out his words - for how should he return to Ayodhya and listen to the hundred-fold exclamations of despair of the citizens seeing him arriving with empty chariot, how should he be able to face Ks. and tell her the blunt truth, or, if not, how can he tell a lie? In his inability, due to grief, to visualize the thought of leaving his master and returning to Ayodhya alone, he entreats R. again and again to allow him to find his happiness in following him and serving him with loyal devotion. Only with difficulty, R. persuades him to drive back his chariot by motivating him to
do him the favour to see to it that Kai. will obtain her desire.  
(II 46.6.54) Yet Sumantra's grief has not been assuaged. As  
he drives towards Ayodhya, a deserted city of silent mourners,  
as he hears the agonized exclamations and lamentations of the  
citizens - seeing him return alone, as he hears the whispers of  
the ladies, when entering the palace of D., as to how he will  
be able to assuage the grief of Ks., as he finds king D. forlorn in  
grief, and, after conveying to him R.'s message, sees how he  
swoons overwhelmed with grief, and how he, only after being  
encouraged by Ks. - herself disconsolate - requests him for news  
about R., S. and L. - Sumantra's depression has been driven  
to a very high pitch; and so he simply cannot help adding a very  
touching note to R.'s affectionate greetings, consoling messages  
and exhortations, which he conveys to him, and cannot help giving  
a pathetic account of how L. gave vent to bitter accusations,  
how S., being choked with tears, was unable to speak to him as  
she looked after his vanishing chariot, of how trees and flowers,  
animals and birds, rivers and ponds on his way here looked de­  
pressed and deserted with grief, of how the people of Ayodhya gave  
way to dire lamentations when they saw him return. Thus, his  
messages, instead of being consolations, have, against his own  
intention, added fuel to the fire burning in D. and Ks. But he  
simply could not help it. Yet he quickly finds to himself and  
realizes his duty to console when he sees Ks. utterly lost in  
grief, and he tries to console her by changing his tone of pathos  
into a tone of cheer, and giving her an account of how happy the  
three feel in their forest life, without, however, any immediate  
success, as his earlier, gloomy representation still rings in  
hers ears. (II 51-56 passim)

Last not least we have to mention that the people of Ayodhya as a whole are explicitly characterized several times, especially in the context of the ideal city of Ayodhya,
and in the context of their reaction to D.'s announcement of his desire to install his son in the heir-apparentship and to the news of R.'s banishment. Taking together the various contexts, a uniform picture of the people of Ayodhyā emerges. As the poet introduces the ideal city of Ayodhyā, he also introduces her citizens—idealized through the king's spirit radiating on them. In this atmosphere, they are an ideal people in all respects: a people living in happiness, prosperity, and possessed of un-failing efficiency, a people endowed with lofty virtues, religiosity, devotion to righteousness and truth, and living an unblemished moral life, all sections of society living up to the expectation of their distinctive qualities. (I 5-6) Though this ideal picture is presented only at the beginning, so to say, to set the Epic moving, the reactions of the citizens, first to D.'s announcement, and later to the news of R.'s banishment, as described by the poet, testify to their loftiness of character: Not only do they welcome D.'s announcement of his desire to consecrate R. with a spirit of ecstatic joy, giving expression to it with festive celebrations as an expression of their deep attachment to R. and of their regard for his heroic greatness of personality and his overflowing love and concern for all of them (II 2.5 and others), not only do they one and all plunge into heart-rending grief when they hear of his banishment and give expression to their bitter indignation by bitterly criticising D. and accusing Kai., but, feeling that with R., the heart of their life, all life and happiness has forsaken them, that dharma and virtue will abandon the country and adharma and crime will prevail over it, they, young and old, men and women, as far as their physical strength permits it to them, run after R.'s chariot, entreating Sumantra to drive slowly, many of them (especially Brāhmans) determined, against all the persuasions of R., to abandon the amenities of city-life and to share R.'s hardships even at the cost of their lives, in their love for R. and in their desire to move his will to come back (II 30.35-36,
40 § others) Frustrated in their intention, they, after an upsurge of wild lament and despair, give way to a spirit of melancholy and mourning, are utterly disinterested in life, and whenever their memory of R. is aroused, they give vent to their grief by heart-rending lamentations (II 42.51 § others). 1

True to their devoted spirit, they - a whole retinue of them (counsellors, soldiers, artisans and citizens and countrymen from all walks of life) - follow Bh. to the forest, like him eagerly determined to restore R. to his honour and glory, and sharing the expectation that R. will oblige Bh.'s supplications (II 76 end - 77). But a people endowed with a high moral conscience, they cannot but feel convinced of, and advocate against Bh.'s plea to them to intervene on his behalf, the supreme moral value of R.'s unflinching resolve on making his father truthful to his words, though they do greatly admire Bh.'s devotion to his brother and feel sad about R.'s decision not to return to Ayodhya (II 103.19-21; 98.70-71). And when Bh. sets out to Nandigrāma, not only priests and counsellors, but the whole retinue of citizens follow him, without being asked to do so, devoted like him to the cause of R. (II 107.9-11). When finally H.'s news of R.'s glorious victory sets an end to all the gloomy spirit of sadness and melancholy, which has nested in their hearts ever since their parting from their beloved prince, all Ayodhya goes gay with joy and jubilation in preparing an exuberant welcome to him, displaying all their resources of glamour and festivity (VI 115 passim)

1) Though Sumitrā and Satrughna are often mentioned, the author has not shown any intention to give an explicit representation of their characters, precluding from a few exceptions, namely when he dedicates one short sarga to the description of Sumitrā's consolation of Ks., or when he makes mention of Satrughna's angry humiliation of Mantharā in s.72. But such stray character allusions do not suffice to consider these figures even as minor characters.
THE HEROIC FOUR
BHARATA
A SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS
OF THE CHARACTERIZATION OF BHARATA
Besides scarce references in the context of the brief general characterization of the four princes in I 17 and of Bh.'s departure to Rājaṅgaṛha (II 1.1ff.), several allusions are made to Bh.'s character before he personally appears on the scene, sometimes negatively, by way of expressions of apprehension on the part of some characters like D., Kṣ., L., who project their ideas about the evil nature of Kai. on Bh., which, thus, reveals their own emotional upsurges and does not throw any side-lights on Bh.'s character as intended by the author; sometimes positively, by way of R.'s refutation of such apprehensions, or even by way of affirmation of Bh.'s righteousness by the former on other occasions. On the whole, these references are part and parcel of the psychological exhibition of these characters, and though R. sketches a very favourable picture of Bh. in all his allusions and praises his ideal virtues (cf. e.g. II 40.5-10), which, however, do not as yet foreshadow Bh.'s heroic response to come, they leave much scope for the audience to guess as to how Bh. will actually respond to Kai.'s design when called from Rājaṅgaṛha. For this reason, and also because the whole character of Bh. unfolds itself before us personally and right-up a-new with the moment he appears on the scene, we take this as the starting-point of our analysis.

II 63 - 65

Bharata's inauspicious apprehensions at the time of being summoned to Ayodhya

Résumé:

The very night the envoys enter the city of Rājaṅgaṛha, Bh. is described as having had, just at the break of dawn, most
inauspicious dreams, which caused him great anxiety, distress and apprehension — so much so that all the sweet words of his friends gathered around him, all attempts by musicians, dancing-girls and other entertainment-makers to cheer him up and allay his anxiety fail. When asked by one of his friends why he does not cheer up, he relates the dreams: gruesome visions picturing D. as plunging from the summit of a mountain into a dirty pool filled with cow-dung, as floating in the dirty pool and drinking oil in the hollow of his joined palms with a laugh, and, after eating rice mixed with oil, diving into the oil with his limbs smeared with oil; others picturing the whole universe in chaos and D. as seated on a sable-seat of iron, clad in sable garb, while black women and yellow laugh at him, or as hurriedly driving an ass-cart towards the South, wearing a red garland. All these are inauspicious visions associated with death and the nether-world, and so Bh. gives expression to his apprehension that either R. or D. or L. will die, surely so D., whom he has seen driving on a cart yoked to asses. Hence his heart is filled with anxiety and fear. When the envoys present Vasiṣṭha's message requesting him to come immediately to Ayodhya where he is urgently needed, Bh.'s first question is not the reason of the summons, but a concerned inquiry as to the welfare of all his relatives in Ayodhya: king D., R., L., Ks., Sumitra and Kai. Interesting in this context is the contrasting application of epithets to Ks. and Sumitra on the one hand, which are all laudative —

arya ca dharmaniratā dharmajñā dharmadarśinī /
arogā cāpi kausalyā mātā rāmasya dhīmataḥ // 7
kaccitsumitrā dharmajñā janani lakṣmanasya yā /
śatrughnasya ca vīrasya sārogā cāpi mādhyaṁma // 8 —

and to Kai. on the other hand, which are rather negative —

ātmakāmā sadā caṇḍī krodhanā prajñamānini /
arogā cāpi kaikāyī mātā me kimuvāca ha // 9 —

and which imply an implicit allusion by the poet not only to
Bh.'s subconscious acquaintance with the self-conceited behaviour of his mother as something part of her very nature (and thus tallies very well with our interpretation of her inner transformation on the ground of a latent selfish ambition of her), but possibly also, as it is put at this crucial moment of his anxieties and in clear opposition to the laudative remarks about the other queens, to a subconscious inauspicious apprehension about her, an apprehension that, given her selfish and arrogant nature, she may have caused some mischief. But as the envoys answer that they are all well, Bh. takes it to be the truth, and, taking leave of his uncle, who presents him with innumerable precious gifts (detailed description) makes arrangements for setting out on the journey. After a long journey over hills, through forests and rivers (detailed description), Bh. sees Ayodhya spread out before his eyes, but, bereft of its usual glory, it appears to him a deserted, cheerless, silent city of mourners, all around imbued with inauspicious signs - a sight which accompanies him everywhere as he enters the city gate and the royal palace, and which thus fills him with anxiety and depression, as he apprehends these inauspicious signs to be those very omens which from hearsay he knows to be signs of old indicating the death of kings.

Summing up the psychological reactions of Bh. as brought out by the poet in these sargas, and explicating the impressions implicit in them on the audience, we can say that Bh.'s encounter with the gruesome dream visions about his father D. and the inauspicious omens hovering over the city of Ayodhya - suggesting to him that calamity, that death has befallen his relatives, if not D. himself, reveals a personality who, as his heart beats with deep concern and anxiety while these gloomy apprehensions flash through his mind, is in the most intimate manner existentially and emotionally involved with the well-being, and identifies himself with the destiny, of his relatives, and a personality who
Since Bh. did not see his father in his residence, he went to see his mother Kai. When Kai saw her son entering, she joyfully jumped up from her golden seat, and, smelling his head, embraced him affectionately and asked him about the duration of the journey, the welfare of his maternal grandfather and uncle and gives us by this already an insight into the warmth of his attachment, and the love and concern he cherishes for all of them, especially his father, king D. This attachment of Bh. to his relatives is also manifested in the concerned manner in which he inquires of the envoys as to the welfare of his relatives in Ayodhya, before and instead of asking them any question as to the reason of his being summoned, and the way he, in this inquiry, besides expressing his concern for them, also expresses his appreciation and regard for them; while he shows some reservation against his mother Kai., obviously because he knows her self-conceited nature and perhaps has some subconscious, inauspicious apprehension in her regard, at this moment where his mind is crossed by anxieties, as to whether she may not have created some mischief. Thus, though the listener may not have known how Bh. will actually respond to Kai.'s design earlier, he now is impressed by the selfless spirit of Bh., and may well apprehend that Bh. will violently renounce it. The stage for Bh.'s dialogue with Kai. is prepared, and we know that there will be opposition and denunciation.

II 66-68

Bharata's reaction to Kaikeyi's intimation of Dasaratha's death and the disclosure of her evil design

Contents (with occasional interpretatory notes):

Since Bh. did not see his father in his residence, he went to see his mother Kai. When Kai. saw her son entering, she joyfully jumped up from her golden seat, and, smelling his head, embraced him affectionately and asked him about the duration of the journey, the welfare of his maternal grandfather and uncle and
his stay in Rājagrha. Bh. gave a brief reply to her questions and explained that he had been sent in advance by the envoys, but then immediately expressed the desire to know why her bed-stand was empty, why the Ikṣvaku family was not in good spirits, and why he did not see D., who so often used to come to her place, and for the sake of whom he had come here, and whether perhaps he was in Ks.'s palace. Then Kai. [expecting ], as she was infatuated with ambition, [ that her announcement would cause joy to her son ] intimated to Bh., who was ignorant of his father's death, which she knew so well, the gruesome, unpleasant news as though it were a gladsome news - "Your father has attained the goal which is the goal of all beings." When Bh. heard this, he fell down all at once on the ground, pressed down by the weight of grief over the death of his father, and, with his senses confused and agitated, lamented that what had once been the shining bed of father was now, abandoned by him, bereft of its glory. When Kai. saw him lying prostrate on the ground, overwhelmed with grief, she raised him from the ground, saying, "Arise, arise, why are you lying on the ground, a renowned prince! Honourable people like you do not wail." After weeping for a long time, Bh. answered her with expressions of grief - "I have come here in the happy expectation that D. would install R. Instead it has all turned out otherwise, and my heart is broken for grief that I do not see my father D., ever bent on the welfare of his dear ones. Mother, of what disease did he die? Fortunate are those who honoured my father while I was absent. If he were alive and had known that I had arrived, he would certainly smell my head. Where is that hand of his with which he used to brush the dust off me when I fell? Please, announce me to R., who is my brother, father and friend, and whose humble servant I am. I clasp his feet, he is my refuge now. Tell me, what did my honourable father say when dying? I wish to hear his last message." Thus asked, Kai. answered accordingly - "The king went to the other world, wailing 'O Rāma, O Sītā, O Lakṣmanā'. These are the last words your father spoke, smarting under the grip of death: 'Fortunate are they who will see R., S. and L. come back to Ayodhyā.' " But Bh., at the implicit hint by Kai., in her enunciation of D.'s last words, that R. and S. have left the place, was filled with new distress, and anxiously asked his mother - "Where has my righteous brother gone with S. and L.?") At this question, Kai. [inspite of all these gestures by Bh. expressing his humane concern for D. and R.] lulled herself in the expectation that her announcement of R.'s exile would cause joy, straight-away said - "He has gone, wearing bark-garments, with L. and S. to the Daṇḍaka forest." Hearing this, Bh. was filled with fear and apprehension about the conduct of R. and anxiously asked - "Has R. taken away a Brāhmaṇ's wealth? Has he ill-treated innocent persons, rich or poor? Is he taking a fancy to another's wife? Tell me, why has he been banished to the Daṇḍaka forest?" Then his fickle-minded mother [triumphantly ] set out to disclose her real deed in her typical
womanish disposition [by which she, against all her son's gestures of human concern, expected him to joyfully welcome this announcement at least now when she has revealed this as the work of her own personal design for the sake of her own son] - "R. has neither taken away a Brähmin's wealth, nor ill-treated an innocent, rich or poor, person, nor does he even look on another's wife. But, having heard of R.'s consecration, I personally, requested your father for the kingdom and the banishment of R. Your father acted in due accordance and R. was banished with L. and S. And D., separated from his dear son, died out of grief. Now take up the kingship, it is for your sake that this has been done by me. Quickly perform your father's obsequies and get yourself enthroned."

Hearing this terrible news, Bh., tormented with grief, said these words - "What shall I do with the kingdom bereft of my father and my father-like brother? By having caused the king's death and having sent R. into exile, you have caused grief above grief to me, and like the night of death you have come for the destruction of the race, and because of you Ks. and Sumitra live overwhelmed with grief for their son. Does not noble-souled R. treat you with affection like his own mother and far-sighted Ks. treat you like her own sister? But how is it that you have banished her own son and do not even feel pity? What reason do you have for sending a virtuous, self-possessed hero like R. into great misfortune. By what power can I protect the kingdom when R. and L. are out of sight, can I, an untrained steer, carry such a heavy burden? But even if I attained the strength by yogic exercise and the power of the mind, I shall not allow you - avaricious for your son - to obtain your wish. I shall bring back my brother, the darling of the people, from the forest."

Bruising her with a host of abasing words, Bh. roared, as it were, like a lion in a mountain-cave.

Having thus reviled her, Bh. again was filled with great wrath, and said to his mother - "Leave the kingdom, you vile, wicked woman. You, forsaken by dharma, don't weep over me when I am dead. What harm has the king or virtuous R. done to you that you caused the former's death and the latter's banishment? By your destruction of this one, you committed the sin of one killing an embryo. Go to hell, Kii., and let your husband not see you since you have committed such a great sin by your horrible deed that you have brought on me the disgrace of the whole world. Don't speak to me, you vile, covetous woman, an enemy of mine in the form of a mother, slayer of your husband. Ks., Sumitra and my other mothers have been filled with great grief, having you, the destroyer of their clan. You are not the daughter of the righteous king Așvapati, you are a ṚK̄ṣasī born for the destruction of the race of my father. Since you have banished R., ever-devoted to dharma and truth, and have caused my father's death and are the principal queen, I, for your sin, have been deprived
of my father and brothers and am disliked by the whole world. What place in hell shall you obtain for depriving Ks. of her son? Don't you know, you cruel one, that eldest, father-like R., the refuge of his friends, is Ks.'s own son? A son, in every limb of his, is born from the heart of his mother. Therefore, he is dearer to his mother than all other relations. Once upon a time ... [story of Surabhi's lamentation over her labouring sons yoked to the plough and her assertion of the dearness of a son in a mother's life] Now if Surabhi bewails her thousands sons, how much more Ks. her only, bereft, son? You have deprived a virtuous lady of her only son, therefore, you will for ever suffer grief after your death. I shall make complete atonement for my brother and father, and shall enhance my reputation. After bringing back the glorious son of Ks., I myself will enter the forest." Thus speaking, Bh., breathing with anger and sorrow like a snake, and throwing away all ornaments, fell on the ground like the banner of Sakra at the end of the festival.

Analysis of characterization:

As Bh. meets his mother Kai., we see how his anxious concern about the welfare of his father, which has been criss-crossing his mind ever since his encounter with his gruesome dream-visions and inauspicious omens on the journey, makes him cut short Kai.'s greeting-ceremonies, i.e. inquiries about his journey and things in Rājagrha, in as much as he, after an extremely abrupt reply to each of her questions, instantaneously asks her about the whereabouts of D., who used to be such a familiar sight in his mother's residence whenever he came to see her, but whom today he neither finds in his own residence nor even here. When Kai., with concealed feelings of exuberance, in her mistaken belief that her announcement would cause joy to her son, intimates to him the gruesome news with laconic brevity, Bh. is knocked down by the power of grief, his senses confused and agitated at this unbearable news. True, he has been terribly anxious and concerned about his father, but in his heart of hearts there was always a flickering of hope that his anxiety was unfounded. Nay, he weened himself in the joyful expectation — and this is how he interpreted his being summoned to Rājagrha — that he would witness
the jubilant occasion of the consecration of his dearly beloved brother R. Instead, everything has come otherwise, his joyful hope has been reversed into heart-rending grief and agony for his beloved father, who once used to affectionately caress him and take motherly care of him, but now has gone to the next world without ever seeing him again. Disconsolate, he requests his mother to announce him to his brother R., his sole refuge, his father in D.'s stead now, and to relate to him his father's last message. When Kai., using this opportunity to lay open her design one step further, as she still lulls herself in her mistaken hope that ultimately her announcement would arouse joy in him, relates first his last wailings and then his last words: 'Fortunate are they who will see R., S. and L. come back to Ayodhya', thereby implicitly indicating that R. and L. have left the place, Bh. at once is struck with new feelings of apprehension as to where R., L. and S. have gone, and what has happened to them, and when Kai., with concealed feelings of exuberance, straight-away answers that they have gone as ascetics to the Daṇḍakā forest, he can't but feel taken aback because — unbelievable though it may appear — such treatment could have been meted out to R. only if he had committed a serious crime, and so he asks her whether R. has taken away a Brāhmin's wealth, or ill-treated innocent persons, rich or poor; or has taken a fancy to another's wife. (One may feel tempted to interpret that Bh. already has his suspicions as to Kai.'s mischievous hand in these happenings, and that he addresses such questions to his mother to expose to her, without revealing himself, the immense meanness and cruelty of her design. But this interpretation is annulled by the emotional way in which Bh. reacts to her following self-disclosure). Finally, with now unconcealed and triumphant feelings, Kai. discloses her real deed in her mistaken belief that the soul-baring revelation of her petty ambition for the sake of her own son would dispel all his previous agonized reactions. But Bh. is struck with immeasurable grief and wrath at the same
time. His heart, already pressed down with grief, now, with this new traumatic blow, bursts out in wild agony at the visualization of the boundless misfortune brought over him, R., L., Ks. and Sumitrā, over the whole clan of the Ikṣvākus, over the whole kingdom of Ayodhyā. And as he indulges in heart-rending lamentation, his agony is more and more transformed into anger, embitterment and hatred, at the thought of the exorbitant heinousness and cruelty with which she, in her boundless greed, has requitted the affectionate treatment she received from R. and Ks. by depriving the latter of her son R., an embodiment of virtue and dharma, and expelling him into the forest, and at the thought of her base misjudgement of his virtuous character and attachment to R., by which she has plunged him into boundless misery. Prescinding from the question as to whether he might be able to bear the burden of the kingdom on his shoulders by yogic power, he bids defiance to her shameless task by disdainfully announcing into her face his inflexible determination to thwart her heinous ambition and to personally fetch and enthrone R. By now Bh.'s ire has come to a full eruption, and it reaches violent expression as again the thought of Kai.'s heinous wickedness, with which she has treated D. and R., flashes through his mind. Reviling her left and right, nay almost cursing her, he exposes to her the exorbitant sinfulness of her action, on account of which she has caused the death of D., has brought heart-rending grief and the disgrace of the whole world upon him, brought destruction over the whole race of Ikṣvākus, and has plunged Ks. and Sumitrā into an ocean of grief, nay, has deprived a mother of her only son, the dearest friend she can have in her life, which is thus a crime immeasurable in its sinfulness and cruelty, a crime for which she deserves the darkest place in hell as retribution. But he is determined - and with this determination he leaves his mother - to atone for the crime committed by her to R. by making good the disgrace which she has brought upon him by himself bringing R. back to glory and then entering the forest as an ascetic.
Bh. thus shows himself to be a man of deep humaneness, of
depth love for and an intimate attachment to his father, brothers,
and mothers, and of an anxious concern about their welfare, as
well as a man of a fervent commitment to justice. Confronted
with the trauma of Kai.'s brazen-faced disclosure of her heinous
and cruel design of banishing R. for the sake of installing him
on the throne, he not only violently renounces her cruel design,
but disdainfully defies it, not shunning from reviling her left
and right, nay, almost cursing her, for her exorbitant heinous-
ness and cruelty, boundless greed and vulgar misjudgment; not
only gives vent to his bleeding heart full of agony for the un-
bearable grief in which he and all his dear ones have been
plunged, but takes up his resolve to atone for the wrong done to
R. by bringing back R. to glory and himself leading the life of
an ascetic.

Classification:

Literary basis:

exposition: objective (in the words of the poet and by way of
self-revelation) - descriptive (partly narrative) -
explicit and implicit
tone: largely a tone of agony constituting a pathetic sentiment

II 69

Bharata calls on Kausalya
to console her and convince her
of his innocence

Résulte:

As the poet describes Bh.'s meeting with Ks., he makes her address
Bh., with words showing traces of resentment, if not of blame, against him. In particular, her insistence that Kai. or Bh. himself should take her to the forest, or she will go herself along with Sumitrā, is an unspoken indication that, being persona non grata, she wants to pave the way for others. See s.v. Kausalyā p. 694. We have interpreted this as a psychological projection of her resentment against Kai. on Bh., as he is the one for the sake of whom R. has been unjustly deprived of his kingdom and cruelly humiliated, for the sake of whom misfortune has befallen the whole house of Ayodhya.

Bh., aware of Ks.'s resentful mood, takes very much to heart her implicit accusation, greatly disheartened that even his mother Ks., knowing his immense and firm devotion to R., should accuse him, unknowing and innocent with regard to Kai.'s evil design, and, to prove his innocence, invokes the worst maledictions which his imagination gives vent to on the person who consents to R.'s banishment, i.e. on himself if he has desired so. Any one listening to these curses must have been convinced of Bh.'s innocence, to be sure, but at the same time he couldn't but feel terrified at the vigour and exorbitance of these curses. And so the question arises whether the poet, by using this device of maledictions, beyond making Bh. prove his innocence, did not intend to delve further into Bh.'s psyche, and, if so, what was that something more which he wanted to convey? Bh.'s eruptive, irascible nature lashing out subconsciously against the injustice committed by Kai., or his emotional break-down at the hurting thought of a mother of his suspecting his sincerity? I think that both these aspects have been intended by the poet, perhaps with a primary stress on the second in the sense that it is Bh.'s emotional break-down at the distressing thought of Ks.'s accusation which makes his heart violently erupt and also drives him subconsciously into a greater and greater fury against that mischievous mother of his, Kai. But then the poet has brought out the emotional upsurge of Bh. not by many words of his, but solely by
a self-revealing device, i.e. by making Bh. launch a host of 
curses and reveal his emotions in the exorbitantly vigorous 
impression they leave on the listener. But he does so - and 
this makes our interpretation altogether plausible - by describing 
not only the emotional effect of Bh.'s maledictory speech on 
Ks. herself, who asserts how much his curses rend her heart and 
re-affirms her faith in Bh.'s righteousness and truthfulness, 
but its own vigorous emotional after-effect on himself, before 
and after Ks.'s words:

vv.29-30 - vihínāṁ patiputṛbhyaṁ kausalyāṁ pārthivātmajāḥ /
evamāśvāsyaṁ neva duḥkhaṁnipātā ha // 29

tathā tu āpathaṁ kaśṭaṁ āpamānamacetanam /
bharataṁ śokasantaptāṁ kausalyāṁ vākyamabraviṭ // 30

vv.33-34 - evaṁ vilapamānasya duḥkhaṁtasya mahātmanaḥ /
mōhaccā śokasenrodhādbhūva lulitaṁ manaḥ // 33
lālāpyamānasya vicetanasya praṇāstabdūdhē patitasya
bhumaṁ /
muhurmuhurnihsvasatasca dīrghaṁ sa tasya śokena
jagāme rātriḥ // 34

II 70-71 passim

Bharata's disconsolateness 
during the performance 
of the funeral rites

Résumé:

It is obvious that the poet will depict Bh.'s grief for his de-
ceased father with much pathos and deeply touching scenes, 
obvious, first because of the tragico-pathetic atmosphere of the 
situation, and more so because of the intimate attachment and
devotion Bh. had always cherished for his beloved father, which has now been violently disrupted by the evil agency of his own mother in his own name. As the author depicts Bh.'s heart-rending grief, he leaves the listener with an unforgettable impression of Bh.'s ever-loyal devotion to his father, and this though he, unlike at other lamentations, restricts his pathetic depiction to a few short scenes. Its effect lies in the author's device to stress the disconsolateness of Bh.'s grief by making him again and again fall into lamentation, even as late as the thirteenth day after the king's cremation, and each time making Vasiṣṭha console and exhort him to put an end to his grief and carry on his further duties.

II 72

At the sight of Manthara
Bharata becomes furious

Résumé:

Bh. and Śatrughna are conversing, while suddenly Mantharā, clad in royal garments and decorated with innumerable precious ornaments, anointed with sandal-paste and adorned with a girdle, looking like a female monkey tied with a rope, appears on the threshold. At once Bh. takes hold of her, and saying, 'here is that sinful, wretched woman on account of whom R. has been expelled and my father has died, do with her according to what you think', hands her over to his brother Śatrughna, who addresses the inmates, saying that, as she has caused immense grief to his brothers and father, she should obtain the fruit of her action, and then pulls and drags her till all her ornaments are scattered on the ground. Then, filled with rage, he takes hold of Kai.
and reviles her with abusing words, while Kai., frightened, takes shelter with her son Bh. Bh. tells Śatrughna to show mercy, not because she is his mother, for he would feel like killing her for her heinous deed, but out of respect for his righteous brother, who would despise him as the murderer of his mother, and also because R., if Mantharā were killed, would never speak to him or Śatrughna again.

V. shows Bh. in this sarga as of an embittered, vindictive temperament, as of flaming righteous anger at the heinous injustice committed by Mantharā as well as by his own mother Kai., so much so that he would feel like committing matrghāta, were it not for his respect of R.'s spirit of forbearance.

II 73.75-76

Bharata astutes the citizens' and Vasistha's request to be their ruler and insists on his decision to fetch and enthrone Rama

Résumé:

As Bh. repeatedly is requested to allow himself to be crowned, first by the citizens (the royal agents rājakartāraḥ) (s.73), then in all solemnity, in the midst of all the prominent citizens of Ayodhyā from all sections of society gathered in the shining royal court, by the priest and counsellor Vasiṣṭha (ss.75-76), he rejects their offer with determination, declaring that such a request is improper since only R., the eldest prince, deserves to be king, and he, committed to righteousness, will never follow an unrighteous path or approve of the sin committed by his mother Kai., instead immediately make arrangements to go to the forest
and bring back R. to Ayodhya (and if he is not able to persuade him, he will live with him like L.). While the first declaration closes with the request for artisans to prepare the way to the forest, the second ends with the direct commission to Sumantra to announce his journey and summon the forces. From the first to the second declaration there is not only an increase in the vigour of Bh.'s determination, with which he envisages his design to fetch R., but also an increase in his impatience towards the citizens' very expectation that he should accept an illegal proposal. In fact, this impatience manifests itself already when he all of a sudden, after he has already commissioned the artisans to prepare the way, hears, towards the end of the night of Nandimukha, the bards singing his praises accompanied by the noise of kettle-drums and conch-shells. Already tormented with grief, this noise of musical instruments cleaves his heart still more, and, after impatiently commanding the noise to be stopped, and announcing 'I am not the king', he empties his agitated heart to Satrughna, saying that, taking advantage of the confusion created by the death of D. and the exile of R., Kai. has created mischief, and the poet describes him as giving himself to heart-rending laments. (75.1-6) But still more than this, Bh. takes to heart the second request by the citizens to accept the kingship of Ayodhya. The poet dedicates two full verses to describe the deep impatience and agony with which Bh. reacts to such a proposal that expects him to commit an unrighteous act. And the very declaration by Bh. breathes the spirit of wounded honour of one who considers himself fervently committed to the course of righteousness, but finds himself insistently encouraged by expectations that demand from him to pursue a sinful path.
Bharata on his journey to Rama

Résumé:

We shall not follow up all the doings of Bh. on his journey, but restrict ourselves to such scenes only which are conspicuously designed to highlight Bh.'s character:

While he is the guest of Guha, Bh., as the night falls, is engrossed with sorrowful thoughts about R. And though Guha tries to console him by speaking about the good nature of L. and relating to him in all details how L. declined his offer of a comfortable bed and his offer to stand guard in his stead, out of concern for his brother, and how he gave pitiful expression to R.'s misfortune, falling thereby into gloomy musings regarding the destiny of the royal house (II 80), Bh. not only remains disconsolate, but is plunged into still greater sorrow, to such an extent that Satrughna, Ks. and the other queens give vent to loud lamentations. As he has consoled Ks., herself disconsolate, Bh., recovering from his grief, asks Guha to relate to him how R. and S. spent the night, what food they took etc. When Guha sympathetically relates everything about how R. declined all provisions, and with what humility and hardships, and in what spirit of self-less devotion, they spent the night on a bed of kusa grass on the root of an Ingudi tree (II 81), Bh. examines the bed, and, with grieved heart showing it to his mothers, gives vent to sorrowful musings at this unbelievable, vision-like sight of such undeserved a fate of hardships for one who used to sleep on a bed with royal comfort and luxuries, used to be surrounded with an aura of royal glory and used to be the enhancer of the happiness of the world, the darling of the people, and expresses his high esteem for the loftiness of S. and L.'s devotion in following and standing by the side of R.; and as his thoughts revolve around these imaginations and about the tempest-clouds
hovering over the kingless state of Ayodhyā, he is prompted with a renewed determination to himself undergo, with cheerful spirit, the austerities of forest-life for fourteen years together with Śatrughna, and to make R. with L. rule over Ayodhyā, and if he does not comply with his request, he will forever follow his path (82). We see thus a Bh. filled with such intimate brotherly attachment to, and selfless love for, R. and L., bearing so deep a sympathetic concern for them that not only he feels one with their (presumed) sorrows and makes them his own, desiring to know everything about their good-natured, self-less devotion to the austere hardships of forest life, but is filled, as these and other anxieties flash through his mind, with a renewed determination to free R., L. and S. from their undeserved hardships endured for his sake and joyfully undergo a life of austere asceticism himself in the company of Śatrughna in order to stone for them.

As Bharadvāja also, like Guha, reveals, in his welcome speech, some concealed apprehension as to Bh.'s motivation in coming to the forest, Bh. cannot help manifesting his wounded honour at such an attitude, and so reacts by expressing, though courteously, his indignation at such an attitude of his and, vehemently rejecting all such apprehensions, insistently declares his pure intention (II.84.9-18).

As Bh. introduces his mothers to Bharadvāja at the latter's request, he, while making sympathetic remarks about Ks. and Sumitrā, denounces his own mother in the very presence of the sage, thus manifesting how deeply his embitterment, against the heinous injustice committed by his mother, has engrained itself in his heart that the very thought of it re-awakens his righteous anger and makes him respectlessly lash forth in abuses against her, even in the very presence of others (II.86.19-25).
As we see Bh. eagerly and indefatigably pursuing his course to trace out R.'s hut in the forest, as we hear him giving expression to his impatience to see R. together with S. and L. and touch his feet and bow to him and to witness his coronation—until which time he will not have peace (na me śāntirbhāvīṣyati), as we share his feelings of grief and sorrow at his catching sight of R. living an austere life of asceticism, a sight so unbelievable and unbearable to him, who used to see his brother surrounded with an aura of royal glory and comfort, a sight that fills him at once with regret and shame that his brother is suffering all this because of him, and as we witness how he is running to touch R.'s feet, but falls on the ground before reaching him, blinded with tears, how he exclaims the word aryā but his voice is choked, and how he, unable to speak to him, silently stares at him (92-93 passim), we encounter a Bh. that reveals an intimate brotherly affection and selfless love for R., a deep sympathetic concern for the welfare of his brother, with whose (presumed) sorrows he identifies himself even to the point of denouncing his own life, innocent though he is.

Last but not least, we should not forget to take notice (not only in this context but in general) of the deep intimacy of Bh.'s friendship with Satrughna, who to him is like a second self, with whom, wherever and whenever they are together, he shares his joys and sorrows, to whom he empties his heart whenever it has something to say to him and whatever it has to say.

Rama adamantly declines Bharata's persuasion to accept the throne

Translation:
Having comforted that brother of his, affectionately devoted to his guru, together with his brother L., R. began to question him (1). "What is it, thus I would wish to hear related by you, why you have come to this region, wearing bark-garments, matted hair and deer-skin (2)? What is the reason that you have left the kingdom and entered this region, wearing black deer-skin and matted hair - all this please tell me (3)." Having been thus spoken to by the noble-souled Kakutstha, the son of Kai., restraining himself with great effort, said with folded hands these words (4) - "Our powerful father, having left you, honourable sir, has, after committing an extremely wicked deed, gone to heaven, tormented with grief for his son (5). Directed by a woman, my mother Kai., O hero, he has committed this awful sin which deprived him of his own fame (6). Not having obtained the fruit of the kingdom, my mother, a widow afflicted with sorrow, will fall into horrible perdition (7). Thus, do me, your servant, the favour of getting yourself consecrated in the kingdom like Indra (8). All these subjects and all the widowed mothers have come to you. You ought to show your favour (9). This is appropriate of the hereditary order and it is rightfully fixed for you, O honourable sir, obtain the kingship according to dharma, fulfil the wishes of your friends (10). Let the whole earth cease to be a widow, with you as her lord, like the autumnal night with its spotless moon (11). I entreat you with bowed head, together with these ministers, show your favour to your brother, disciple and servant (12). You ought not to override this whole ancestral, honoured assembly of ministers continuing from generation to generation, O foremost of men (13)." Having spoken thus, the powerful son of Kai., Bh., his eyes filled with tears, again grasped R.'s feet with bowed head (14). Then R., embraced that brother of his, Bh. - sighing again and again like a furious elephant, and spoke to him these words (15) - "How can a man like you of high descent, possessed of good qualities, illustrious, devoted to a good conduct, commit a sin for the sake of the kingdom (16)? I do not see even a minute fault in you, O destroyer of enemies, nor should you blame your mother, prompted by your childishness (17). As much respect as is due to a father knowing dharma and respected by the people, as much respect is also due to a mother possessed of dharma, O eminent one (18). When I have been told by these virtuous father and mother of mine 'go to the forest, Rāghava', how can I act otherwise (19)? You should obtain the kingdom in Ayodhya - highly regarded by the people, and I should stay in the Dandaka forest, clad in bark-garments (20). Thus the great illustrious king D. has made the apportionment in the presence of the people, and, having put it into force, has gone to heaven (21). And this virtuous king, your father, lord of the world, is the authority; you ought to enjoy the kingship given by father according to the assignment (22). But I shall, dwelling in the Dandaka forest, for 14 years, O dear one, enjoy the portion assigned to me by noble-souled father (23). What my noble-souled father, respected by the world
of men, resembling Indra, said to me, that I will consider exceedingly beneficial to me, more than even the eternal sovereignty of the whole world (24).

Then, as those eminent men, surrounded by hosts of friends, were wailing with grief, the night passed by (1). When the day had dawned auspiciously, those brothers, surrounded by friends, after performing oblations and mantras in the Mandakini, approached R. (2). Sitting silent around him, none of them said anything, but then Bh. in the midst of his friends, spoxe these words to R. (3) - "My mother has been pacified, and this kingdom has been given to me, but I give it now to you, enjoy the kingdom - free from thorns (4). Like a dam torn by a large current of water at the onset of the rainy season, this great fissured kingdom is difficult to be controlled by anyone other than you (5). As an ass cannot imitate the gait of a horse, a bird that of Garuda, so I cannot imitate your course, O king (6). A good life is lived by that ever-honoured man on whom others depend for subsistence, but a bad life, O R., by him who depends on others for subsistence (7). It is like with a tree planted by a man and grown up into a big tree with its branches spread out, which is difficult to be climbed by a dwarf (8). When it flowers, it will not show fruits; it will not enjoy that delight for the sake of which it has been brought into existence (9). This is the comparison, O mighty one, you should consider if you, our lord, do not rule us servants (10). Let hosts of attendants and the foremost of men from all sides see you, subduer of enemies, established in the kingdom, shining forth like the sun (11). Let, O Kakutstha, furious elephants roar, following you, let the ladies of the female apartments rejoice with full heart (12)." Manifold citizens gave their acknowledgement to him, hearing the words of Bh. soliciting R. (13). Beholding that glorious one lamenting with grief, self-possessed R., possessed of self-control, comforted Bh. (14) - "There is no such non-independent man, who is acting according to his own will; death (fate) drags him hither and thither (15). All accumulation of riches end in their loss, all heights of prosperity end in their fall, unions end in disunion, life ends in death (16). As ripe fruits have no fear except of falling, so a man born has no fear except from death (17). As a house with solid pillars perishes when it has become worn out, so men perish when they have come under the grip of old age and death (18). Days and nights pass for all beings, they fast destroy lives, like the rays of the sun do water in the hot season (19). Bewail yourself; why do you stand or go (20). Death walks with you, death sits down with you, and, having travelled a long way with you, death returns with you (21). Wrinkles appear on the body and white hair on the head; what is there that man, worn out due to old age, should consider himself like a lord (22)? Men rejoice when the sun has risen, they rejoice when it has gone down, but they are not aware of their own decay of life (23). Each new beginning of a season
they see coming near they rejoice, but with the revolution of seasons there is a decay of life to living beings (24). As log and log may come together in the ocean, and after coming together, may dissociate after some time, so wives and sons and relatives and riches, after coming together, dissociate, for certain is their separation (26). There is no living being that continues to live according to his own will; therefore there is no power in him of one feeling sorrow for one that is dead (28). As it is the case when somebody standing on the road calls after a travelling caravan - 'I, too, will follow behind you (28)', so the ancestral path trod by the predecessors is certain. How should he who has reached that path feel sorrow for one for whom there is no way of deviation (29)? As there is no return to a falling age or to a current of water, the self should be directed towards happiness, for beings are regarded to be destined for happiness (30). That virtuous father of ours, the lord of the earth, has gone to heaven, cleared from sins through all the auspicious sacrifices where daksinās are obtained (31). By duly maintaining his servants, and protecting his subjects, and distributing wealth according to dharma, our father has gone to heaven (32). Having offered manifold sacrifices, and obtained abundant pleasures, and attained the highest age, the lord of the earth has gone to heaven (33). Having renounced that worn-off human body, our father has obtained heavenly prosperity by sporting in the Brahmaloka (34). But for him no wise man of such a kind like you, like anyone who is learned and intelligent, should feel sorrow (35). For, many such manifestations of grief as well as lamentations and mournings ought to be subdued in all circumstances by him who is resolute and wise (3!5). So, be steadfast, don't lament and go and dwell in the city. Thus you have been directed by self-possessed father, O best of speakers (37). Where I have been directed by that meritorious one, there only I shall accomplish the order of venerable father (38). I shall not abandon the rightful order of his, O subduer of enemies, and also you should always regard it, for he is our kinsman, he is our father (39)." When R. had ceased after speaking such meaningful words, righteous Bh. said these wonderful, equitable words (40) - "Who is there of such a kind like you in this world, O subduer of enemies? Neither can grief afflict you nor joy make you exult (41). You are agreeable to the aged and you ask them when you are in doubt, you are the same whether dead or alive, whether there is anything or nothing (42). By what should one who has an acquisition of such insight be afflicted? He when obtaining such calamity ought not to worry himself (43). You are of a divine-like nature, noble-souled, faithful to truth, all-knowing, all-seeing and possessed of insight (intelligence), O Rāghava (44). The sinful act which has been committed by my mean mother on my account while I was away from home, has not been wished by me; may you show mercy to me (46). I am bound by the fetters of dharma, that's why I do not kill, by rigorous penalty, this villainous mother of mine deserving penalty (47). How could I,
born from D., possessing the \textit{karma} of a pure descent, knowing \textit{dharma}, commit an unlawful, disgusting act \((48)\)? He is our dutiful preceptor, an aged king, deceased, and a father. So I should not blame father, a godhead, in the assembly \((49)\). But which man conversant with \textit{dharma} would, \(0\) virtuous one, commit such a sinful act - devoid of \textit{dharma} and \textit{artha}, being desirous of doing a favour to a wife \((50)\)? There is an old saying that at the time of their end beings become infatuated. That saying has been made evident to the world by the king's action \((51)\). Let yourself take back (make good) the transgression committed by father through anger, infatuation and recklessness, with a good object in view \((52)\). For, a son who makes right the transgression of a father is considered \textit{a-patya} in the world: one who thinks contrary is not so \((53)\). Let yourself be that \textit{a-patya}, let not that evil deed committed by father, condemned by those who are self-possessed, spread in the world \((54)\). Let me and father and our relatives and friends, all town and countrymen, all these you ought to protect \((55)\). Where is the forest and where is Ksatriya life, where are matted hair and where is protecting the country! You should not perform such contradictory work \((56)\). If you wish to practise \textit{dharma} born of physical strain, take upon yourself physical strain, by protecting the four \textit{varnas} according to \textit{dharma} \((57)\). Of the four \textit{aśramas} that of the householder is the best \textit{aśrama} - say, \(0\) virtuous one, those knowing \textit{dharma}; how can you abandon it \((58)\)? In learning, status, birth I am an infant to you, so how will I protect the earth when I am here \((59)\)? I am devoid of intelligence and qualities, young and devoid of status, and without you I am not able to discharge things \((60)\). Rule, \(0\) you knowing \textit{dharma}, this entire unagitated ancestral kingdom - free from thorns, according to your own \textit{dharma}, together with your relatives \((61)\). Let here only all the subjects together ... and the \textit{rīvīks} together with Vasistha - versed in \textit{mantras}, consecrate you, accompanied by \textit{mantras} \((62)\). Consecrated by us, go to protect Ayodhyā like Indra, accompanied by the Maruts, protected the worlds after conquering them by his strength \((63)\). Removing your three debts, destroying completely your enemies, and gratifying your friends with their wishes, rule over me here only \((64)\). Let today, \(0\) noble one, rejoice your friends at your consecration, let today your enemies run away in fright in the ten directions \((65)\). Free today respectable father from sin by wiping off the blame from me and my mother, \(0\) eminent one \((66)\). I solicitate you with bowed head, show compassion on me and your kinsmen like Māheśvara on all beings \((67)\). But if you ignore it and go from here to the forest, I shall also go with you \((68)\)." Though king R. was propitiated with bowed head by Bh. - filled with distress, that virtuous one did not resolve on going, firmly resolved on that word of his father \((69)\). Seeing that wonderful firmness in Rāghava, the people were at the same time delighted and grieved. They were grieved because he would not go to Ayodhyā, they were delighted, seeing his firm resolve on fulfilling his promise \((70)\).
Then the rüviks, the townsmen as well as the mothers, deprived of their senses, and filled with tears, praised Bh. speaking such words and, turning to R., solicitated him altogether (71).

As Bh. was speaking thus again, the illustrious, exceedingly respected elder brother of L., then, answered in the midst of his relatives (1) - "Befitting for you are these words which you thus spoke as a son born to Kai. from the best of kings, D. (2). In former times, our father, when taking your mother in marriage from her brother, promised to mother's father the kingdom as an excellent bride's price (3). And at the time of war between the Gods and Asuras, the king, lord of the earth, pleased at her service, joyfully gave your mother a boon (4). Then that glorious mother of yours, best of women, after making him promise, requested the foremost of men for two boons (5), for your kingship, O best of men, as well as my banishment, and the king, directed by her, gave that boon to her (6). It is by that father of mine that I, for my part, have been directed, O eminent man, to stay in the forest for fourteen years, as a result of the grant of a boon (7). So I have come to this uninhabited forest, accompanied by L. and S., without any opposition, being firmly resolved on making my father truthful to his words (8). Yourself also should, as well, make the king, our father, truthful to his words by quickly getting consecrated (9). Release, O Bh., for my sake, the king, our lord, from his debt, save the king, you who know dharma, and gratify your mother (10). For, we hear of an ancient saying, O dear one, sung by famous Gaya while making offerings in Gayā to the ancestors (11): Because a son saves his father from the hell called put, therefore he is called putra, or also because a son protects his fathers (pitrya pāti) (12). People endeavour to obtain many meritorious sons - well-versed in the Vedas because at least one of those gathered may go to Jāyā (13). Thus all the rajārsis are known to have acted, O prince; therefore, O best of men, save father from hell, O lord (14). Go to Ayodhya, Bh., and gratify your subjects, together with Śatrughna, O hero, and together with all the Brāhmīns (15). I, on my part, shall enter the Dandakā forest without delay, accompanied by these two, Vaidehi and L. (16). You yourself, 0 Bh., be king of men, I, on my part, will be king of the wild animals of the forest. Go cheerfully today to your excellent city, I, on my part, will cheerfully enter the Dandakās (17). Let the umbrella, impelling the rays of the sun, spread cool shade over your head; I, on my part, will happily, resort to the excellent shade of these forest-trees (18). Wise Śatrughna is your companion, renowned L. is my best friend. Let us four best of sons, 0 Bh., make the king truthful, let us not get distressed (19)."

Thus addressed by R., highly illustrious Bh., extremely disspirited, said to the charioteer - standing next to him (12) - "Quickly, 0 charioteer, spread kūṣa grass here on this piece of...
ground of mine. I shall beset the noble one by undergoing a
hunger-strike till he is gracious to me (13). Abstaining from
food, not looking about like a Brähmin robbed of his wealth, I
shall lie before his cottage as long as he does not return (14)." Beholding
Sumantra staring at R., that dispirited one himself brought excellent kuśa
grass and spread it on the ground (15).

Then illustrious R., the best of rājarṣis, said to him - "What
harm am I doing, O Bh., my dear, that you beset me by undergoing
a hunger-strike (16)? A Brähmin may beseech men by lying on one
side, but it is not a custom to undergo a hunger-strike for men
of the Kṣatriya class (17). Stand up, O tiger among men, and
give up that cruel vow, go quickly from here to the most ex-
cellent of cities, Ayodhya, O Rāghava (18)." But Bh., having sat
down, said, looking in all directions, to the city and country
folk - "Why do you not instruct noble R. (19)?" Those town- and
countrypeople said to that noble-souled one - "We know Kākutstha;
what Rāghava says is right (20). Since this illustrious one, on
his part, abides by the word of his father, so we cannot properly
make him turn back (21)." Hearing their words, R. spoke these
words - "So, regard the words of your friends, possessed of
righteous vision (22). Having heard both these sides, judge
properly, O Rāghava. Stand up, O mighty one, and touch me as
well as the water (23)." Thus, having got up and touched water,
Bh. said these words - "Let the members of the council, counsel-
lors as well as the hosts of attendants, listen to me (24): I
did not request my father for the kingdom, nor did I persuade my
mother. I know my noble brother Rāghava as being exceedingly
conversant with dharma (25). If, however, by all means the word
of father has to be accomplished, and the exile in the forest
has to be undertaken, I only will stay for fourteen years in the
forest (26)." Virtuous R., astonished by those genuine words
of that brother of his, said, looking towards the city and
countryside folk (27) - "Neither I nor Bh. can annul what has been
said, deposited or purchased for me by my father during his
life-time (26). I ought not to commit any detestable fraud in
regard to staying in the forest. What has been enjoined and said by
Kai. and my father, has been done in a righteous manner (29).
I know, Bh. is forbearing and paying respect to his elders, all
prosperity to the noble-souled one adhering to truth (30). With
this virtuous brother I shall, after returning from the forest,
be foremost lord of the earth (31). I have carried out the order
which the king has been asked for by Kai., release by the same
order that father of ours, lord of the earth, from his being
false to the promise (32)."

Filled with wonder and delight at the encounter of those
two excellent brothers, hosts of invisible rṣis, saints and
Gandharvas assembled and praised the two brothers, but as they
were looking forward to the execution of Daśagrīva, they entreated
Bh. to follow the word of R., out of regard for his father, and
thus free Him from his debts to him. Thus saying, they went to
their respective abodes. And R., elated by their words, joyfully paid obeisance to them. Once more, Bh. appealed to R.'s duty as a Kṣatriya to comply with his and his mother's request, in view of his incapability of protecting such a big kingdom and of gratifying the subjects, speaking in the name of relatives, warriors and friends, who wait as eagerly for him as cultivators for the rainy season. Saying this, Bh. fell on R.'s feet and solicited him again and again. R., taking him on his lap, said affectionately—"You possess wisdom—both natural and from training in propriety, so carry out your stately duties with the help of ministers, friends and wise counsellors. The moon may be deprived of its effulgence, the Himalaya may abandon its snow and the ocean may transgress its boundaries, but I shall not transgress the promise to my father. Do not worry about what mother has done for you, whether out of love or greed, but treat her like a mother." As illustrious R. spoke these words, Bh. requested him to take off his sandals, saying that these will guard the welfare of the whole world. Then R. took off his sandals and gave them to his brother; Bh. received them reverently and, placing them on the head of the elephant, circumambulated R. Then R. took leave in due order of the people, the elders, the counsellors and his younger brother. His mothers, their throats choked with tears on account of grief, were unable to bid farewell to him, and R., after greeting them respectfully, entered his cottage, weeping.

Analysis of characterization:

The Bharata-Rāma-saṃvāda, as this whole complex of scenes may be called, is one of the highlights of the V. Rm. It is no less a dialectics of two views of life, a confrontation of two mentalities, and thus a portrait of two characters, than it is a dialectics of two argumentations. Seen from this point of view, an analysis of the dialectics of Bh. and R.'s argumentation will be at the same time an analysis of the poet's representation of two characters, who, confronting one another though they may be, culminate in an apex of ideal brothership.

1) Structural analysis of the argumentation
Saṁvāda 1

R. asks Bh. for the motive of his visit

Bh. answers with soliciting words:
D. has died out of grief for his son. He has committed an aweful sin at the instigation of Kai. Therefore, he, all the subjects, and his widowed mothers request him to accept the throne. This is both in accordance with dharma (law of succession) as well as the wish of the whole earth, represented by the ancestral assembly of ministers, who have come with him from Ayodhyā.

Bh. solicitates R. again and again

R. embraces him and replies:
Such a proposal is sinful and unworthy of Bh. — of exemplary character. As much respect is due to a righteous mother as is due to a righteous father. Both father and mother (Kai.) have directed him to go to the forest, so it is his filial duty to carry out their words. It is, according to the will of father, Bh.'s assignment to obtain the kingship, and R.'s assignment to stay in the forest for 14 years. And these words of D. are authoritative and beneficial.

Saṁvāda 2

The brothers spend the night wailing with grief and at dawn perform the morning duties

Bh. breaks the silence and again solicitates R.

It is true that the kingdom has been given to him, but he now hands it over to him. He himself is too weak to take up the burden of kingdom, whereas R. is the ideal person. R. conducts himself like a tree planted by the people, who expect its fruit in vain. Such a tree is not at all gratifying the people.

R., not answering directly, comforts Bh.

Man has no power over his will, there is no stability to things in this world, everything is under the grip of death. Hence, all worldly considerations of attachment have no value, all worldly sorrows and mourning for others are useless since there is no deviation from the destiny
Therefore let the people take delight in witnessing R.'s coronation.

of the course of beings; rather, beings should engage themselves in happiness, for they are destined for happiness. Therefore, Bh. should not mourn his dead father, who has obtained celestial bliss, cleared from sin after duly performing his duties on earth. This is unworthy of a wise man. So also he should abandon all worldly considerations regarding the kingdom, and adhere to the only consideration of value: the assignment made by father, which must be regarded as rightful by both.

Sanvāda 3

Bh. renews his argumentation:

He admires the wonderful equanimity of R., but stresses that all the more he should not be overcome by grief - manifested in his renunciation of the kingdom. His mother Kai. has committed an atrocious deed for his sake, and he would have killed her for it, were he not bound by the fetters of dharma and respect of the family. In the same way, his father D. has committed a sinful act, complying with the request of Kai. in his infatuation. This transgression, committed by father through anger,

R. once more insists on the irrevocable duty of fulfilling the word of father:

D. promised to Kai.'s father, at the time of marriage, the kingdom to her future son as a dowry [this statement, as it is nowhere else found in the Rm., is a purely subjective statement by R. to reinforce his argumentation] At the time of the war between the Gods and Asuras D. granted Kai. a boon in gratitude for her service. She then requested D., after making him promise, for two boons, Bh.'s enthronement and his banishment. And the king granted that boon to her. Thus being directed by his father to stay in the forest for 14 years,
infatuation and recklessness, ought to be made good, his blemish ought to be removed by R. if he wants to prove himself a worthy son, whose duty it is to make right what has been done wrong by father, is to free a father from his blemish by acting contrary to it. Also, such an evil deed should be prevented from causing a bad example in the kingdom. After all, it is not at all his dharma to live the life of an ascetic, but to protect the people, in fact the dutiful āśrama of a householder is the foremost of all āśramas. Besides, he is a child compared to R. in every respect, and it would be impossible for him to cope with the discharge of kingly duties, therefore R. should, in accordance with his own dharma, get himself crowned at this very spot and then go to protect Ayodhya. In this way, he would free himself from his 3 debts, destroy his enemies and gratify the people. He should free therefore father from his sin, and wipe off the blemish from him, Bh., and from Kai. If R. turns aside his request, he will go with him to the forest.

Bh. solicitates R., but R. does not swerve from his firm resolution on fulfilling his promise to his father, which fills the people with delight and it is his irrevocable duty to be firmly resolved on making father truthful to his word by living an ascetic life, as much as it is Bh.'s irrevocable duty to make his father truthful to his word by accepting the kingship. In this way, he should commit himself to the sacred duty of a son to free father from his debt and save him from hell, by fulfilling the promise he has made, for a son is called putra because he saves father from hell. He should dedicate himself together with Satrughna to his assignment of protecting the kingdom, while he (R.) will dedicate himself together with L. to his assignment of forest-life. In this way, all the four sons should dedicate themselves to making the king truthful to his promise.
They praise Bh. and solicitate again R. for the public to prevail upon R. to go back to Ayodhya, but they decline because they consider his stand to abide by the words of his father as right. Bh. then declares before the public that in no way he ever requested father or mother for the kingdom, and, if the word of father has to be followed by all means, he shall do so instead of R. R. asks him what harm he has done to him that he is exerting this cruel pressure on him, and tells him that it is not a Kṣatriya custom to undergo a hunger-strike. R. hearing the words, appeals to Bh. to regard the verdict of the public and give a proper judgment to both sides. R. acknowledges Bh.'s forbearance and attachment to him, but insists that whatever he has been enjoined by father at the request of Kai. has been done rightly so, and is irrevocable, and must not be twisted in any way. Bh. may be assured that after his return he will comply with his request.

Once more, Bh. appeals to R.'s duty as a Kṣatriya to comply with his request, in view of his incapability of protecting such a big kingdom and to gratify the subjects, R. takes him on his lap and, assuring him of his competence in protecting the kingdom, once more asserts his firm resolve on fulfilling his promise to
in the name of relatives and friends, who eagerly await his coronation. He falls on his feet and solicits him again and again.

Then R., at the request of Bh., takes off his sandals, which Bh. reverently places on the elephant, and, circumabulating R., Bh. takes leave of him.

Résumé of the main points of the argumentation:

1) R.'s banishment and the proposal of his own (Bh.'s) coronation are the result of a sinful act committed by D. by complying, in his infatuation, with the heinous desire of Kai.; therefore, the word of father, the fulfilment of which R. considers to be his irrevocable dharma, is based on grave injustice and has to be categorically rejected.

On the other hand, it is R.'s lawful duty (dharma) to become king and protect the people, while it is utterly against his dharma to live the life of an ascetic in the forest. The sinful act committed by D. needs to be made right by him, father needs to be saved from hell by him - this is his sacred duty as a son - by his undoing it, by his acting contrary to it. In this way, the blame incurred on him and his mother need to be wiped off.

What has been ordered by D. at the request of Kai., is the result of the king's sanction of a boon granted to her at the time of the war between the Gods and Asuras in gratitude for her service - which boon she has requested for. As much respect is due to a righteous mother as is due to a righteous father.

Whatever has been ordered by Kai., and D., is therefore absolutely righteous and is therefore irrevocable. Thus, being directed by his father to stay in the forest for 14 years, it is his irrevocable duty to be firmly resolved on making father truthful to his word by dedicating himself to the assignment of forest-life, just as it is Bh.'s irrevocable duty to make father truthful to his word by dedicating himself to the assignment of protecting the kingdom. Whatever goes against this, whatever other considerations there are, is against dharma, is sinful.
It is therefore his sacred duty as a son to free D. from sin, to save father from hell, by making him truthful, i.e. fulfilling the promise D. has given to Kai., and so also to gratify his mother Kai.

2) Though he may acknowledge that the kingdom has been rightfully assigned to him, he now hands it over to him. For he himself is a weakling, a child to R. in every respect, and greatly dejected on account of those unfortunate events (unspoken), so that it is sheer impossible for him to carry the burden of the kingdom, while R. is the ideal person for it.

It is in the expectation of R. being king that all the subjects, ministers and widowed mothers have come here to request him to accept the kingship. As a tree planted by the people who expect its fruit, it is his duty to gratify them.

3) Though he has great admiration for R.'s wonderful equanimity, it looks to him as if his stern resolve on renouncing the kingdom betrayed itself as a concealed grief.

a) All such considerations which go to show his dejection (on account of those happenings and for his deceased father) and which involve him in frantic considerations of injustice being inflicted on him, his brother, by Kai. and D., and any consequent attempt to make good for it, are considerations of worldly attachment, which are of no value and relevance, having their resonance in their failure to recognize that man has no power over his will, that things in this world are unstable and under the grip of death, and there is no deviation to their course, and they are, thus, by-passing that only consideration of value: to act in accordance with dharma, to fulfil the assignment given by father on his own and on Bh.'s part.

b) R. gives Bh. his assurance of his ingenuity in protecting the kingdom.

R. does not respond at all to his psychological argument, but re-affirms his irrevocable duty to fulfil the word of father.
4) Bh. in near-to despair applies psychological pressures
   a) If R. turns aside his request, he will go with him to the forest
   b) He will undergo a hunger-strike before R. till he yields to his request.
   c) He appeals to the public to prevail upon R.
   d) He declares that, if the word of father has to be followed by all means, he shall do so instead of R.

- no response
- R. invalidates his measure by reproaching him for exerting cruel pressure, when he has not done any harm to him, and branding it as unlawful for a Kshatriya.
- R. appeals to him to acknowledge the verdict of the people.
- R. acknowledges his forbearance and attachment to him, but re-affirms that the word of father is irrevocable and must not be twisted in any way.

2) A psychological interpretation of the śādvāda and explicitation of the character-portrait evolved in it

More than anything else, Bh. and R.'s argumentation are a matter of different psychological conditions. As we read through the arguments proposed by Bh. and L., we are struck by R.'s serenity of argumentation, on the one hand, and Bh.'s emotional tone and unbalanced manipulation of argumentation, going even to the point of exerting psychological pressure, on the other hand. All this reflects an emotional upsurge on the part of Bh. On the other hand, R.'s serene, balanced, self-possessed and absolutely firm argumentation reflects a serene, balanced, self-possessed and absolutely firm psyche. Though it may sometimes look stern, it is not meant so either, for it tries to cure Bh. from his frantic disposition in regard to his consideration of the injustice inflicted upon him, his brother, in his name, tries
to console him and acknowledges his love. But R.'s argumentation is firm in the measure R. is firm in his commitments.

For R., in his supreme heroic equanimity, to the indeviable course of earthly things, which are but unstable and under the grip of death, to all considerations of worldly attachment, which only produce sorrow and grief and egotistic claims for justice in defiance of dharma, and in his supreme heroic adherence to dharma as the only consideration of value, even to the point of forbearing any unrighteous act inflicted upon him, the order of father, whatever heroic demands it may make of him - even if it were to sacrifice his life for no fault of his -, has been made on absolutely just and rightful grounds, for it is the result of father's own sanction of the rightful claim of a bore by his wife Kai, promised to her earlier. Such a word of father, irrespective of whatever irrelevant egotistic claims for justice, is irrevocable, and a firm resolution on its fulfilment, on his as well as on Bh.'s part, is their irrevocable duty under all circumstances. Seen in this perspective, R.'s assertion of his firm resolution is therefore not a manifestation of his stubbornness, but of his loving brotherly concern to uncompromisingly inculcate this lesson upon his brother. In fact, more than a lesson inculcated upon a brother, who by-passes the boundaries of dharma, it is an attempt to cure his brother's frantic disposition in considering that grave injustice has been inflicted upon him, his brother, on account of him, by Kai. and D., and consequently attempting to atone for it - but unjustified and irrelevant considerations; it is an acknowledgement of Bh.'s sympathetic concern for his welfare as overflowing brotherly affection and self-less devotion to him, but an uncompromising rejection of its frantic emotional manifestations, even if this means to fill his heart with dejection and sad disappointment, in view of a more supreme realization of the good of both of them, of a deeper concern for Bh.'s well-being, a deeper love for him, which has its resonance
not in a temporal emotional attachment, but is firmly grounded in ever-enduring dharma. R.'s assertion of his firm resolution on fulfilling the word of father is an expression of a supreme, perfect equanimity to the subjecting influence of worldly considerations of attachment and egotistic demands for justice in defiance of dharma, it is, thus, an expression of an unflinching commitment to satya-dharma, in the witness of an exalted homage to the word of father by aspiring to make him true to his promise and fulfil all his debts, an expression of the most selfless filial love a son can give witness to in a spirit of total self-sacrifice and forbearance against whatever injustice done to him, a most sublime expression of the ideal of putradharma. It is, further, an expression of a love that realizes the best of his brother, though it needs to reject his plea overflowing with brotherly affection and sympathetic concern for him, and needs to sadden his heart. To the question whether the author did not intend to show how R.'s spirit of equanimity and forbearance blinds his eyes to the actuality of the grave injustice involved, and whether this does not reflect an unhealthy aspect of his character, we have to answer: Though the author wanted to show how his heroic equanimity veils his realistic sense of acknowledging the heinous injustice done to him, he did not mean at all this lack of acknowledgement to be identified with blind adherence to dharma. Rather, he agrees with R. in the assertion that against all worldly considerations dharma is the only consideration of value to be upheld. (Cf. our extensive discussion about the author's identity with regard to R.'s argumentation in the context of the Lakşmanä-Räma-saṅvāda). This is the very character-gist of R., and in this consists the distinction of his character, the heroism of his character. R. is the embodiment of a perfect character and, unlike other ideal characters portrayed in the Rm., he is the only one whose personality reaches near-to absolute (human)perfection, he is the apex of the characters of the Rm.
Contrasted with R., Bh. finds himself in a completely different psychological condition when he forwards his argumentation. Yet suffering from the effects of the traumatic shock of the death of his beloved father and his mother's brazen-faced intimation of her heinous design in his name, and from the many emotional upsurges of grief, remorse and anger, ever haunting his mind while musing over the destiny of R., his heart, which beats with intimate brotherly love, is dejected with grief and agitated with righteous anger on account of those unfortunate happenings, having but the one anxious desire to atone for the sin committed by Kai. and D., and lead back R. to honour and happiness. But R. is so forbearing, so forgiving, so self-sacrificing that he allows the most cruel injustice to be inflicted on him without even muttering a word of revolt, nay, considering as his irrevocable dharma what is actually the product of grave injustice and cruel heinousness. And this weighs down the more on Bh., since R., sacrificing his everything, allows himself to be deprived of all happiness and honour, for no fault of his but for the injustice committed in his (Bh.'s) name. With this thought as his inmost concern, he inculcates upon R. the injustice of D.'s action as well as the unlawfulness of his order. As R. insists on the righteousness of D.'s order, and his as well as Bh.'s irrevocable duty to follow his assignment, Bh. feels as if blockaded by an unsurmountable wall; but, feeling all the more the urge of his concern for his brother's down-trod honour and happiness, he takes recourse to all kinds of emotion-ridden persuasions to instill in R. the absurdity of his resolution: He does as if he acknowledges R.'s argument of the king's assignment of the kingdom to him, but expresses his desire to hand the kingdom over to him; he asserts his incapability of ruling the kingdom, and shows the absurdity of R. wasting his talents and frustrating the people's hopes; he interprets R.'s equanimity in his resolve on renouncing the kingdom, as a covering-up of his hidden grief; he re-affirms the injustice done by D., and
states R.'s duty to save father from hell by acting contrary to his decision, and to remove the stain from him and his mother; he reminds him again of his dharma as a Kṣatriya, and exposes again his own incapability of ruling the kingdom; he solicitates him with supplications again and again etc. And as all attempts fail, because R. adamantly re-affirms his stand by his irrevocable duty to follow the word of father, and invalidates Bh.'s claims of injustice as unjustified and irrelevant, Bh., near-to despair, takes recourse to more and more desperate psychological pressures, one after the other, only to meet with that same insurmountable barricade of R.'s firmness, even failing to get the consent of the people, who, while they admire his brotherly devotion, admit their inability to ignore the righteousness of R.'s argumentation. And, as if there were still any hope that R. would reverse his determination, he engages in one more and last bid of solicitation, as the dire prospect of having to rule the kingdom in separation from R., the hope of the people, impresses itself vehemently in his mind, then falling exhausted at his brother's feet; whereupon R. takes him affectionately on his lap, and, assuring him of his talents in tackling the affairs of the kingdom, re-asserts his firm resolve. But what is that deep psychological urge that makes Bh. carry on his argumentation, shifting, twisting, manipulating, re-affirming it, against the almost superimposing correctness of R.'s argumentation? There is no other answer than the answer which we have already given: By nature irascible and possessed of an acute sense for equity and justice, Bh., whose heart has been beating with intimate brotherly affection and selfless love for R., at the traumatic shocks of D.'s death and of Kai.'s atrocious self-disclosure, has suffered an emotional break-down, which, having driven him to furious outlashes against the injustice committed by his mother Kai., and having engrained itself deeply in his heart, has left behind in him a vigorous determination, a splinter of righteous anger, to put an end to such injustice as has deprived
his dear brother R. of his happiness and honour in his name. It is his sincere and most intimate concern to inculcate this upon R.; but when he is confronted with the insurmountable barricade of R.'s firm resolve - insisting adamantly on unflinchingly abiding by the word of father, he, far from realizing its rightfulness, is emotionally driven by this barricade, which re-enforces his concern for R.'s down-trod happiness and honour, to all kinds of frantic attempts — going to the extreme, at instilling in R. the absurdity of his resolution, which involves him in an emotion-ridden, unbalanced manipulation of arguments. And this is not at all a reflection of Bh.'s lack of good-will, but of a tremendous self-sacrificing brotherly love, in which he loses himself so completely, for the welfare of his brother, that he not only wants to make good the wrong done to him for his sake, not only wants to lead back R. to his deserved honour and happiness, but wants to free him from the fetters of that self-less spirit of forbearance, of forgiveness which makes him (R.) a victim self-sacrificed to the cruelty of others. What Bh. lacks, is not in any way love, but that serene sense for satyadharma, that ideal of putradharma, which is in a perfect equanimity towards valueless considerations of worldly attachment and human claims for justice - that characterizes R. Instead, he is of an irascible nature, and, once erupted in flaming righteous ire against the injustice committed by Kai. and D., his determination to put things right dominates his mind to the extent of obscuring that serene sense for dharma which should be the guiding-line of man in all critical situations. But it is far less, if at all, Bh.'s falling short of the ethical loftiness of R. which the poet wants to bring out, but it is the extent of his self-sacrificing love for his brother R., which, though by-passing the boundaries of dharma, goes to the last to enforce the restauration of R.'s honour and happiness, which R., in his utterly forgiving spirit, for no fault of his, to no good of his, wants to sacrifice. It is not unduly that Bharadvāja, listening with sympathy to Bh.'s
report on the outcome of his talks with R., exults at the noble
loftiness of Bh.'s devotion to his brother, saying: (s. 105) –

\[
\text{naitaccitraḥ naravyāghre śītavṛttavatāṁ vara } / \\
vadāryaḥ tvayī tiṣṭhettu nimne vrṣṭamivodakam } / 16 \\
amṛtaḥ sa mahābāhubhiḥ pītā dasarathastava / \\
yasya tvamīḍraḥ putro dharmātmā dharmavatsalah } / 17
\]

and that the counsellors acknowledge his determination to go to
Nandigrāma with the words: (s. 107) –

\[
sadṛṣaḥ śāghaṇiṇyaḥ ca yaduktaṁ bharaṇa tvayā / \\
vacanaṁ bhṛtyātvatsalyādānurūpaṁ tavaiva tat } / 5 \\
nityaṁ te bandhuluḥdhasya tiṣṭhato bhṛtyānührde / \\
āryamārgaṁ prapannasya nānumanyeta kah punā } / 6
\]

II 105-107

B h a r a t a a f t e r r e t u r n i n g t o
A y o d h y a r e t i r e s t o N a n d i g rām a ,
enthrone his sandals and
ruling in their name

Résumé:

Though Bh. is filled with satisfaction that R. at least yielded
to his wish to have his sandals rule over the kingdom of Ayodhyā
(implicit in 105 passim), he falls back into sad musings at the
sight of the desolate, dispirited, lifeless city of Ayodhyā
(II 105.23-24. 106). As soon as Bh. arrives at Ayodhyā, he,
though still dejected at the prospect of carrying out the king-
ship without R., is filled with eager determination to immediately
set out to Nandigrāma, ready to bear the grief in view of the
hope that R. one day will come back. The ministers express their
admiration at this wonderful gesture of brotherly love. And so
he sets out to Nandigrama with a new, cheerful spirit, a spirit nurtured by the hope of R.'s return. And reverently enthroning the sandals, he rules the kingdom with brotherly dedication as R.'s trust to him, himself living an ascetic life as an expression of his sympathetic grief for the misfortune of his brother, but sustained by a spirit of hope in his return. (II 107)

VI 113.26 - 116 passim

Bharata's hopes are fulfilled

As we meet Bh. again at the end of the Rm., with H. approaching him to intimate to him the good news of R.'s advent and exploits, we still see him reverentially dedicated to the protection of the kingdom in front of the sandals of R., in utter austerity and poverty, devoid of all mirth and amusement, like another Dharma, as it were, incarnate, as a mark of his sympathetic grief for the misfortune of his separated brother. H.'s message of the good news of R.'s coming, his victory over Rv. and regaining of S., fills him with exuberant joy and gratitude to H. (113.26-43), with eagerness to learn everything from him about what has happened since their departure (114), with a spirit of jubilant exultation that prompts him to get the road from Nandigrama to Ayodhya transformed into a road resounding with elephants and the procession of jubilant citizens — going to welcome R. back to Ayodhya, he himself clad in ascetic dresses, reverentially carrying R.'s sandals on his head, and holding a white umbrella and a royal crown in his hands. So eager is Bh.'s longing for R.'s return that, on not seeing R. immediately, he doubts for a moment whether H.'s message was not a deceitful Vn. trick. But this doubt is immediately allayed as H. points to the unmistakeable
signs of the jubilant advent of the Vns.; and as the vimāna approaches, and the hosts of citizens, with jubilant shouts, welcome R., Bh., witnessing the happiest moment of his life, bursts out in joy and happiness and expressions of heartfelt affection: There follows a heartfelt affectionate welcome to his dear brother R., to L., S., Su., the Vn. chiefs and all the Vns.; an encomium of praise to Vibhiṣaṇa for his friendship offered to R.; an affectionate ceremony of handing-over the kingdom entrusted to him - expressed in the symbolism of his reverentially fixing the sandals of R.'s feet, with an expression of joy at seeing his hope of meeting his brother again, fulfilled and at having, by the power of R., been able to increase the prosperity of the country ten-fold - an unspoken token of such brotherly love that it draws tears of admiration from the Vns. and Vibhiṣaṇa, and makes R. take him on his lap for joy - (115); a reverential expression of gratitude to R. for the honour conferred to his mother and to him, and an affectionate admonition to accept the kingdom from his hands, in which he symbolically repeats some of his earlier arguments, now of indubitable value (116.1-11).
A SYNTHETIC VIEW OF THE AUTHOR'S CONCEPTION
AND PORTRAIT OF BHARATA'S CHARACTER
The conception of Bh.'s character is conspicuous by its uniformity, so much so that the Bh. we leave behind at the end of the Ayodhyākāṇḍa, and the Bh. we meet again at the end of the Epic itself, is the very same Bh. throbbing with brotherly love for R. In fact, this is the excelling feature of his character, and so it is but natural that it offers a strongly unifying theme for the presentation of his character. This does not exclude the poet's use of the pattern of spontaneity, but it is always permeated with that centripetal brotherly spirit of Bh. in some form or other.

Another characteristic in V.'s representation of Bh.'s character is the pattern of unspoken self-revelation. It is true that much of Bh.'s character is intimated by the poet himself or by other characters or even by his own intimation, but that unfathomable depth of his character is brought out not by words and arguments, but by the unspoken self-revelation which Bh. conveys in the exposition of his words, of his arguments to the audience, in the unspoken impression he leaves behind with the audience. It is not the first time that we meet with this pattern. In fact, we have made reference to it in the context of several characters, and even where we have made reference to it, it is often used with unobtrusive delicacy. But perhaps nowhere it is used with such efficiency and delicacy, at the same time, as in the Bharata-Rāma-saṃvāda. In terms of structure, it is a dialectics of two argumentations, but these two argumentations reveal two unspoken character-portraits, the depth of which is expressed not so much by words, but by the spirit, the heart behind the words. To grasp this spirit entirely would mean to identify ourselves with the ideals and aspirations of the
audience of the Rm. age themselves. It seems that today we can do that only retrospectively, not any more existentially. But though much water has flown down from the Himalaya since that time, many of those ideals and aspirations are still the same, though perhaps modified in certain aspects, as e.g. R.'s firmness on fulfilling the word of father to the point of forbearance against the gravest injustice committed to him would today certainly no more have that approval and appeal which it had in those times. But in essence, many of these ideals are the same, and so especially the brotherly love displayed by Bh. And so we are able to re-live that impression which V. must have left on the audience of the Rm. age.

Portrait

Bh., son of D. and Kai., is an ideal brother. Satrughna is his most intimate personal friend, his second self, with whom he is always together wherever he goes, and with whom he shares all his joys and sorrows, and to whom he empties his heart whenever it has something to say to him and whatever it has to say. But to no less a degree Bh.'s heart throbs with intimate brotherly affection and self-less love for R. and a deep sympathetic concern for his welfare. But this love and concern of Bh.'s is not merely brotherly love - though the circumstances will elicit it as the landmark of his character - but a love and concern for all, especially his relatives, his father, his mothers, and so on. The anxiety arising from his encounter with the gruesome dream-visions about his father's death and with the inauspicious omens looming over the city of Ayodhya, the concerned manner
in which he inquires from the envoys about the welfare of his relatives, and in which he cuts short his mother’s greeting-ceremonies and instantaneously asks her about the whereabouts of his father, the absence of whom makes him restive,—all this shows how Bh., far away from his dear ones, existentially and emotionally identifies himself with the destiny and well-being of his relatives, especially his father, shows the warmth of his attachment, love and concern for them. But Bh. is critical of his mother. He knows her self-conceited way of behaviour, and somehow has some subconscious feeling that she is a potential danger to create mischief in the family. But this is only a subconscious, unspoken feeling, and he would never dream of that gruesome heinousness which she will brazenly reveal to him in the name of her love for him. In fact, though by now he has become more and more anxious and concerned about the welfare of his father, he is still hoping that his anxiety is wrong. Nay, he is lulling himself in the joyful expectation that he has been summoned to witness the joyful occasion of his brother’s coronation.

But now he is struck with a series of traumatic shocks, coming, as it were, like a series of bolts from the blue, too gruesome not to pierce and stir up his heart—so intimately throbbing with love and so fervently committed to justice. Kai.’s intimation of the death of his father not only throws him down from the heights of hopes and expectations to the depths of grief and agony, but makes him so forlorn in disconsolation, as his mind conjures up pathetic memories of the intimacy of his father’s caresses when he was a boy. As Kai., at his request to convey to him father’s last words, alludes to the absence of R., L. and S., and, at his further anxious questioning, reveals with concealed exuberance that they have gone as ascetics to the forest, Bh. is taken aback, because—unbelievable though it may appear—such treatment could have been meted out to R. only if
he had committed a serious crime. But this thought has not yet fully criss-crossed his mind when Kai. now shakes him anew, and most traumatically, with the brazen-faced triumphant disclosure of her ghastly act. Already heavily pressed down with grief, his heart now bleeds out with agony and wrath at the visualization of the unbearable grief in which he and all his dear ones, nay the whole kingdom, have been plunged through her boundless heinousness and cruelty. And as he imagines again and again this immeasurable sinfulness and cruelty of her action, with which she, in her boundless greed, has requitted R. and Ks.'s affectionate treatment of her as mother and sister by depriving Ks. of her only son, an embodiment of virtue and dharma and the dearest friend a mother can have, on account of which, she has caused the death of D. and brought unending misery, as he imagines her base misjudgement of his virtuous conduct and affectionate attachment to R., by which she has concurred heart-rending grief and disgrace on him, his agony has transformed itself into blazing ire, embitterment and hatred against his own mother, so much so that he not only violently renounces her cruel ambition, but, disdainfully defying it, reviles her left and right, almost curses her for all her boundless heinousness, greed and vulgar misjudgement. A symptom of an emotional break-down though it may appear, it is a revelation of his intimate affection and selfless love for his father, brother and his dear ones, as well as of his fervent commitment to justice, his righteous anger against the injustice done to his brother by his mother. And prompted by this spirit of brotherly love and justice, he firmly resolves on atoning for it by bringing back R. to glory and himself leading an ascetic life.

But Bh.'s emotional temperament is in upsurge, and the agony and ire resulting from the shock of D.'s death and Kai.'s self-disclosure have engrained themselves deeply in his heart - so much so that, when Ks. takes a slightly apprehensive attitude...
as to the purity of his intention, he bitterly takes it to heart, and in his determination to prove his innocence, prompted by a feeling of wounded honour, invokes the most maledictory curses on the person who has consented to R.'s banishment, i.e. on himself in case he has desired so, thereby indirectly revealing how his emotional break-down has subconsciously driven him to an outburst of fury against Kai.; that he is throbbing with feelings of vengeance at Mantharā appearing on the threshold, whom he hands over to his brother Satrughna to chastise her, and at Kai. as she takes refuge with him, saying that he would not shun from even killing Mantharā or his own mother, were it not out of respect for R.'s spirit of forbearance. Even the well-disposed expectation of the citizens - that he would accept the kingship - drives him, the more it intrudes itself upon him, to agitated outbursts of agony and wounded honour at finding himself insensitively encountered by gestures from the citizens that expect from him to pursue (what he thinks to be) a sinful path when he considers himself so fervently committed to the course of righteousness.

As we see Bh. on his way to R., his heart and mind is only engrossed in thoughts about the well-being of R. - so much so that any occasion which evokes in him an association with R.'s life of austerities becomes a mark-stone of sorrowful concern and heartfelt pity for his misfortune, of remorse and shame that this has been caused on account of him, and of a renewed resolve to free R., L. and S. from these undeserved hardships suffered for his sake and atone for them by undergoing a life of asceticism himself - all this thus revealing a Bh. who is full of intimate brotherly affection and selfless concern for the welfare of R., with whose sorrows he identifies himself even to the point of denouncing his own life, innocent though he is.
This self-sacrificing brotherly love for R. reaches its climax in his indefatigable attempt to persuade him to return to Ayodhya and accept the kingship, which he has been deprived of through the grave injustice and heinous cruelty of queen Kai. As his heart, which is filled with intimate brotherly love and fervent commitment to justice, is still dejected with grief and agitated with righteous anger on account of those unfortunate happenings, and has been left with but one anxious desire, to atone for that cruel injustice by Kai, and D. and lead back R. to honour and happiness, it is his most intimate concern to inculcate with vigorous determination upon R. to what grave injustice and heinous cruelty he has allowed himself to fall victim to, for R. is so forbearing, so forgiving, so self-sacrificing that he allows the most cruel injustice to incur on him without even muttering a word of revolt, allows himself to be deprived of all happiness and honour for no fault of his but for the injustice committed in his name. But when R. unflinchingly insists on the righteousness of D.'s order and his as well as Bh.'s irrevocable duty to follow father's words, Bh. feels as though blockaded by R.'s firm resolve like by an unsurmountable barricade. But as this psychological barricade reinforces in him all the more his concern for his brother's down-trodden honour and happiness, he is emotionally driven to all kinds of emotion-ridden, unbalanced, nay, even frantic attempts—going to the extreme—to instill in him the absurdity of his resolution, till he falls exhausted on R.'s feet, who affectionately takes him on his lap, and, assuring him of his ingenuity in protecting the kingdom, reasserts his firm decision. A psychological break-down though it may appear, it is a revelation of his tremendous self-sacrificing brotherly love, in which he loses himself so completely, for the well-being of his brother, that he not only wants to make good the wrong done to him for his sake, not only wants to lead back R. to his deserved honour and happiness, but wants to free him from the fetters of that selfless spirit of forbearance, of forgiveness which makes him a self-sacrificed victim to the
cruelty of others. What Bh. lacks, is not in any way love, but that serene sense for satyadharma, that ideal of putradharma, which is in perfect equanimity towards valueless considerations of worldly attachment and human claims for justice - that characterizes R. Instead, he is of an irascible nature, and, once erupted in flaming righteous ire against the injustice committed by Kai. and D., his determination to put things right dominates his mind to the extent of obscuring that serene sense for dharma which should be the guiding-line of man in all critical situations. But it is far less, if at all, Bh.'s falling short of the ethical loftiness of R. which the poet wants to bring out, but it is the extent of his self-sacrificing love for his brother R., which, though by-passing the boundaries of dharma, goes to the last to enforce the restauration of R.'s honour and happiness, which R., in his utterly forgiving spirit, for no fault of his, to no good of his, wants to sacrifice.

As Bh. sets out to Nandigrāma in utter austerity and poverty as a mark of his emotional distress and pity for his brother, but spiritually sustained by a spirit of hope for the day of R.'s glorious return, and rules the kingdom, paying reverential obeisance to the sandals of R.; as he, prompted by a spirit of exultation, leads a jubilant procession to welcome R., himself wearing ascetic dresses and reverentially carrying R.'s sandals on his head, and so eagerly yearns for R.'s coming that, as he does not see R. immediately, he for a moment doubts the sincerity of R.'s message; as he extends his heart-felt, affectionate welcome to him and his dear ones; as he affectionately fixes the sandals on R.'s feet, and intimates to him his joy at the fulfilment of his hope of seeing him again and at having, by the blessing of R., been able to increase the prosperity of the country ten-fold; as he reverentially expresses his gratitude to him for the honour conferred on him and his mother, and affectionately admonishes him to accept the kingdom from his hands, - it is all
a panegyric of brotherly love, (bhrātravātsalya, bhrātrasauhrda) of which Bh. is the very embodiment; a brotherly love unspokenly and spokenly intimated by the poet himself, and confirmed by exultant words of acknowledgement from Bharadvāja, and from his counsellors, and by tears of admiration of the Vns. and Vibhīṣaṇa—

\[
tathā bṛuvāṇaḥ bharataṁ drśtvā tam bhrātrvatsalam \\
\text{mumucurvanarā bāspaṁ rākṣasca } vibhīṣaṇaḥ \\
\]

and is evoked and praised by L. with pathetic imaginations, which come to his mind as he describes to R. the spell of the winter season (III 15. latter part), imaginations which fill R. with sadness and homesickness, on envisaging the boundless love of Bh. for him:

\[
niscitapi hi me buddhirvanavase drdhavrata \\
bharatasaṁheasantaptā bāliśkriyate punah \\
\]

a homesickness which, with his victory accomplished, grows so passionate that he even declines Vibhīṣaṇa's offering of a luxurious bath, saying:

\[
\text{sa tu tāmyati dharmātmā mama hetoḥ sukhocitaḥ } \\
sukumāro mahābāhuḥ kumāraḥ satyasaṁśravaḥ \\
taṁ vīnā kaiketiputraṁ bharataṁ dharmacāriṇam \\
na me snānāṁ bahumataṁ vastrāṇyābharaṇāni ca \\
\]

as also his invitation to stay for one more day, for:

\[
taṁ tu me bhrātaraṁ draṣṭaṁ bharataṁ tvarate manah \\
māṁ nirvartayituṁ yo'cu saṁānītum ucyatasya vacanaṁ na kṛtaṁ mayā \\
\]


A CRITICISM OF MODERN SCHOLARS' VIEWS ON THE CHARACTERIZATION OF BHARATA
M. K. Venkataram Iyer

It is not possible to go into the details of Iyer's rather extensive exposition of Bh.'s character in his two treatises. Judging his essay on Bh., as a whole, we can say that it is substantially good and correct, prescinding from a few problematic issues or philosophical misinterpretations, as e.g. the tentative interpretation of Bh.'s yearning for R. as a symbol of "the finite self's progress to be reunited with the Infinite Self from which it has suffered a temporary separation owing to the play of selfish interests", and some irrelevant questions, as e.g. the acceptance of Bharadvāja's feast, perspectives which were not in the mind of V. We shall restrict ourselves to a few essential issues, which we shall first quote and then critically comment upon. Iyer's exposition on Bh.'s argument with R. remains at the level of an interpretatory contents rather than delving into the psychology, and bringing out the character-portraits, of the two heroes evolved in it. He, however, does so by way of summing up Bh.'s character in his first article, and by way of preluding remarks on Bh.'s attitude towards D.'s promise, before he describes his entering into discussion with R., in his second article.

"The most outstanding trait in Bharata's character is his innate nobility. It is part of his nature and not something acquired. It is in his blood and comes out most spontaneously on every important occasion. We may note how without any conscious effort on his part it manifests itself when he learnt from his mother that she had secured the position of Yuvarāja for him. It is the most crucial situation in his life. Did the offer made by his mother tempt him in the least? Did he show the slightest inclination to accept it? Instantaneously and most effortlessly did he give a stern negative reply. It is here that
his inborn magnanimity is unmistakeably in evidence. He did not come to this conclusion after carefully weighing the pros and cons in his mind. There was no civil war in his mind between his selfish impulses and his better judgement. There were no pulls from opposite directions, no clash of rival loyalties. It never occurred to him to ask himself the question: 'To accept the offer or not to accept it.' Dharma had entered into his flesh and bone, had permeated every fibre of his being. No wonder there was no divided loyalty but that his wholly nature beat in unison and made one harmony. It is in this respect that Bharata rises head and shoulders over all other heroic characters known to history or fiction.

Far from approving what his mother had done for him, he took serious exception to it and began to scold her in rather intemperate language. When he learnt further that Rāma had been exiled for his sake and that his father died being unable to stand the separation from his eldest son, Bharata's grief knew no bounds and it soon turned into a paroxysm of rage. He became rather unbalanced in the rebukes that he administered to his mother. He squarely charged her with being the murderess of her husband. It is her wickedness that had brought calamity to the house and ruined its reputation. The sin of sending the innocent and universally beloved Rāma into exile was on her head. By working at cross purposes to the established practice of the Ikṣūkū family she had sown the seeds of discord and confusion. Her intercession on his behalf had dragged his name into the mire and, far from promoting his interests, she had done the greatest disservice to him. She had besmirched his reputation and he would be looked upon with suspicion by all people. He was therefore ashamed of calling himself her son. He therefore proposed to disown her. She was his mother only in name. He went on in this strain, heaping curses on her devoted head. The climax was reached when he said: 'Why do you not fall into fire or otherwise
take away your life? Tie a rope round your neck and put an end to yourself.' (II.IXXIV. 33).

All this is of course very strong language and readers of Śrīmad Rāmrāyaṇa have wondered whether it was proper for Bharata to have spoken in that strain even under provocation. He is known for his innate nobility. One writer [C. Rajagopalachari] says that 'Bharata is the most perfect embodiment of virtue.' Should not this nobility and virtue manifest themselves in dealing with his mother? Should they be confined to this dealings with Rāma alone? Granting that she was wicked, can a son overstep the limits of decency in abusing her? Does not propriety require a certain decorum to be observed even when one is quarrelling with another? 'The intensity of Bharata's grief was such that words less strong would not have satisfied his emotional needs,' observes another critic [M. Venkatesa Iyengar]. 'To understand Bharata's feelings,' writes Sr. C. Rajagopalachari, 'we should keep in mind his innate noble nature, his love for Rāma, his grief for his father and the sense of guilt and shame that for his sake his mother had done this grievous wrong. We should not weigh his words in dry air and a chemical balance. In such contexts poetry flashes fire. One sees it both in Valmiki and Kamban.'

It may be granted that there is a tendency for most people to use words indiscriminately under a grave provocation. Such lapses may be excused in ordinary people. But Bharata is not of this sort. He comes of a noble family. Decency and restraint are the hallmarks of true nobility. What else is the effect of culture if it is not restraint especially in the use of language? ... One's mother, merely because she is the mother, has to be honoured and worshipped. Instead Bharata pours curses on her head. After all, what was her offence? She had interceded with her husband to get the throne for her son. Such intercessions are not unknown in history. Even political murders have taken
place as part of court-intrigue. Kaikeyi had done nothing of that kind. On a previous occasion her husband had granted her two boons. He had given her the liberty to put any content into them and ask for their fulfilment at a future time. In the exercise of this privilege she had demanded the throne for her son and the exile of Rāma that there might be no trouble for the former. What was wrong in all this? Daśaratha could not go back on the promise he had made. No honourable man can repudiate his plighted word. Whatever the consequence and however unpleasant it may be, it had to be carried out in a spirit of resignation. All that Bharata could have said was that the situation was most unfortunate. Or he could have mildly protested at the turn of events which she brought about. She could not even be accused of error of judgement. She knew her mind and, as a mother, insisted on the promise being fulfilled. Bharata's rage therefore is without any justification...

If there is little justification for the language that Bharata used under provocation, there is even less for the way in which he speaks of his mother to the messengers and later to Sage Bharadwāja. When the messengers arrived at Kekaya, Bharata made the usual inquiries about the welfare of his father and others and, referring to his mother, he said: 'She is very fond of herself, extremely selfish, apt to become angry on slight provocation and thinking too highly of herself.' (II.LXX.10) Let us remember that Bharata had not then heard of any of the events that had taken place in Ayodhya. Let us also remember that he had been separated from his mother for twelve long years. On seeing the messengers from Ayodhya what would one naturally expect him to say about his mother? Would we not expect him to make kind inquiries about her and exhibit a desire to see her? Is it not rather unnatural to use offensive language against one's mother, especially when one has not seen her for a fairly long time? And again, look at the way he introduces her to
Sage Bharadwaja: 'This woman is my mother. She is at the bottom of all our trouble. She brought Rāma and Lakṣaṇa very near to death. And on account of her mischief my father died broken-hearted. She is hot-tempered and feeble-minded. She thinks too highly of her personal charms. She is greedy and ignoble, but passes for a noble woman, she is wicked and cruel.' (II.XCII.25-27). Look at the number of adjectives! Is there any need for them, now that she has repented? Though she did not openly put it, still there was clear proof that she has realized her folly and felt sorry for what she had done. She had joined the party which was proceeding to Chitrakoot to bring back Rāma to Ayodhya. The poet also tells us that she made common cause with Kausalyā and Sumitā and journeyed in the same carriage with them. What clearer proof do we require to know that a change of heart had come upon her? When one has repented, there must be an end of the matter. All bitterness must be clean forgotten. But from the manner in which Bharata refers to her, he gives the impression of one who is nourishing a grievance. It looks as if he has a rooted prejudice and an implacable hatred against his mother. Even if she had not repented, he should have interceded on her behalf, put in a kind word in her favour and tried to present her in as acceptable a manner as possible. This is all the more necessary when we are introducing a sinner to a sage whose benediction we all seek. Bharata's ill-treatment of his mother, we fear, is inexcusable and bound to remain a blot in his otherwise immaculate character. Rāma is aware of this and hence solemnly advises him at the end of the meeting at Chitrakoot to use his mother with consideration. 'Treat your mother properly. Don't be angry towards her. Sītā and I lay this oath on you.' (II.CXII.27-28) He gave also a practical lesson to reinforce this precept. When he took leave of the queens, Rāma took special care to offer his obeisance to Kaikeyī. The plural (Sarvāḥ) in II.CXII.31 is intended to convey this idea. Bharata also appears to be aware of this defect in his nature. He tells Rāma that
he refrained from killing his mother and Mantharā because of the fear that he would go down in his estimation. But for this wholesome fear, Bharata would possibly have committed more cruel deeds."

Critical comment: Iyer's unpardoning attitude towards Bharata's ill-treatment of his mother is based on the mistake of playing too high the formal aspect of Bh.'s disrespectfulness towards his mother, while ignoring, without admitting it, the psychological shock which Kai.'s brazen-faced disclosure of her heinous act has on Bh., who is so full of brotherly love that he would give his everything to R., and so fervent in his commitment to justice that it would be his last thought to do any wrong to anybody, but who, instead, hears the unbelievable news that she has inflicted upon his brother the most cruel injustice, and that for his sake and in his name, and envisages the misery over misery that has been brought over his relatives. It is true that the poet also purports to depict this emotional upsurge in Bh. as a weakness of his character, which makes him fall short of the loftiness of R.'s serene dedication to dharma, but he allows this weakness of his to be drowned in the waves of his nobility of brotherly love. Iyer's playing down of Kai.'s heinousness looks as if he were R.' himself. But though V. fully agrees with R.'s firm resolve on adhering to dharma and his reasons for doing so, he does not agree with the way he, in his spirit of forbearance and filial respect, wipes away the sinfulness of her act and attributes it to fate; i.e. he agrees with R.'s spirit of forbearance and his respect for Kai. as a mother in so far as this motivates his personal determination to fulfil his sonly duty by obeying the word of father and making true the boon promised to Kai., but not in the sense of an objective acquittal of Kai.'s guilt. Not at all so. See s.v. Kaikeyī pp. 308f. Iyer then goes on saying that, if there is little justification for the language
that Bh. uses under provocation, there is even less for the way in which he speaks of his mother to the messengers and Bharadvāja. Here Iyer again makes the mistake of not taking into account the psychological upsurges going on in Bh., which are more forcefully purported by the author than Bh.'s display of disrespectfulness towards his mother, which also is purported, but not for its own sake. We have given an interpretation of this passage earlier. Seepp. 792, 752. It is highly doubtful to us to assume that the poet meant Kai. to have undergone a change of heart. Rather, as she had played her role and she had no other option than to accept Bh.'s decision, the author prescinds from any further characterization of her. And the fact that Kai. joins Ks. and Sumitrā on Bh.'s journey to R., for Iyer an unmistakable proof of her change of heart, has nothing special to say.

"The stormy speeches of Bharata having reached the ears of Kausalyā, the latter wanted to meet him and was about to set out when Bharata and Satrughna came to her place of their own accord. The queen was sore distressed and the two princes were not less distressed. When the weeping subsided, Kausalyā cried out: 'So you have got what you wanted. Through the intercession of your mother the kingdom has come to you and you are rid of your rival. My son, clad in bark-robics, has gone into exile; but how does it affect your mother? She would do well to send me also in the forest where my son is staying. Or, I may myself go there carrying with me the sacred fires (Agnihotra). Or, it is up to you to send me there where my son is having a hard time. You may have a pleasant time here, ruling a rich and prosperous kingdom all by yourself.' (II. LXXV. 11-16) This speech of the queen deeply offended Bharata's susceptibilities. It cut him to the quick. It attributed to him motives of which he was thoroughly innocent. He had absolutely no hand in what his mother had done and yet Kausalyā charged him with being a party to it. When the queen suggested that he had got the kingdom for which he was
thirsting. Bharata's mental anguish knew no bounds. He wanted to convince her that he never aspired for the kingdom and was never a party to what his mother had done. If he had any hand in sending his brother into exile, let the worst sins to be visited on him... Kausalyā was the first to suspect his intentions and Bharata cleared her mind of suspicions. Others were yet to follow and pure Bharata had to be giving assurances again and again..."[7]

Critical comments: Substantially good and correct.

"A few words have to be said by way of summing up the character of Bharata. Though he has many qualities in common with his brother, he has a strongly marked individuality. Nobility and magnanimity are to be found in all the sons of Daśaratha, but they express themselves with certain overtones arising from their distinctive personalities. Both Rāma and Bharata renounce the kingdom. Rāma does so out of respect for the promise that his father had given. Bharata does so out of respect for equity and justice. Both are firm in their adherence to lofty principles. Nothing could shake them. Neither the desire of his mother nor the request of the assembled citizens of Ayodhya nor the solemn adjuration of the family priest could make Bharata waver in his decision to bring back his brother and install him as the ruler. Equally steady was Rāma in his resolve to carry out his father's word to the letter. All the entreaties and arguments of Bharata did not produce the least change in his attitude. Thus both of them are very meticulous in the observation of high idealism... The only difference between Rāma and him is that while the former is always cool, calm, collected and considerate, the latter is somewhat impetuous."[8]

Critical comments: Substantially correct, but not forceful enough and not delving into the depths of Bhāja psyche.
"The promise given to his mother by Daśaratha was purely accidental. It was due to a fortuitous circumstance. It could never have the effect of nullifying an immemorial tradition. In his opinion the implementing of a promise made in a casual manner was not so important as ensuing orderly government in the state. He feared, as Arjuna did, that chaos and confusion would set in if the established order was disturbed. Political expediency as well as his sense of equity and justice prevented Bharata from closing in with the offer."

Critical comments: Does not take into account the psychology of Bh.

K. S. Ramaswami Sastri

It is unfortunate that, while Ramaswami's account of other characters is quite good, his representation of Bh. is extremely dry, superficial, and nothing more than an interpretatory follow-up of his story interspersed with quotations, thus in no way justifying the deep character-portrait which V. laid into the presentation of his character.

V. S. Srinivasa Sastri

Evaluating Sastri's exposition of the character of Bh., as a whole, we have to say that it is very far away from the portrait the author actually wanted to bring out. What obscures Sastri's presentation very much is that, on the one hand, he psychologizes perspectives totally outside the intention of V., while, on the
other hand, he fails to delve deeply enough into the heart and mind of Bh. where this is part and parcel of the impression which V. purported to leave on the audience. It is unfortunate that almost all issues brought to mind by the scholar are to some degree obscured by these two interpretatory flaws. We quote an example so that the reader may understand what we mean by our criticism (See below). The question of Bh.'s un filial treatment of his mother, which also Srinivasa Sastri plays very high\textsuperscript{12}, has been discussed s.v. Venkatarama Iyer.

"Of the three whom I have contrasted, certainly Bharata stands on a pedestal of his own. Reading over his speeches and noting the way in which he behaved one might think that he had a great deal of persistence and strength of will. Of these we have had already some proof in the way in which he matched them or tried to match them against his own brothers. It was only his elder brother, Rama, who could surpass him in resolution, in determined pursuit of the highest. Only to him had Bharata to yield a little. Otherwise he would have held his ground firmly against anybody else as we see. His utterances are all strong, decided and unequivocal. There is no hesitation about them, nothing of the tentative, nothing of the dim, none at all. One might almost think that his long residence with his grandfather and his uncle had made him a spoilt child as it were, for he does not seem to have been afraid of anybody unless it was Sri Rama himself. And why should he be afraid of anybody? We might even describe him as an untamed youth. How differently Lakshmana would have behaved in similar circumstances, it is just interesting to speculate a little. What a great contrast between the two brothers! Alike noble and high-minded and self-sacrificing, they nevertheless differed so much that you would never mistake the one for the other. Lakshmana would have collapsed and surrendered at once if Sri Rama had said "Do this or that." He might think differently, his feeling my be that Rama was doing
something wrong or harsh, he may not approve of it; nevertheless even if he attempted to say one word of protest, Rama had only to put his foot down, there would be an end of all opposition. Lakshmana delighted to eliminate himself where his brother was concerned. He was just a servant, an instrument for the carrying out of the great man's purpose and nothing more. Only he was an animated instrument and sometimes had his own ideas. But they were there just buried. Bharata was quite different. When he differed from Sri Rama, he would say, "Please, my brother, allow me to put in a word." He would begin modestly but he would say what he felt without hesitation. One might almost say that he had an individuality, a strong individuality and expressed it so that you felt great respect for Bharata."¹⁵)

1) Bharata. KK XXVII 209-214, 233-238; Bharata's Argument with Rama. KK XXVII 305-312.
2) p.237
3) p.236
4) p.237f.
5) p.306
6) pp.210-213
7) p.233
8) p.237f.
9) p.306
10) Valmiki's Portrait-Gallery -XII. KK XX 331-335.
    Valmīki - India's First World-Poet - XVI. KK XXXI 297-299.
11) pp. 187-209

13) pp. 191-192. We leave out from our purview the exposition by Iyengar, pp. 156-159, since it is very dry and does not penetrate much into the depth of Bh.'s character. We also do not take into account the article on Bh. in Mahāraṣṭriya, Śrī Rāmāyaṇ-Samālochnā athāvā Rāmāyaṇācā Upasadhār. Pune 1927. Part II, pp. 301-306 - for want of sufficient knowledge of the language.
LAKSMANA
A SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS
OF THE CHARACTERIZATION OF LAKSMANA
The vistas of L.'s character are beautifully opened up as the poet, while introducing for the first time the four sons of D., describes the intimate attachment and affection budding forth between L. and R. from their very childhood days. The poet says: From childhood L., the enhancer of beauty, was always very attached to his elder brother R., the delight of the world, doing all service to that R. of his by his own body. L., endowed with beauty, was another life of his outside himself, and without him that best of man does not obtain sleep, without him he does not eat savoury food offered to him. Whenever Rāghava, mounted on horse, goes for hunting, he follows behind his back, protecting him with his bow. This is a prelude to the whole perspective of L. as an intimately loving and loyal brother and guardian of R., which will be unfolded in course of the Epic. In fact, a later interpolator has pushed back this perspective into the boyhood days of the princes in his insertion of the Viśvāmitra-yāstrā, where L. gives silent witness to his brotherly attachment and affection for R. by accompanying him on his journey with Viśvāmitra.

Another silent testimony is given by the poet himself when he makes R., after intimating the happy news of his installation to Kes., who with Sumitra, S. and L. is engrossed in prayers for his welfare, expresses this sentiment to his brother:

II 4.43-44 -

lakṣaṇaṁ māṁ māyā sārdham praśādhi tvad vasantārām/
dvītyaṁ me'ntarātmānaṁ tvāmiyāṁ ēśīrupasthitā // 43
saumitre bhūkṣya bhogāśṭvamāṃśānāṁ rājyaśphalārī ca/
jīvitaṁ ca hi rājyaṁ ca tvadarthamabhikāmaye // 44
Laksmana in flaming ire for his brother

Translation:

(II.16.56) Behind him followed L., the enhancer of the joy of Sumitrā, exceedingly enraged, his eyes filled with tears.

(II 18.1-5) As that mother of R. was thus lamenting, L., being distressed, said these words fit for the occasion (1) - "It does not please me either, O honoured lady, that Rāghava should go into the forest, leaving the glory of the kingdom, under the influence of the words of a woman (2). What will the king, who is perverse, old and over-powered by the senses, not say, being impelled and filled with passion (3)? I do not see any fault of his nor such blame by which Rāghava should be expelled from the kingdom to stay in the forest (4). Nor do I see any man in the world who even behind his back, be it even an enemy or one who has been cast out, would name any vice of his (5). Who, regarding dharma, can abandon a son almost equal to the Gods, self-controlled, dear even to the enemies, without reason (6)? Which son remembering the custom of the kings would take to heart such words of a king who has fallen back into childishness (7)? As long as no one knows this end and aim, bring the government under your charge together with me (8). Who is able to overpower you - concealed by me, with my bow at your side, when I am standing there like Death (9)? I shall bereave this whole city of Ayodhyā, O foremost of men, of all human beings with my sharp arrows if it should stand in offence (10). Whoever there is a partisan of Bh. or wishes his benefit, all these I will slay, for one who is gentle is defeated (11). With both you and me engaged in unexcellible hostility, who has the power to confer the majesty of the kingdom to Bh. (12)? I am truly devoted with all my heart to my brother, O queen, and I promise to you, by truth and the bow that has been given to me and is dear to me (13): If R. enters blazing fire or the forest, know me, O queen, to have entered there before (14). By my heroism, I dispell your grief as the risen sun disperses darkness. Let the queen see, and also Rāghava see, my heroism (15)."

(18.32-37) Having thus spoken to that mother of his, he spoke, again, to L. - "I know, O L., your unsurpassed love for me without your being aware of the inner meaning of truth and peace (32)."
For dharma is the highest in the world, in dharma truth is firmly rooted, on dharma rests this excellent word of father (33). One who adheres to dharma and stands firm by it, O hero, must not, when he hears the word of father or mother or a Brāhmin, frustrate it (34). So I cannot transgress the order of father, for it is on the word of father that I have been directed by Kai., O hero (35). Abandon this ignoble idea resorting to ksatrādharma and resort to (satya)dharma; let not your thought for me be subjected to rudeness (cruelty) (36).” Having thus spoken to that brother of his out of affection (goodheartedness), the elder brother of L. again spoke to Ks., having his hands folded and his head bowed down (37).

(19) Then that self-possessed R., approaching that good-hearted beloved brother of his, Saumitri, who was distressed on account of anguish and exceedingly indignant, sighing like a lordly snake, as it were, with his eyes gleaming with rage, spoke to him these words, restraining his natural disposition with firmness (1-2) — "Let, O Saumitri, that zeal of making preparations for the sake of my consecration be a zeal of making preparations for the sake of its abolition (3). See to it that that mother of ours, whose mind is set on fire with regard to my consecration, be not filled with apprehension (4). I cannot even for a moment overlook the sorrow produced in her mind as a result of her apprehension, O Saumitri (5). I do not remember here ever to have done even a minute offense to my mothers or to father (6). Let my father, of true promise, ever truthful and truthful to his promise, who is frightened by fear of the next world, be freed from fear (7). For if this activity is not withdrawn, there will be mental agony to him because he does not find truthfulness, and his agony will pain me (8). That's why, O L., I, immediately after curbing the execution of my consecration, wish to go from here to the forest again (9). Having obtained her object after my going to exile today, she will then, O prince, consecrate her firm son Bh. (10). When I have gone to the forest, wearing bark-garments and deerskin and a mass of matted hair, Kai. will obtain happiness of mind (11). I shall also not annoy that well-concentrated mental power by which this intention of her has been evoked. I shall go into exile, let there be no delay (12). But daiva only, O Saumitri, has to be considered responsible for my banishment and my giving back again the kingdom conferred on me (13). For how could Kai. have an intention to inflict pain on me if there did not exist that daiva (unseen destiny) inspired by Fate (14). For you know, my good sir, that neither did I make any difference between my mothers formerly, nor did she make any special distinction between me and her son (15). So I consider nothing else than daiva behind her harsh cruel words - attempting the withdrawal of my consecration and my banishment (16). How can that princess, endowed with good nature and possessed of such qualities, talk, like a vulgar woman, such abuse to me in the presence of my brother (17)? That that daiva is unthinkable and cannot be warded
off from beings is evident, for calamity has befallen me and her (18). Which man, O Saumitri, can fight with daiva, of which there seems to be no comprehension except by its effect (19). If somebody is subjected to grief and sorrow, fear and anger, gain and loss, birth and death, is something of such nature not the work of daiva (20)? Even though my consecration has been obstructed, I have no anguish; therefore, do also you follow me in being free from anguish: Let the activities for my consecration be quickly withdrawn (21). Let not, O L., my younger mother be too much distressed for this obstruction of my kingship, for in speaking unfavourably, she has been subjected by daiva; you know daiva and its corresponding power (22).

(20) But L., having listened for some time, with his head downcast while R. was speaking thus, revolved in his mind between grief and joy (1). But then, knitting a frown between his eye-brows, that best of man sighed like a big snake in a cave, filled with rage (2). His face then, marked by that knitting of his eye-brows, was hard to look at, resembling the face of an angry lion (3). Vibrating his finger-tips like an elephant his trunk, and moving his neck alternately to the left and right, up and down (4), and looking with straight eyes, he spoke to his brother in shanting direction - "It is unnatural if somebody has such great fear out of consideration for a violation of dharma and out of too much fear of the people; how can a man, free of agitation like you, speak such things (5-6)? Since daiva is powerless, why then do you, O powerful Ksatriya, praise wretched, mightless daiva (7)? How is it that you have no fear of those two sinners? They are opportunists feigning righteousness, don't you, being possessed of righteousness, realize this (8)? That the consecration of another than you has been designed, is odious to the people. That dharma by which, O king, this power of discernment (judgment) of yours has come into conflict, such a dharma is odious to me, for the consideration of which you lose consciousness of mind (9). Even if your course of action is due to daiva, and their intention also, it nevertheless does not please me that you should consider it (10). He who is timid and devoid of heroism resorts to daiva, those who are esteemed as heroic do not care for their daiva (11). He who is able to overcome daiva by his manliness, such a man, if he is deprived of his prosperity by fate, does not become disheartened (12). But today they will see the power of daiva and of man, today the distinction between daiva and manliness will be clear (13). Today people will see daiva destroyed by the power of my manliness, since today your installation into the kingdom appears to be thwarted on account of daiva (14). Today I shall drive away daiva after assaulting it like an uncontrollable, furious elephant, exerted by the vigour of rut (15). Neither all the kings of the world nor all the three worlds can obstruct your consecration, R.; how much less your father (16). Those by whom your exile in the forest has been secretly decided shall likewise stay for fourteen years in
the forest (17). I shall pierce that hope of your father and of
that lady, who aspires the kingship of her son by obstructing
your consecration (18). To a person that opposes my strength
there will not be daivabala to that extent to which my fierce
(formidable) paurusa will conduce to his pain (19). Later, at
the end of a thousand years, your sons will then, in your succe-
sion, carry out the kingship when you have gone to stay in the
forest (20). According to the custom of former rāja-sis, vanavām
is performed after consigning the subjects to one's sons to look
after them like sons (21). If you do not wish the kingdom on
you, O virtuous R., because of fear of agitation in the kingdom
due to father, who is perplexed (22), I promise you, O hero, let
me not attain the world of heroes. I shall protect the kingdom
like the shore the ocean (23). Get yourself consecrated with
auspicious rites, be engaged there, I alone will, by my strength,
be able to subdue the kings (24). These arms are not meant for
beauty, my bow is not meant for ornamentation, my sword is not
meant for tying, my arrows are not meant to be motionless (25).
This whole collection of four weapons is meant for the subjugation
of enemies, and I am not very much fond of him who is considered
my enemy (26). With my sword stretched forward - with its sharp
dge and moving with the brilliance of lightning, I care neither
for an enemy nor for the thunderbolt (27). The earth will be
impenetrable and impassible on account of elephants, horses and
men's arms, thighs and heads pulverized by the onslaught of my
sword (28) ... [further pugnacious assertions in this style]
Today these two arms, worthy of the most excellent sandal-paste,
of putting on armlets, of distributing wealth and protecting
friends, will perform their duty, O R., in subduing the obstruc-
tors of your consecration (34). Tell me which enemy of yours
shall be severed by me today from his life, fame and friends;
order me that this earth shall be under your power, I am your
servant (35)." Having wiped off his tears and consoled him again
and again, that enhancer of the glory of the dynasty, Rāghava,
honoured L. and said - "Know me to be firmly resolved on the word
of father, for this, my good sir, is the path of truth (36)."

Interpretation of context:

See s.v. Kausalyāpp. 636-639

Analysis of characterization:

1) Structural analysis of the argumentation (in the light of a
philosophical understanding)
--- L. reacts to R.'s heroic response to Kai.'s intimation of D.'s (imposed upon) consent to her boon with anger and grief

--- L., hearing the heart-rending lamentation of Ks.-resulting from the traumatic shock of R.'s announcement of his banishment, feels incited to console Ks., thereby giving an outlet to his impatience at the unwarranted injustice behind the order of D.: 

D.'s decision to banish his own son, who is an embodiment of virtue and beloved by the whole world, is, as the product of perverse infatuation, utterly unwarranted, unjust (against dharma) and atrocious on the part of a father. He appeals to R. to take charge of the kingdom by force under the auspices of him, who will shield him like Death and, unassailable by anybody, will root out whoever should try to obstruct him. By the loyal devotion and love he cherishes for his brother, he is prompted to promise to her that he will do everything, will engage his whole prowess to restore justice to him and dispel her sorrows, and if he enters fire or the forest, he will do so before him. 

--- R., after reminding Ks. of his first and foremost duty as a son to follow the word of his father, affectionately turns to L.: 

He acknowledges the boundless love of L. for him, but characterizes it as somewhat shallow since it does not possess the depth of truth and peace (This is not a judgment about the shallowness of L.'s love as such, but an attempt to steer it in the right direction by making him aware of its shortcomings) There is nothing higher in the world than dharma, truth itself is rooted in dharma. Obedience to the word of father is dharma par excellence. It is on the word of father that he has been directed by Kai. to go to the forest. It is therefore his irrevocable dharma to follow this order. On the other hand, L. should in his over-concern for him, not allow himself to be subjugated by the vanity of kṣatrādharma, which aspires for justice with a concern for one's own welfare at the cost of inflicting
cruelty on others, but resort to satyadharma, which aspires for righteousness for the sake of truth and goodness and peace, with equanimity about one's own welfare.

Sadhāda 2

L., while listening to R.'s argumentation, for a while hesitates between grief and joy, but at the end he cannot but reveal his extreme anger, impatience and mental conflict - going on in his heart - in external bodily manifestations:

A behaviour that is based on a meticulous fear not to violate dharma and on fear of the people is unnatural. A behaviour that resorts to daiva as an irresistible power is a sign of timidity and lack of heroism, for daiva is absolutely powerless and needs to be suppressed by manliness (for it is man who creates his daiva and therefore also has power to control it, overcome it and destroy it by creating a new daiva).

By resorting to daiva to explain Kai.'s intention, R. sanctions the heinous sinfulness of D. and Kai., who but feign righteousness, but are sinful opportunists; by this he has lost all power of discernment, and if he calls that dharma, a dharma that is the product of

After again entreating Ka. to allow him to go to the forest, R. turns again to L., who is beside himself with anger and anguish, moved by his good-hearted affection for him, but restraining his natural disposition:

It is L.'s duty to cancel the preparations for his consecration, so that mother Kai. should not be subjected to grief on account of apprehension, and father D. may be freed from mental agony - arising from the non-realization of his promise - thoughts which would pain his heart to the core.

It is for this reason only that he is so keen on immediately leaving for the forest that Kai. may be able to install Bh. and obtain happiness of mind.

It is not expedient to him to reprove that power which evoked this intention in her mind. It is not expedient to him to reprove that power which evoked this intention in her mind.
heinous injustice in the name of daiva that turns the most virtuous into the most miserable while it makes the most evil ones prosper, such a dharma is odious to him.

Even if R.'s course of action and D.'s and Kai.'s intentions were due to daiva, such a daiva has to be overcome with manliness by one who wants to heroically stand up to life and not allow himself wretchedly to be crushed by the wheels of daiva.

It is manliness (paurusa) that controls daiva and not daiva that controls manliness.

Coming more and more under the impulse of flaming ire and anguish for his brother, L. now indulges in bombastic, bragging self-assertions that he will give witness to the destruction of daiva by his paurusa, vowing destruction to those who attempt to obstruct R.'s installation, vengeance on those who have aspired his exile, and firm protection to R. under the unassailable shielding power of his, his humble servant (In between he advises R. to take up vanavasa life after entrusting the kingdom to the care of his sons as it is the custom of the former râjârgis)

own son, otherwise it is unthinkable how Kai., who has been treated by him like his own mother and has treated him like his own son, a queen endowed with good nature and possessed of good qualities, should all of a sudden conduct herself like a vulgar woman using abusing language to him in the presence of his brother. [In his good faith, so the poet wants to say, he forgets the sinful, ambitious nature of Kai., as the prime cause for her cruel design]

There is no better proof than the fact that calamity has befallen both him and her that the activity of daiva is incomprehensible, of unknown mysterious origin, manifesting itself but in states of grief and sorrow, fear and anger, gain and loss, birth and death, and therefore is uncontrollable and irresistible.

Therefore he has no reason for being filled with grief in accepting his destiny, and so also L. should not be filled with anguish for him, but should see to the cancellation of preparations for his consecration and conduce to the satisfaction of Kai., who has been subjected by the incomprehensible power of daiva.

R., after wiping off with brotherly affection L.'s tears and consoling him, re-affirms his firm resolve on following the word of father, for this is the path of truth
2) An ethico-psychological evaluation of the sahvāda and explicitation of the character-portrait evolved by the poet

An ethical evaluation of the sahvāda seems to be inevitably linked up with the interpretation of the author’s stand in regard to the debate of R. and L. from an ethical point of view. For only then can we clearly evaluate the merits of the arguments, and explain the psychology behind the different outlooks. But an interpretation of the author’s identity (as in all other such cases in the Rm.) can be acquired only by an insight into his mind, which, in turn, is possible only by an intuition into the impression, ethical impression this case, produced on the audience. But the problem is not so difficult as it appears. For, R. being the ideal character in the Epic, the author will almost totally agree with him except for a few aspects of his character. So the whole question of the identity of the author in regard to R. and L.’s views can be reformulated as an inquiry into how far V. does not agree with R. but with L., from an ethical point of view. The answer is: R., blinded by his unflinching commitment to satyadharma and the nobility of his filial respect for Kai., tends to sanction Kai.’s heinous deed as the effect of an incomprehensible and irresistible daiva, rather than attributing it to her sinful ambition. But even so, for V. it is nothing but a gesture of nobility if R. gives such an interpretation, for—so the poet wants to say—as a loyal son it is in any case his absolute duty to fulfil Kai.’s direction since it has the rightful sanction of his father, and it is not his concern to peep into her motivation even though that direction puts him into great misfortune. But if his mother Kai. does make demands of him which are, though lawful, of such a stunningly injurious nature and evoke such terrible repugnance in L., he does not distrust her; does not think bad of her; but, as it is worthy of a respectful son of good faith, who always thinks the best of his parents, he considers that this must have
its own reason, considers that, as it reveals such a stunning transformation in Kai., whom he always treated like his own mother, and who always treated him like her own son, it is nothing but daiva, of incomprehensible, mysterious efficacy, that has induced her mind with this injurious intention. Thus, by resorting to daiva to explain Kai.'s intention, R. only manifests his noble respect for Kai. as a mother. And V. agrees with R.'s recourse to the efficacy of daiva to explain Kai.'s transformation and to defend his determination to follow her direction—sanctioned by father's words, in as much as his attitude, bears witness to the nobility of his filial regard for Kai. as a mother and enhances his spirit of forbearance, motivates him in his unflinching resolve to fulfil his sonly duty and so motivates him to make true the boon promised by D. to Kai., to fulfil father's debt and the desire of his mother Kai. V. does, however, not agree with R.'s attitude in as far as it tends to absolve Kai. of all her guilt. The judgement of Kai.'s character, the author reserves entirely to himself, and he expresses it by way of directly exposing her character to the audience or allowing certain other characters to speak in his own intention.

Considered from a psychological point of view, the Laksmana-Rama-sātvāda is a reflection first and foremost of two different concerns, of R.'s concern to fulfil the word of father, which for him is dharma par excellence, and L.'s concern for R. as a victim of heinous ambition and perverse infatuation. While R.'s concern shows itself as of a serene, self-possessed nature, as of complete equanimity about his own welfare, and as devoted solely to a dharma that aspires for righteousness for the sake of truth and goodness, L.'s concern is highly emotional, for he sees his brother accept an order that plunges him into the greatest misery and dishonour and is the product of grave injustice, shameless deceit and perverse infatuation, as his irrevocable dharma and the result of an incomprehensible fate. While
R.'s concern thus reflects the very depth of his character, L.'s concern reflects the psychology of his selfless brotherly affection and love, as well as a mentality of his own in viewing dharma, a mentality perhaps more engrained than that of Bh., which is but a spontaneous emotional outflow of his heart throbbing with love for R., but has not that rigid character of an ideology as in the case of L.

R. is, to the core of his heart, committed to satyadharma, that is, to a dharma that aspires for righteousness for the sake of truth, goodness and peace (sama), with no concern as to one's own welfare, in a spirit of utter selflessness and forbearance towards whatever injustice done to one. Obedience to the word of father is for him the testimony par excellence of satyadharma. Now that he has been given an instruction by Kai. to go the forest, an instruction that has been rightfully sanctioned by his father, it is his lawful duty and filial concern to give prompt witness to his obedience to the word of father, the par-excellence-expression of dharma, by fulfilling his father's promise to Kai., and so freeing him from all mental agony arising from the non-realization of his promise, as well as to show his filial respect due to Kai. as a mother by fulfilling her desire, and conduce to her happiness by freeing her from all fear arising from possible apprehension. An expression of R.'s unflinching commitment to dharma, in the witness of his exalted homage to the word of father, as well as an expression of great magnanimity in the witness of his filial respect for Kai. as a mother, - it is all an expression, thus, of the most sublime selfless filial love a son can give witness of in a spirit of total self-sacrifice and forbearance of whatever injustice done to him, a most sublime expression, thus, of the ideal of putradharma. In this sublime, serene, selfless devotion to the word of father, as the par-excellence-expression of dharma, R., in his selfless spirit of forbearance, not only bears all the misfortune brought up on him
and all the heinous cruelty done to him, not only abjures all considerations of ksatradharma as considerations rooted in a dharma of vanity, which aspires for justice with a selfish concern, at the cost of inflicting cruelty on others, but, reluctant to think anything bad of Kal. as a mother, though painfully aware and forcefully made aware so by L. of the stunningly injurious design of her as well as of her stunning transformation as regards her motherly treatment of him, attributes, what actually is the result of Kal.'s heinous ambition and shameless cunning, to the incomprehensible and irresistible efficacy of daiva, - a consideration which, in turn, enhances his spirit of forbearance, and so consolidates him and further motivates him in his personal decision to fulfill his sonly duty. Last but not least, when R. exposes all these views to L., who is throbbing with rage, he does not merely in self-defense, but much more as an expression of his loving concern that realizes the best of his brother, though it needs to reject his plea - overflowing with brotherly affection and sympathetic concern for him, a concern that wants to direct L.'s boundless love in the right direction by making him aware of its shortcomings. The poet gives ample evidence to show how R. acknowledges his deep love with great affection, how he tries again and again to console him sympathetically, how he even wipes off his tears; and at one place the poet purports to say of R. that, as he turned to L. to console him, he was so moved by his good-heartedness that he had to restrain his natural disposition with firmness.

L.'s grief-ridden, fury- and vengeance-breathing appeal to R. to revolt against the unwarranted, unjust and atrocious decision by D. to banish him - to which he diverts his full argumentation - , and to take charge of the kingdom by force under his auspices, vowing, with bragging self-assertions, destruction to those who should attempt to obstruct R.'s installation, and
assuring him firm protection under his unassailable shielding power, - is a revelation both of the psychology of L.'s overflowing brotherly affection and selfless love for R., a love that, losing itself completely in the heart of his brother, is filled with concern about the atrocious injustice inflicted upon his brother, and his blind-spirit of forbearance, which ties him with the fetters of a dharma that, depriving him of his power of right judgment, makes him the victim of the heinous cruelty of others. And it is a revelation of a deeply engrained mentality of keatradharma, of an ideology of a dharma which aspires not for righteousness for the sake of truth, goodness and peace, but aspires for equity and justice under all circumstances, at all costs, even that of inflicting injury on others. Yet this mentality is very much the emotional outflow of his sympathetic brotherly concern for R., whom he sees plunged into misery for no fault of his, the traumatic eruption of an emotional tender-heartedness, blended with an inborn natural irascibility and ire for righteousness. His attachment to R. is of so tender a nature that he cannot bear the thought of such humiliating injustice inflicted upon his brother, that he cannot but feel impelled to engage his whole self (and promise this to Ks., with whose heart-rending grief he identifies himself) to save R. from the clutches of Kai.'s heinous ambition and D.'s perverse infatuation, to which he, in his blind forbearance, has fallen a victim to. And when R. insists on the unchallengeable sublimity of satyadharma and the word of father as its par-excellence-expression, and denounces the vanity of keatradharma and, challenged by L.'s eye-opening reminder of Kai.'s humiliating treatment of him, resorts to daiva to explain her injurious design and moral transformation, he cannot but revolt against such blind forbearance that robs him of his power of discernment and strings him with the fetters of a dharma which makes him the victim of heinous injustice, in the name of a daiva that turns the most virtuous into the most miserable, while it makes the
most evil ones prosper, he cannot but inculcate upon him the
demoralizing effect of a doctrine that fails to help man stand
up to life with courage and manliness and pays homage to the
incomprehensible and irresistible efficacy of daiva, and cannot
but express his urge to demonstrate to him personally the utter
invalidity of daiva before pauruṣa. It is this flaming brotherly
concern — urging him to dispel all the fanciful imaginations of
dharma and daiva that invariably hold in check R.'s mind and rob
him of his realistic evaluation of the heinous injustice inflic-
ted upon him — and this flaming righteous ire — urging him to
restore justice and honour to his brother — that drive him to
furious proclamations of destruction to those who should attempt
to obstruct R.'s installation, and vengeance to those who have
aspired his exile —, while he promises firm protection to R. as
his unassailable protector and humble servant. And the poet ends
by alluding to R. as wiping off his brother's tears and consoling
him while re-affirming his firm resolve on fulfilling the word
of father, since this is the path of truth, — a silent depiction
of the emotional tenderness of L.'s brotherly attachment, a
tenderness of heart which has erupted with grief and agony as
sudden and traumatic as a bolt from the blue, has upsurged into
a violent storm of fury and vengeance, and ebbed away into a
— depression of sorrow and distress.

Classification:

Literary basis:
exposition: objective (self-revelatory) + subjective (in the
words of R.) — descriptive — explicit
tone: a tone of ire and agony (krodhaśokabhāva) constituting
a pathetic-raudric sentiment.
Laksmana a loyal brother
and guardian of Rama

II 28

Laksmana's desire to share Rama's destiny and serve and guard him as a loyal brother

Contents:

When L. also requested R. to allow him to go with him to the forest, R. said to him - "Who will sustain Ks. and Sumitra? The king, who showered the earth with pleasures, has been subdued by the fetters of pleasure. And so Kali, as soon as she has obtained the kingdom, will treat her co-wives with disrespect, and they will be filled with sorrow." To this L. answered - "No doubt Bh. will treat Ks. and Sumitra with honour, and Ks., who has thousands of villages, will be able to maintain thousands like this. I shall go before you, showing you the way, with bow and arrows, pick-axe and basket in my hands. I shall always bring you fruits, roots and other ascetic eatables. You will sport with Vaidehi on mountain-ridges; I shall do everything for you whether you are awake or asleep." R. then, with delighted heart, asked him to take leave of his friends, to bring him his bows and weapons, distribute his wealth to the Brahmans and fetch Suyajña, the son of Vasiṣṭha [detailed description].

Analysis of characterization:

Though L.'s brotherly love and concern has impelled him to express his revolt against R.'s blind forbearance which makes him the victim of cruel injustice and heinous ambition, and though this consideration has deeply engrained itself into his heart and will erupt again in critical situations - Sumantra conveys to the king L.'s bitter accusation against him (II 52.18-22), and when Indrajit beheads magic S., L., in utter despair on seeing his
brother losing heart, violently denounces the validity of dharma (see below) —, it is this same brotherly love and concern which, as he realizes R.’s unflinching firmness and witnesses the sublime devotion and loyalty of S., prompts him with the impatient desire, even to the point of trivializing the question of a possible harassment of Ks. and Sumitra by Kai., to follow R., leaving behind father, mother and everything dear to him, and share his destiny, to engage his whole self in alleviating his hardships and contribute to his happiness by serving and guarding him with unflagging devotion.

II 35.4-8

Sumitra’s parting-advice to Laksmana — a symbol of Laksmana’s character

Translation:

His mother, desirous of his welfare, said to powerful L., her son, as he was taking her leave, after smelling his head, filled with tears (4) — "Though attached to your friends, you are sent forth to stay in the forest. Don't show any inattention, O son, to your brother as he goes to exile (5). Whether he be in adversity or prosperity, he is your refuge, O faultless one. This is the dharma of the virtuous in this world that one should be obedient to one's elder brother (6). For this is the eternal law of the family: generosity, dedication, sparing no effort in sacrifices and battles. Regard R. like D., Jänakī like me, the forest like Ayodhya; go, my dear, in peace (8).

Analysis of characterization:

Though being the exhortation of a loving mother to her departing son, this passage is no less a symbol of L.’s sublime
fraternal devotion to his elder brother R., to which he will give witness throughout his staying together with him in the forest: He will serve and guard R. with unswerving devotion, in accordance with the dharma of the virtuous and the age-old practice of the family. He will consider him his refuge in adversity and prosperity. He will be to him like a son unto a father, and to S. like a son unto a mother.

Classification:

Literary basis:

exposition: subjective - exhortative = symbolically predictive

Great moments of Laksmana's bearing witness to his loyal fraternal devotion and guardianship

Résumé:

We see implicit and silent testimonies of L.'s fraternal devotion all over the Rm.: in the way the poet describes his dedicated services in the forest - a beautiful testimony of which is e.g. III 14.6-7

`evamuktastu rāmeṇa lāksmanah saṁvatānjaliṁ / sītāsamakṣam kākutsthamidaṁ vacanamabravīt / 6 paravānasmi kākutstha tvayi varṣaśataṁ sthite / svayaṁ tu rucīre deśe kriyātāṁti mūṁ vada`/7

and R.'s acknowledgement, 14.24-27
in the way R. entrusts all his intimations to L., sharing his joys and sorrows with him, pouring out his heart to him whenever and wherever it has something to say, and in the way L. entrusts his intimations to R.; in the way R. entrusts L. with acting as his counsellor to Su., and the amiable way in which the latter introduces R.'s concern to him etc. etc.

We shall mark here only some great mile-stones of this brotherly devotion of L.:

As the trio spend the night with Guha, we see L., after affectionately fetching water and food for his brother and washing his feet, devotedly keeping guard over R. When Guha, seeing L. keeping awake to protect his brother, with sorrowful concern offers him a soft bed to lie down upon, specially prepared for him, and begs him to allow him to guard R. in his stead, L. declines this offer, saying how can he find sleep and happiness when his brother is lying on the bare ground with S., when such a peerless son of D., who has been obtained after great penances and hardships, is sleeping on grass in happy union with S., and as he muses on the pitiful plight of R. and envisages the immeasurable pain king D. must feel for his dear son, a pain that is bound to give him the death-blow, he falls into most melancholic musings on the dismal fate that impends over the royal family in their agony at their beloved R., and on their own ill-fortune of having to stay in a desolate forest - while the citizens will be fortunate to participate in the king's
obsequial rites and will live happily in the city full of life and luxuries. (II 44.24-27; 45. passim)

It is a testimony of L.'s affectionate brotherly dedication to his elder brother R. as well as of his tender-hearted concern for him - so tender-hearted indeed that it cannot but evoke feelings of sadness and dismal apprehensions, as his eyes rest on R. and S. sleeping on the ground in utter humility and austerity in a spirit of a selfless, devoted commitment to their destiny, and his mind envisages the pangs of agonies piercing D., Ks. and Sumitra's hearts full of grief for their son.

It is not unduly that the poet makes Guha, to comfort Bh., speak to him about the good nature of L. and relate to him all the details regarding L.'s decline of his offers and his sorrowful lamentation over the misfortune of his brother, as also regarding his affectionate services to R. before they went to bed (II 80-81).

As R. spends, with L. and S., the first night in the absence of the comforting company of Sumantra, the thought of whose ardent devotion to him - pouring out in heart-rending supplications to his master to allow him to find his happiness in following him and serving him - and of his having had to decline them has left an unspoken sore in his heart, even he, the very embodiment of steadfastness, for once is overcome with deep depression, as his mind goes out to his father, and in this state of deep depression he visualizes the evil and destructive agency of Kai., who, having entrapped D., a victim of infatuation to her charms, in the clutches of her shameless cunning, may now give D. the deathblow and may, in her bitter hatred, harass, nay even kill, poor Ks., the thought of whose never-ending sufferings for his sake now fills R. with boundless grief and urges him to request L. to go to Ayodhya and protect her against the evil doings of Kai.
When L. hears these pitiful lamentations, so unusual in the mouth of his brother, he, both to comfort R. and to put once and for all out of his mind any such unbearable thought that would subject him to separation from him, professes that he cannot live even for a moment without S. and him, that without him he does not wish to see his father or Satrughna or Sumantra or even heaven, professes his total self-surrender and love for R., the all-in-all of his life. (II 47)

When R. at the tumultuous noise — coming from the approaching army of Bh. — requests L. to ascertain its cause, and L. hastily climbs a tree and sees the vast army and convention of chariots, horses and elephants coming from the East, and recognizes the Kovidāra banner of Bh., L. at once is beset by the darkest apprehensions about Bh., thinking that he has come to kill them in order to have a free hand over the whole of his kingdom, and vows with flaming wrath destruction to him, who, the cause of all misfortune that has overcome R., rightfully deserves to be killed as he was the first to inflict harm on them, and freed of whom, R. may at last peacefully rule the whole world, and Kai. shall obtain the fruits of her action; nay, he will kill, he says, Kai. herself and all her attendants, and, slaughtering the entire host of enemies, he will transform the forest of Citrakīṭa into a blood-stained battle-field filled with corpses. When then R. reproaches L. for his rash, unjust apprehension, displaying before his mind the pure, selfless intention of Bh., and puts him down saying that, if he spoke those words out of a desire for the kingdom, he would tell so to Bh. and Bh. would gladly agree,— L., so the poet says, enters, as it were, his body with shame (praviveśeva avāni gātrāṇi lajjayā).

Though reflecting his rash excitability and irascibility, which so carries him to the extreme that, after being OUNTRYL down by his brother, he feels like creeping into his own body
for shame, L.'s ireful behaviour is but another testimony of his tender-hearted devotion - expressing itself in an over-vigilant guardianship, an over-anxious zeal to protect his brother from any emerging peril. Srinivasa Sastri\(^1\) expresses this very beautifully when he says - "Laksmana, so single-minded was he in guarding the interests of his brother, so like a faithful dog, he can only suspect everybody. What made him suspect is not his interest, is not any small idea, but the desire to protect what he conceived were the imperilled interests of Sri Rama..." And when L. realizes his folly, and is so filled with shame that he feels as if creeping into his own body, it is a manifestation of his painful awareness that the way of expression of his well-wishing concern for his brother was of so 'shallow' a kind that, while it failed to obtain acknowledgement on account of over-stepping its limits and upsetting R.'s mind, it exposed, to the depth of his heart, his own over-excitement and irascibility. (II 90-91)

L.'s brotherly dedication comes to a severe test when S., on hearing the cry of distress 'O Sītā, O Laksmana' and taking it for that of her husband, urges him to immediately go and save him. But L., though he earlier, when she took a fancy to the golden deer, warned R. against the sorcery of Mārica - at that time she did not pay heed to his warning - (41.4-7), stands firm by his brother's instruction not to leave her out of his care under any circumstances because he has absolute confidence in R.'s invincible prowess. And even though S., who is in a state of utter emotional desperation, misinterprets his firmness in this agonizing situation and charges him with the exorbitantly hurting words that he is an enemy in the form of a brother, who has no other desire than to destroy his brother in order to take advantage of her, he first conceals these cruel words in his heart, and, assuring her of the invulnerability and invincibility of R. from all the beings in the three worlds, requests her to be
comforted— for the cry of agony was not that of R., but of an evil Rk., who was commissioned to take revenge for the hostilities inflicted on the Rks. in Janasthāna, and so, in the face of such a danger, it would be a misdemeanor on his part if he did not abide by the word of his brother, who has entrusted her to his care. But when S., so beside herself with anguish and wrath, heaps outrage after outrage upon him, one more cruel than the other, picturing him as a villainous hypocrite, who, acting in the dark, has followed R. out of sinister desires for her, it is a shock too traumatic, a thought too unbelievable, an injury too hurting his innocence, an insult too wounding his honour as that L. could have any longer command over himself and restrain himself from proving the purity of his intention to her even at the cost of ignoring the sacred command to protect her, and could do so without gently criticising her attitude as an attitude of womanish fickleness and harshness while affirming, at the same time, his restraint from reproving her out of respect for her, who is a sister and goddess unto him, and without indicating, by way of a warning proclamation, that he would only wish, against all the inauspicious omens, that she may be protected by the deities of the forest, that she may be safe when he returns. Indeed, so utterly desperate is S. that, though L. is already about to leave her against his own conviction, she, as if not convinced yet of L.'s sincerity before he has not really put it into action, or as if not willing to allow him to have any second thought about it and to see him hesitate any longer, even if it is for a fraction of a moment (two possible interpretations; probably both together apply), threatens him with all kinds of suicide, and vows that she will never even with her feet touch any other man than R. For once more, L. tries to console her, looking into her eyes, himself depressed to the core of his heart, but, not noticing any response from her, he, at last, takes her leave, again and again casting a backward glance at her. (III 43)
L., for the first time, has failed in his brotherly dedication as a guardian, but he has failed in the midst of a crushing experience of humiliation— an experience so depressing, so agonizing, so hurting his innocence and wounding his honour that for him, to whom the well-being of R. and S. has been the uppermost concern, the all-in-all of his life, who has ever looked at S. with the eyes of a son looking at his mother, this is too unbearable an accusation as that he could remain a silent listener to such outrages on him, to such frantic gesticulations of anguish and menaces of suicide, without giving once and for all witness, though with the utmost reluctance, to the purity of his intention. Surely, the poet himself looks sympathetically at L.'s failure, though it is natural that he makes R. reprimand L. on his seeing him approaching alone for leaving S. behind, for too precious is the prize he has staked and too gruesome the omens lurking in all corners (s.55 latter part), and that R.'s reproach becomes more and more forceful as his apprehension of the absence of S. becomes more and more a reality (s.56). And when L., who first keeps quiet at R.'s reprimanders, defends himself— as R. takes him seriously to task— by explaining the whole story in all details, R. has no word of appreciation even then, but blames him, and expresses his displeasure at him, for having committed an improper deed by disobeying his mandate, since he listened to the angry words of S. inspite of his better knowledge that no Rk. would be able to attack him (III 57).

It is then that R. breaks into the most heart-rending, into the most pitiable and despair-ridden lamentsations and expressions of grief— so wringing and moving one's heart in their unfathomable depth and their overwhelming power of pathos, so intimate and touching in their ardent professions of pining love, so awe-imposing in their wrathful proclamations of destruction to the whole world (that not unduly this complex of scenes of R.'s lamentation is considered one of the most beautiful pieces of
world-literature), and it is in this terrible plight of R. that L. never fails to prove himself a source of comfort and solace to his brother's pining heart: According to the emotional gravity of R.'s pinings, he tries to comfort and cheer him up with sweet words, tries to encourage him with hope-inspiring advice and exhortation, tries to restrain him from his despair-ridden, wrathful proclamation of his going to destroy the whole universe—when the discovery of S.'s ornaments and the remnants of a bloody battle, with the corpse of the charioteer lying dead on the ground and foot-prints being visible, makes him believe that his beloved one has been killed or devoured by cruel Rks. And at a point where R.'s agony and wrath have reached a state of seemingly no return and a degree of violence never witnessed before by L., a point where R. has lost so totally control of himself that he is no longer himself, L. for a moment changes roles with R. Displaying a magnificent self-control and a deep insight into the psychological nature of R.'s despair, he acts as a counsellor who makes R. aware of the sublimity of his own self-disciplined nature, of the unexcelled acuteness of his own power of discernment, for all of which he does not need any advice, were it even from Brahaspati, how much less then from him, but which now, so obscured by the power of grief, has led him into a paroxysm which is not only totally unbefitting of a wise man like him, but totally unjust and unwarranted in the extent of his wrath and revengefulness— the more so when the whole world, even the Gods are subject to grief and misfortune and even ordinary beings are destined to endure their sufferings. And he urges him to engage his unexcelled prowess, a prowess so great that he does not need to feel intimidated by any being in the world, in searching for S. in all the worlds, sustained by his (R.'s) ever-ready assistance and that of the Ṛṣis, and advises him to resort to his desire only if he does not obtain S. from the Gods (III 61-62).

We see thus a L., who, though himself often tossed by the storms of grief and anger and in earnest need of the wise and
moralizing counsel of R., at the unprecedented moment where the
peace of mind of his brother is at stake, not only knows to
control himself with great exemplarity, but knows to give, and
knows to awake from slumber in R.'s own self, that very moralizing,
that very wise and yet so affectionate counsel which R. himself
would have given at a reverse situation. We see the miraculous
efficacy of L.'s brotherly love and concern, a concern that,
while at other times it had driven him to emotional upsurges and
outbursts of revolt, now has impelled him to cure the unprece-
dented paroxysm of despair of his brother.

And when R. and L., after the coronation of Su., withdraw to
the Prādravaṇa hill to spend the rainy season and the spell of
nature awakens in R. again and again pining thoughts of S.
(II.26-27. 29), L. again displays his wise counsellorship in that
he appeals to his brother not to allow himself to be subdued by
grief, but to fortify his energy — so as to be able to display his
prowess, when the occasion comes, in destroying the Rks., and when
R. acknowledges his words, commends his realisation of the need
to be true to himself and to his own nature, and to wait patiently
for the proper occasion (IV 26.8-14;19-23); in that, when R.'s
thoughts, in the midst of his painful musings, turn towards Su.,
whose regained happiness he contrasts with his unfulfilled desire,
the fulfilment of which appears to him to be far away due to the
unfavourable climatic conditions and his unwillingness to disturb
Su. all too soon in his happiness, and he, while his thoughts
revolve on Su., suggests to himself, with a ray of hope flashing
up in his mind, to trust in Su.'s favour and sense of gratitude
L. strengthens his brother in this hopeful trust of his
(IV 27// 27.45-46).

But tranquil, self-controlled, sympathetic L., is abruptly
transformed into the old L. — flying into wrath and filled with
revengefulness for his brother: When R. is led by his sentimental
musings on the manifestations of beauty and joy in nature - reawakening in him painful longings for S. - to the disheartening thought of Su.'s seeming lack of compassion for him, and, flying more and more into anger at what he conceives to be Su.'s vile, ungrateful breach of loyalty, commissions L. to go to Kiṣkindhā and communicate his warning mixed with words of conciliation and cynical threats to kill Su. with all his relatives if he should transgress his promise (see s.v. Sugrīva p. 433), - L., though R. has flown into anger for the same reason, in his flaming ire for his brother, now abuses the Vn. king in a yet more forceful way, calling him a hypocrite who changed his mind and took advantage of R.'s gentleness, and proclaiming that, unable to restrain his anger, he will kill that liar today. And he does this with such feelings of wrath that R. has to reprimand his behaviour as sinful and unworthy of a hero like him, and has to remind him to admonish Su. in a peaceful manner (IV 30.1-8). And even these admonishing words do not have their immediate effect. Nay, unable to bear such a grave injustice done to his brother, L., his heart burning with rage, upsets trees and rocks as he proceeds like a mad elephant towards Kiṣkindhā, and as he sees formidable Vns. seizing hundreds of mountain-peaks and tall trees, he gets doubly inflamed with rage like fire nourished with fuel, whereupon the Vns., frightened, flee in a hundred directions, and the leaders of them enter the palace of Su. and try to report the matter to him, yet in vain, since the king of the monkeys is drunk and enjoying himself with Tārā. And as then the most formidable Vns. are stationed to guard the entrance to Kiṣkindhā, L., at the thought of Su.'s unloyalty, flies into an anger so terrible, so like the doom's day fire, that Aṅgada, seeing him, falls into dejection for fear, and L. immediately directs trembling Aṅgada to announce his arrival to Su. (s.30). Meanwhile things are going on inside the palace. But L. is too impatient to wait any longer, and so he enters the gate, with all the Rk. guards, seeing him enraged, standing with folded hands, without
in any way attempting to restrain him from entering. Going through the city while admiring its magnificent palaces and gardens, and entering the shining palace of Su. and passing through a number of courts, he enters uncheck the glamorous female apartments, much to the consternation of the Vn. king, whom he finds seated on a golden seat and adorned with the most precious ornaments and garlands, and surrounded by beautiful damsels while vehemently embracing Rumā (IV 32). Burning with anger at Su.'s vile ingratitude, this sight makes him so furious that he reviles Su. in themidst of his wives far beyond the accusations made by R., describing Su.'s meanness of not returning his friend's favour as an unpardonable meanness greater than that of killing a Brāhmin, drinking wine, committing theft or breaking religious vows (s.33).

But when Su. propitiates L. with words expressing his gratitude to R. and his inefficiency in requiting such a heroic deed, thereby assuring R. of his own unequalled power, through which he will regain S. and kill Rv., and also promising his humble assistance, and asks R.'s forgiveness if he has committed any transgression with regard to trust or love, L. is, as it were, completely transformed. Not only has his anger completely calmed down, but his response is a total reversal of his earlier accusation: He expresses his delight at, and appreciates the great value of, Su.'s help to R., praising him as of being R.'s friend, as knowing dharma, grateful, heroic in battle, and equal in strength and power to R., and asks him to come now with him to R. in order to console him, as R. is deeply lamenting the loss of his beloved one. And he confesses to Su. that it is for this reason that he has spoken so harsh words to him and requests his forgiveness. (35.4-20).

We see a L., who, though only a little while ago swept away by storms of anger, on imagining a vile breach of loyalty against
his brother, on the part of Su., now that he has been convinced of Su.'s sincerity and loyalty, is so extremely happy for his brother that he not only sheds at once all grievances and forgives all the negligence and sexual debaucheries of Su. which caused him to draw out the execution of his promise, but pours praise after praise upon Su. and even requests him to forgive him his harsh words — another transformation of L., this time from an angry to an over-joyed L., a transformation which finds its explanation only in the very depth of his nature, a nature that is a blend of an over-flowing tender-hearted love with an inborn irascibility and an eruptive emotional state of mind.

In fact, if we look back, we have been seeing all the while a L. engrossed in tender, sympathetic concern for his brother, a L. engaging his whole self in self-less love to relieve, protect, comfort, encourage and defend his dear brother, in short, a L. being to his brother like a son unto a father (and to S. like a son unto a mother), and yet we have been seeing all the while a L., whose psychological state of mind was widely fluctuating along a scale ranging from rash excitability (irritability), tantalizing agony and flaming wrath and revengefulness, sad and pessimistic musings, to the calmness and tranquillity of offering solace, showing the highly tender and emotionally eruptive nature of L. — a nature so susceptible indeed that in a moment of traumatic humiliation it has induced him for once to violate his own brotherly commitment, which has always been the very heart-beat of his character and which he himself has professed to be the sarvasva of his own life.
Laksmana in ire against dharma
as he thinks that Sita has been beheaded by Indrajit

Translation:

Having heard those words of his, Rāghava, deprived of his senses for grief, fell on the ground like an uprooted tree (10). Seeing that Rāghava resembling a God fallen on the ground, the most excellent monkey-s came jumping hither from all sides (11). As he was burning with rage, unbearable like fire blazing up, they sprinkled him with lotus-scented waters (12). Then L., greatly distressed, embracing him with his arms, spoke to R. these indisposed words endowed with reason and meaning (13).—"Useless dharma, O noble one, is unable to save you, who, with senses subdued, follow an auspicious path, from calamities (14). In the manner in which non-moving and moving beings are perceptible, dharma is not; therefore dharma does not exist, that's my opinion (15). In the manner in which a non-moving being is manifest and likewise a moving being, in this manner this aim and end are not, otherwise, O righteous one, a man like you does not fall into misfortune (16). If adharma existed, Rv. would go to hell, and you possessed of dharma would never obtain misfortune (17). And since there is no misfortune to him, while you have fallen into misfortune, he should obtain dharma to the extent of his dharma, and adharma to the extent of his adharma (18). If men should be enjoined with dharma and not indulge in adharma, dharma should be the fruit of those acting according to dharma (19). Since riches (prosperity) increase in those on which adharma has its firm hold, and those who are committed to dharma suffer, these two are meaningless (20). If sinners are slain by dharma, O Rāghava, whom shall dharma slay when it is itself killed in the act of slaughter (21)? Or if he is killed or kills somebody else by a fixed order, it is destiny which is stained by that sinful act, and not he (22). How can one obtain final bliss by dharma, O destroyer of enemies, the reward of which is unseen, which is unmanifest and non-existent (23)? If righteousness were existent, O foremost of the righteous, there would not be any such unrighteousness as you have obtained; therefore righteousness does not occur (24). Or if dharma, itself weak and impotent, takes refuge in strength, then it is feeble and devoid of propriety and should not be attended to, that's my opinion (25). And if dharma is like a quality of strength existing in manliness, then abandon dharma and resort to strength as you do
to dharma (26). Then, if truthfulness to one’s word is dharma, as they say, 0 harasser of enemies, why has father, a liar and being ruthless to you, not been confined by you (27)? If dharma or adharma were existent, 0 harasser of enemies, Indra would not have performed a sacrifice after slaying a sage (28). Dharma taking recourse to adharma causes destruction, 0 Rāghava; as it is in his desire, so a man accomplishes all this (29). And this, 0 dear, is what I consider to be dharma, 0 Rāghava. By renouncing the kingdom, you have then chopped the root of dharma (30). All actions proceed from riches collected and accumulated from here and there, as rivers proceed from mountains (31). All the actions of a man deprived of wealth, possessed of little energy, are extinguished like small rivulets in the hot season (32). Such a man, longing, after he has abandoned wealth, for pleasure, as he grew up in pleasure, starts committing sin; thus vice has its origin (33). He who has riches has friends; he who has riches has relatives; he who has riches is a man in the world; he who has riches is learned (34). He who has riches is powerful; he who has riches is intelligent, he who has riches is endowed with great fortune; he who has riches is endowed with many graces (35). These faults related by me have been committed by you, in so far as you resolved on renunciation of wealth by abandoning the kingship (36). He who has riches possesses dharma, pleasure and wealth, and has all reverence. For a man without wealth, who desires for wealth, wealth is not attainable, even though he may strive after it (37). Joy and pleasure and pride, dharma, anger, tranquillity, self-command, all these proceed from wealth, 0 king (38). Whose is the world of those living the life of a dharmacarin, their world perishes. And those riches are not seen in you, like the planets are not seen on cloudy days (39). When you went forth to the forest, 0 hero, abiding by the word of father, your wife, dearer than your life, was abducted by a Rk. (40). Today, 0 hero, I shall remove by my action that immense grief caused by Indrajit. Therefore stand up, 0 Rāghava (41). So, 0 faultless one, I am arising, prompted by concern for you, and inflamed with anger, seeing the destruction of Janaki; I shall completely destroy Lāṅkā with my arrows, together with its horses, elephants and chariots, together with the lord of the Rks. (42).

Analysis of characterization:

1) Structural analysis of the argument

Dharma does not exist, for it is not perceptible like non-moving or moving beings.
If dharma-adharma existed, R., following the path of dharma, would not have fallen into misfortune, and Rv., following the path of adharma, would have gone to hell. Dharma and adharma should bear respective fruits. But what we see is that those who are committed to acharma prosper, while those who are committed to dharma suffer. Dharma can also not be a power of meting out retribution since it is itself annihilated in its process, any more than fate can be, which itself would be stained by the sinful act rather than the agent. Further, how could it be sucha power if its efficacy is unseen and it itself is unmanifest and non-existent; and if it did exist, then R. could not have suffered such adharma. And if dharma takes refuge in strength, if it is a quality of strength existing in manliness, then it is weak, devoid of dignity, and one should abandon it and resort to strength just as one does to dharma. - Gārvāka logic

If truthfulness is dharma, then how is it that R., rather than punishing D., a ruthless liar, followed his word? Real dharma is a dharma that resorts to adharma, that respects the desire of man, because only as such it has an efficacy as befitting for a Kṣatriya. - Kṣaträdharma logic

Real dharma has its root in artha and not in renunciation of artha. It is artha from where all actions proceed, while all actions deprived of artha are extirpated. All good comes from artha: friends, relatives, manliness, learnedness, intelligence, fortune, respect etc., joy, pleasure, pride, tranquillity, self-command. All misery and vices come from renunciation of artha. The world of the renouncing dharmaśaṅkara, like that of R., is a perishable world. By conforming to dharma, R. has fallen into the greatest misfortune. But L.'s manliness will put an end to it and take revenge for it. -practical common man logic

2) An ethico-psychological interpretation of the argument:

Comparing L.'s argumentation in the śāntvāda with the arguments exposed here, we find, speaking on a purely logical level, a remarkable transformation in L.'s philosophic conception of morality. While earlier he upheld a philosophy of kṣaträdharma - advocating a dharma that aspires for equity and justice under all circumstances even at the cost of inflicting injury on others, against R.'s philosophy of satyādharma - advocating a dharma that aspires
for righteousness for the sake of truth, goodness and peace, with no concern about one's own welfare, in a spirit of utter selflessness and forbearance towards whatever injustice done to oneself, - he now glides off into a very this-worldly, materialistic philosophy of practical morality, sharply rejecting R.'s idealistic philosophy of dharma and renunciation. Nay, at the very first impulse, he seems, in a spirit of Carvaka logic, to do away altogether with any consideration of dharma-adharma, which do not possess any perceptible reality, which only lead to perverse results, subjecting men following the path of righteousness to endless suffering and misery, while they make those who follow the path of righteousness prosper, and seems to suggest as the only way out to take recourse to bala, - only slowly to come to a more positive philosophy of life, in which he admits dharma, but such a dharma that does not degrade the personality of man, that respects human aspirations, and is conducive to efficiency in life. But to be so, it cannot remain an abstract, idealistic dharma cf renunciation, but must absorb a good deal of hardness (adharma), so as to stand up to life and guarantee justice [Ksatradharma mentality], and must be built on a solid mundane foundation of life, that is, on artha, for all human endeavours are rooted in artha, otherwise they just don't reach anywhere. All that is of value in this world: all human relationships, all human qualities and virtues, have their root in artha, while all misery and vices have their root in renunciation, since man can never still his desire for happiness, and, unable to do so, remains a stunted personality, and, always thirsting for happiness, but never reaching it, finally resorts to vices.

But the cause of L.'s change of attitude is very serious. While L.'s earlier advocation of a Ksatradharma mentality was, as we said, very much the outflow of his sympathetic brotherly concern for R., whom he saw plunged into a calamity brought about by an unjust design on the part of Kai., his instant materialistic
mentality of viewing things is the outflow of the most traumatic of traumatic experiences, the most agonizing of agonizing thoughts that he could have ever had in his mind, is, were it really true, the most fool-proof negation, the most total reversion, of what should be R.'s due reward for his indefatiguable pursuit of all the ideals and values of dharma which he committed himself to, which he advocated and defended with unflinching devotion and with total selflessness and forbearance towards any this-worldly, any peace-disrupting, injurious consideration. R. himself is so totally crushed down by this agonizing news of S.'s decapitation that he is unable to respond even with a single word to L.'s speech, that, when Vibhīṣaṇa consoles him, by clarifying Indrajit's magic trick, he has to ask to repeat his clarification since his senses were so dimmed that he could not grasp anything.

So we see a L., whose overflowing brotherly concern, now that he sees his brother plunged into the most heart-rending and agonizing misfortune, and that as a 'reward' for all the idealism and self-sacrifice R. displayed, cannot but re-awaken in him all the scruples which he had at the time when R. so adamantly insisted on following the word of father, and cannot but form in him a strong conviction of the futility of R.'s idealism of dharma and renunciation, and of the necessity to resort to a more down-to-earth, practical view of life, which does not degrade the aspirations and endeavours of man, but valorizes them and endows them with efficacy and reward, and cannot but urge him, now that the worst has happened, to once and for all awaken R. from the slumber of his idealism and bring him back to a sound mundane conception of life, lest he emotionally succumb.

Classification:

Literary basis:

exposition: objective - descriptive - explicit
tone: a tone of agony (gokabhava) with an overtone of wrath (krodhabhava), constituting a pathetic tone of sentiment
Lakṣmāna, a valiant and heroic warrior

Résumé:

The Yuddhakāṇḍa shows us in L. a warrior possessing all the qualities of an ideal yuddhavīra, next only to R. and H., namely, an awe-inspiring, unexcelled super-natural heroism, valour, strength, martial brightness, and skill in astras exhibited in fighting the Rks. - , a formidable, Herculean, bellicose ardour and wrath, and a relentless and irresistible pugnacity - , an awe-imposing, Herculean display of martial braggings and scornful proclamations to the enemy - heroic traits (the ingenuity and gamuts of their poetical depiction can be fathomed only by reading), which reach their highest elevation in L.'s spell-binding duel with Indrajit, in which he secures a triumphant victory extolled to the highest heaven by R., and in his thrilling duel with Rv., in which, after a most valiant fight, he falls unconscious because of the wounds inflicted upon him by Rv. - both unsurpassed duels which fall only little short of the awe-inspiring thrill of the duel between R. and Rv.

VI 116.77-79

Résumé:

V. closes the portrait of L. with a brief, but thought-evoking testimony of L.'s selfless love : R. offers L. the heir-apparentship. But L., though solicitated by him with all his heart, does not accede to this appointment - in order, so the poet means to say, to make way for his brother Bh.
A SYNTHETIC VIEW OF THE AUTHOR'S CONCEPTION
AND PORTRAIT OF LAKSMANA'S CHARACTER
Conception

What strikes us most when we read through the passages highlighting L., is the unity in disunity of his character, the unity being constituted by his selfless love and brotherly devotion, the disunity by the fluctuation of his emotional reactions. Both are intended as such by the poet, and the very conception of L.'s character is one of unity in disunity. But because of the fluctuating and very often eruptive nature of L.'s psychic temperament, which is always part of his self-revelation, the poet has been able to give full scope to the development of the pattern of spontaneity. He uses many stereotyped devices to express L.'s psychological reactions, but impregnates them with a personal spirit of liveliness, so that they evoke much more than they stand for, evoke the whole personality of L. This is one of the most immediate impressions one gets from listening to the poet's exposition of L.'s character. And in fact, this is part of the ingenious art of V. as a bard-poet, and though we have seen it all along, it has perhaps nowhere found such a universal application as here, with, at the same time, such a depth of evocation and personal liveliness.

Another characteristic in the presentation of L.'s character is the use of the pattern of unspoken self-revelation. As much of what we said about it in the context of Bh. applies also here, we refer the reader to Bh.
Since a fairly cohesive portrait of L.'s character emerges from a successive reading of the interpretative portions of our analysis, we better prescind from unfolding the portrait of L.'s character step by step and give, instead, an over-all outline of his personality as it imprints itself in the minds of the audience in the impression poet has left on them.

L., the very heart-beat of his elder brother R. ever since his early child-hood days, R.'s second life outside his own self, is the embodiment, as it were, of brotherly devotion, a devotion that finds its expression in an overflowing brotherly affection, a tender-hearted sympathetic concern and in self-sacrificing love, and prompts him to consider it the all-in-all of his life, the most intimate desire and happiness of his heart to share whatever destiny with his brother, to alleviate whatever hardships and comfort whatever sorrows of his and to conduct in whatever way possible to his happiness by serving and guarding him with never-failing loyalty. This brotherly affection and concern of L. is of an extremely tender nature, for L. is by nature of a psychic temperament that is tender-hearted and emotionally eruptive, and is blended with an innate irascibility and a deeply engrained attitude of intolerance towards inequity. L.'s attachment to R. is thus of so tender a nature that anything he would think would disrupt the well-being, happiness and peace of mind of his brother, would disrupt his own well-being, happiness and peace of mind, that any insult done to, any injustice inflicted upon his brother, would be an insult done to himself, an injustice inflicted upon himself.
But he sees how his brother, venerated as the ideal of all men, has been subjected to the greatest misfortune by the heinous injustice of Kai., and what he thinks to be, the perverse infatuation of D., and he sees how R., in his idealistic spirit of forbearance, allows himself insistently to be strung with the fetters of a dharma that robs him of his power of right judgment and makes him the victim of the heinous cruelty of others. And so he cannot bear the thought of such atrocious injustice inflicted upon his brother, and, though shallow as his efforts may appear in pledging himself to the vanity of kṣatradharma, he cannot but feel impelled with flaming ire to engage his whole self in saving R. from the clutches of Kai.'s heinous ambition and to dispel in him all fancies of dharma and daiva that invariably hold in check his mind, to instigate him to take charge of the kingdom by force, and proclaim his firm protection to R., under his unassailable shielding power, vowing destruction to all those who should obstruct his brother's installation.

And while he happily shares R.'s destiny in the forest and serves and guards him with unflagging devotion, he is tossed by various psychological experiences: He is necessitated to muse on the pitiful plight of R. and the agony of those who left him behind. He witnesses with his own eyes how even R., at a moment of depression, gives vent to sorrowful musings. He fears that he (R.) is being persecuted by his own brother Bh. He witnesses how R. falls into greatest misfortune, and how his heart is tantalized with grief and mental agony. He witnesses how he is apparently cheated by his own ally. And so, in such moments, although always losing himself completely in the heart of R., always engaging his whole self in relieving, protecting, comforting, encouraging and defending his dear brother, in short, always being to him like a son unto a father and to S. like a son unto a mother, L.'s emotionally tender and eruptive psyche is tossed hither and thither in a state of often violent fluctuations.
along a scale ranging, according the nature of his experience and the emergency of the situation, from tantalizing agony, rash excitability, and flaming wrath and revengefulness, sad and pessimistic musings, to the serene calmness and tranquillity of offering solace, and an all-forgiving enthusiasm. So susceptible indeed is L.'s psyche that in a moment of traumatic humiliation it forces him to violate his own brotherly commitment, which has always been the very hear-beat of his character and which he himself has professed to be the sarvāsva of his own life.

It looks as if there were almost no emotional state of mind where L.'s heart would not be tossed to in traumatic moments: So, when he sees his brother plunged into the most pitiable and agonizing misfortune that he could have ever imagined - so unjust a reward for all his idealism and self-sacrifice, L. cannot but affirm his conviction of the utter futility of R.'s ideal of dharma and renunciation, and pledge himself to a more down-to-earth moral view of life, a view that does not degrade the aspirations and endeavours of man, but valorizes them and endows them with efficiency and reward, and cannot but feel impelled to once and for all awaken R. from the slumber of his idealism and bring him back to a more sound mundane conception of life, lest he emotionally succumb.

But though L.'s heart has often been flung hither and thither by the winds of emotion, his intimate and self-sacrificing brotherly devotion has always stood out like a lofty peak, commended by R. again and again and praised and acknowledged by S. without envy, and expressed by her in these beautiful sentiments:
pitaraḥ mātaraḥ caiva sammānyābhīpṛasādyya ca /
anupravrajito rāmaḥ sumitrā yena suprajāḥ /
ānukūlyena dharmāmatā tyaktvā sukhmanuttamam // 44
anugacchati kākutsthām bhrātaraḥ pālayavane /
simhaskandho mahābhūrmanasvī priyādārsanaḥ // 45
pitravadvartate rāme mātrvanmāṁ samācaraṇaḥ /
hriyamāṇāṁ tadā vīro na tu māṁ veda laksmanah // 46
vṛddhopasevi laksāṁvāṁ sakto na bahubhāṣīta /
rājasputraḥ priyasreṣṭhaḥ sadṛṣaḥ śvaśurasya me // 47
mattah priyataro nityaḥ bhratā rāmasya lakṣmānaḥ /
niyukto dhūri yasyaṁ tu tāmudvahati vīryavān // 48
3

A CRITICISM OF MODERN SCHOLARS' VIEWS
ON THE CHARACTERIZATION OF LAKSMANA
Iyer's extensive exposition of L.'s character is very good, apart from a few issues which are either due to late interpolations, or are not or only marginally intended by the author. We have, however, to say that, while the author brings out very well the gamuts of L.'s brotherly love, he does not sufficiently expose the gamuts of his eruptive psychological temperament, which, though an outflow of his tender-hearted brotherly love, has a resonance in the depth of his very nature. Except from a slightly superficial approach in projecting L.'s character, Iyer, however, draws quite a striking portrait, of which we want to quote some extracts as examples:

"Lakṣaṇa is the elder of the two sons of Emperor Daśaratha by his second queen, Sumitra. He was therefore a half-brother of Rāma. But somehow the attachment between them was so strong and deep that the like of it is not ordinarily met with even in sons born of the same mother. The affection that bound them to each other is literally without a parallel in life or in literature. They really constituted one soul, though housed in two different bodies. So complete was their identification. In fact, Rāma looked upon his brother as his *alter ego*. If we could imagine a respiratory system functioning outside the limits of a man's bodily frame, Lakṣaṇa would easily fill that role in regard to Rāma. The poet uses the expressive simile *bahiḥprāṇa ivāparah* in more than one context. Even if they were twins the attachment could not have been more organic or vital. The love which Rāma bore to his brother, especially to Lakṣaṇa, was dealt with in a previous number of this journal. The latter reciprocated in full measure and in a most concrete manner also. He translated it into terms of service to his brother. This was the ruling passion of Lakṣaṇa's life. There is no end to
the services which he rendered to his brother, whom he worshipped on this side of idolatry. He fully believed that he was born only to serve Rama and that therein lay the highest goal of his life. It is remarkable that his mother also took the same view as is borne out by the advice that she gave to him when he was setting out for the forest along with his brother. On a later occasion she tells Kausalya that her son is promoting his highest and most abiding welfare by faithfully serving his brother in the forest (II.XLIV.57). Sumantra also thinks likewise. Leaving the party when they had reached the banks of the Ganga, Sumantra returned to Ayodhya and found Kausalya in a most disconsolate condition. He tried to console her by giving his impression of the way in which the three had taken to forest life. Speaking about Lakšmana he says that by wholeheartedly serving his brother he was winning his way to Eternal Bliss (II.LX.6). He added that to Lakšmana Rama was everything—brother, master, kinsman and father—all rolled up into one. To safeguard Rama's legitimate rights against unjust encroachment, to prevent any possible harm to his life or person and to do all kinds of service to him was the three-fold aim of Lakšmana. These are the three forms in which his love expressed itself.

As regards defending his elder brother's legitimate rights against unjust encroachment, we know that Lakšmana never reconciled himself to Rama's decision to renounce his claims to the throne of Ayodhya and betake himself to the forest. It was wrong in his opinion to imagine that Daśaratha had given his word to Kaikeyī and it had to be respected by his son. Daśaratha was not so innocent as Rama imagined him to be. Rather it was a deep game to which the Emperor was also a party. All his sympathy towards Rama was only make-believe. It was a pity that Rama did not see into this game and allowed himself to be duped by Kaikeyī and his father. Rama's respect towards his father and the word that he was supposed to have given was therefore misplaced. The
proper thing to do was to fight out the issue. In the absence of reason and fair play there was no alternative for them but to resort to force. One need have no compunction in the matter. The father is no father and even the Guru is no Guru if their actions are opposed to natural justice. Both deserve to be bound or even put to death if they do not see reason. If Rāma felt any delicacy in the matter of enforcing his claims, he would take it up and fight it out to the finish. Kaikeyī, Bharata and all their kinsmen and sympathizers will be taught the lesson of their lives. He did not bear arms for ornamental purposes. Rather, he bore them to uphold justice and truth. The soft man was always bound to be denied his claims and even treated with contempt. Softness and politeness were out of place in dealing with the common run of mankind. They were sure to be taken as signs of weakness and helplessness.

Rāma's reference to Fate, Destiny, Divine Dispensation etc. was equally gall and wormwood to Lakṣmaṇa. He had no faith in such a mysterious Power. In Lakṣmaṇa's opinion man was the master of his destiny, the architect of his own fortunes. If only man was sufficiently courageous and powerful, no Fate or Destiny could deprive him of his rights. If it tried to balk his brother of the throne, he would fight it and show who was the mightier of the two, himself or Fate. He would knock it down, by the force of his arms. It was unmanly and against the Ksatriya tradition to submit passively to evil. To suppose that it was all due to a divine thrusting-on was the worst form of self-deception.

Nor were Rāma's discourses on the concept of Dharma any more convincing to his brother. He took every occasion to rail against it. There was no evidence to prove that it was operative. It was not open to perception as other material things were. Even granting that it was an immaterial, spiritual force, its existence
must be justified by results. Virtuous people who always walked in the straight path of Dharma must be rewarded with happiness and the good things of life, while wicked folk who always violated Dharma must be punished. But what obtained in the world was quite the reverse. Rāma, who meticulously observed the rule of Dharma in everything that he said and did, had to undergo many sufferings; while his adversary, who set at naught all rules of decency, was flourishing like 'the green bay tree'. Dharma which did not have the power to make itself felt was no good. It was a mere will-o'-the-whisp. Wealth conferred power and hence it was more worth while than mere abstract Dharma.

For these reasons, Laksmana could never reconcile himself to the decision of his brother to give up his claims and proceed to the forest. He would set right the whole matter if only his brother allowed him a free hand. If he had his way he would reverse the situation in no time and get his brother installed on the throne which was his by the right of primogeniture and immemorial practice. The injustice involved in depriving him of such an inalienable right was rankling in Laksmana's mind. His anger knew no bounds. He was straining at the leash. It was with much difficulty that his brother could keep him under check. Not even all the arguments and powers of persuasion of Rāma could restrain him. Such was his indignation. So strongly did he feel for his brother. If he did not take the law into his own hands it was simply due to the respect that he had for his brother. Rarely do we come across a man who is prepared to go to such lengths in defence of his brother's rights."

"... Sugrīva was greatly pleased by this eulogy. Then both of them came to the presence of Rāma. Thus in advancing the cause of his brother, Laksmana was most skilful. Though quick to get angry he was equally quick in cooling down. That shows not only his magnanimous nature but his fine sense of tact in
handling a delicate situation. A lesser man would have spoiled the whole matter by inept opportunistic stiffness. Not that Lakṣmaṇa was an insincere opportunist who spoke language to suit the occasion. Far from that. The transformation from anger to sweet reasonableness was genuine. The words of praise that he spoke were not intended to flatter Sugrīva. They came rather from the depths of Lakṣmaṇa's heart. When he discovered that the facts were different from what he had imagined them to be there was nothing left to him but to apologize and he did so without any reservation whatsoever. Lakṣmaṇa never meant one thing and said another. He blurted out whatever he felt."

"But the question still remains why Lakṣmaṇa reached to Bharata's approach so differently from his brother. That the same situation should call forth two entirely opposed reactions from two brothers who were so closely moving with each other is a rather strange phenomenon. In comparison with Rāma's noble sentiments, pitched specially in a very high key, Lakṣmaṇa's suspicions and his anger appear very sordid and seem to pull him down in the estimation of readers. But in fairness to Lakṣmaṇa it must be said that it is his exceeding love for Rāma which leads him to suspect Bharata's intentions. He was a realist and had no illusions about human nature. He knew that power corrupted even the best minds and that power-mad politicians would be up to anything. Political murders were not uncommon even in those days. He therefore feared the worst and did not want to be caught napping. He was not an idealist like Rāma, who read his own mind into other people and thought that there was no evil in human nature... His view of human nature was altogether transcendent. Ordinary people cannot be expected to rise to that level. Further, Lakṣmaṇa, who regarded himself as his brother's keeper, could not afford to take any risks in the matter. That he suspected Bharata is therefore no matter for him to be ashamed of or for others to condemn. Rather he deserves praise without
stint for the watchful manner in which he protected his brother's life and person."

K. S. Ramaswami Sastri

Ramaswami Sastri gives well the essential features of L.'s character, which he outlines by way of successive quotations; he, however, does not succeed in drawing an integrated picture of him. From this point of view, there is no point in discussing his presentation, which is bound to be superficial and lacking all the psychology which V. had put in the depiction of his character.

V. S. Srinivasa Sastri

Judging Sastri's presentation of L.'s character as a whole, we have to say that, while in certain parts it is quite good (in one or two points even very good), though generally and even in so central a question as the sansvāda between L. and R. not penetrating to the depth of L.'s psyche, it is in other parts vitiated by an over-stress on perspectives which were not or were only marginally in the author's mind, as well as by his inclusion of Uttarakāṇḍa passages and other late interpolations, and his sometimes artificial attempt to bring them in line with passages of apparently similar outlook in the earlier parts of the Rm. We quote two passages which we find interesting enough to comment upon:

"... ahau tāvanmahāraje pitṛtvam nopalakṣaye / bhrātā bhartā ca bandhusca pita ca mama Rāghavāḥ // II.58.31
There is the *summum bonum* of all his existence. He repudiates his father without qualification. 'I do not consider Dasaratha my father. To me Rama is brother, he is my protector, he is my relation, and he is my father,' and he adds, 'Rama takes in my heart the place which I would have given to Dasaratha if he had behaved properly.' You see at a glance how Lakṣmana makes his life one of utter devotion to RAMA, whereas Rama’s greatest love was the love of an abstraction called RIGHT. What a tremendous difference between Rama and Lakṣmana!

Lakṣmana was, as you know, characterized as the very embodiment of the principle of 'kaīnkyā'; his 'Lakṣmi' was 'Kaiṅkarya-lakṣmi,' that is to say, 'kaīnkyā' or service was the badge or distinguishing 'lakṣana' or mark of Lakṣmana. What are the chief points in his character? He has a dog’s qualities, a slave’s virtues. As a watchful guard, if there is a stranger or even a friend in apparent enmity, he barks; he suspects, but as a faithful slave will suspect. This is *kaīnkyā* in the extreme sense, utter devotion and nothing else. You see these characteristics in him displayed throughout. Twice at the post of duty his vigilance is tried hard, once when Sīta at Panchavati contrary to Rama’s orders urges him to leave her and go to Rama’s aid and threatens to take her life if he will not, and again when Durvasas against Rama’s orders demands admission to his presence and threatens a comprehensive curse for neglect. He suspects Bharata of hostile designs when he comes to Chitrakuta followed by his army and by all Ayodhya, and Rama has gently to reprove him. His efficiency in work is attested by Rama as well as by Sīta. Retenence is a marked quality of such a character. He lets Sugriva speak for him in the council of war about Vibhīsana; at Sīta’s ordeal by fire he never raises his voice. Angry and violent he can be, but at bottom he is a simple and unsophisticated nature. You see him quick to repent, generous, nay magnanimous, in owning to his fault. Shy of women,
he has a high respect for the sex. Simple as he is then, you will allow that Lakshmana possesses many lovable qualities, all springing from his uttermost devotion to Rama. 8)

Critical Comments: All that Sastri says is more or less correct, but it does not delve deeply enough into the psychological aspects of L.'s character. Furthermore, the contrastation of R. and L.'s ideals of life as love of an abstraction called dharma on the part of R. (which he explicitates on pp. 31-33) and devotion to R. on the part of L., is too simplistic a contrastation. Our analyses both of the saññāda between Bharata and Rama as well as the saññāda between L. and R. have clearly shown that R.'s devotion to dharma is far, far more than a devotion to an abstraction!

"... Lakshmana was the very soul of obedience, of literal obedience. And yet in order perhaps to show how life is full of difficulties for us all, how the man who commands is placed oftentimes in a difficult position and how a man who is the very soul of obedience is also placed in a very difficult position, how this world, even when we have the highest characters, one way or another puts us all in difficult situations, let me refer to this. We have got Sri Rama putting Lakshmana as it were through a hard test. Going away in search of the golden deer, he had told Lakshmana, 'Be careful. This is a forest full of perils and dangers. I am going away to bring what Sita desires with her whole heart. Mind you, you have to take care of her. Don't stir. Watch keenly, watch with all your skill.' So many words were not necessary for Lakshmana. He knew his business and he took every care of Sita. You all know what happened. When Maricha at the end cried in imitation of Rama's voice, poor Sita was maddened with grief and she ordered Lakshmana to go up and see. He was not willing. He tried to tell her all about her husband as if she did not know. 'Don't you know your husband?
Can there be any danger to him? What is likely to happen to him? And if anything is to happen to him, am I going to save him? Don't fear. I am here to protect you. I am under strict orders. Your husband is a bad man to disobey.' She would not listen. You know what things she says. Horrible things to repeat. Having said them all and finding that even that most harsh imputation was not quite able to dislodge him from his post of duty, Sita adds ... 'While you are looking on I am going to die at your feet.' What was the poor fellow to do? And the woman will do it. She was all too near doing it. She was a Rajput woman. She threatened to do it. Lakshmana thought therefore that he was in the last extremity. What was he to do? Was he to see her die at his feet? Was he to obey his brother or was he to forget at the last moment his brother's order and go and save the life of this poor woman? She was mad. She abused him. He abused her and abused her sex. 'You women are horrible creatures. Yes, I will go. I can't see you die. You have driven me to choose between one horrible alternative, that of disobeying my brother, and the other alternative which I consider still more horrible, to see you kill yourself before me. Well, I will go. That seems to be the lesser evil. Well, I will go.' Having gone, when he reported this fact to his brother, I do not know what he expected. Lakshmana could not have expected any mercy from his brother. He did not ask for it at all. That was not his nature. But you and I pleading for Lakshmana at that moment would have said, 'What was this poor fellow to do? You gave him an order. He obeyed it as long as he humanly could. But if that woman would drive him away under threat of killing herself, do you mean to say he should still have stayed?' We might have pleaded with Sri Rama. Not that Rama did anything. But he passed a solemn censure. What more was needed for a sensitive person? Rama passed a solemn censure. He said, 'A woman is a woman after all. That poor girl, she loves me so much. I am her very life, what would be left to her without me? She
thought that I was in danger. You must expect, you must be prepared for her saying all sorts of things, like a mad woman. She might have said anything, she might have threatened to do anything. You ought not to have come away. You ought to have stayed and protected her.' Would you be in Sita's place, would you be in Rama's place, would you be in Lakshmana's place? All the three the Poet contrives to put in a desperate situation and all reach the limits of their endurance, every one of them. Here it was Rama says, ... 'You have disobeyed me.' That means, 'I am displeased with you. You have earned my displeasure.' Poor Lakshmana! After all, he did what was best in the harsh circumstances. That was his reward. A more generous man, one who was less of a disciplinarian, might have said, 'Yes, you were in a terrible trial, Lakshmana. I think you did right. I might have done the same.' Well, Rama could have risen to that magnanimous height and spoken in that strain. But Rama was the embodiment of Dharma. For him duty is duty. You are posted in a place from which you should not stir, a soldier's post of duty. To turn away is to desert, to incur the penalty of being shot immediately, out of hand."

Critical Comments: We find Sastri's treatment of this passage very good, but we would like to make two small corrections:

1) We would not say that L. disobeys R.'s word because he is driven to choose between two horrible alternatives, that of disobeying his brother and that of seeing S. killing herself before his eyes, but we would say L. does so because S.'s accusation is an injury too hurting his innocence, an insult too wounding his honour as that he, who has always looked at S. with the eyes of a son looking at his mother, could remain a silent listener to such a vulgar accusation without giving one and for all witness to the purity of his heart. This alone, so the poet wants to say, was enough to drive him out.
But S. is in so frantic a state of mind that, before he can have any second thought, she threatens him with all sorts of suicides, so as not to allow him to hesitate any longer, even for so little as the fraction of a moment.

2) R. reprimands L. not so much because he has violated his duty, and for R. duty is duty, but because the loss of S. is too precious a thing to stake with, and the thought of it is too agonizing a thought as that he could not find an outlet for his grief by way of severely reproving his brother for his negligence, which has brought about that whole catastrophe. But for the grief that tantalizes his heart as he apprehends the loss of S., R.'s reprimander is very moderate indeed.  

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1) p.48
2) Lakṣaṇa. KK XXVII 117-122; 177-183.
4) ib. p. 120.
5) ib. p. 177.
   Valmiki - India's First World-Poet - XV. KK XXXI 267-269.
7) pp. 28-57. Summary pp. II-IV.
8) pp. 33-34.  9) pp. 53-55.
10) We leave out Iyengar's exposition (pp. 150-156) since it, far from penetrating to the core of L.'s personality, is hardly more than an interpretative account of L.'s life. We also do not take into account the articles on L., in: Maharasteṛaṛī (Sri Rāmāyana-Samālocana athvā Rāmāyaṇacā Upasahār. Pune 1927. Part II, pp. 293-301) and by V. Raghavan (A sketch of the character of Laksmana. Bharata Dharma (Madras) Dec. 1931, Jan-Febr. 1932) (not available).
SITA

853
A SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS
OF THE CHARACTERIZATION OF SITA
Prelude

We see a first emergence of the ideal character-portrait of S. in the description, by an early interpolator, of the budding of an intimate conjugal love between R. and S., a heart-to-heart intimacy, uniquely enhanced by the sublime character and brightness of R., who resembles Viṣṇu in glory, and by the great spiritual virtues and physical qualities of S., who, in brightness and beauty, resembles the goddesses, being, as it were, Lākṣmī incarnate—a beautiful, symbolic foreshadowing of the sublimity of S.'s character and, par excellence, of her unique wifely devotion. (I 76.14-18)

In the original version, however, V. introduced S.'s personality straight-away in her role as a living testimony of wifely faithfulness and devotion to her husband, face to face with a critical situation, which, though not demanding the utmost from her, elicits a most momentous test as to the depth and intimacy of her love and devotion. The poet does so straight-away, after giving the audience only a few faint glimpses of her personality: in the manner of her prayerful meditation to Viṣṇu, in the company of Ks., for the welfare of R. (II 4.32-33) and of her blessings to her husband on his being summoned to D.'s palace (II 14.17)—glimpses which do foreshadow some light on the loftiness of her devotion, but still leave the audience in tension as to her real role in critical situations, which alone are the real touch-stones of a character.
(23) After bidding farewell to Ks., R., endowed with her blessings, went along the royal road filled with people, his heart agitated on account of their goodness. Vaidehi did not know anything. After worshipping the Gods with grateful and joyful heart, according to the customs of the kings, she waited for the prince to come. But R., with the joy of the people revolving in his head and the thought of Ks.'s agony on account of him still vivid in his mind, howeversoever strong his commitment to dharma was, could not but feel restless with sorrow and anxiety as to S.'s state of mind with which she would receive this bad news, and entered his palace with his head stooping down for shame. Seeing her husband in such an unprecedented dejected state, she asked him why there was this dejection in him, why his loving face did not shine, protected by a royal umbrella, why..., why..., why..., in short, why all the glamour associated with the day of consecration was absent and his face looked so dispirited — when today was the Pusya Bárhaspata, the most auspicious day declared by the learned Brâhmins, and everything was ready for his consecration. At this, R. answered with gentle words — "You see, venerable father sends me into exile, listen how this came about. My father, truthful to his promise, had once granted Ks. two boons, She has now lawfully stopped my consecration by asking for this boon: my stay in the forest for 14 years and Bh.'s installation in the heir-apparentship. I have come here to see you once more before I go to the forest. You will be under the dominion of Bh. So, act discreetly, never speak too much of me in his presence, for experience teaches that men endowed with prosperity do not bear another's praise. Therefore, do not relate my merits before him. Don't let yourself be treated with special care, but always act with kindness in his presence. I, on my part, shall fulfill the promise of my father and go to the forest. Devote yourself during my absence to fasting, worshiping the Gods, honouring with due respect father D. and aged mother Ks. - afflicted with grief, as also my other mothers, and treat L. and Satrughna - dearer to me than my life, like your own sons. Never offend Bh., who is king and lord of the country and the family. Kings rejoice when propitiated with virtuous
conduct and served with great care, but they are angry if it is the contrary ... I shall go to the forest, you shall dwell here and observe my words in a manner that you do not do anything displeasing to anybody."

(24) Hearing such words, Jānakī, whose heart knew nothing than love for her husband, was filled with anger, and said - "Dear husband, all other relatives, father, mother, brother, son and daughter-in-law, forge their own fortune by resorting to their own merits. The wife alone shares the fortune of her husband. Her husband's fortune is her fortune, his destiny is her destiny. Whatever destiny befalls her husband, befalls her, too. If her husband has been ordered to stay in the forest, she also has been ordered so. Her only aim in life consists in sharing the destiny of her husband. After death, nobody, neither father nor son nor her own Self nor mother nor friend, but her husband alone is her refuge. If you go to the forest, I shall walk in front of you, removing kusa grass and thorns. Throw away your īśya and roga [R.'s firm resolution to leave her back in the palace, however much his decision is meant to be for the good of his wife, cannot but awaken the impression in S. that R. has no interest for the desires of her heart, that he simply passes her over, that he is impatient and angry ] and take me with you to the forest - free of anxiety. I have not committed any sin that I should be punished to stay at home. Be it in foremost palaces or in heavenly cars or in flights through the air, be it in whatever condition, the shadow of a husband's feet is above everything. I have been taught by mother and father various forms of seeking protection. Now I don't need to be told how I have to behave. I shall live as happily in the forest as in the palace of my father. I do not care for the three worlds, but I do care about my fidelity to my husband. As a self-controlled brahmacārī, always obedient to you, I shall sport with you in the forest. You are able to protect even other people in the forest, how much more then me! I shall take full delight in living an ascetic life, shall never cause you grief, I yearn to enjoy in your company all the enchantments and the majestic beauty of nature [ spun out ] even for a 1000 years. Without you I would not even find happiness if I were given the choice to stay in heaven. I shall stay in the forest like in father's house, as your beloved wife grasping your feet. Please, take me, whose heart is wholly devoted to you, who, forsaken by you, am determined to die. I shall not be a burden to you." But virtuous R. was unwilling to take her with him to the forest, and in order to dissuade her, he said to her :

(25) "S., you are born of a noble family and always intent on dharma. Do here your dharma, don't let yourself be carried away by the fancy of your heart. Drop this resolution on living in the forest, for the forest is full of miseries and dangers, I am
saying this for your own good. I know the forest only as a source of pain and never as a fountain of joy [especially for a woman]: The roarings of mountain-torrents and of lions living in mountain-caves cause pain to your ear. After the toil of the day, one has to sleep on a bed of broken leaves on the naked ground. One has to undertake fasts with all one's strength, has to wear matted locks and bark-garments. There is terrible wind and darkness, there is constant hunger, there are great dangers: Many serpents of all kinds of forms move across the earth with unrestrained power; snakes having their hiding-place in tortuous rivers block your way; night-birds with awesome shrieks, scorpions, worms, snake-bites, mosquitoes plague you all the time... It is too much for you to go to the forest, the forest is unfit for you; it is full of miseries."

(26) Though R. was not resolved on taking S. with him to the forest, she did not pay heed to his words, and spoke to him, filled with tears, gently these words—"All the dosas related by you concerning stay in the forest are converted into merits in as far as they are governed by my love for you. By the order of my elders, I have to go with you; separated from you I have to abandon my life. In your presence not even Indra can assault me. A wife forsaken by her husband is unable to live. In fact, so you yourself have pointed out to me (or: you yourself have been a proof of this to me). Further, I have heard from Brähmins—knowing good and bad marks—in my father's house that it is my destiny to stay in the forest. Since that time I have always had a desire to stay in the forest, and it is my duty to comply with this order of staying in the forest. Now the occasion has come to fulfill it. I know that in staying in the forest there are unpleasant moments in manifold ways, but they are experienced as such only by men who are uncontrolled. When I was a girl, I heard a virtuous bhiksunī predict my stay in the forest to my mother. And formerly, I have propitiated you many a time to allow me to go with you for vanavasa. I am prepared to go, I desire to serve you as a hero staying in the forest. I shall be a faithful wife, following my husband out of love, pure-minded and stainless, for my husband is my God. Even in the next world I shall be in happy union with you, for a sacred text of the Brähmanas says 'To whom a wife has been given by her parents according to svadharmā, his she will also be in the next world.' For what reason do you not wish to take me along, your own virtuous and faithful wife? It is your duty to take me with you, your devoted and faithful wife, your afflicted wife even-tempered in joy and sorrow. If you don't take me with you, I shall end my life by taking poison or entering fire or water." Though S. enticed her husband in many ways, he did not consent to taking her with him to the forest. Thereupon Maithili fell into great anxiety, and filled the earth with tears of grief and anger. As she was thus engrossed with sorrow, R., in order to bring her back to herself, tried to comfort her repeatedly.
(27) But S., intent on living in the forest, utterly agitated, embraced her husband out of love and affection and said - "Why did my father approve of you, having obtained a woman in the form of a man as his son-in-law? A lie it is, alas, that people through ignorance, say that greater lustre than in R. there isn't even in the blazing sun. Why are you so dejected, why are you so afraid that you wish to forsake me - devoted to none but you? Know me to be faithful, submissive to your command like Savitri devoted to Satyavan. I do not see even with my mind another than you. Should I go with you, O Rāghava, like another one defiling her race? Do you wish to give me, your chaste wife - having served you for such a long time, away to others like an actor does? Without taking me, you ought not to go to the forest. Whether it be penance or the forest or heaven, it will be together with you. I shall not feel any weariness while walking behind you; it will be like lying on a comfortable bed. With you as my companion the pricks of kuśa, kaśa, śara grass and of reeds and thorny trees will be soft like cotton and deerskin. I shall consider the dust raised by the wind like precious, sandal-paste, and when I rest on grassy grounds on aed of kuśa grass in the woods, what greater happiness is there than this? Whatever leaf or root or fruit you fetch for me, be it little or abundant, will be like amṛta to me. I shall not remember mother or father or the palace, happily enjoying myself with the flowers and fruits of the seasons. You should not see anything disagreeable in taking me with you, you need not be worried about me, nor shall I be a burden to you. Whatever is with you, is heaven, whatever is without you, is hell. Knowing this, obtain joy with me. If you do not take me with you, I shall drink poison. Let me not come under the subjection of enemies. Forsaken by you, I shall not be able to live even for a moment, how much less 14 long years of grief!" Lamenting pitifully and filled with utter distress, S. deeply embraced her husband and wept aloud. Pierced by these words of R., she shed streams of tears flowing from her eyes like water from lotuses. As R. saw his wife almost unconscious for grief, he embraced her affectionately and comforted her - "If you are in sorrow, I do not even desire heaven. I have no fear of anything, like Svayambhu himself. Not knowing your whole mind, I disagreed with your staying in the forest, even though I am able to protect you. But since you are determined to stay in the forest together with me, I cannot abandon you, like one who is self-possessed cannot abandon fame. I shall follow dharma as practised by the sages of old, like Suvarcāla follows the Sun. This dharma is, to follow the command of mother and father. If I violate this command, I am unable to live. As my father, abiding by the path of satyadharma, orders me, so I wish to act, for that is the eternal dharma. Follow me and walk in the same path of dharma. Give jewels to the Brāhmīns and food to the beggars, and quickly prepare yourself." When S. saw her husband approve of her going with him,
she quickly set out, with cheerful and self-satisfied mind, to distribute wealth and jewels.

Analysis of characterization:

The Sītā-Rāma-saṁvāda, as one may call this complex of scenes, is one of the highlights of the Rm. Though a dialectic of arguments in its external form, it is not so much a confrontation of two views, of two mentalities, and thus not a representation of two characters, but a conflict of hearts and a conflict of two motivations.

Let us first see what is R.'s motivation, first, in not taking into account S's heroic desire to share, with a spirit of joyful devotion and love, whatever destiny with her husband, even to the extremest of hardships and difficulties, though R. ought to know her deep devotion and faithfulness to him, and secondly, in refuting that very heroic desire of her, even though she asserts it with such vigour as leaves no doubt as to her sincerity and unflinching determination, and accepting it only when she is near to an emotional break-down.

R.'s first attitude is not only intelligible, but it reveals his tactfulness and considerateness in as far as he does not expect from his wife such heroic renunciation as would be beyond the capacity of any normal human person, not to speak of a tender lady like her brought up in the midst of royal glory and comfort, and, instead, gives her lavish advice as to how to behave tactfully in the presence of Bh. and devote herself to fasting, religious worship, honouring D. and Ks., etc. and never to do anything in her sorrow that may give the impression of her being dissatisfied with and resentful against her superiors. R.'s attitude, thus, is both an expression of his dutiful concern for her happiness of mind during her separation from him, as
also a tactful device to divert her attention from the grief-evoking present situation to the future she has to face, before she may lose herself in lamentation at the situation or may allow herself to be carried away by indeliberate, fanciful desire of her heart to follow him to the forest — in short, it is but an outflow of his love and selfless concern for her welfare, carried by a spirit of firm responsibility and tactful consideration.

However, R.'s rejection of her emphatic desire to follow him becomes less and less intelligible, especially, the more insistent her desire becomes. It is still intelligible when L. refuses her request inspite of her almost sermonizing enunciation that a wife's vocation lies in her sharing the fortune of her husband, who is her fortune, her destiny and refuge; of her insistence on her purity and sinlessness, for which she does not deserve the punishment of being left behind; of her firm declaration that she knows what to do and does not need to be told how to behave; of her assertions that she will find full happiness in serving her husband like a brahmacharini, in living an ascetic life in the forest, and that she yearns with her whole heart to enjoy all the enchantments and the splendour of nature even for a 1000 years in his loving company, deprived of which she would not even feel happy in heaven, were she given such a choice — since R. may believe that, in the first impulse of her boundless love and devotion to him and her over-enthusiastic fancy for the romance of forest life, she, a tender lady brought up amidst the comforts of city life and unaware of the hardships and terrors of life in the forest, does not know what she is talking about, does not apprehend the hardness of reality: the miseries, hardships and dangers awaiting her in the forest, and may, facing such adverse reality, however devoted she may be, lose heart for sheer inability to cope with it, and may then repent of her rash decision which she had made without having a faint idea of what dangers would await her. Such a terrible thing he wants to
prevent by all means, as he knows too well the psychology of women, and knows too well that in such a crucial situation things cannot be taken lightly, cannot be deliberated often enough. And so, he sets out to paint with glowing colours all the terrors and hardships and dangers of forest life, so as to disillusion her once and for all, and all her indeliberate and romantic ideas and ideals springing forth from her heart at the first impulse of her boundless devotion.

But it is less intelligible when he remains obstinate even when she asserts that she will take whatever miseries and hardships in a spirit of love and self-forbearance, that she has been predicted by astrologers as well as by a bhikṣuṇī in her father's house that it is her destiny to live in the forest, and that she has ever since desired for it, nay even repeatedly requested her husband for it; when she points out the sacredness of the union between husband and wife, which is indissoluble so much so that it even endures after death, and declares that she, a devoted and faithful wife, pure-hearted and stainless, ought not to be forsaken by her husband, and entreats him in the most affectionate manner, warmly embracing him - staging a dramatic show of anxiety and distress in her pining for her husband's consent to allow her to share in his life of hardships. It is less intelligible when he turns a deaf ear to such heartfelt assertions and entreaties, and opens up only when she is near-to an emotional break-down - after staging, in a state of utter restlessness and desperation, an almost frantic display of womanly psychology, in that she designates him ironically as a cowardly woman in the form of a man, a victim of dejection and fear, belying the saying of the people that there is more brightness in him than in the blazing sun; in that she accuses him of degrading her, an ever-devoted, chaste and faithful wife like Sāvitrī, to the status of a common woman sold by actors, in that she once more asserts and paints in loud colours how she will
experience all the miseries and hardships of the forest as sources of supreme joy and happiness, and assures him that she will never be a burden to him; in that she declares that her life has no fulfilment but in his company, that whatever is with him, is heaven, whatever is without him, is hell, and that she will not be able to live even for a moment without him, nay, if abandoned by him, she will take her own life, - all the time embracing him affectionately and entreating him beseechingly, her heart well-nigh broken for distress and despair and all that because she pines for her husband's consent to her wish to share in his hardships.

R. says:

\[
tava \text{ sarvamabhipräyamavi} jñävä \text{ subhänane} / \\
väsäṁ na rocayë'ranye saktimänapi rakëane / 26 \\
Vyäṣṭäṣäi mayä sārdhaṁ vanaväsäya Maithili / \\
nä vihätäñ mayä sākyä kirtirätmañvata yathä / 27
\]

But is this true? Did not S. give full proof of her unflinching determination by her arguments earlier (s.26)? Either R.'s justification is not quite sincere, or S.'s words did not convince R. sufficiently. Or, they did convince him, but the situation was too crucial a thing as that R. could, head-over-heels, even at the assurance of S.'s deepest devotion to him, fall in with her determination before she would testify with her whole personality to how supremely happy she would be in sharing with her husband the gravest of miseries, and this in a way that it would emerge as her most intimate, her most heartfelt desire - to an extent that its rejection would throw her into the darkest depths of unhappiness, nay, would make her well-nigh despair of her life - : This, because only then he can be absolutely sure that his wife may not lose heart in difficulties, only then he can be absolutely sure that he has not staked his responsibility, the consequences
of which would be disastrous. And in fact, as soon as his doubts have been allayed, he is immediately ready to take him, nay, he even expresses the beautiful sentiment that her grief pains him so much that, for it, he would not even desire heaven: \textit{na devi tava duḥkhena svargaṁ api bhūrocaye} / (25)

And so, R.'s hesitation is ultimately not a lack of compassion, but a testimony of the highest and deepest love, a love that does not allow itself to be at the mercy of first impulses and indeliberate fancies, but bases itself on a deep responsibility and foresight, to the perpetual good of his beloved, even though this may cause her initial pain.

S.'s motivation is crystal-clear, and so we can straightaway frame a portrait of her sublime devotion as it emerges in this complex of scenes, taking into account our conclusions regarding the psychology of R.'s attitude.

As S., engrossed with happy thoughts of the great glory awaiting her husband and engaged in fervent prayers for his welfare, sees R. all of a sudden lost in sorrow and anxiety instead of being filled with joy and happiness and being surrounded with the pomp and glamour of royal festivity customary on the great, auspicious day of a prince's consecration in the heir-apparentship, she is at once taken aback, and apprehending that something has perturbed his peace of mind, that some misfortune has befallen him, she inquires what happened, with all the display of restlessness and anxiety that is characteristic of womanly temperament. S.'s restless and anxious questions only intensify R.'s sorrowfulness, which had entered his mind at the thought of the state of mind with which his wife would receive his bad news, and which is nourished by the painful thought of his mother's mental agony on account of him and the joyous festivity of the people, and so, driven by an anxious and dutiful concern for her peace of mind both for the present unhappy moment and for the
future, he, with tactful consideration, sets out to give her substantial advice as to how to behave tactfully in the presence of Bh. and instructs her to devote herself to fasting, worshiping the Gods and honouring her relatives. But S. cannot but receive such an attitude of R. with great indignation, since for her, the very embodiment of wifely devotion and love, a wife's vocation of life lies in sharing the fortune of her husband, who is her fortune, her destiny, her refuge, who is her all-in-all; for her a wife's union with her husband is so sacred, so indissoluble as to even last after death; for her all life with her husband, even amidst the gravest of miseries and hardships, is heaven, all life separated from her husband, be it even in heaven, is hell; for her, thus, to share in the gravest of her husband's destiny is the most intimate desire of her heart, the greatest happiness to indulge in. And so, if R. expresses his resolution to leave her behind in the palace, it cannot but create the impression in her that he does not really fathom the depth of her boundless devotion to him, that, on the other hand, he is indignant and angry at her for some wrong done by her, or that he must consider her a nuisance in his company - all the time pestering him with her troubles and indisposition and not knowing how to cope with them. These are the impressions coming to her mind - not that she may no longer believe, in the back of her mind, that the actual motive of her husband is a distorted idea of his concern for her welfare. But these impressions are emotionally so irresistible that she, whether she is now convinced or only half-convinced of them, has to revolt against them, has to wipe them once and for all off her husband's mind, and, more than that, has to instill in him an irrevocable conviction of what it means to her to be his devoted and faithful wife.

She does so in that she enunciates that a wife's vocation lies in her sharing the fortune of her husband, who is her fortune, destiny and refuge, in that she demonstrates her purity
and sinlessness, for which she does not deserve the punishment to be left behind, and in that she asserts that she knows what to do and does not need to be told how to behave, that she will find full happiness in serving him like a brahmacharini, in living an ascetic life in the forest, and that she yearns with her whole heart to enjoy all the enchantments of nature even for a 1000 years in his loving company, deprived of which she would not even feel happy in heaven, were she given such a choice. But she does not succeed since R. still thinks that in the first impulse of her boundless love and due to an over-enthusiastic fancy for the romance of forest life she, a tender lady brought up amidst the comforts of city life and unaware of the terrors and hardships of forest life, does not really visualize the hardness of reality: the miseries, hardships and dangers awaiting her in the forest, and that she, facing such adverse reality, may lose heart for sheer failure to cope with it. And so he sets out to paint with glowing colours all the terrors and hardships and dangers of forest life, so as to disillusion once and for all her, what he thinks to be, rash and romantic ideas and ideals springing forth from her heart at the first impulse of her boundless devotion.

As R. paints the dosas of the forest, S. apprehends what he has in mind, but this pains her all the more, since in the depths of her heart she knows nothing more joyful than to experience these hardships and miseries if it is only for the sake of her husband, in whose loving company they become, through her spirit of love and self-forbearance, sources of supreme joy and happiness. But R. does not read this inmost desire of her heart, and he has revealed this now openly, but he speaks of all kinds of ungrounded fears and scruples, and this is what tantalizes so much her heart that her husband, whom she has loved and served with ever-loyal devotion, by this creates an impression in her as though he had not grasped how unfathomable the depth of her love is, as though he had not intuited the all-in-all of her devotion,
her total readiness to sacrifice her all in love for her husband. And so, she once more asserts, lavishing all her affection on him and pouring out the sorrows of her heart, that she will take whatever miseries and hardships in a spirit of love and self-forbearance - whereby pointing to a prediction made by astrologers and a bhiksuni in her father's house - saying that it was her destiny to live in the forest, and to the desire she has cherished ever since to accomplish this prediction - , and once more enunciates the sacredness of the conjugal union between husband and wife, which is so indissoluble as to even endure after death, and declares that she, a devoted and faithful wife, pure-hearted and stainless, ought not to be forsaken by him.

But B., being, as if, deaf even to the most heartfelt asseverations as to the unfathomable depth of her self-sacrificing devotion, S. - unable to grasp what is going on in his mind - is left in a state of utter desperation, and, unable to move him by the sincerest of her asseverations, stages an almost frantic display of womanly psychology: in that she goes as far as to ironically designate her husband as a cowardly woman in the form of a man, a victim of dejection and fear, belying the saying of the people that there is more brightness in him than in the blazing sun, and accuses him of degrading her, an ever-devoted, chaste and faithful wife like Savitri, to a common woman sold by actors; in that she once more and most emphatically asserts and describes how she will experience all the miseries and hardships and dangers associated with life in the forest as sources of supreme joy and happiness, and assures him that she will never be a burden to him... a display so fraught with despair at her frustrated longing for her husband's consent to her wish to share in his hardships as shows that she is near-to an emotional break-down.
S. thus delivers the most unique testimony of a wife's love for, and devotion to, her husband—so unfathomable in depth, and of so total a commitment and such self-denial, that she considers it the most intimate desire of her heart, the greatest joy and happiness of her life to share with her husband the most adverse destiny of life, to take upon herself the gravest of miseries and hardships for the sake of him, who is her fortune, her destiny, and refuge, who is the all-in-all of her life, in whose loving union all life, even amidst the gravest miseries and hardships, is heaven, in separation from whom all delights of the world, even heaven, are hell. And so, her heart is deeply distressed and agitated at the thought that her husband may not read this intimate desire of her heart, that he may even not intuit how unfathomable the depth of her devotion is and how total her commitment and self-sacrifice are. And when R., turns, as if, a deaf ear even to the sincerest of her asseverations, she is left in a state of utter desperation, unable to grasp what is going on in the mind of her husband. But a woman with as indestructible a resolution as imperishable a devotion, with no less unfathomable a wealth of emotions than unfathomable a wealth of love, S.'s whole personality vibrates so vigorously in her frantic display of sorrow and despair as she pines for her husband's consent that, though herself at the edge of an emotional break-down, she has given the fullest and most unmistakable proof of her devotion, a devotion so transparent in its integrity and firmness that, to be sure, even the hardest trials in days to come will not prevail over it, that, whatever will come to test her personality, will only be further testimonies of her fidelity to her sublime love and devotion.
Great testimonies of Sita's sublime wifely devotion and loyalty in the midst of tantalizing experiences of anxiety, agony and pinings for her husband

Many pages could be filled with descriptions of S.'s unique devotion to her husband as it is everywhere transparent in the poet's depiction of R.'s and S.'s life in the forest = as e.g. in her wonderful asseverations of her ever-loyal devotion to her husband, in answer to Ks.'s well-wishing fare-well counsel (II 34.19-21; 22-27) = cf. the wonderful verses 25-27:

nātantri vādyate vīnā nācakro vartate rathāḥ /
napatiḥ sukhamedheta vā svādapi satātmajā // 25
mitaṁ ādāti hi pitā mitaṁ mātā mitaṁ sutāḥ /
amitasva hi dātārām bhartaraṁ kā na pūjāya // 26
sāhamevañcata īrṣṭā śrutadharmaparāvāra /
ārye kimavamanvēvaṁ strīnām bhartā hi daivatam // 27

or to the loving instructions given by Anasūryā, Atri's venerable sage-wife, who is herself a symbol of sublime wifely devotion (II 109-110); in her fervent prayers for the welfare of her dear ones to the Gaṅgā (II 46.47-73) and Śyāma (II 49.13); in the manifestations of her exuberant joy which she finds in sharing her husband's austere life in the forest despite that fact that she is physically pulled down by its hardships, in sporting with him in the romantic woods, whilst taking delight in the enchantments of nature and the company of birds and animals = explicitly expressed in many places, but perhaps nowhere so beautifully as in R.'s pathetic lamentations —, to name only a few examples — but we shall restrict ourselves to such testimonies which are real touchstones of her love and devotion, involving her whole personality and subjecting her to great emotional trials.
In III 8 the poet gives us a wonderful example of S.'s concern for the spiritual welfare of R. S. has known her R. as ever and whole-heartedly committed to satyadharma, as always aspiring for righteousness for the sake of truth, goodness and peace, forbearing every injury done to him while refraining from every kind of himsa to others. But the sudden realization that her husband has promised to the sages of the Daṇḍakā forest that he will slay the Rks. for their protection, that he is entering the Daṇḍakā forest, weaponed with bow and arrow, though he has pledged himself, prompted by his firm resolve on following the word of father, whole-heartedly to the life of an ascetic, has filled her with great anxiety. She fears that the use of arms may divert her husband from his commitment to asceticism in that it may arouse his ardour for fight so dear to kṣatriyas - do not the tales of old teach us examples how the most devoted sages have, by resorting to arms, become infatuated with wrath and have engaged in wanton cruelty, as a punishment of which they have gone to hell? Nay, she feels that the very idea of killing Rks. without provocation is a great offence against the dharma of a muni, whose duty is to keep his mind pure and untainted by himsa, whilst devoting himself to austerities of his own self. And so, she fears that, by becoming unfaithful to his commitment to dharma, to which he has pledged himself so whole-heartedly and with such firm and heroic resolve in obedience to the word of his father, the happiness of mind and spiritual welfare arising from it may abandon him. It is for this, the happiness and welfare of her husband, that she shows such deep anxiety, which is pure and genuine anxiety untainted by any didactic motivation. Nay, in her great humility and respect for her husband, she feels as though she is an inconsiderate woman displaying her fickleness in attempting to advise somebody who is the very embodiment of loyalty to dharma. But still, her wifely love and concern for her husband is of too tender a nature,
her heart is too throbbing with tender feminine sentiments and emotional urges as that she could restrain herself from emptying her anxiety, however much she may feel the impropriety of her action.  

Thus S. manifests a concern that is the deepest a human being can show for a fellow human being since it touches the very depth of his self and affects the ultimate spiritual destiny of his being—cf. the wonderful verses of R.'s response, III 9.2:

\[
\text{hitamuktaṁ tvayā devi snigdhaya sadṛśaṁ vacaḥ} / \\
kuleṁ vyapadiśvyantā ca dharmajñe janakātmāye  \\
\]

and 9.20:

\[
\text{mama snehacca sauhārdādidadamuktaṁ tvayā vacaḥ} / \\
pārituṣṭo'smyahāṁ site na hyanistō'nuśīyate} / \\
sadṛśaṁ canurūpaṁ ca kulasya tava ṣobhane  \\
\]

and a concern that is deeply feminine—springing from a heart that is filled with tender sentiments and emotional urges, coupled with a bashful awareness of its impropriety, an awareness of it as something that has its root in womanish fickleness.

Before depicting with glowing colours S.'s great mental agony, which she suffers as a result of her separation from R. and the harassments inflicted on her by brutal Rv., V. shows us S. in a great emotional crisis. In doing so, he leads us with great psychological insight into the depths of her tender-hearted feminine psyche, which, though firmly rooted in wifely devotion, is tossed by a breeze of feminine fancies and moods surging up through the force of external circumstances into an unprecedented state of high emotions, to ebb away then in a depression of restless pensiveness.
It all starts with the appearance of the heart-stealing kanakamryga - so irresistible in its unprecedented, spell-binding beauty and grace of movements (which the poet takes pains to depict with glowing colours) that Jānakī, who has grown a special liking for the enchantments of nature and the denizens of the forest, is so intoxicated by its sight that she simply cannot help feasting her eyes on it in sheer wonder and delight, and cannot help begging her husband to secure it for her - as an object of wonderment for her and her relatives, if he captures it alive, or for its beautiful golden skin, if he kills it - , paying not the least heed to L.'s warning that the whole show may be the cunning trick of the sorcerer Mārīca having a sinful motive in mind. (III 40.12-41.20)

Already in great emotional excitement, S., on hearing the agonized cry 'O Sītā, O Laksmaṇa', is immediately filled with the utmost anxiety. And in this traumatic anxiety, she, when L. refuses her urgent request to go and save her husband, is carried away into a state of utter emotional desperation, so totally losing control of herself as to misinterpret L.'s attitude and to charge him with the exorbitantly hurting words that he is an enemy in the form of a brother, who has no other desire than to destroy his brother in order to take advantage of her. Nay, at the sincerest assertions of L. that R. is unconquerable by any being in the three worlds, that the cry of agony was that of a Rk., who was commissioned to take revenge for the hostilities inflicted on the Rks. in Janasthāna, and that, in the face of this danger, it would be a misdemeanour on his part if he were to leave her, she flies into such an unprecedented frenzy as to pour outrage after outrage upon him, one more cruel than the other, picturing him as a villainous hypocrite, who, acting in the dark, has followed R. out of an evil desire for her. And though L. is already about to leave her against his own conviction, she, as if not yet convinced of his sincerity before he has
not really given proof of it, as if not willing to allow him to have any second thought about it, to see him hesitate even for so little as the fraction of a moment, threatens him with all kinds of suicide; and vowing that she will never touch even with her feet any other man than R., she is left in a state of a complete emotional break-down.

V. shows us in this great emotional trial of S. how even a wife of the greatest nobility of character loses, prompted by her boundless love and devotion for her husband and on account of the tender nature of her feminine sentiments and emotional urges, so totally control of herself in a traumatic moment of anxiety that she indulges in the most cruel and hurting defamations against her own brother-in-law, who has ever treated her with the purity of innocence with which a son treats her mother. (III 43)

After this frantic upsurge of emotions, S. is left in a state of silent grief and restless pensiveness, thinking about the fate of her husband. It is in this state that she is interrupted by the arrival of Rv. - dressed as a parivṛājaka -, whose salutatory speech is so full of ambiguous compliments that she cannot help feeling a little strange about it - which the poet indicates in a hidden, delicate way. But a respectful lady ever honouring the Brāhmīns with due respect, S., in her mistaken belief, based on Rv.'s external behaviour, that he is a Brāhmin, restrains her odd feelings and offers him all hospitality, without, however, being able to hide her internal restlessness, which is subconsciously nourished by her suppressed feeling of uneasiness: She stretches, as it were, her eyes to gaze upon R. and L. in the distance, and, after she has given a full introduction of herself and an account of her life, she says that R. would soon return from his hunt, thus hiding the real state of affairs. (III 44-45 passim)
Thus, though S.'s emotions, after their stormy upsurge, have ebbed away in a depression of restless pensiveness, it all looks as if another storm is bound to come, and is bound to come very soon with Rv.'s self-revelation of his identity and his unholy intention, but as to what this storm will be like the poet keeps us in suspense till the Rk. has ended his 'blandishing' 'love' proposal (II 45.21-27).

S.'s reaction (III 45.28-43) is unique in its kind. Not only does she assert her firm devotion and loyalty to her husband, and thereby, while drawing sarcastic, derogatory parallels with Rv.'s boastful self-assertion, extol the insurmountable greatness of R., not only, to speak in symbolic language, does she stand like an immovable rock against Rv.'s insolent assaults, but, prompted by her indignation at his exorbitantly mean and insolent intrusion upon her, she becomes like another Kālī, as it were, fuming with rage and contempt, scorning his aspiration for her as an aspiration for the wife of one whose greatness of character is a world above the despicable lowness of his own, with words so full of abuse as would force any honourable man to gasp for relief.

"But you, a miserable jackal, desire me - a lioness unattainable for you. I am unable to be touched by you like the radial rays of the Sun (32). You wretched one are seeing plenty of golden trees - in that you desire, 0 Rv., the beloved wife of Rāghava (33). You wish to extract from its mouth the fangs of a hungry lion, the foe of animals, or the fang of a swift-moving poisonous snake (34). You wish to take away mount Mandana, the foremost of mountains, with your hand; you wish to drink deadly poison and then go in peace (35). You are rubbing your eye with a pointed blade, you are licking a razor with your tongue - in that you wish to approach the beloved wife of Rāghava (36). You wish to cross the ocean by clinging to a stone round your neck,
you wish to catch both sun and moon together - in that you wish to assault the beloved wife of R. (37). Seeing blazing fire, you wish to capture it with your clothes - in that you wish to capture the blessed wife of R. (38). You wish to walk over pointed iron-lances - in that you wish to approach the respectable wife of R. (39). There is as great a difference between D. and you as there is between a lion and a jackal in the forest, as there is between the ocean and a drop of saliva, and as there is between the choicest liquor and sour gruel (40). There is as great a difference between D. and you as there is between the metals of gold and lead, as there is between sandal-water and mud, as there is between an elephant and a cat, in the forest (41). There is as great a difference between D. and you as there is between Garuḍa and a crow, as there is between a peacock and a cormorant as there is between a vulture and a crane in the forest (42). As long as that R., whose power is equal to that of thousand-eyed Indra, stands there with bow and arrows in hand, I shall not decay, even if I am taken away by you, as little as a diamond swallowed by a fly (43).

Thus, S. reveals herself in her rejection of Rv.'s love-proposal both as a wife possessed of an unflinching firmness of devotion and fidelity to her husband, and as a wife, who, though in a state of gravest anxiety as to R.'s and her own fate and future, is so strong-mindedly so self-assured of her virtue, so like a task-master lashing his whip, as to scourge her self-imposed courtier with the most abominating and contemptuous abuses ever heard of.

And when Rv., as if not having enough of her scorn, reiterates his proposal, resorting to bombastic braggings about his all-powerfulness and heroism, about the glamour and magnificence of his city, Daṅkā, which, so he thinks in his perverse imagination, would make S. forget human ladies and R., and to disparaging R.
as a poor ascetic, who has been banished on account of his weakness and is useless for S., and to appealing haughtily to her conscience that she ought not to reject the lord of the Rakṣasīs, who has personally come to her out of 'love', S. has only words of sarcastic contempt and words predicting an abominable end for him and all the Rakṣasīs. (III 46. cf. pp. 593 ff.)

But the situation is too grave, and soon S. is subjected to a most tantalizing ordeal: She is forcefully seized by Rv. and abducted into the air; she is aghast to see with her own eyes Rv.'s ruthless slaughter of Jātāyu, who, trying to thwart his way, sacrifices his life for her; she is pestered again by Rv.'s perverse love-proposal, and, finally, as he is rebuffed by her, she is confined in the Aśoka grove, heavily guarded by frightful Rakṣasīs, with the warning that, if she does not yield to his wishes within 12 months, she will be cut into pieces by the cooks to be his breakfast. While spending her time in the Aśoka grove in deep sorrow and pining for her husband—a state in which H. finds her—, she is again tortured by Rv.'s advances and submitted, at his instigation, to the most terrifying threats of the Rakṣasīs.

During these emotional ordeals, S.'s heart is first, at Rv.'s cruel abduction of her, pierced by frantic pangs of agony fraught with tantalizing grief and fear, an agony expressing itself in her uttering despair-ridden cries for R.'s and L.'s help, in her besetting the creatures of the forest with the most pitiful entreaties to tell R. of her abduction, and in her heart-rending pathetic lamentations over her destiny, with all nature vibrating with her in sorrow and sympathy, — an agony, however, blended with an outburst of wild fury and a sadistic desire to find an outlet for her disdain and scorn, which she then, amidst gravest emotional despair and fear, relentlessly heaps upon him with provocative, sarcastic, and abusing words, carried by a heroic
spirit of firmness, strong-mindedness and courage of heart and prompted by her pride in her wifely devotion. (II 47.- 50-51)

This emotional scale of mental agony and fear, of a surging wrath and desire to find an outlet for her scorn, of courage of heart and wifely pride, all existent at one and the same time, reaches the most dramatic dimension in the wild abuses, scornful vilifications, bitter revilements and sarcastic, derogatory warnings by means of which she, meeting Rv.'s repeated love-advances, upbraids his abominable sinfulness and fickleness of mind, his exorbitant presumption in aspiring after the wife of one who is a world above his despicable lowness of character, and his shameful cowardice of robbing her in the absence of R. (III 54; V 19-20 passim; for more detailed contents see s.v. Rāvana pp.599-608) — all the time displaying a heroic spirit of firmness, of courage of heart and of pride in her wifely devotion, while, yet, to the core of her being, afflicted with agony and grief and tossed by despair-ridden anxieties and fears.

While S. is alone with herself in the Aśoka forest, in the midst, though, of hideous-looking Rākṣasīs, lost in sorrowful musings, restless fears and tantalizing pinings for R. - while emaciated with fasting and penance - , which so impregnate her whole physical and external appearance that she looks like Beauty, but divested of its embellishment (the poet uses a series of beautiful similes to express this idea) - it is all a wonderful, silent testimony of her sublime chastity, devotion, and fidelity to her husband in the midst of agony and grief, which so impresses H. that his thoughts often and again stray away to R. and his state of mind, that he is prompted to reflect with praise and joy on the intimate bond of love between R. and S. (V 13. 15 passim), and that he relates all this with heart-felt sympathy to E. (V 63.12ff.)
S.'s agony of heart is greatly intensified at the sight of approaching Rv. The poet draws all resources of poetic imagination to depict the fear haunting her mind and the overwhelming distress and pain of her heart—so impregnating every fibre of her person as to make her look like a divested figure of beauty and pining devotion, lost in an ocean of grief, praying to the Gods for the destruction of Rv. (V 17). And when Rv. subjects S. to the torturing persuasions and threats of the guarding Rākṣasīs, she looks like agony and fear embodied, yet in the midst of all despair she asserts her ever-loyal devotion and fidelity to her husband, for which she is ready to sacrifice her life, but, being so disconsolate, so filled with grief and despair at her never-ending miseries and so filled with pining thoughts of R., she breaks, before the very eyes of the Rākṣasīs, into most gloomy and frantic lamentations, musings and imaginations, being tossed hither and thither: from pathetic exclamations addressed to her dear ones, to disconsolate musings on her miserable life so devoid of hope and meaning that death would be the only relief were it only that death took pity on her; from remorseful self-accusations of her past deeds, to imprecations against her human existence and her subjection to others, against not being able to end her life by her free will, and again to disconsolate musings; from abuses of Rv.'s cruelty, to affirmations of her unflinching fidelity to R.; from disheartened broodings on the incomprehensible fact that R. has not come to her rescue inspite of his unexcelled prowess, to consoling herself with the thought that he may not be aware of her location, and to memories of Jaṭāyu, who laid down his life for her, the only witness of her abduction; from playing with the imagination of what would happen if R. comes to know her situation: he would take revenge and cause devastation and endless sufferings to all Laṅkā, to vividly imagining that this will actually happen and happen very soon; from the midst of such hopeful visions to the despairing thought that the villainous and cruel Rks., who do not
know righteousness, may cut her to pieces, and the victory of R. may coincide with her death, a thought which drives her to still more pessimistic and gloomy, nay, even 'unholy' imaginations (that R. and L. have given her up as alive, that R. has renounced his life for grief; that he, being a rajasa with dharma as his only desire, has no need for his wife; that, as she is out of sight, he has no affection for her; that she has been forsaken by him for her lack of merits and fortune; that R. and L. have laid down their weapons and are roaming about in the forest or have been killed by Rv.) - imaginations which fill her with but one desire, the desire to die, were it that death took pity on her, imaginations which make her envy the tranquillity of mind of the sages, who are unaffected by love and loss of love: But she, forsaken by R. and under the subjection of sinful Rv., has no other desire than to renounce her life. (V 23-24). In short, in her disconsolate state of mind, in her despair at her never-ending miseries, in her pining thoughts of R., her heart traverses the entire scale of her despondent soul, so filled with all kinds of dark and gloomy imaginations as to make her even think R. has lost love for her, and to make her feel as if her only relief lay in renouncing her life, were it that death had pity on her.

Thus, we can sum up S.'s psychological demeanour in meeting the emotional ordeal of her abduction and confinement in the Aśoka forest by saying :

In her encounter with the gravest and most tantalizing sorrows, fears and pinings, which so impregnate her personality as to make her be constantly engrossed with sorrowful musings and lamentations - as to make her a veritable emblem of sorrow and beauty, and yet of silent, sublime fortitude - , which, at times, make her so disconsolate and so fill her with despair as to make her traverse the entire scale of her despondent soul and make her
give into the darkest and gloomiest of imaginations, imaginations as dismal as that R. has lost love and interest for her, in the midst of which she feels she would that her heart would break and feels that her only relief would be that of renouncing her life were it only that death took pity on her, - in her encounter with such grave tortures and fears, S., governed by an unfathomable devotion and loyalty to her husband, reveals not only an unshakeable firmness of wifely devotion, but a heroic spirit of strong-mindedness, of courage of heart and of pride in her wifely chastity - a spirit so heroic indeed that she, notwithstanding her pangs of agony and fear, allows her wrath, hatred and her vindictive desire to find an outlet for her abomination of Rv. free vent to relentlessly gush out on him, using all her resources by way of abuses, vilifications, revilements and derogatory warnings, to chastise his exorbitant presumption, insolence, shameless cowardice and cruelty, and his perversity of mind in aspiring after the wife of one who is a world above the despicable lowness of his character.

Annotation: Throughout the author's depiction of the perversity of Rv.'s love, there shines through the great, inspiring personality of S., who, on account of her physical as well as her moral excellencies, has, against his own will, aroused feelings of adoration even in a brutal savage like him. S.'s personality as an embodiment of all excellences, including her great physical excellences, is brought out also in the context of H.'s observation of her in her emotional trials. All throughout the Rm. V. has depicted the beauty of S. only indirectly and much after his first introduction of her personality to the audience. This is a very delicate, and I think intended, device to bring out the over-all greatness of S.'s character: By first making her give a unique testimony of her deep love and devotion for her husband, he reveals the great spiritual sublimity of her character and, by this, he leaves an
inexstinguishable impress of the greatness of her personality, a
greatness which can no longer be surpassed by the high-lights of
other excellences, but only be unfolded or completed by them. By
tacitly allowing S.'s physical excellences to transpire through
the mouth of other characters, V. makes this completion, and does
it in a matter-of-fact way, so that it does not appear as if it
were such a great complement to her personality.

From the abyss of S.'s emotional trials, V. leads us, in the
S.-H.-sahāvāda (for detailed contents see s.v. Hanumān pp.492-503),
to a struggle of her heart, to a conflict of sentiments and
feelings, of oddness, fear, distress and anxiety, on the one hand,
and of wonder, hope and joy and confidence, on the other hand:

It is feelings of wonder blended with oddness and doubt, that
imprint themselves first in her mind at her first encounter
with H. - wonder at the sweet-sounding words of his
encomium on R., oddness and doubt at the dream-like sight
of H.'s vānaratva (V 29-30).

It is hope and joy that arise in the midst of her sorrowful heart
when H., to prove the actuality of his presentation, asks
her a chain of guess-questions - seemingly imposing them-
selves upon him and urging him to the conclusion that she
is S., and that prompts her to introduce herself and her
life-story and to intimate her pitiful situation to him
(V 31)

It is utmost delight and confidence abruptly converted into
sorrowful fear and apprehensive anxiety when S. hears H.
convey R. and L.'s well-wishes, but, on H.'s coming closer
and closer to her as they begin talking to one another with
mutual confidence, all of a sudden suspects him to be Rv. -
for too deeply engrained in her heart are her experience
of the harassment inflicted upon her by Rv. (V 32)
It is ecstatic joy, expressing itself in overflowing praise and gratitude when H., in answer to her request, eulogizes with beautiful words betraying his deep psychological insight R.'s greatness and love for her and his care for her welfare, as evidence of which he stands before her, and assures her of R.'s coming with the Vns. and rescuing her, and as a confirmation of all this gives her R.'s ring (V 32 letter part; 34 beginning) - slowly, slowly to be supplanted by a surging fear - latent in her heart - that something has gone wrong with R., as he has not come to her rescue for such a long time, expressed in the fact that she asks H. a series of questions inquiring whether, and expressing the hope that, everything is alright with R. concerning his emotional stability (undisturbed by agitation, grief and fear), his prowess, heroism and enterprises, his continued love for her and eagerness to rescue her, his happiness of mind (undisturbed by grief on account of her) etc. (V 34.12-30)

It is joy and grief that alternately flash through her heart when H., to console her and cheer her up, draws her attention to the fact that R. is completely unaware of where she is, assures her and swears that, hearing his words, he will immediately come with the Vns. and destroy the Rks., and with beautiful words draws a picture before her mind how her husband, plunged in grief and lost in thoughts on account of her, is totally disinterested in life and does not think of anything else than her, assuring her that he undertakes all efforts to regain her. It is joy at the thought of R.'s devotion to her, and grief at the thought of his grief for her. And subsequently, her heart is torn between desconsolateness at desperate situation (only two months are left and then Rv. will cut her to pieces) and a re-awakening trust in R.'s prowess. (V 34 end, 35 beginning)
It is odd feelings of surprise mixed with moral scruples that are at the bottom of her heart when H., motivated by an anxious desire to put an end to her pitiful plight, offers to carry her on his back to R. - feelings which she conceals and delicately suppresses by pretending amusement at his offer and ridiculing his smallness of body and his monkeyish nature; and, when H., a little humiliated at her 'ignorance', in order to awaken her confidence in him, proves his strength and power of transmutation, by pretending a scale of fears of entailing too great risks, which may frustrate all efforts made and lead to the ruin of R., L. and all the Vns.' lives, while indicating her real scruples, namely, that, respecting her devotion to R., she would not like to touch anybody else's body, only, so to say, by way of an appendix, though clearly enough to reveal her real mind to H., who, in his answer, expresses his delight and high praises at her exemplary wifely modesty, promising to relate everything to her husband (V 35-36 beginning).

It is all with feelings of confidence and an anxious concern to have her husband know about her pitiful plight and have him come to rescue her quickly when she relates to H., in virtue of a token of recognition, with words directly addressed to R., an intimate story and ends her account with pathetic exhortations to R. and L., and then entrusts an armlet to him, requesting him to give it to R. and, if commanded by him to undertake the task, to extend his counsel to him as to the ways and means of its achievement. (V 36-37 beginning).

It is a sudden upsurge of feelings of distress, fear and anxiety, amidst all the confidence and hope she has already gained, that take command of her - first they reveal themselves obscurely in her stammering plea, interrupting H., who is already about to start off, to give her regards to E. and L. and all the Vns., and to see to it that R. will come
to her rescue, but then they break out uncurbed, as she feels yet unconsoled by H.'s words of encouragement - on her apprehending the absence of the solacing company of H. and reflecting upon the seemingly insurmountable task that faces the Vns. and R. in crossing the ocean (since only Garuda and he (H.) are known in the three worlds to have the power to leap over the ocean).

This swaying to and fro, this mutual blend and supplantation of feelings of wonder, delight, hope and confidence, on the one side, and of oddness, fear, distress and anxiety, on the other side, which have been going on in S.'s heart all throughout her colloquy with H. - a heart that oscillates widely and abruptly, at the mere occasion of some sudden pensive or apprehensive thought, towards the negative side of the scale, in the midst of all the fresh feelings of hope and trust - ,

reveal how deeply her agony - arising from the harassments inflicted upon her by Rv. - has engrained itself in her heart;

reveal her pining love for R., which is sighing for relief and an answer to the tantalizing uncertainty as to the interpretation of the absence of any sign from R.;

reveal her joyful hope for an eagerly expected re-union with R., a hope which, however, is blended with anxiety at the thought of the seemingly insurmountable difficulties thwarting its achievement;

reveal last but not least the sublimity of her moral conscience concerning her wifely chastity, which does not allow her to violate any of the etiquettes of moral behaviour expected of a noble and virtuous woman even under the force of critical circumstances; and yet no less than that
her delicate feminine tactfulness, which prompts her to rationalize her rejection of H.'s offer, so as not to hurt his well-disposed feelings of concern for her.

S. again proves her courage of heart and presence of mind in the midst of grievous circumstances when the Rākṣasīs question her who the Vn. is with whom she was talking. Knowing H. to be in danger and anxious to protect him from calamity, she elides the truth by cynically remarking that it is none of her business to know the movements of Rks. assuming different forms at will; it must have been some Rk. in disguise who came to her and frightened her. (V 40 beginning)\(^3\) A little later, she casts her concern for H., arising from the news that his tail has been set afire by the Rks., into a fervent prayer to Agni for his protection.

When S. sees Rv. running towards her with upraised sword - restrained by his friends, she feels that her last hour has come, that Rv. is going to take her life for her unflinching profession of her devotion to her husband and her refusal to become Rv.'s wife, or that Rv. has killed R. and L., who have sacrificed her life for her. And in this state of death-despair she feels remorse for having been the cause of the destruction of her dear ones by neglecting H.'s well-meant offer; she feels pity for Ks., whose heart she thinks will break at this unbearable news of the death of her only son, and who, remembering, with tears streaming down her face, the stages of his life she followed up with such loving affection, will put an end to her life; and she feels prompted to curse that evil Mantharā, on account of whom such misery has befallen Ks.

Thus, the poet depicts a S. who even in death-despair goes out in thoughts of remorse and pity to those for whom she considers herself the cause of death and irredeemable grief, a S.
whose heart is united in love and concern with her dear ones
even in the gravest minute of her life, even in the very face of
death itself. (VI 80.39-49)

Sita's joy
(VI 101)

S.'s reaction to H.'s happy news of R.'s victory is one of
so unbounded joy and gratitude as to almost rob her of her power
of speech and make her extend sentiments of praise to H. -
intimating that she does not find anything on earth that would
be a worthy reward for him, sentiments which H. acknowledges by
saying that listening to her noble words which express her ever-
loyal devotion to her husband and concern for his welfare is
worth more than gold and jewels and even more desirable than the
kingdom, and by asking her, out of an anxiety to do her a favour,
to allow him to kill the Rākṣasīs, who have caused her such
immense grief. But S.'s nobility of mind is far above any
feelings of retaliation and vindictiveness towards the Rākṣasīs,
nay, she is all ready to forgive them, for, while she herself,
so she says, suffered the fruits of her former bad actions, they
only carried out the command of their ruler Rv., and, more than
that, it is the duty of all noble men of character to have com-
passion with all men, whether sinners or good men, for there is
no one who does not commit faults, and thus to refrain from
doing any injury even to such Rks. as are persecutors of mankind
and sinners. Cf. the eternal verses 35-37:

na parah pāpamādatte paresah pāpakarmasām /
smayo rakṣitavyastu santaścāritrabhūsanām // 35
Thus, S., a paragon of wifely devotion, is also a paragon of nobility of heart, a heart that has compassion with all beings and forgives those who have done injury to her. And she is not only an embodiment of nobility of heart, but also an embodiment of delicacy of heart, as we see from the context of her colloquy with H. and from the way the poet concludes her chapter by delicately depicting how R., after offering S. a jewelled neck-lace, recognizes her desire to offer it to H., and so tells her to give it to anybody she likes, and she then (a little before she has presented him with precious ornaments and clothes) gives it to H., 'in whom ever manliness, valour, intelligence' reside (VI 116.68-72).
A SYNTHETIC VIEW OF THE AUTHOR'S CONCEPTION
AND PORTRAIT OF SITA'S CHARACTER
Conception

V.'s conception of S.'s character is identical with his conception of her as a paragon of wifely devotion. This conception, in turn, is identical with the conception of her as a paragon of spiritual sublimity of character. Her sublimity of character and her wifely devotion are identical expressions of her personality. As it is, V. also highlights the radiating beauty and charm of her personality, to show the over-all greatness of her personality. But, knowing that this only complements the spiritual sublimity of her character, never supplants it, he leaves it to his pattern of spontaneous improvisation to expound it to the audience, but much after his first presentation of her character to the audience.

But V. does not leave it simply at an impressive portrayal of S.'s unfathomable wifely devotion, but he makes it be subjected to the gravest emotional ordeals, to show both her heroic endurance as well as her tender feminine heart, which, in its overflowing love, is tossed in to the darkest abysses of emotion. And so, the poet leaves large stretches in his characterization of S. in her emotional trials to the pattern of spontaneity, without ever losing sight of her paramount virtue, which impregnates every fibre of her temperament.

But, all in all, S.'s character is conceived not so much, though reflecting also, as a unity in disunity, i.e. a unity of wifely devotion in a disunity of emotional fluctuation, as it was the case with L., but rather as reflecting a unity versus disunity, a unity of wifely devotion versus a disunity of emotional tribulations. This conception of unity versus disunity also reflects a dramatic conception of personality versus
experience. By giving us a portrayal of S.'s sublime wifely devotion and its heroic endurance, V. not only unfolds the whole of her sublime personality, but presents a sublime, dramatic human story. More than any other character so far treated, S. is both a character and a very essential part of the story itself. Her personality is no longer only dramatically involved with the story (as, e.g., D.), forms no longer only some of the dramatic highlights of the story (as, e.g., Rv.) [that of course should not mean that these characters are less integral parts of the story, in fact, all of them do have an important role to play and a vital message to convey], but she, or her potential role as an ideal character, is part of the very heartbeat of the story itself, a fome for the sake of which the story has been primarily taken up by V. - once he was inspired by the vision of R.'s ideal character.

Portrait

S. is a paragon of wifely love, devotion and fidelity to her husband, and, in that, an embodiment of the spiritual sublimity of wifely character. Her sublimity of character and her wifely devotion are identical expressions of her personality, a personality lofty in its sublimity, and yet deeply human and womanly in its tenderness of heart and its overflowing emotional urges.

Her loving devotion to her husband is of so unfathomable a depth, and of so total a commitment and readiness to sacrifice her all as to make her consider it the most intimate desire of
her heart, the highest joy and happiness of her life to share the most adverse destiny with her husband, to take upon herself the gravest of miseries and hardships for the sake of her husband, who is her fortune, her destiny and refuge, who is the all-in-all of her life, in whose loving union all life, even amidst the gravest miseries and hardships, is heaven, in separation from whom all delights of the world, even heaven, are hell. And her heart is so tender in its overflowing love that the thought that her husband, who declines to take her with him to the forest for reasons of hardships and miseries that may await her in the forest, despite her sincere asseverations, may not read this intimate desire of her heart, may not intuit how unfathomable the depth of her devotion is and how total her commitment and her readiness to sacrifice her life for him are, fills her with grave distress and anxiety. But her resolution is too unbending, her wealth of womanly emotions too inexhaustible as that the incomprehensible reluctance of her husband to even accept the sincerest of her asseverations would not force her desperate heart to stage a frantic display of sorrow and despair, which leaves her at the edge of an emotional break-down.

As deeply as her devotion manifests itself in her unflinching determination to follow her husband and in her wonderful professions of her loyalty to her husband, so it manifests itself in actuality during her stay in the forest with R. It manifests itself in the happiness she feels in sharing R.'s austere life and in the delight she takes in sporting with him in the romantic woods and enjoying the beauty of nature, and above all it manifests itself in her constant concern for the welfare of her husband and her dear ones: so in her fervent prayers to Gaṅgā and Śyāma. It manifests itself in a concern that goes as deep as human concern can go for a fellow-being, and is as tender in its sentimentality and emotional urges as a wife's concern can be for a husband, when she expresses her
anxiety to R. that he is in danger of becoming unfaithful to his commitment to dharma, to which he has pledged himself so wholeheartedly and with such firm and heroic resolution in obedience to the word of his father, and that, by doing so, he may lose happiness of mind and spiritual welfare.

S.'s heart is overflowing with concern and love for her husband, but, as if still greater heroism were demanded from her, it is subjected to a chain of gravest and most tantalizing emotional trials - trials which make her deep devotion and love for her husband stand out in a heroic spirit of fortitude, courage of heart, and wifely pride, a spirit so heroic indeed as to allow her wrath, hatred and her desire to find an outlet for her abomination of Rv. to gush out relentlessly on him, with all her resources being invested by way of wild abuses, scornful vilifications and bitter revilements, to chastise his exorbitant presumption, insolence, shameless cowardice and cruelty and his perversity of mind in aspiring after the wife of one who is a world above the despicable lowness of his character; - trials, however, which beset her with the most torturing sorrows, fears and pinings, and drive her to the edge of despair with herself, a despair that not only takes, in a traumatic moment of anxiety, so totally control of her as to make her defame L. with the most vulgar and humiliating accusations and abuses, but traverses the entire range of her disconsolate and despondent soul down to the darkest and gloomiest abysses of imaginations, imaginations so dismal as that R. has lost love and interest for her, in the midst of which she feels as though her heart would break and her only relief would be that of renouncing her life, were it only that Death took pity on her.

Indeed, so deeply engrained are her agony, her fears and worries, so sighing for relief and an answer to the tantalizing uncertainty as to R.'s coming to her rescue is her pining love
for her husband that all the joy and hope and confidence she feels, arising from the midst of her grieved heart at H.'s messages are too quickly extinguished, are too quickly supplanted by feelings of fear, distress and anxiety at some sudden pensive or apprehensive thought that crosses her mind. And yet again, in the midst of such grievous circumstances, there reigns high S.'s sublime conscience of chastity, which does not allow her to violate any of the rules of behaviour expected of a virtuous and chaste woman like her, and no less high reigns her delicate feminine tactfulness, which prompts her to rationalize her arguments for rejecting H.'s offer, so as not to hurt his well-disposed feelings of concern. And, hearing that H. has been subjected to great trouble, she casts her concern into a fervent prayer to Agni for his protection.

S.'s agony of heart reaches its climax in a traumatic moment of death-despair, in which she thinks that cruel Ev. is going to take her life, and that R. and L. have been killed by him, which is for her a moment of remorse and of pity for R. and L., whose death she has conjured, and for Ks., upon whom she has brought irredeemable grief and misery - showing us a S. whose heart is united in love and concern with her dear ones even in the gravest minute of her life, even in the very face of death itself.

Sublime as S.'s nobility of heart is in the midst of an ocean of grief and mental agony, as sublime is her nobility of heart in the midst of joy and jubilation at the happy news of R.'s triumphant victory: Hers is a heart that vibrates with boundless joy and gratitude to H. and expresses fine sentiments of appreciation for him intimating that she does not find anything on earth (gold and all the riches of the three worlds) that could be a worthy reward for him; a heart that is free of all misgivings and feelings of retaliation towards the cruel Rākṣasīs, whom H. offers to kill for her; a heart that has compassion with
all beings, and readily forgives those who have done injury to her. And no less sublime is her feminine delicacy of heart, which prompts her to express her sentiments of gratitude to H. by presenting him with a precious jewelled necklace that R. actually had selected for her.

Indeed, S. is no less a paragon of womanly nobility and tenderness of heart than a paragon of wifely devotion and sublimity of character. It is the feminine nobility of her heart which makes her sublimity of character really sublime, and it is the feminine tenderness of her heart which makes her wifely devotion really devoted. S., then, is a perfect embodiment of sublimity and womanhood at the same time. And it is her womanhood which makes her sublimity truly sublime and her devotion truly devoted. This spiritual sublimity and womanliness of character, which makes her an ideal of womanhood, is complemented by a radiating beauty and charm of personality, so that S. is the veritable embodiment of all excellences, physical and spiritual, of an ideal wife. The greatness of her personality, though, consists first and foremost of her spiritual sublimity of character, but it is rounded off by the grace and charm of her personality. Yet, though S. is an embodiment of all wifely excellences, an ideal of womanhood greater than whom perhaps no other poet has pictured (to speak in the words of Iyengar p.150), and so lives on in the hearts and dreams of all devout men and men of ideals, for what S. stands first and foremost, for what she has been given her place by the poet, is her undying wifely devotion and fidelity, uniquely demonstrated by her unflinching resolve on sharing her husband's destiny — so that we can say with sage Agastya: III 12.2-7 —

\[
\text{adhyāśramena vāṁ khedo bādhate pracuraśramaḥ} / \\
\text{vyaktamutkāṭhate cāpi maithili janakātmaja} // 2
\]
eṣā hi sukumārī ca duḥkhaiśca na vimānīṭā /
prājyadosaḥ vanaṁ prāptā bhartṛsneha-pracoditā // 3
yathaiśa ramate rāma iha sītā tathā kuru /
duṣkaraḥ kṛtavaṭyesā vane tvāmanugacchati // 4
eṣā hi prakṛtiḥ strīnāmāśreṣṭe rādhunandana /
samasthamanurajyante viṣamasthaṁ tvajānta ca // 5
datahrdānāḥ lolatvāḥ sastrānāṁ titkṣatām tathā /
garudānilayoh saighryamanugacchanta yośitaḥ // 6
iyāṁ tu bhavato bhāryā doṣairetaṁvivarjīta /
slaghyāḥ ca vyapadesvā ca yathā devī hyaṛunihāti // 7
A CRITICISM OF MODERN SCHOLARS' VIEWS ON THE CHARACTERIZATION OF SITA
Sītā was not without her foibles. She was intensely, and truly, a woman. Taking leave of Ayodhya she could not help hearing a sigh of sorrow and displeasure at Kaikeyī's inexplicable and sudden spite against her spouse. 'sakāma bhava kaikeyī' ('Be pleased, O Kaikeyī; for we are now begone'). She was no uncomplaining stoic. She set her greedy eyes on the golden deer. Not all the sage advice of Lākṣmaṇa had effect on her: she liked it and she must have it. And, when Lākṣmaṇa told her that the wait "O Lākṣmaṇa" was not of Rāma but actually that of Mārīcha, the deer, she in her nervous fright said he must go at once and leave her alone, a prey if need be to the wild animals. She even questioned his bonafides: that was presently to be the cause of her undoing. In her trouble, like a fickle-minded woman, she lost her balance and had the heart to suspect even Lākṣmaṇa, who was her spouse's unfailing companion and unquestioning attendant.

But these were her weaker moments—just momentary impulses. We see threading through the Epic the evolution of this loving wife into a noble mother, uncomplaining and magnanimous in triumph and in humiliation as well. She was a woman with rare fortitude, compassion, forbearance and wisdom. For one whole year she waited for her spouse to come and fight Rāvaṇa. She would have waited more if necessary. She could have burnt her adversary, she could have killed herself; but the purpose of the Avatāra, and her own mission, were different. Such was her confidence in the potent and inextinguishable love of her spouse. Hanumān offered to take her back to Rāma on his shoulders in a trice. But not this for Sītā. A hero's wife, she would content only if her hero came personally and showed this coward what he was capable
of. She would wait rather than deprive her beloved of the fame that was his.

Before leaving Lankā, brought to rubbles by the war, Rāma bade Sītā to have one glance at the city — 'Lāṅkāmīkṣasva Vaidehi'. For he, the all-knowing, knew it was by her grace that the city could once again regain its lost splendour. When Rāma promised to the Rṣīs that he would clear the forest of all the Rākṣasas, she cautioned him against bearing enmity without cause. She could not bear the thought of death even to her foes, much less to Khara and Dūṣaṇa, who did them no harm. Being Vanachārīs, why not they confine their concern to themselves, she pleaded.

It was a tired Rāma resting on her lap. A crow pierced at her breast, and blood was dropping. She stirred not lest he be disturbed. In her moment of extreme distress, when being carried away by the Asura, quivering in her limbs she had the good sense to throw down her jewels in the hope that Rāma would one day — somehow — find them, which indeed, He did and later, her too.

At the time of the Coronation, Rāma gave to Sītā a necklace and asked her to present it to him that deserved it most, to him that was great in deed, and great in thought. This was Rāma's promised gift. Hanumān was the natural choice. Not to be outdone, Sītā took out another pearl necklace from her own neck and with the concurrence of her husband gave that also to Hanumān, a generous acknowledgement of his being the cause of their reunion.

Let us hear Rāma speak to Laksmaṇa while lamenting her loss:
In counsel she was a minister, in deeds a servant,
In religious duties a partner, in forbearance like unto the Earth,
In affection a mother, in bed like the celestial Rambhā,
In love a playmate and companion: O Lakṣmaṇa, such was my beloved.

In giving expression to these sentiments, our hero set down
the ideal for a Hindu wife, nay, a true wife the world over.
There is no question that Sītā lived up to every one of the
characteristics enumerated.

When we think of Sītā, it is as the consort of Śrī Rāma that
she appeals to our emotions. No other country has set so much
store by the chastity of womanhood as India. Great have been the
feminine stars that littered the firmament of the Purāṇas...
But Sītā by the tenderness of her love, so devoid of ill will,
and the silent, sublime fortitude with which she bore her lot
without a complaint, has a unique charm. She suffered from
banishment, she suffered from all sorts of privation, she suffered
from separation from her spouse and, worse still, her very mis-
fortune made her victim to an unjust scandal.

To the end of her life, like a good mother, she took upon
herself all the suffering only to give to mankind the undying
hope of perennial love. Repository of all wisdom, she was un-
complaining in her attitude and unflinching in her devotion. All-
potent as her weapon of mercy was, she made meekness her strength,
faith her armour. Her joys and aspirations were woven around
Rāma's person. Like the great Arundhatī, consort of Sage Vasūpāha,
she allowed things to have their course and, by suffering enriched
by rare magnanimity, set an example hard to find elsewhere....."
Criticism: Chandrasekharan's portrait of S. is a most beautiful and edifying account of S.'s undying sublimity of character. It does justice to all aspects of her personality and brings out the womanliness of her character. Inspite of a promising attempt in this line, the author, however, has not delved deeply enough into S.'s heart and mind, especially in her grief. In a number of cases, Chandrasekharan does not seem to have read the author's intention correctly, as e.g. when he says - "A hero's wife, she would be content only if her hero came personally and showed this coward what he was capable of. She would wait rather than deprive her beloved of the faith that was his." As for this and other questions of the kind, our critical analysis itself will answer them.

M. Venkatesa Iyengar

"..............................
To make Rama realise how sincerely she desired to go with him Sita stopped at nothing. She scorned him when that became necessary. From her own point of view she urged that she desired to go to the forest, that life in the forest would be pleasant, that it was her destiny to live in a forest. From his point of view she said that as she had conducted herself as a good wife he had no reason to abandon her, that to leave her and go would not become a valiant prince, that she would not be a burden to him in his life in exile and that she would be satisfied with whatever life brought her in the forest. If he did abandon her and go alone, she told him, it would be a stain upon his prowess. When Rama left her to enter the fire, Sita did not say to him the words which she said when he asked her to stay in Ayodhya in ease and comfort. They were words which seemed inconsistent with
womanly modesty. That Sita did not hesitate to utter any words when the situation demanded them appears also from what she said to Lakshmana to make him go to Rama's help. At the first glance one wonders why this woman said such extraordinary words to her husband's brother. But if we realise the time and the circumstances we understand that it was not possible for Sita to say anything else to Lakshmana. Rama had pursued the deer which was suspected of being a deceit of the Rakshasas. Lakshmana had stated that it should be Maricha. He was staying behind, wondering how the situation might develop. Sita herself had doubts whether the animal that her husband had pursued was or was not a deer. These people were living in a part of the forest infested with Rakshasas. It is quite certain that the inmates of the hermitage had talked often of the great power, the cunning, deceit and other wags of Maricha and his like. When therefore a cry came from the woods in the voice of Rama, what should become of Sita? Rama asked himself this question when he heard Maricha cry "Sita, Lakshmana", in a feigned voice. A thousand people might assure Sita that it was not Rama that had cried. Sita herself might have felt that it was probable that it was not Rama that had cried. But supposing that it was Rama? Supposing that, having spent an hour or two thinking it was not Rama, they went and found that it was Rama, wounded and lying on the ground? Was it possible for a wife to remain at peace and not send help when there was a cry for help in the husband's voice? This wife in any case was unable to be at peace. If the cry was really from Rama it would be a good thing for Lakshmana to go. Supposing it was not from Rama, what was the harm done? Lakshmana would go, and presently he and Rama would return. What was the risk involved except that she would be alone in the hermitage till they came? What would happen in the very short interval? If the whole thing was a plot of the Rakshasas, something might occur in the interval. Sita should have feared this possibility. But in the rush of the terror for Rama, she was unable to dwell on this possibility and
to weigh the harm that might occur if Rama did not receive help with the harm that might occur if it was a plot and to decide in favour of the less dangerous course. She had neither the time nor the mind. Her one feeling was that something might have occurred to Rama and that Lakshmana should go to his help. When Lakshmana from a sense of duty told her that he could not leave her alone and go, she lashed out her cruel words. It is noteworthy that in this narration the poet has left no interval between Lakshmana's refusal to leave Sita and her words of insult. Sita did not say ten other things that she might have said before making her extraordinary and improper suggestion. Immediately Lakshmana told her that he had to obey his brother and stay on guard, she whipped him with her words. Lakshmana might have desisted from going to Rama's help but he could not have stayed to guard Sita. This was Sita's intention. Her one desire was that Lakshmana should leave her immediately and join Rama. Remonstrance and counter-remonstrance would have taken time and Sita was not prepared to lose time in an elaborate discussion of the pros and cons. It is quite certain that it was not pleasant to her to shape into words a thought which she would not ordinarily have allowed even to come into her mind but she did it in order that her husband might have help. Such conduct in woman for the person she loves is natural and often seen in life. Poetry has often recognised this. In truth the courage that Sita showed when she entered the fire to prove her innocence was not greater than the courage she showed in flinging this insult on Lakshmana. All the more is this the case because she had in fact no doubt whatever about Lakshmana's goodness. When Ravana came and abducted her, the first name that Sita called out was that of Lakshmana. When Hanuman brought her Rama's message she enquired about Lakshmana and praised him. She had understood quite clearly what sacrifice Lakshmana had made in order to be of use to Rama and to herself. When Rama by words of insult made her life unbearable and she wanted a fire to be made, it was Lakshmana that she asked to make it. In all these instances
the poet has disclosed the nature of a noble woman's heart. Woman is not man's satellite, nor a rib, nor even a half of him, though with the honour of being the better half. Woman is a complete being even as man is, with her own law of life, her own duty, her own ways of self-fulfilment. Similarly, in the hundred other instances of Sita's life recounted, in the story, we see a noble and essentially womanly nature faithfully delineated. When Kowsalya asked Sita to treat her son, Rama, though an exile from power, with respect, the daughter-in-law might have told the mother-in-law: 'Without this instruction from you, I have started for the forest with him. Do I need to be taught my duty to my husband?' Sita did not say so. She accepted Kowsalya's advice. When Anasuya asked her to describe her marriage to Rama, Sita, like any young woman happy in marriage, told the old lady the story of her girlhood, gave an account of her marriage and spoke in pride of her noble husband. When again, Anasuya spoke to her of wifely duty, Sita accepted advice in the same spirit in which she had accepted similar advice from her mother-in-law. Though seemingly complaisant Sita did not hesitate to advise Rama when necessary regarding his duty. When Rama promised to help the sages of Dandakaranya and put down the Rakshasas, Sita asked him to consider if he was right, and supported her view by a very ingenuous and simple young woman's story. In giving the advice, however, she was cautious not to injure his self-respect. 'I am saying nothing,' she said, 'that you do not know. I am only reminding you.' The right which she assumed in this manner Rama gladly allowed to her. 'You are right to advise me,' he said, and explained the reasons for his conduct to satisfy her. Sita's manner in seeking the refuge of all the spirits of the wood when she was abducted is exceedingly womanly. The words in which she spoke to Ravana and every detail of her conduct are true to womanly nature. The simplicity of this nature appears in the way in which, on seeing Hanuman, she enquires about the health of Rama and Lakshmana,
tells him how deeply Rama loves her and begs him to see that Rama comes quickly to rescue her. Womanly too is her wondering, on hearing Hanuman's description of Rama in separation, when they would meet again and his sorrow end. The willingness with which immediately after the ordeal by fire she returned to Rama's love, forgetting the intolerable cruelty which he had shown her in the previous hour, was characteristic of the same simplicity of womanhood. This power to forgive is like that of our earth, brown and rusted in early summer, becoming green with the first showers. Sita bore no anger in her heart against the Rakshasa women of the guard who had ill-treated her. This forgiveness of Sita, great as that of earth, this patience infinite as the patience of God, made her an example for womanhood. As they left Lanka and travelled to Ayodhya, Rama showed Sita Sugriva's town. Sita desired immediately to see the women of Sugriva's household; and took them with her to Ayodhya. Friendliness and consideration for friends, nothing drove from her nature. In the happy hour when she was crowned with her husband on the throne of his father, Rama gave her a garland as a present. Sita desired to give that garland to Hanuman to whom she owed her happiness, and with Rama's approval she gave it to that great servant and benefactor. Hanuman had come to Sita in her dark hour. With him had come the first hope of light. He was therefore to her a symbol of returning happiness. So much so that when he wished to return to Rama she had asked him to stay for another day. Her husband's messenger was to her even as that husband's ring, the embodiment of the assurance that she was loved and would be rescued. Sita therefore gave to Hanuman in the hour of her triumph treatment that she gave to none else. Among the great heroines of world literature Sita stands in the forefront. Poetry has not seen and has not pictured anything nobler.

Criticism: Iyengar's article, though short, is interesting and points out well S.'s womanliness. However, we would have
expected him to delve much deeper into the psychological depths of this womanly nature of her character. Iyengar's article is also good in drawing the various outlines of her personality. Yet, on the whole, it remains very much on the surface. One word about the psychological motives which the author conceives of as going on subconsciously in S.'s heart, in her anxiety at the cry of agony 'O Sītā, O Lakṣmaṇa': The poet does not speak of any such subconscious questions going on in her mind. And it is risky to assume that he intended to convey in a hidden way such an impression to the audience. The fact that he makes S. fly into such abnormal frenzy and makes her lose so totally control of herself seems to totally exclude this impression.

M. K. Venkatarama Iyer

Iyer's presentation is substantially correct and, at large stretches, very good, prescinding from his historical presuppositions, which, at times, blur S.'s portrait as conveyed by F., and his taking recourse to philosophy to explain the naturally inexplicable fact that "there are 3 people, Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā, all losing their judgement on an occasion fraught with danger." Though making an edifying and beautiful reading - we shall this time prescind from giving an extract as otherwise we have given plenty of preferences to the author - it, however, never really penetrates to the core of S.'s heart and mind. Especially, the gamuts of S.'s grief have not been brought out.
Swami Nihshreyasananda

Though starting with a masterly description of S.'s all-round personality - of which we want to give an extract - Swami N. soon glides off into an interpretative account of her life-situations, instead of unfolding her character. His account is further disturbed by his identification of Vedavatī with S. and the parallels he draws between their characters.

Extract: "... If the test of greatness is the capacity to remain true to one's principles in spite of terrors and temptations, Sītā's greatness was undoubtedly more pronounced; for she had a greater power of endurance than any other character, except Rāma, Rāma and Sītā were equal in this respect, because every sorrow that affected the one affected the other as well, although they were situated in different environments. It is not claimed that S. did not cry or complain. Vālmīki shows her 'shaking like a plantain leaf in the wind.' That was inevitable. Hers was not the endurance of the stone or the wall, with no outside expression for the innerworkings. Hers was the special capacity, amidst the wailings and the complaints, to use her discrimination to cling to chastity, and to act in a manner suited to the dignity of her parents, her husband and other relatives."

K. S. Ramaswami Sastri

Sastri's presentation is a most inadequate account of S.'s character-traits, strung together by quotations. To this jumble of inadequate explanations there is annexed a philosophical discussion on truth, in view of the ridiculous question as to why
S. uttered a lie to the Rākṣasīs, when she herself, at an earlier occasion, has classified untruth among the greatest sins. His discussions confirm the obvious answer that "to refuse to speak out the facts to save another from certain death is certainly more ethical than to speak out the facts and get him killed by Rāvaṇa." Compare what we said on p. 884. However, when Sastri says - "I am not prepared to accept the view that Sītā, like an ordinary human being, showed a human touch and spoke a lie under the stress of fear. She was a perfect being and what she spoke was the truth and a totally ethical act even if it was not absolutely true, because a lie uttered to save a life is not a venial lie but is no lie at all and is a sinless act." - I would like to question Sastri:

1) From where he gets the notion of S. as a perfect being in the sense in which he understands it,

2) what other motive than fear for H.'s welfare could have prompted S. to elude the truth.

Human emotions and ethical principles are not necessarily contradictory. Good human emotions are the spontaneous outflow of ethical principles. What makes a man human, is not his principle, but the emotion revealing his principle. A person who deeply loves another person on spiritual grounds also loves him emotionally, otherwise I doubt whether he loves him at all.  

V. S. Srinivasa Sastri

Though Sastri gives a very extensive presentation of S., his unfolding of her character, except for his over-all characterization of her p. 355, does not do justice to the sublimity and
emotional richness of her personality, with which the poet has 
endowed her, at least it does not in the fatiguing way of his 
presentation, which, though at times very good, does not, on the 
whole, delve enough to the depth of her personality and, what is 
more serious, often dwells on unimportant details and perspec-
tives not intended by the author, straying away to practical 
reflections, and is blurred not only by the inclusion of late 
interpolations and Uttarakaṇḍa material, but by an outlook that 
takes every detail in the Rāmāyanam as historical.

However, it should be said to the credit of the author that 
he has discussed some controversial issues very well, e.g. S.'s 
rebuke of L. (pp.378-381) (though he tends to tax L. a little 
too much) or the question of her telling a lie to the 
Rākṣasīs (pp.390-392)14)

1) For R.'s answer see s.v. Rāma pp.333 ff.
2) We give here only a section of S.'s rebuff, namely vv.32-43.
3) A great debate seems to have turned round the question how 
S., the paragon of all wifely virtues, could tell a lie. For this question is irrelevant. We refer the reader to 
Srinivasa Sastri, who has discussed this 'problem' and 
given a very sound solution (pp.390-392).
4) Sita, the Consort of Rama. KK XXVI 56-60.
5) pp. 143-150.
6) Considerations of space force us to cut off Iyengar's 
exposition, interesting though it is.
7) Sītā. KK XXVII 54-60; 83-87.
8) pp. 59-60.

10) Valmiki's Portrait-Gallery -XIV. KK XX 427-432.

11) p.430.

12) In a later article on Sītā 'Valmiki - India's First World-Poet -XVII. KK XXXI 329-332' the author dwells almost exclusively on the grace and charm of S.'s personality, while in its continuation (XXXII 7-10) he gives an account of her moral qualities in the style of the above-mentioned article, however, without annexed discussions.

13) pp. XXV-XXIX; 344-401.

14) We leave out the following treatises :

C. Bader, Women in Ancient India. Translated by M.E.R. Martin. 2nd ed. Varanasi 1966. pp.89-224 (Women in Heroic Age);


-- since they contain only characterizing, scil. interpretative accounts of certain perspectives of S.'s life --;


-- since it, remaining at a mere listing and analytical description of S.'s character-traits, could not be considered a study of her character --;

Mahāraṣṭrīya, Śrī Rāmāyaṇa-Samālocana athvā Rāmāyaṇācā Utpasarṣāhar. Pune 1927. Part II, pp.314-325 (Sītā)

-- for want of sufficient knowledge of the language --;

Swami Nityabodhananda, Sita, Faithful Wife and Symbol of Silence. VK LIV 310-315

-- since as a philosophical interpretation of S. as a symbol of silence it goes too far away from what V. intended her to be --;

Swami Nihsreyasananda, The Culture of the Rāmāyaṇa. CHI, 1st ed., I 77-97 pp.90-92 (Sītā);

T.S.Raghavacharya, Valmiki's Sita. BBJ XII 18, 31-35

-- which are not substantial.
A SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS
OF THE CHARACTERIZATION OF RAMA
Rama as a youth

In the original version of his Epic - as we reconstruct it - V. launched the story by conjuring up before the minds of the audience the magnificence and splendour of Ayodhya - to focus gradually on the theme of his story. In the background of this magnificent atmosphere, he first introduced the ideal character of D. and the citizens of Ayodhya, and then focussed straight on the birth and name-giving of D.'s four sons, which was followed by a short characterization of their excellent qualities: sacred wisdom, heroism, concern for the welfare of the people, service to their father - in short, a characterization of them as models of virtues - , and of their youthful dispositions. In this short characterization he pictured youthful R. as the most eminent and the most beloved of them - being, as it were, like Svayambhu among the beings. By doing so, and by painting in glowing colours the budding love between R. and L., V. sowed the seed of R.'s sublime character - instantly to bud forth and unfold itself before the minds of the audience, in his own portrayal of R.'s character in words appearing as though they were at the same time the reflections of D., and in the citizens' eulogies.

However, the audience of a slightly later age hardly listened any two minutes to their bard to get a most comprehensive, though abstract, character-portrait of their hero - related by Narada to V. himself - , a portrait which the original author had kept reserved to himself to expound to them, after casting a spell over their minds of the glory and splendour of Ayodhya and her king. Endowed with a full abstract portrait of R.'s character, as also with an abstract picture of his
awe-inspiring life-experiences (s.I), the audience soon listened to the extraordinary circumstances of the birth of R. and his brothers, and followed with wonder and awe youthful R.'s spellbinding heroic enterprises on the journey with Viśvāmitra (so great as to be fully estimated only by a sage like the latter) and at the court of Janaka, delighted time and again by the bard's interludes, and edified by R.'s youthful curiosity for sacred wisdom, his fervent commitment to dharma and the words of his elders, his reverence and devotion to his elders and dear ones, and his nobility of heart and tender disposition.

Instructive as this depiction by later bards may be with regard to the character-portrait of R., we shall meet all these excellent traits of R. again, and with greater abundance and richness, and in the light of a deeper, more existential involvement of his personality. Yet, one feature we shall miss, and that is the landmark of these Bālakāṇḍa scenes: the aura of youthfulness pervading R.'s already manly personality. With regard to the abstract character-portrait of R. in s.I, we must say that the one given by V. himself through the quasi-reflections of D. and the praises by the citizens of Ayodhyā is no less instructive and comprehensive, and is more vivid, more intuitive, more personal. And so, if we open the curtain on the character of R., as V. himself once upon a time had done, we feel we have the best access to his personality. To begin with, let us give the word for a moment to the poet himself:
Rama's sublime character-traits

Of them, in turn, the illustrious R. the enhancer of the joy of D., was the more eminent, like Svayaşhnu, as it were, of the beings (10). And when Bh. had gone, R. and powerful L. then honoured father like a God (11). Giving everywhere priority to the order of father and the duties towards the citizens, virtuous R. did many favours and works of charity (12). Doing his duties to his mothers as they pertain to mothers, he, a man of exceeding self-control, looked after his duties towards his elders (13). Thus D. and the Brähmins and the citizens, all the inhabitants of the country were pleased with the virtuous conduct of R. (14). For, he always speaks, possessed of a tranquil mind, sweetly and before-hand; even when addressed harshly, he does not give a reply (15). He is pleased with a single favour done to him in some way or other, but, through his self-control, he does not remember even a hundred of offences (16). Speaking with virtuous men advanced in virtuous conduct or in wisdom or in old age, he never even rested in the pauses of martial exercises (17). He was of a blessed family, virtuous, free from distress, truthful and honest, instructed by the aged Brähmins showing him dharma and artha (18). He knew the essence of dharma, artha and kāma, was possessed of memory and brightness of intelligence, and proficient in, and conversant with, mundane practices (19). He was conversant with the śāstras, grateful, conversant with the hearts of men, one who was proficient both in chastising and in showing favour, in accordance with justice (20). He was conversant with expedience in the object of acquiring wealth and conversant with the aim of well-seen expenditure; he acquired perfection in a multitude of even interspersed śāstras (21). Having gathered artha and dharma, he gave himself to enjoyment, and, yet, he was not indolent, having his
share in the well-known practices of pastime arts (22). He was competent in riding and training elephants and horses, and the best in the world of those knowing the Veda of the bow, and considered an unrivalled warrior from the chariot (23). He was an assailant and combatant, skilled in leading the army, and invincible in battle, even by the wrathful Gods and Asuras (24). He was free from malice, one who subdued his anger, neither proud nor jealous, one who did not think lowly of people, nor was a slave of kāla (25). Thus endowed with the most eminent qualities, the son of the sovereign of the people was regarded in the three worlds as possessed of the qualities of forbearance of the Earth, as equal to Brhaspati in intelligence and to Indra in heroism (26). Thus R., with his excellences - pleasing all the subjects and causing joy to his father, shone like the blazing sun with its rays (27). As he was possessed of such virtuous conduct and invincible prowess, the likeness of the protector of the world, the earth decided upon him as her lord (28) ..........................................................................................................

"Many good qualities, O king, has your son (18). Possessed of godly qualities, R., of true prowess, is like Indra, for he has excelled even all the Ikṣvākus, O king (19). R. is the best man in the world, is devoted to satya-dharma, conversant with dharma, truthful, possessed of virtuous conduct, and free from malice (20), forbearing, conciliatory, gentle, grateful and of subdued senses, tender-hearted, ever firm in his mind, handsome and free from malice (21). Kind in speech to the people and sincere, Rāghava honours the highly-learned aged Brāhmins (22). Therefore, he possesses unequalled fame here, and his glory and lustre increase. He is well-versed in all the weapons of Gods, Asuras and men (23). When he goes to a battle on behalf of a village or city, he never returns, with L., without conquering it (24). On returning from battle either on elephant or on chariot, he always asks the citizens about their well-being, like their own kinsman (25), concerning their sons, sacrificial fires, wives,
their flocks of servants and pupils, asks them about everything, like a father his own sons (26). 'Do your pupils obey you and do they adhere to their works?' - like this, the tiger among men, R., always addresses us (27). At the misfortune of people, he is extremely sorrowful, and on all their joyous occasions, he rejoices like a father (28). How fortunate that this son of yours, Rāghava, who is truthful, a great warrior, an attendant of the aged, and of subdued senses, has been born for your welfare! How fortunate that he is possessed of the qualities of a son as is Kaśyapa, the son of Marīci (29)! All the people in the kingdom as well as in the excellent city wish learned R. strength, health and a long life (30). People from inside and outside, countrymen and citizens, women, the old and the young, worship everyday in the morning, with collected mind, all the Gods for the sake of illustrious R. - let their prayer, O king, by your favour be gratified (32). Let us see your excellent son R. - dark-blue like a blue lotus - , the destroyer of all enemies, established as heir-apparent (33). Quickly consecrate, O conferrer of boons, for our benefit, that joyful son of yours resembling the Devadeva, intent on the welfare of all the people, possessed of nobility (34)."

The poet, no doubt, reveals a gamut of intentions in this comprehensive, allembracing portrayal of R.'s ideal character-traits. He reveals his intention of showing us, with D. and the citizens, R. as an ideal and perfect prince, the ideal of a king-to-be, and thereby foreshadows the heinousness and atrocity it would mean to frustrate such an ideal prince from becoming king. He reveals his intention of showing us R. as an ideal and perfect character, ideal and perfect in every aspect of his personality, and, more than that, as a sublime, super-human personality unrivalled by any other man in the world, in heroism unrivalled even by the Gods, resembling, as it were, the God of Gods himself. And last but not least, the poet foreshadows his intention of
showing us in R. a man of perfect idealism, who will endure the severest trials in life and will ever and unflinchingly adhere to his commitment to *dharma*, foreshadows his intention of showing R. as a model of humanity, unexcelled though in sublimity, a fellow-traveller of man in his most tantalizing experiences of life. As a model of a prince, as a model of an ideal personality, as a model of humanity, he sings of R.

as possessed of a nature as eminent and sublime in greatness of character as is that of the highest of Gods, as is that of *Svayaṁprabhu*, the *Deva* of *Devas*,

and as human in emotionality and temperament as is that of the most human of humans -

as being as skilled and heroic in warfare as are the most chivalrous and heroic of Gods, like *Indra*,

and as tranquil-minded and self-controlled as are the greatest of sages -

as being as altruistically concerned and beneficent as are the closest of kinsmen, as are father and son,

and as grateful and forbearant as are the most forbearing of mothers, like the *Bharth* -

as being as exemplary in virtuous conduct and conversant with sacred wisdom and mundane arts as are the greatest of *gurus*, like *Bṛhaspati*,

and as filially observant as are the most loyal servants, like *Kasyapa*,

and as respectfully attentive to elders as are the humblest of pupils -

as being as unflinching in adherence to *dharma* and truth as are the most unflinching judges, like *Yama*,

and as amiable and gentle as are the most tender-hearted of children -
as being as proficient in the accumulation of artha as the most exemplary of grhasthas,
and as bountiful and generous as are the most bountiful of kings, like Kubera -
as being as firm in endurance as is the immovable Himavān
and as deep in character as is the unfathomable Ocean -
as being as beautiful and effulgent in glory as are the brightest of stars, as is the blazing sun,
and as beloved and dear to the people as are their sons.

Ramā's heroism of character (dharma-virya) exemplified in his unflinching resolve on following the word of his father and in his cheerful and forbearing spirit in taking up his commitment

After drawing this magnificent character-portrait of R., which he substantiates now and then by giving the audience a few glimpses of his respectful and affectionate nature, V. soon unfolds dramatically the unfathomable depth of his heroic character:

II 16. As R. sees his father, who otherwise ever used to greet him with cheerfulness and affection, afflicted with unprecedented grief and agony, his loving concern for him fills him with such restlessness and anxiety that he becomes impatient to know whether he perhaps has enraged him without his knowledge, or whether perhaps mother Kai. has done so, impatient to ask for forgiveness and asseverate his boundless remorse if he should
have offended his dear father, who is a God before his eyes, impatient to know whether father has some desire on his heart, and to promise with an eager heart to do whatever he wishes from him, even if it were to sacrifice his own life.

And when Kai. with brazen shamelessness declares that the king at the time of war between the Devas and Asuras had given her two boons, and that at that time she had asked him for Bh.'s installation and R.'s banishment, and that, if he wished to make his father truthful to his promise, he should abide by his order, which she then explicitates, - R., hearing these cruel, traumatic words (resembling death', to speak in the words of the poet), is not the least agitated. Nay, in his boundless filial love and unflinching commitment to dharma, he responds with such heroic equanimity that he not only cheerfully and loyally accepts these brutal words with an immeasurable spirit of forbearance and self-denial, but loses himself so completely in his self-sacrificing concern for his father as to go out to express his inability to understand why father does not welcome him as before, why he has not told him his intention himself, and why he keeps his eyes pressed on the ground and sheds tears - when he should know that it is his most intimate desire of heart to do whatever favour to him, his father, benefactor and king, when he would offer S., the kingdom and even himself to Bh. on his own account, and how much more if asked by his loving father, and if he thereby can help to maintain his promise and fulfil the desire of Kai. How deeply engrained in his heart are his commitment to dharma and his sense of filial duty to obey the word of father! So deeply, indeed, that he would think it to be as much a matter of course for his father to know that it is his most intimate desire to do any sacrifice for him, even to the point of sacrificing his life, as it ought to be a matter of course for him to demand any amount of self-sacrifice for him, his son, howsoever big it may be. And the thought that father may not know this,
and that it may cost him immeasurable grief to enjoin his order on him, perturbs his heart, a heart which so throbs with love for his dear father as to not know anything greater than service to him - while it does not even strike him what it may mean to his father to lose his beloved son, whom he has ever loved so much, out of his eyes.

And when Kai., instead of acknowledging the heroism of these words of R., shamelessly urges him to delay no longer and to immediately send messengers to Bh., for, until he has reached the forest, his father, who is unable to talk to him out of shame, will not take bath and eat - a gross lie to cover her impatience to see R. expelled -, R. meets such heinous cunning with a response of an enthusiastic eagerness to exchange his life of seeking artha for a life of seeking dharma, in order to do a favour to his worthy father, for the sake of whom he would be ready to even forgo his life, since there does not exist any greater observance of dharma than obedience to one's father and carrying out his words. Nay, even without being told so by father, he would most gladly and eagerly obey her words if she had requested him to go to the forest since she is his mother and has a right to expect any sacrifice from him, her son; but it looks as if she did not believe in any merit of his since she has not straight-away intimated her order to him, instead, has intimated it to her husband. And he leaves her with the assurance that he will go to the forest, and the request to see to it that Bh. will protect the kingdom and carry out the word of father.

We gasp in awe and reverence at this unfathomable forbearance and selflessness of R., at this exalted homage to the word of father, and this extraordinary filial respect to his unworthy mother Kai. Not only does he, in his unflinching commitment to dharma and his sublime, selfless devotion to the word of father - which for him is the par-excellence expression of dharma, forbear all the injustice inflicted upon him by Kai.
the poet describes him as he leaves with the following words, in vv. 58-59:

na ośasya mahatīḥ lakṣmīḥ rājyanāśo'pakarsati / lokākāntasya kāntatvam śītaśaśeriva kṣapā // 58
na vanaḥ gantukāmasya tvajataśca vasuñāharām / sarvalokātigasyeva lakṣyate cittavikriyā // 59 /

and forbear it with heroism and enthusiasm, not only does he go out to accept her most shameless and mean words - spoken in a spirit of ruthless ambition diametrically opposed to the discretion with which he treats her, as words prompting him with eagerness to renounce all selfishness for the sake of gratifying his father, but he even expresses his regret that she did not personally give him this order when he, a loyal son, would do any favour to her which she would demand from his as a mother; his regret that she does not appreciate sufficiently enough his self-sacrificing motives - when, in actuality, Ka. knows too well R.'s unflinching adherence to truth, and makes use of it with the most shameless cunning, so as to shut off the last ways for a possible escape by D. from his promise.

II 17-21. With however heroic equanimity R. forbears his calamity, an equanimity so strong that he is able to restrain any feeling of grief coming up in his mind at the imminence of his traumatic intimation to mother Ks., that he is able to show no sign of perturbation in order not to cause any shock to his relatives (II 16.59-61), the very thought of the immeasurable pain his news is bound to cause Ks. cannot but fill him with distress (II 17.1), and the sight of her engrossed in devout prayers to Viṣṇu for his welfare and her affectionate welcome to him - breathing an aura of happiness and joy at her prospect of the glorious consecration of her son cannot but prompt him to betray his distress in the very way of communicating his news to her (II 17.8-16).
R.'s intimation arouses an unprecedented agony in Ks., who feels as though all her life was but a life of never-ending pain with only her hope in her son sustaining her, and now that this last ray of hope is extinguished, it would have been better never to have borne a son, for then she would have only to suffer the pain of being a childless woman, but not the pain of being a queen humiliated and insulted by her co-wives; who feels as though everything is black and dark for her, all her life useless, all her religious vows and austerities in vain, and no relief from this burden of grief, no mercy even on the part of death (II 17.17-33). And Ks.'s agony, in turn, arouses the wrath of L., who, prompted by his love and loyal devotion to his brother, gives an outlet to his indignation at the unwarranted injustice behind the order of D., appeals to R. to take charge of the kingdom by force under the auspices of him, who will shield him like Death, and who, unassailable by anybody, will root out whoever should try to obstruct him, and promises to Ks. to engage his whole prowess to restore justice to R. and dispel her sorrows (II 18.1-15). In her bitter agony Ks. finds these words of L. a welcome relief, and, in her feeling that her son is the victim of injustice, she, out of deep love for him, takes recourse to a little bit of cunning, in that she wants to bind him to her by reminding him that it is as equally high duty of a son to serve his mother as is obedience to his father, and expresses her formal disapproval of his going to the forest, threatening that, if he fails to listen to her order, she will commit suicide (II 18.16-24).

The way R. meets these emotional eruptions of Ks. and L. reveals the unfathomable depth of his heroic character. He meets them with delicacy and tactfulness and his loving acknowledgement, but, at the same time, with an uncompromising firmness and steadfastness that does not allow him to swerve an inch from his commitment to dharma, even though this conduces to the heart-
wringing grief of his mother and brother; an uncompromising firmness of commitment not to an abstraction, but to a dharma that aspires not for equity for the sake of equity, but aspires for righteousness for the sake of truth and goodness and forgoes all concern about his own welfare, in a spirit of utmost selflessness and forbearance towards whatever injustice done to him, to a dharma that is the expression of the most sublime, of the most selfless filial love for his father - to a dharma, thus, that has its resonance not in the fulfilment of the merely temporal and emotional good, but realizes that which is the deeper, the everlasting good of all of them, though it may fill their hearts with sorrow and agony; and so, to a dharma that, uncompromising though it may be, that, heart-wringing though it may be, has in view a more supreme realization of the good of both of them, a deeper concern, a deeper love for them, which has its resonance not in a temporal attachment, but is firmly grounded in truth and goodness.

While R. engages himself in a full-grown debate with L., which unravels the deepest grounds of his unfathomable heroism of character, while it reveals all the gamuts of L.'s heart (18.1-15,32-36; 19-20) - we have extensively dealt with it s.v. Lakṣmaṇa - , he acquiesces in meeting Ks.'s despair-ridden outburst of agony and her disapproval of his going to the forest with a tactful delicate (though no less energetic) reminder that that it is the highest duty of a son to follow the words of his father, which he substantiates as well with accounts of old as Ks. did earlier and with insistant entreaties for her consent; in short, he acquiesces in arguing with his mother with the delicacy and tactfulness that becomes a loyal and respectful son. (II 18.25-31,37-39)

And Ks. takes R.'s reminder with a silent approval, but, however she realizes and appreciates his high-minded intention,
however she has been impressed by his asseverations of his sanātana dharma to accomplish the words of father, she cannot find consolation, for the painful thought of R.'s austere life in the forest - contrasted to the luxurious life he has hitherto accustomed to, the painful thought of his separation from her, make it almost impossible for her to admit this to happen; and so, she entreats R. to allow her at least to follow him like a cow follows her calf. As R. faces this disconsolate, despair-ridden disposition of his mother, he, in order to put this idea once and for all out of her mind, howsoever this may wring his own heart, cannot but feel urged to inculcate upon her her mission, her sanātana dharma as a wife to attend upon her husband, her God and master as long as he lives, a mission now more momentous than ever before in view of the fact that her husband has been subjected to the greatest agony of his life and is left to the mercy of the wiles of Kai., who has deceived him, and to inculcate upon her her duty - as irrevocable to her as to him - to accomplish the word of father, who is king, husband, preceptor, the foremost lord and master; thereby consoling her by assuring that Bh. will attend upon her with filial affection, by encouraging her to spend her time in devout homage to the Brāhmīns in expectation of his arrival, and by promising that he will accomplish her desire when he returns from the forest after 14 years. (II 21)

We see, thus, a Ra, who, tactful and delicate though he is in meeting her first emotional outburst, is necessitated by her renewed disconsolateness of mind, in the midst of which she urges him to take her along to the forest, in view of his duty and in view of the realization of her own spiritual happiness, to inculcate upon her the momentousness of her wifely mission to attend upon her husband, who is her God and master, and who has been subjected to the greatest agony of his life, so as to motivate her to give up her frenzied idea; is necessitated, thus,
to take upon himself, with all tactfulness and filial respect, the role of an instructor, or better, of a counsellor at a moment where he knows his mother's heart to be in a disposition so fraught with disconsolateness and near-to despair that only a strong motivation recalling her anew to her mission in life would lead her back from her wild emotions.

II 23-27. 28. For R.'s supreme altruistic motive in remaining adamant to S.'s plea to allow her to share his life in the forest see s.v. Śitā, p. 859 ff.

While it costs S. almost an emotional break-down to persuade her husband to allow her to go with him, it takes L. only a little persuasion to do so, and that inspite of his considering trivial the question of Kai.'s possible harassment of Ks. and Sumitṛā, which R. holds out to him as one of the objections (the other being that Ks. and Sumitṛā may not be able to sustain themselves). The poet remains absolutely silent as to why R. gives in to L. so easily, as in contrast to S., but it is almost evident (though tacitly presupposed) in the minds of the audience that R., according to the intention of the author, first of all, does consider L. arguments - trivial though they may be - that Bh. will treat Ks. and Sumitṛā with honour (and Ks., who has thousands of villages, will be able to maintain thousands like this) as sufficiently grounded since he does believe - much stronger than L. himself - in the sincerity and humaneness of his brother Bh. - to this he bears witness several times, in fact, this is the consolation he gives to the people of Ayodhyā following him in desperation - ; and that, secondly, he has not to worry about the possibility of his brother losing heart or courage in face of difficulties and dangers, as it would be the case with S., a tender-hearted lady unaccustomed to the hardships of forest-life, since he knows him to be a mighty and fierce warrior, who is able to defy the greatest enemies, and
who then will be much more able to defy the hardships and miseries of forest-life. When R., nevertheless, first objects to L.'s request, it is therefore more out of a tactfully concealed consideration not to demand such heroic renunciation from his brother, rather than out of worries about Ks. and Sumitrā - true these worries are there subconsciously in his heart, but they are, as said above, sublimated by his trust in the humaneness of Bh. - ; out of a consideration, thus, so supremely selfless and altruistic as that he wishes to asseverate complete freedom to the feelings and inclinations of even his closest friend, with whom he would share all his joys and sorrows, and to whom he would empty his heart whenever it has to say something and whatever it has to say, and who he knows would be all too eager to share even the gravest hardships with him, - asseverate which he does by calling in a rationalizing manner L.'s attention to certain anxieties, which he pretends perturb his mind, but which are, in actuality, not so grave as to be real barriers that ought to restrain his brother from his eagerness to follow him, and which he thus also immediately puts out of his mind without any second thought as soon as L. declares them to be ungrounded, though he (L.) does this in a very carefree manner.

Annotation: There is no positive evidence to show that our interpretation is correct, and an alternative interpretation (the only alternative interpretation possible) considering R.'s spontaneous consent as due to his special affection for L., which is so strong as to make him overlook his anxiety about Ks. and Sumitrā, is wrong. But we would intuitively feel that the second alternative is impossible for the reasons given above and also from the point of view of the very nature of R.'s response to L.'s declaration:

\[
\text{rāmastvanena vākyena suprītaḥ pratyuvāca tam} / \\
\text{vrajaṁprāchasva saumitre sarvameva suhrijanam} // 11
\]
For, such an extreme and abrupt response can be explained only if it presupposes his being psychologically prepared for, nay, even his lulling himself in the expectation of, L.'s company. We feel this psychological expectation of R. unmistakably expressed in the words anena vākyena suprītaḥ.

In the scenes to come— all, somehow or other, parting—scenes, the poet makes R. display many a noble feature of his character: first and foremost, his cheerful and unflinching spirit in taking up his commitment, expressed in his boundless generosity in distributing wealth to Brāhmīns, priests, pages and the poor (II 29);
in giving expression, to console his grief-forlorn father, to the exuberant joy he finds in making his words true and living an ascetic life in the forest, and that, having no other desire than this, he does not wish the kingdom or happiness or even Maithilī at the cost of making him untruthful (II 31 end);
- a spirit, however, no less permeated with heartfelt affection and sympathy:

heartfelt affection and sympathy for his parting relatives, especially his father D. and his mother Ks., whom he does everything to console (II 31.28-37; 33.1ff.; 34.29-31), and whom he motivates to be a solace to one another in grief (II 33.16-19; 34.30);
whose grief wrings his heart as violently as it does theirs, and the pitiful sight of whom running after the chariot in desperate grief and crying out to the charioteer to stop is so unbearable to him that he, in order to conceal his grief from them and to shorten their trauma of agony, urges Sumantra not to listen to the plea of D. to stop the cart, but to
drive on faster, telling him to say to the king, if asked, that he could not hear him on account of the tumult (II 35.29-34);
and to all of whom he sends affectionate greetings, messages of consolation and exhortation through Sumantra (II 52.11-16) --

heartfelt affection and sympathy for the citizens of Ayodhyā - incessantly following him,
whom he does everything to persuade to go back, and whom he advises to show their affection and love they cherish for him to Bh., who is good-natured, possessed of all virtues and qualities, and who will do everything to remove their sorrows and fears and will contribute to their happiness (II 40.5-10);
and whose grief and incessant devotion to him - becoming the more intensive the more he dissuades them - deeply move his heart, but urge him, in view of their unflinching determination to follow him and bring him back - which would subject him to still graver sufferings, to leave them tacitly behind, however this may pain their hearts (II 41.16-21) --

heartfelt affection and sympathy for Sumantra,
whom he consoles as he sees him weeping for grief at his departure by gratefully acknowledging his devotion to him and requesting him to be a solace to, and pay obeisance to, D. and to convey his greetings and messages of consolation and exhortation to D., Ks., Bh., etc., which he explicitates;
whose heart-rending supplications - prompted by his inability due to a paroxysm of grief to bear the thought of leaving his master and returning to Ayodhyā alone - to allow him to find his happiness in following him and serving him with loyal devotion he gently diverts by motivating him to do him the
favour of seeing to it that Kai. will obtain her desire (see s.v. Sumantra).

In short, V., in these parting-scenes, makes R. display a gamut of emotional manifestations, all converging to depict his heroic sublimity of character - expressing itself in his unflinching and enthusiastic spirit in taking up his commitment, on the one hand, and in his gentleness and nobility of heart manifesting itself in his deep affection and love for his dear ones, and no less so for all the citizens of Ayodhya, whose grief wrings as much his heart as it does theirs, and whom he does everything to console, on the other hand: both an expression of the same boundless spirit of altruism and total self-negation which is so characteristic of his personality.

All throughout, R.'s (first stage of) forest-life bears witness to his heroic commitment to fulfilling the word of father: a life in utter austerity - reflecting the sincerity and earnestness of his determination, and a life of supreme happiness - reflecting the cheerful spirit with which he has taken up his commitment, a happiness, no doubt, enhanced by the splendour and charm of nature and the loving company of L. and S., to whom he allows it to flow out with incessant affection and gratitude and an insistent urge to share and intimate the sentiments of his heart. The poet tacitly alludes to this overflowing happiness of R. everywhere in the depiction of his first stage of forest-life, but perhaps nowhere does he depict it with such rapturing charm as in the wonderful scene where R. intimates to S. his extreme happiness at experiencing in her loving company the enchanting beauty of the Citrakūta forest (II 88-89), or in the charming scene where R. delicately expresses his gratitude and intimate affection to L. for his building a graceful cottage after he (R.) himself has, with rapturing enthusiasm, selected a beautiful site for it at the instigation of his brother, who,
while faithfully carrying out his request to build a cottage, tactfully declined his offer to choose a site (III 14).

Happy and firm though R. is in his commitment, it is not so that he would never think of his dear ones at home or of the people of Ayodhya. Nay, the very first night they spend away from Ayodhya makes him feel as though all nature surrounding them was weeping, makes him deeply pensive about the immense grief the city of Ayodhya will feel at their absence, and makes him, only as he diverts his thoughts to the good-nature and filial affection of Bh., gather again confidence in the welfare of his father and mothers, and makes him express his gratitude to L. for his loyalty in following him, as otherwise he would have had to search for assistance for guarding S. (II 41.1-8).

And as he spends the first night without the comforting presence of Sumantra, the thought of whose ardent devotion to him - pouring itself out in heart-rending supplications - and of his having had to decline them has left an unspoken sore in his heart, even he, the very embodiment of steadfastness, for once is overcome with deep depression, as his mind goes out to his father, and in this state of depression envisages a gloomy picture of the evil and destructive agency of Kai., who, having entrapped D., a victim of infatuation to her charms, in the clutches of her shameless cunning, may now give the king the death-blow and may in her bitter hatred harass, or even kill, poor Ks., the thought of whose never-ending sufferings for his sake fills him with boundless grief and urges him to request L. to go to Ayodhya and protect her against the evil doing of Kai. (II 47.1-27)

A son of such sublimity of character that he sacrifices his total self in his filial love for his father, a son of such noble filial regard for Kai. as a mother that he is reluctant
to think anything bad of her even when aware, and forcibly made aware by L., of her evil intention as well of the shocking transformation she has undergone concerning her motherly treatment of him, a paragon of putradharma, R., in a moment of a deep depression occasioned by the absence of a loving friend, whose heart-rending supplications to take him with him to the forest he has had to turn down, a depression that at once makes him think of the agony of grief-forlorn D., so goes out of the way that, what in his filial regard he would have never been ready to even think of, however often this was brought to his mind by his relatives, - namely the visualization of the truth of the heinous and cruel activity of ambitious Kai. - now oozes out unhampered and so strengthens his fears of her cruel harassments of D. and Ks. that he feels an urge to send L. to Ayodhya to protect his mother against her evil designs; and in this gloomy imagination of the evil agency of Kai. even plays with the thought that D. has expelled him on account of his infatuation for her, a thought which otherwise would have been so sacrilegious to him that he would have never even dreamt of it.

Exceptional though it is and seemingly untrue of R.'s nature - this paroxysm of anxieties - in its sudden eruption of unprecedented misgivings against Kai., an eruption, however, which does have an explanation in the extraordinary situation into which his heart has been tossed: the absence of the loving company of Sumantra, the thought of his ardent devotion and of the decline of his heart-rending supplications, the thought of the agony of grief-forlorn D. and Ks. - subconsciously convulsing his heart, the thought of the seemingly endless journey of hardships and trials lying before him, - exceptional, as we said, and seemingly untrue of his nature as R.'s paroxysm of anxieties may be, it only reflects, together with his earlier pensive musings on the eve of the first night, how intimately his heart and mind are with his dear ones in Ayodhya, it reflects his human tenderness of heart, his intimate affection and loving concern for
his dear ones in the midst of all the heroic firmness to his commitment: A commitment to which he will be ever and unflinchingly loyal, even at the cost of its causing grief and agony to his relatives—and in as much, this commitment is itself an expression of the most heroic love, of the most sublime altruism—and yet a commitment that is never a cause to him to forget his tender human affections and does never prevent him from giving vent to a gamut of emotions convulsing his heart. R., thus, is not only the most fervent and heroic in commitment, not only the most sublime in nobility of character, but also the most human in tenderness of heart—which is but another and the most capturing expression of his sublimity of character.

Again and again we meet this human tenderness of R.'s feelings in the course of the Rm. We meet it in his heart-rending lamentations and eruptions of grief at the news of the death of D. (II 95 passim); in his tear-choked farewell to his mothers (II 104.25); in his feeling sad and home-sick for the intimate affection of Bh. as L., while describing to R. the spell of the winter-season, evokes and praises Bh.'s selfless love with pathetic imaginations (III 15.28-38 // 36 e-ccc.); and last but not least in his tantalizing agony at the loss of his beloved S.

We said that R., prompted by the loving company of L. and S., is always filled with happiness, and that this happiness of his flows out with affection to them. At one occasion, however, when L. oversteps his limits in his zeal to protect his brother and, at the mere sight of Bh.'s army, falls into so dark apprehensions as to think Bh. has come to kill them, and to vow with words breathing wrath and vengeance destruction to Bh., who, after all, the cause of all misfortune, rightfully deserves to be killed, as he was the first to inflict harm on them, as well as to Kai. and the entire host of 'enemies', R. not only
reproaches L. for his rash, unjust apprehension and displays before his mind the pure, selfless intention of Bh., but gently puts him down by saying that, if he spoke those words out of a desire for the kingdom, he will tell Bh., and Bh. will gladly agree - words so effective that L., to speak in the words of the poet, enters his body for shame. It appears as though R.'s ironical remark was meant to hurt L., at least so it would look from the impact it has on L.'s feelings. But actually, R.'s irony is an irony with affection, is a cunning measure to make him, as he has gone out of the way in reviling Bh., silent as fast as possible and, secondly, to show it to him how much he has overstepped his limits of decency. In fact, R. is so tactful, when he sees his brother ashamed, as to immediately divert his feeling by saying (II 91.10-11):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{vṛ̣ḏita} a\varo laksmana\varo dṟṣ̱tvā rāg̱havaḥ pratyuvāca ha / \\
\text{esa manye mahābhūrihāṣmāndraṣṭumāgataḥ} / 10 \\
\text{vanavāsanūnudhāya gṛ̣hāya pratinesyati /} \\
\text{imāḥ vāpyesa vaidehi̯ma̯ṯyanṯasukhasevinī̯m} / 11 \\
\end{align*}
\]

(II 90-91).

For R.'s unique asseverations of his putradharma in response to Bh.'s entreaties to accept the kingship see s.v. Laksmana pp 754-769.

Rama's commitment to the protection of rṣis

Though R. is unflinchingly committed to a life of austerity and asceticism, and to a life of ahimsā, in obedience to the word of his father, he turns a willing ear to the supplications of the rṣis - looking up to him as the lord of the Ikṣvākus - excelling in renown, valour, filial duty, and dharma, and
appealing to his Kṣatriya duty as their virtual ruler and protector in the forest to protect them and save their lives from the cruel Rks. harassing them (III 5.6-21). Not only does he willingly promise them protection, but he declares that incidentally it is for the accomplishment of this task that he has come to the forest (III 5.20). By this, R. reveals that to commit himself to his duty as a Kṣatriya to kill evil Rks. in order to save the lives of virtuous sages is not only compatible with his duty as an ascetic, but both are the expression of one and the same ideal of commitment.

Yet, for S. this is not intelligible. Deeply worried about his spiritual destiny, she fears that, by promising the sages to kill the Rks., to have recourse to himsā, he has become unfaithful to his commitment to the dharma of an ascetic, whose duty it is to keep his mind pure and untainted by himsā, a dharma to which he has pledged himself so whole-heartedly and with such firm and heroic determination in obedience to the word of his father, and that by doing so, he may lose happiness of mind and spiritual welfare (III 8).

R. acknowledges her deep love and concern for him with affectionate and grateful words, but immediately sets out to inculcate upon her the invariability and sacredness of his duty as a Kṣatriya to protect the lives of innocent and virtuous sages, who have renounced all worldly desires and have given themselves completely to austere penance, and whose virtual lord and protector he is, from the cruel harassments of the Rks. And he does so by first drawing her attention to a statement made by her that the bow is worn by Kṣatriyas, so that there may not be any sound of distress, and then by giving a pathetic account of the sages' fear-ridden description of their harassments by the terrible, man-eating Rks. and their reluctance to mete out punishment to them themselves - lest they lose their spiritual merits - , and
of their beseeching supplications to him, their lord and refuge in the forest, to protect them, and of his assurance of full protection to them, ending his account by laying emphasis on the invariability of the promise he has given them, venerable Brāhmins, a promise so sacred that he could not forge it even at the cost of his life or that of S. and L., in a matter so momentous as to demand his full cooperation even without his being requested for it, how much more then when he has given a solemn promise. (III 9).

V. does not give us any direct clue to the philosophical presuppositions as to why R.'s role as an ascetic in the forest is different from the role of the other ascetics in the forest. But it is all clear from R.'s own words that, though he has full-heartedly and with unflinching determination pledged himself to a life of austerity and asceticism in obedience to the word of his father, he could not, since he is a Kṣatriya by birth and nature called upon to protect the innocent from all distress and harassments, renounce hīṃsā at the cost of allowing innocent and virtuous Brāhmins in his surroundings to be harassed and killed, and this in spite of their humble supplications to him, their lord and refuge in the forest, to save their lives. Indeed, were he to pledge himself to ahiṃsā at such costs, he would conduce to still greater hīṃsā than he would by killing the Rks., and, what is far graver than that, he would avoid an invariable duty. For, however much he has to keep aloof from anything that is due to him as a prince by way of privileges, and however much he wards off all such aspects of kṣatradharma that conduce to reprisal and self-conceit in place of forbearance and self-negation, he cannot forgo that aspect of kṣatradharma which is conducive to the security and welfare of all beings, and which he alone, by virtue of his birth and nature, is called upon to give. It is in this sense that R. can say, as he does, to the ṛṣis that incidentally he has come to the forest to fulfil their objects.
Both the resolutions of R. - to live a life of renunciation and asceticism in fulfilment of the word of father, and to protect those who ask for his shelter - are the expressions of one and the same commitment, the commitment to a dharma which realizes and aspires to the supreme truth and goodness, aspires for the unflinching fulfilment of the good of his father and the good of those who seek his shelter. The second is no less great than the first. Oriented towards the supreme good of fellow-beings, it only enhances the goodness ensuing from his commitment to the word of father, which is the par-excellence-expression of filial goodness.

Emma's yuddhavira exemplified in his single-handed eradication of Khara's 14000 Raksasa army and in his spell-binding combats against Dusana, Trisiras and Khara

We are here barely outlining the traits which characterize R.'s chivalrous heroism, for the ingenuity and gamuts of its poetic depiction - imbued with an intense sentiment of adhuta-virarasa - cannot be fathomed by any amount of analysis, but only by reading.

In these battle-scenes, R. shows the gamut of all the heroic traits of an invincible and unequalled super-natural yuddhavira, which reach their highest elevation in his awe-inspiring duels with Dūṇa, Triśiras; and the most spell-binding of all, in that with Khara, shows

an unsurpassably spell-binding, dooms-day-fire-like display of martial devastation and bellicose fury;
a formidable, Herculean ardour for fighting and a deadly and irresistible pugnacity in the midst of an onslaught of attacks;

an unsurpassably spell-binding, super-natural display of martial lustre, heroism, valour, and skill in astras, which reaches an unparalleled grandeur in his duel with Khara;

a bellicose Herculean ardour, an ardour growing into an almost sadistic urge, to provocatively revile and vilify Khara and mete out Yama's judgement to him, for his tyrannic cruelty and vicious violation of dharma as well as for his exorbitant presumption, and as Khara ridicules R.'s reprimands and disparages him as a foolish, despicable Kṣatriya obsessed by vain self-eulogy on account of killing 14000 Rks. and declares his revenge on him, to pour his feelings of scorn, abomination and vengeance upon him, for all the vanity of his presumption and the heinousness of his tyranny, and to proclaim his abominable destruction, to the terror of the Rākṣasīs, to the relief of the sages of Janasthāna (III 19.23-29).

Rama in agony

Considerations of space do not allow us to analyse the emotions of R. in agony in detail, though their depiction belongs to the most beautiful of V.'s poetical gallery. Indeed, its poetico-psychological grandeur prompts us to make an analysis of V.'s characterization of emotions in a separate work.
R.'s agony of love (vipralaśāhāṣāṛnāra) runs through the whole gamut of emotions a distressed heart can run through and through all the intensities it can assume:

All throughout and with seeming incessancy, R.'s agony expresses itself

in the most heart-rending and despair-ridden lamentations and manifestations of grief - unbounded in their unfathomable depth and overwhelming power of pathos;

in the most ardent professions of pining love - unbounded in their tenderness and sentimentality;

in so total an absorption in grief and melancholic musings about S. that he becomes completely disinterested in life, that, to speak in the words of H., he does not even ward off gad-flies, mosquitoes, insects and serpents from his body, that he does not get sleep, and that he awakes with the sweet utterance 'Śītā', that, when he sees a fruit or a flower or something else that delights a lady, he addresses her, saying 'O dear one', overwhelmed with grief and uttering her name (V 34.35-45).

All throughout R.'s agonized heart vibrates in a feeling (consciousness) of mystical communion with the encompassing nature,

with the spirits and denizens of the forest, whom he implores for information about his beloved one (III 58);

with its manifold and exuberant manifestations of beauty and joy, which, as they awaken melancholic memories of his happiness of love in him, invariably reenforce his pangs of grief and painful longings for S. (esp. III 71 end; IV 1; IV 26-27. 29).
Again and again, it flares into the highest pitch of wrath, which in a moment of a traumatic experience (the discovery of S.'s ornaments and the remnants of a bloody battle) that makes him consider that his beloved one has been killed or devoured for sure by the Rks. resumes such an unprecedented intensity and violence in R. that he proclaims and vows destruction to the whole universe, reaches a point where he has lost so totally control of himself as to no longer be himself, a point of seemingly no return - were it not for the magnificent display of counsel and consolation by L. (III 60.15-52;61).

No less than an unfathomable treasure of emotions, R.'s agony reveals an unfathomable depth of conjugal love,

a love that is as intimate in its blissful romanticism and overflowing tender sentimentality as it is in its sublime spirituality, and as intimate in its unflinching loyalty and chastity as it is in its gentle, self-sacrificing devotion,

a love that would give everything in dedication to his beloved,

a love that would read and grant the most intimate wishes and fancies of her heart, that on one occasion, namely, when S., disregardful of L.'s warning, starts singing the praises of the magic deer in superlative terms, would be so infected by her admiration for the animal that he himself would feel an infatuation for it and start extolling the beauty of the deer to the highest heaven, as supremely unique of its kind, and would, at last, even go out himself to fetch the deer (or to kill it if it is Marica), leaving S. to the care of L., and by this, paradoxically enough, contribute to the circumstances of her abduction (III 41).
Rama's friendship with Sugriva

Annotation:
For centuries of Indian tradition, R.'s friendship with Su. has raised questions regarding certain moral aspects of his dealings as a result of his alliance with Su. We shall discuss these questions critically, yet, independently from the point of view of Vālī's accusations, which are late interpolations, before we go to unfold R.'s demeanour in his dealings with his ally. The questions are the following: 4)

1) How can R. - so committed to righteousness - so readily enter into an alliance with Su. (a) and so spontaneously and enthusiastically give his promise, in gratitude for Su.'s affectionate consolation and assurances of his help, to offer whatever help he should ask from him (b) - when, on the one hand, he is fully aware that Su. is suffering from hostilities with Vālī, and that he will be called upon to kill Vālī, and yet, on the other hand, he does not know as yet things sufficiently in detail about Vālī - the only allusions to the cause of Vālī being III 68.11.16; IVṣ.18;4.19 - , and Su. relates the whole matter only afterwards, at the instigation of R., who wants to know about the prowess of his enemy?

2) Why does V. not give a clearer picture of the whole affair, expounding the dark side of Vālī more conspicuously, and why does R. kill Vālī, however much he may feel it to be his duty to kill him, unawares, without engaging himself in battle with him?
Our answer:

ad 1) Though logically speaking it is justified to separate the two aspects, R.'s readiness to enter into alliance (a) and his spontaneity in giving his promise (b), for one could say it is understandable if R. enters an alliance on account of the urgency of his agonized pangs of longings for S., but why should he come out with such indeliberate promises playing with the lives of people, this is not the case, psychologically or ethico-psychologically.

It is not so psychologically. For, however urgent his pangs of longing may be, he could never, on account of the delicacy of his emotions, feel satisfied with an alliance with a person in whom he could not put his full trust and confidence. But R. does not only have all reason to trust in Su. for the mere fact that Kabandha has given such an optimistic picture of Su.'s unreserved and boundless helpfulness (III 68.11-22), but he now finds this picture confirmed in the kind and amiable intimations and assurances of H. (IV 3; 4.16-21), which even for L. are an assurance of his speaking the truth (IV 4.22-24); and when he first meets Su. personally, and meets him vibrating with cheerfulness and loving affection, and S. spontaneously offers him his hand in friendship, he is all happy and confident (IV 5.8ff.). In fact, there is a saying that the first impression of a person is the lasting one. Exaggerated though this saying is, it reflects the idea that it does not require a psychologist to intuit the sincerity of a person at first sight - though this may be sometimes dangerous. But the fact is that R. does feel confident and, in fact, has been all confident from the time of Kabandha's intimation, and the more so he is now, with H.'s amiable intimations and with his first impressive
personal contact with Su.

Possessing full confidence - here comes in the ethico-psychological point-of-view - , he will believe Hq and Su. in what they say about Vālī, even though this may be only by way of a side-remark and in the briefest possible way. And, as it is expected of a true friend, he will be therefore, with all the display of kindness on the part of H. and Su., only the more motivated to spontaneously promise his help when he sees Su. subjected to a similar grief as is his, and the more so when Su. now shows all affection and concern for him, so deep and genuine affection and concern that R. embraces Su., saying - 'You have done, O Su., what a loving and well-wishing friend should do. I have been restored to myself by you. It is difficult to get such a friend, particularly in this time' - , and promises him that he will do his best to restore S. to him after killing the Rks. in battle. Since R. believes H. and Su. in what they say about Vālī, namely, that he is a villain who has gravely humiliated Su., has driven him out of the kingdom and taken away his wife, he has all the right to kill him. His assurance of help to Su. by promising to kill Vālī is a case analogous to his assurance of protection to the Rṣis by promising to kill the Rks. And the figure of Vālī is a figure analogous to that of Rv. So, there is nothing wrong whatsoever in that he is so spontaneous in giving his promise, even with the vision in the background of his mind that he will have to kill Vālī, since by killing Vālī he does away with a villain, a persecutor of his brother, howsoever tragic a villain he may turn out at the end. In fact, when Su., in sheer delight at R.'s promise, bursts out into a eulogy on the beauty and firmness of love between good friends and then, falling into a tone of grief and fear, speaks of
the grave humiliation he suffered at the hands of Vālī and pleads to R., the śaranya of the world, to grant his favour also to him, who is helpless and oppressed by the fear of Vālī, R. most spontaneously promises Su. to kill Vālī this very day, assuring him of the unfailing power of his arrows (IV 8.1-23).

2) This, indeed, could be called a flaw on the part of V. - a flaw owing to the fact that, though he, as a rhapsodist, gives much importance to the development of all the various scenes of the Rm. in the sense that he intends them to be appealing devices designed to capture the minds of the audience, some scenes, some aspects, have to be left undeveloped in a big Epic like the Rm. - having its heritage, to a great extent, in oral poetry. This is the very ambivalence of bardic poetry. Though almost all scenes depicted are apt to arouse the emotions of the audience, some aspects are not even touched, or are left undeveloped. Indeed, we find so many undeveloped aspects in the Rm., which later interpolators and later epitomists considered to be gaps, and which they tried to fill up. V.'s main motive in leaving this aspect undeveloped may be the fact that Vālī is only a secondary figure, and even as a figure analogous to that of Rv. only an antetype, and so, though amply characterized in the process, he is not of primary importance from the point of view of the main story. As such, he is only to be removed, and interesting and impregnated with characterization though the circumstances are - leading to Vālī's death, there is no necessity on the part of V. to show the heroism of R. - though he does show his astrabala - and make him engage in a long-drawn battle with him, since Vālī is not the personal enemy of R., yet has to be killed, and since there are plenty of other occasions for the poet to do so. Probably, when V. took
over the story from tradition and infused his poetico-
psychological spirit into it, which worked itself out in
an exuberant characterization of persons and in a poetical
elaboration of scenes, he took over R.'s killing of Vāli
as it was, without elaborating it on the part of R.,
leaving it at the elaboration of the fight between Vāli
and Su. itself, while yet, though not perfectly either,
elaborating some of the circumstances leading to Vāli's
death. V. did so because he was a rhapsodist, at least by
disposition, and he was bound by the vastness of his
subject to leave some scenes in a more unrefined, purely
bardic stage.

We do not agree with the opinion held by many scholars
that V. intended to show a flaw in R.'s character, or that
a historical R. committed a fault which V. accordingly
describes, and that we find a clue to this in Vāli's
accusations themselves.

As regards the first alternative, the author nowhere shows
such an intention except in Vāli's accusations, which are
an interpolation and therefore out of question. If Vāli
says, in his reaction to Tārā's plea to reconcile himself
with Su., among other things - 'And you should not worry
about Rāghava because of me. How shall he, who knows
righteousness and gratitude, commit a sin?' (IV 16.5), it
is from his point of view. A villain though he is, he is
a man of honour, at least, so he considers himself to be,
though actually he is a man of bellicose pride; and in
this distorted conception of honour, he so overrates R.'s
sense of righteousness as to think, and think with all
confidence and trust, that R., a man so committed to
dharma, would never raise his hands against him = would
never commit a sin, projecting, thus, his distorted sense
of honour on R., for whom to interfere in his enmity with Su. would be a violation of dharma, a sin.

Secondly, we do not agree with the conception of a historical R. who committed a fault, which V. accordingly describes. If so, he would have taken pains to elaborate on this fault. At best, we could conceive of a historical R. who kills Vālī, which fact was not considered a fault, or was considered something not very heroic, but V. tactfully conceals this. Possible. But even then we would not think of a historical R., but rather of a conventional R. who kills Vālī unawares, which fact was considered something not very heroic, which, however, V. tactfully conceals. Possible. But then, if V. had an intention to whitewash R. — and this is a decisive point against it —, he should have elaborated still more on the sinfulness of Vālī than he does in the present Rm., and should have done so much earlier — before he makes R. enter into alliance with Su., so that we would get a clearer picture. From this point of view, we prefer our explanation given above.

Also, we do not agree with the opinion that V. allowed some weakness on the part of R. since, after all, so they say, V. did not intend to draw R. as a perfect being, and since we do come across many occasions where he behaves in a manner unworthy of a hero. True, V. did not intend to draw R. as a perfect being, but surely he did intend to draw him as a paragon of humanity with near-to perfection. And the occasions where R. behaves 'in a manner unworthy of a hero' are occasions of gravest emotional stress, and his behaviour under such emotional stress, rather than a behaviour unworthy of a hero, is a behaviour worthy of a man with a tender human heart. R.'s going out of himself in circumstances of grave emotional conflicts, though it is
a weakness in one way, betrays the unfathomable richness of his heart, a richness that does not take away anything from the sublimity of his character, but makes it more genuinely human. We cannot put such human weakness on a par with the presumed weakness of R. killing Vālī unawares, which is done with all his deliberation.

Winding up our whole critical discussion, we can at least say this much for sure that on the part of V. the aspect of R.'s killing Vālī unawares was not fraught with any moral connotation. Reasons of ambiguity lie in the oral nature of the Epic, perhaps also in certain conventions which V. took over - with or without adjustment, which is difficult for us to say.

We are now free to frame a character-portrait of R. regarding his friendship with Su.

R.'s seemingly unending agony, greatly reinforced by the tragic hero's death of Jaṭāyu (III 64), who sacrifices his life for S., finds, after a traumatic experience which R. goes through in the clasp of the yet-spell-bound Rk. monster Kabandha, a temporary relief through the latter's directions to him - which he gives while emerging with a glorious appearance after his cremation - to make friends with Su., directions which bespeak the optimistic prediction that Su. will do everything in his power to restore S. to him unfailingly (III 65-66 passim; 68-69).

Though R. falls into the most melancholic musings at the sight of the joy and splendour of nature, which awaken sad memories in him of his happy union with S. (III 71 end, IV 1), his meeting with H., who addresses them with such overflowing praises and inquires with such kindness and amiability about their whereabouts, while tactfully introducing Su. and himself and speaking of Su.'s desire to open up friendship with them (IV 3), a meeting which makes him at once feel convinced of
the optimistic picture drawn by Kabandha, now puts him into a very cheerful and confident mood. And this mood of his is greatly strengthened by the continued friendly intimations and assurances on the part of H., who on hearing of their case, holds out the prospect to him that Su., who has undergone a similar fate, will happily assist them on their search for S., intimations so cheerful and amiable that even L. feels an urge to express his confidence in R.'s speaking the truth (IV 4); and it is strengthened still more by his own personal encounter with Su., a Su. vibrating with cheerfulness and loving affection, as he greets him, and full of praise for his qualities and his readiness to make friends with him, a Su. spontaneously offering his hand in friendship, which is immediately contracted before the fire, with both of them looking at each other in affection which never seems enough, a Su., further, who expresses his concern for R.'s grief and consoles him with all assurances of help, disclosing to him that he thinks it must be S. whom he has seen being carried away by a Rk., and that it must be her ornamen-tants which she has thrown down - which he, then, shows to R. - , a Su., who tries to affectionately console R., as he now gives vent to bitter grief at the sight of the ornaments, by lovingly advising him not to lose himself in grief, but to resort to steadfastness and manliness. (IV 5-7 - see av. Sugrīva)

R. is over-joyed at such a deep concern and love for him in such a grief-fraught situation of his life. He thinks that Su. is really a true and loving friend, a friend so good-hearted and sympathetic, so identifying himself with his (R.'s) worries as to feel prompted to assume the role of a sincere counsellor and to give him a good dose of consolation to cure him from his grief. And really, R. feels, and expresses it, that Su. has restored him to himself. And so, on account of such affectionate concern expressed by Su., R. himself feels an urge to ask Su. what he should do for him, promising whatever help he may ask of
him, and underlining his promise with the words that he has never told a lie nor will he ever do so. (IV 7.14-21)

And when Su., in sheer delight at R.'s promise, bursts out into a eulogy on the beauty and firmness of love between good friends like them and then, falling into a tone of sadness and fear, speaks about the grave humiliation he suffered at the hands of Vālī, and begs him, the saviour of the world, to grant his favour also to him, who is helpless and oppressed by the fear of Vālī (IV 8.1-18), R. expresses his sympathy by spontaneously declaring that he will kill Vālī this very day, assuring him of the unfailing power of his arrows (IV 8.19-23)

Indeed, so full of compassion and a feeling heart is R. - has he not experienced on himself all the pangs of grief? - that he not only listens patiently to Su.'s repeated paroxysms of grief and fear convulsing his heart as the pain and grief of his calamity come to his mind, in the midst of which he again pleads to R. to free him from his affliction and again relates the story of his humiliation, now with more pathos (IV 8.24-39), but sympathetically tries to divert his agonized heart by expressing his desire to hear the cause of his enmity - so as to be able to determine the relative strength and weakness of Vālī and, thus, be able to restore his happiness, of which he can be assured (IV 8.40-45).

Like this, R. shows again and again not only a feeling heart for Su.'s anxieties arising in his mind, but even listens patiently to, and tries to dispel sympathetically, his doubts and scruples - overcoming him with irremediable insistence on calling to his mind Vālī's unexcelled power and heroism, as well as his feelings of shame and anger at his (R.'s) failure to come to his rescue in his first duel with Vālī. And when Su. during the second battle, after a heroic fight with Vālī, shows signs
of growing exhaustion, R. relieves him by shooting his arrow on Vālī. (See s.v. Sugrīva p. 427 ff.) And he shows a feeling heart also for the sorrow overcoming Su. at the death of his brother, for whom Su. had, in spite of all enmity, an innate affection, by consoling him with words expounding the insuperability of the all-governing rule of kāla, which has determined Vālī's death, and by assuring him that his brother has obtained heaven by the fruits of his heroism (IV 24.1-11).

As R., after cremating Vālī and ordering H. to install Su. etc., while instructing Su. to appoint Aṅgada as heir-apparent and to enjoy himself together with the citizens till the commencement of Kartika, by which time he should make arrangements for marking out to kill Rv. (IV 25.8-15), resides with L. on the Praśravana hill to spend the rainy season and, while residing there, is overcast with grief and painful longings for S. — aroused at the magnificent spell of the rains, and overcast so irremediably, with L. extending all affection to him to console him, he, in the midst of his painful longings, goes out in his mind to Su., whose regained happiness he contrasts with his unfulfilled desire, the fulfilment of which appears to him far away on account of the unfavourable climatic conditions and his unwillingness to interrupt Su. all too soon in his happiness. But while he contrasts Su.'s happiness with his agony of love, and while his thoughts revolve round Su., he feels all of a sudden inspired by these thoughts to put his trust in Su.'s favour and gratefulness. (IV 27; see s.v. Sugrīva p. 433)

R., thereby, reveals an internal conflict that is going on in his heart, a conflict between his grief-ridden emotions — reinforced by reflections on the dire prospects of nature and, in contrast to them, the happiness prevailing in Su.'s city — and his hopeful feelings of trust in the gratefulness of Su., whom he has been knowing as so affectionate and so concerned for him, feelings of trust which, by the force of its optimistic prospect,
become a source of fresh hope for him, in which he is strengthened by L.

Yet, when all nature is in an exuberance of joy and splendour proclaiming the advent of autumn, while there is no sign of Su.'s preparations far and wide, and this exuberance of joy in nature gravely re-awakens R.'s longings for S., it is all but natural that his heart is led by the sentimental vision of nature's manifestations and the absence of any sign of communication from Su., for which he has been waiting so impatiently for months, to a state of deep disappointment at Su.'s lack of compassion, and that from such disappointment it is led to greater and greater anger at what he conceives to be a vile and ungrateful breach of loyalty - a heart which, by now, has reached a gamut of feelings which force him to tell L. to go to Kiśkindhā and communicate his speech of admonition - blending words of conciliation with cynical threats to kill Su. with all his relatives if he should transgress his promise. (IV 29; see s.v. Sugrīvapp. 437 ff.). But, however fraught with anger, R. is too much a man of gentleness and tactfulness as not to feel prompted to restrain L.'s wild outbursts of ire brething vengeance and wrath, as not to reprimand him for behaving in a sinful manner - unworthy of a hero like him and instruct him to admonish Su. in a peaceful manner (IV 30 beginning).

And when Su. finally appears before him and falls at his feet, there is no sign in R. of any misgivings, no sign of any feelings of disappointment, nay, he is so full of affection and regard for him that, before anything, he raises him up, embracing him affectionately, and, encouraging him to find out the whereabouts of S., after which the needful would be done; and entrusting the entire task to his guidance, he bursts out in words of praise and appreciation, saying that Su. is his second friend, is heroic, wise..., bent on his welfare, one whose aim
is to serve, one who knows his aim thoroughly. (IV 37.15-19 + 39.10-14)

We, thus, have seen all along a R. who, while tossed by pangs of grief and pining love, has found a source of consolation in Su., whose spontaneous offer of friendship, whose deep and loving affection and concern for him, whose lavishing solaces and expressions of sympathy, whose assurances and promises of help, have been a source of new trust, of fresh hope and confidence, of a revived cheerfulness for him, have been a source of inspiration for him to lavish on Su., in gratitude for his friendship, his own wealth of affection, his own sympathy and concern and understanding for him, his own solace — sighing though for solace he has been to, as deeply as he has experienced in himself what it means to suffer for grief, identify himself with his brother-in-grief. And he has done this with the utmost gentlemanliness, tactfulness and patience, and in a situation in which, though so pregnant with hope, there has loomed large in the background of his mind the uncertainty of the future. Yet even at a time when the spell of nature cast again a net of sorrow, a net of uneasiness over his mind, he has comforted himself with the thought of the gratitude and friendship of Su. True he lost this confidence, he even felt for a moment as though he had been deceived, he flew into great anger at the seeming lack of compassion of Su., at what he considered to be his ungrateful breach of loyalty; but when Su., by his appearance, testified to the sincerity of his intention, R. has been all full of praise, gratitude and affection for him, has done as though he had never had any feeling of distrust, any misgiving thought in his mind.

This is perhaps the best place to say a word about R.'s friendship with Vibhīṣaṇa, which is of a similar nature, though the perspectives are different:
When Vibhīṣaṇa, in the midst of the bewildered Vns. staring at his splendid appearance in the air, introduces himself to Su. and seeks refuge with R. - the refuge of the whole world - , as his brother, enraged at his advice to return S., has severely abused him (VI 11.9-15), and Su. conveys his grave suspicion to R., considering Vibhīṣaṇa to be a spy sent by the Rks. to kill them by his māyā, and pleads for killing him straight (VI 11.16-21), R. first remains perfectly calm, commending Su.'s words of concern and advising the chiefs of the monkeys to give their individual opinions (VI 11.23-24). When the monkey-chiefs, one after the other, express their warnings and advise R. to test Vibhīṣaṇa through skilled spies, to which then H. responds by telling R. that a scrutinization of Vibhīṣaṇa is impossible, unfounded and annoying, and that Vibhīṣaṇa's resolute words and cheerful appearance not betraying any sign of wickedness, are a proof of his sincerity and integrity, for the expression of a face, though it may be veiled, cannot be entirely concealed, since it by force reveals the innermost feelings of man, and that Vibhīṣaṇa has come here after due consideration of his (R.'s) heroic deeds (VI 11.25-59), - R. is all in tune with H.'s argumentation, but, keeping his own opinion in reserve, he requests his companions to give their comment, indicating, however, that he can never forsake one who has approached him for friendship, even though he may have his faults (VI 12.1-3). When then even Su. expresses his full confidence in Vibhīṣaṇa with overflowing words of appreciation for R.'s wonderful ideal of friendship and urges him to quickly make friends with Vibhīṣaṇa (VI 12.4-7), R. expounds his tenet of the duty and virtue that is to grant shelter to any body who begs for protection in fear of oppression, whoever he may be, even if he be the greatest enemy, and even if one has to sacrifice one's life for him, and stresses the great sin incurring him who forsakes or kills the person who seeks his protection, for fear, infatuation or desire (VI 12.8-22). R. expounds all this not because he would not intuit, with H.,
Vibhīṣana's sincerity—his cheerful acknowledgement of H.'s speech and his overflowing, affectionate treatment of Vibhīṣana show full confidence in him—but to inculcate upon his companions, whose concern for him he acknowledges, the final irrelevance of any fearful and suspicious thoughts in view of an ideal that transcends all such considerations, an ideal that has its foundation in an eternal value, the value of Āraṇāgatāraṅgaṇa, an ideal, therefore, that has to be upheld in utter disinterestedness for what regards one's own self. We see again R. committed to an ideal that has its source in supreme altruism and selflessness, and we see him edify his companions on the supreme value of this ideal.\textsuperscript{4}

\textbf{Rama's impatience to fight and regain Sita and his unequalled god-like heroism in battle}

Too severe are the pangs of agony R. has suffered due to his separation from S. as that he would not feel impatient to fight the Rks. with all bellicose ardour and wrath in order to secure his beloved S.

This impatience manifests itself already in his desire prompted by the encouraging message brought by H.,—a desire that bursts out in optimistic visions and in a host of exhortations and directions addressed to his companions, to make immediate arrangements for marching towards Laṅkā (VI 4 beginning);

in his restlessness at the sight of the seemingly boundless and dreadful-looking ocean (VI 4 end), which fills him anew with disconsolate pinings for S. (VI 5);
in his terrible wrath at the Ocean's reluctance to yield to his three-days' propitiation to him to open up and grant them passage, which he (R.) considers to be a mark of haughtiness and contempt vis-a-vis his gentleness and forbearance, for which haughtiness he threatens to chastise him by drying him up with his arrows, and would have done so — in fact, he already discharged one arrow, which upset the whole cosmos — if the Ocean himself had not appeared from the bottom of the sea and had, promising to grant complete safety from water-animals to all the Vns., announced that Nala, the son of Viśvakarmaṇ, should build a bridge (VI 14. 15.1-3);

in his being prompted by the vision of gloomy portents for the Rks. to march towards Laṅka in the early morning-hours (VI 31 beginning) and to send his ultimatum to Rv. through Aṅgada (VI 31 end).

But most of all, R.'s impatience manifests itself in the battle-scenes themselves,

in his deadly and unsurpassably spell-binding display of martial devastation and bellicose wrath and call the other awe-imposing land-marke of his god-like heroism — so magnificently displayed in his battle against the 14,000 Rks. of Janasthāna and in his combat against Khara,

reaching here perhaps a still higher elevation and more relentless embitterment, especially in his furious combat against the titanic Rk. monster Kumbhakarna and, above all, in his duel with Rv., a duel so spell-binding in awe and unparalleled in grandeur as no other duel has been among beings, a duel with an enemy well-nigh equal to him in prowess and heroism, an enemy who would have well-nigh withstood the prowess of R. — had it not been for fate acting against him, a duel the gradeur of depiction of which can be
fathomed only by reading.

As resolute as R. is in his display of martial prowess, as overwhelmed with agony is his heart, breaking as it were, in moments of sheer frustration, so when he believes that S. has been killed by Indrajit, and so when L. lies on the ground, struck by Rv.'s sakti.

In the first case, his agony robs him straight-away of all his senses, crushing him down like a lightning crushes a tree; and he is so totally forlorn in grief that he remains mute like a stone, without showing the slightest signs of life, as it were, without responding with a single word to L.'s long remonstration on his (R.'s) unremunerated idealism; that, as Vibhīṣaṇa sets out to console him and, disclosing Indrajit's magic, urges him to send out L. to interrupt Indrajit's sacrifice, his senses are yet too dimmed as to grasp anything, and he has to ask Vibhīṣaṇa to repeat his speech. (VI 70.10-12,13-42. 71-72.15) It is all an unspoken revelation of an encounter with the most traumatic of traumatic experiences, an experience so a reversion of his hopes and trusts - devoted as he ever and indefatigably was, and with such total self-negation and forbearance, to the pursuit of the highest ideals and values of dharma and to the cause of goodness - as that he would have never even thought of it in his mind, far less believed it to happen to him.

In the second case, his agony first fills him with such relentless wrath and revengefulness that he vows to set an end to the unending miseries of his life by satiating his thirst for revenge with the blood of Rv., whom he will give a defeat appropriate to the efforts he has put up, a defeat as will be for ever remembered by beings moving and non-moving, by Gods and men, as long as the earth carried them; and, after making him engage in a furious discharge of arrows till Rv. flees, driven
by fear, from the battle-field, it forces him to empty his bleeding heart, with a paroxysm of physical weakness and mental discouragement, a feeling of disgust with life, as it were, overcoming him, in the most heart-rending and pitiful lamentations - a picture though of utter disconsolateness, he stands testimony to a unique brotherly love for L., who is so dear to him that without him, he feels, life has no meaning for him, be it even in the glory of kingship or even in the loving company of S. (VI 88.36-59. 89.1-8).

Rama's elation

As relentless as R. was in his display of martial prowess to fight the Rks. and kill Rv., as elated he is in his victory amidst the rejoicings of the Vns. and the praises of the Gods (VI 97 end and elsewhere). But elated though he is, it is all an elation in a spirit of humaneness and generosity:

an elation that forgets all enmities and misgivings against Rv. now that he has obtained his penalty, and grants him an honourable cremation (VI 99.35-40) —

an elation that gives vent to an impatient desire in him to express his gratitude to Vibhīṣaṇa by immediately arranging his coronation (VI 100.9-10) and to communicate his good news to S. (VI 100.9ff.) —

an elation that works itself but in his entreating Indra—honouring him with a boon - to restore the Vns. to life and make their forests abound with fruits and flowers and spotless water, even when it is not the season (VI 108) —
an elation that flows out in sentiments of affection and gratitude to his loyal companions (passim) and to the Vns., on whom he invites Vibhīṣaṇa to lavish his hospitality - meant for him - since they have suffered so much for him (VI 109.4; 110 beginning), for whom he requests Bharadvāja to make all the trees on the way to Ayodhyā bear fruits for their enjoyment (VI 112.18) -; that flows out in passionate longings for a reunion with his noble brother Bh. and all his dear ones at home, longings which are so strong as to urge him to even decline Vibhīṣaṇa's offer of a luxurious bath, dresses and ornaments - for without Bh., who, in utter self-sacrifice for him, performs penance at home, no bath, no ornaments are pleasing to him (VI 109.1-7) - or his invitation to gratify him by staying one more day, while promising to him the Puṣpaka, which would bring him to Ayodhyā in one day - for his mind is restless and impatient to see his brother, who even came to Citrakūṭa to persuade him to return to Ayodhyā, and whose beseeching supplications he has declined, and to see his dear mothers, elders and friends and the people of Ayodhyā with their sons (VI 109.8ff.); longings which urge him to send H. to communicate the good news to Bh. and, on the way, give his regards to Guha (VI 113) - that; that flows out in an exuberance of joy and affection to his re-united brothers, mothers, elders and citizens (VI 115 end) and to his loyal companions, in the midst of all of whom he experiences the glorious hour of his coronation, and whom he rewards with generous gifts (VI 116) --

an elation that works itself out in his granting supreme happiness and protection to the citizens (VI 116.80-90).
A SYNTHETIC VIEW OF THE AUTHOR'S CONCEPTION
AND PORTRAIT OF RAMA'S CHARACTER
It is not an exaggeration to say, though we can say this only on the basis of an intuition, that V.'s conception of R.'s character is identical with his conception of the R. story as he intended to re-fashion it. R. not only is a hero and paragon of nobility of character (dharma-vıra, dhirodatta), but he embodies the story of a human destiny in its most sublime expression. So, to cast R.'s heroic character, V. had to cast his heroic story, and to unfold his humanity he had to unfold the story of his human odysseys, and to unfold the story of his human odysseys he had to unfold the story of all persons who had a deep bearing on R.'s life. So drawn, this is a somewhat exaggerated sketch, were we to consider it logically, for we could not rightly imagine that V. intended every other story, every other destiny, every other character to be secondary to R. No, surely he did not do so. Whatever page we may turn up in the Rm., it immediately bespeaks the poet's intention to portray a whole cosmos of life, a cosmos of persons and their destinies, their characters and emotions, of nature, of cities, of what not. What we mean to say, is that R. was the prime ideal in V.'s mind that moved him to take up the story as it was prevalent before him, and to make it an ideal story of life with an ideal message of life, with R. as its living ethical apex, with variegated ideal characters as living embodiments of an ideal ethical life, with many and variegated characters of life of variegated psychic temperaments, drawn from variegated sections of life, from variegated classes of beings, with a gallery of life itself and life's environment, with anything that would capture the fancies and imaginations of the people in a due rhapsodic and poetic sense - with all conducing to form the
stucco-work of a cosmos of life enthralling in its unfathomable richness and edifying in its unfathomable ethos.

If R. was the prime ideal in V.'s mind that inspired him to retell the R. story in his poetical vision and with his poetical message, R. must have been much of an ideal character in the tradition before him, though this tradition may have been more in the line of a delightful ākhyāna and less in the line of a delightful story with an ethical message of life. So we can say then more truly that V.'s poetical vocation was awakened at the vision of the ideal character of R., and that this vision itself filled him with a poetical mission to make his story an ideal story of life, with an ideal message of life, embodying in itself a whole cosmos of life - spell-binding in its richness, edifying in its message.

So many remarks could be made as regards the pattern V. uses to bring out his conception of R., but they are much the same as elsewhere and we have sufficiently spoken about them earlier.
We have done all the unfolding of R.'s heroism and exemplarity of character as well as of its human gamut. So we perhaps do more justice to the poetical mission of V. to convey, as V. intended to convey, in a total and lasting impression on the audience, what the hero, the paragon R. stands for, and what all he is in his unfathomable richness of personality.

As V. opens the curtain on R. and sings the praises of R., he says everything about him he can say by way of words and the impressions these words convey, and he sings of a paragon of virtues, a dharmavīra, greater and deeper than whom none could be. He sings of him as a model of an ideal and perfect prince. He sings of him as a model of an ideal and perfect personality, a personality sublime and super-human, a personality unrivalled by any other man in the world, in heroism unrivalled even by the Gods, resembling, as it were, the God of Gods himself. He sings of him as a model of humanity, a man unexcelled in idealism, and yet a fellow-traveller of man's most human experiences of life. He sings of him

as possessed of a nature as eminent and sublime in greatness of character as is that of the highest of Gods,

as is that of Svayamprabhu, the Deva of Devas,

and as human in emotionality and temperament as is that of the most human of humans -

as being as skilled and heroic in warfare as are the most chivalrous and heroic of Gods, like Indra,

and as tranquil-minded and self-controlled as are the greatest of sages -
as being as altruistically concerned and benevolent as are the closest of kinsmen, as are father and son, and as grateful and forbearant as are the most forbearing of mothers, like the Earth -
as being as exemplary in virtuous conduct and conversant with sacred wisdom and mundane arts as are the greatest gurus, like Brhaspati, and as filially observant as are the most loyal servants, like Kaśyapa, and as respectfully attentive to elders as are the humblest of pupils -
as being as unflinching in adherence to dharma and truth as are the most unflinching judges, like Yama, and as amiable and gentle as are the most tender-hearted of children -
as being as proficient in the accumulation of artha as are the most exemplary of grhastras, and as bountiful and generous as are the most bountiful of kings, like Kubera -
as being as firm in endurance as is the immoveable Himavān, and as deep in character as is the unfathomable Ocean -
as being as beautiful and effulgent in glory as are the brightest of stars, as is the blazing sun, and as beloved and dear to the people as are their sons.

So, while hardly having opened the curtain on R., V. has told us, with words impressive and edifying, all that R., the hero and paragon, stands for, and all that he is. But he has told us all this in abstract words divested of all flesh and blood, divested of all experience of life, divested of all emotion. But he makes
up immensely for that. For the story to come, is the living and enthralling life-story which is to unfold how unflinching the heroism of his commitments is, how unexcelled the sublimity of his character, how unfathomable the human-ness of his heart, how god-like his super-natural lustre and prowess in battle.

How unexcelled is the sublimity of R.'s character and the heroism of his commitments!

R.'s highest ideal in life is an unflinching commitment to satyadharmā, to a dharma that aspires for righteousness for the sake of truth and goodness and forgoes every concern about his own welfare, all considerations of worldly attachment and egotistic claims for justice, in a spirit of utmost self-sacrifice and forbearance against any injury done to him; a dharma that, uncompromising though it may be, has its resonance not in a temporal emotional attachment, but in the ever-lasting, supreme good of all beings, in a supreme altruism, an altruism that transcends all temporal attachment and seeks the eternal, spiritual welfare of beings. Its par-excellence-expressions are:

The most heroic and sublime self-negating filial love and concern for a father and filial respect for a mother (an unworthy mother) which a son can give witness to, in a spirit of total self-sacrifice and forbearance of all injustice done to him,

so heroic and sublime that he not only bears up all the injustice inflicted upon him by Kai, and bears it with cheer and enthusiasm, not only that he would think it to be as much a matter of course for his father to know that it is his most intimate desire to do any self-sacrifice for him, even to the point of sacrificing his life, as it ought to be a matter of course for him to demand any amount of sacrifice, howsoever big, from
him, and that the thought that his father may not know this deeply perturbs his heart, that he not only goes out to accept the most shameless and mean words of Kai., spoken in a spirit of ruthless ambition diametrically opposed to the discretion with which he treats her, as words prompting him with eagerness to renounce all selfishness for the sake of gratifying his father, but that he even expresses his regret that she did not personally give him this order, when he, a loyal son, would do any favour to her, his mother, expresses his regret that she does not appreciate sufficiently enough his self-sacrificing motives, when actually Kai. knows too well his unflinching adherence to truth and makes use of it with the most shameless cunning - so heroic and sublime that he, reluctant to think anything bad of Kai. as a mother, even when painfully aware, and forcefully made aware so by L., of her atrocious design, attributes, what actually is the result of her heroic ambition and shameless cunning, to the incomprehensible and irresistible efficacy of daiva, a consideration which, in turn, only consolidates him and further motivates him in his personal decision to fulfil his filial duty ---

An unfathomable love for his grief-forlorn dear ones, his father D., his mother Ks., and his brothers L. and Bh., on whom he would lavish all affection, and to whom he would gratify all the desires of their heart, but whose beseeching persuasions prompted by their inability to bear the crushing weight of grief to change his mind, and asseverations of love he, in view of a more supreme realization of their good, of a deeper spiritual concern for their well-being, has to gently turn down, even if this means to fill their hearts with dejection and
agony, and has to sublimate towards the realization of the supreme value of his commitment to dharma.

The most intimate and the most dedicated and self-sacrificing love a husband can give to a wife,
a love that always has in mind her supreme good,
a love that, though it would read and grant the most intimate wish and desire of her heart, would not allow itself to be at the mercy of even the deepest and most assuring of her asseverations of love, when such asseverations could be the product of first-hand enthusiasm and indeliberate fancies due to her being unaware of the darkness of life, and when a consent could mean a stake of responsibility, the consequences of which would be disastrous,
but a love that, when he sees how S. testifies her whole personality how supremely happy she will be in sharing the most grievous of her husband's miseries, and testifies this in a way that it emerges as the inmost and deepest desire of her heart, to an extent that its rejection would bring her well-nigh to the grave, when he is absolutely sure that she will not lose heart in difficulties, is spontaneously ready to consent and ready with extreme gratitude and affection—ever to be lavished on her during their path of life.

A commitment to grant protection to those who are virtuous and oppressed and seek his shelter, as an expression of the same commitment to dharma that realizes and aspires for the supreme good of fellow-beings.

A commitment to grant shelter to any one who seeks his protection in fear of oppression, whoever he may be,
even if he be the greatest enemy, as the most unflinching expression of this eternal ideal of śarapagataraksana —

And many more ideals —

And yet, how unfathomable is the human-ness of his heart!

How throbbing with affection and sympathy!

Throbbing with heartfelt affection and sympathy at parting from his dear ones and his citizens, whose incessant devotion and asseverations of love deeply move his heart, whose grief wrings as much his heart as it does theirs, and which he does everything to soothe and gently divert; whose agony of love he keeps ever in mind during his forest-stay, and, in a moment of a deep mood of depression caused by the absence of the comforting presence of Sumantra — the thought of whose ardent devotion violently convulses his heart —, is so traumatically re-awakened in him that he breaks into an unprecedented paroxysm of misgivings against Kai., whose purity of intention he would otherwise not have even questioned in his mind ——

Overflowing with tender and intimate affection, and devotion and love, with gratitude and generosity in joy, sorrow, and longings, towards his ever-devoted companions on his path of life, his wife S. and his brothers L. and Bh., in sentiments and professions that belong to the most beautiful of the Rm., and towards all his other loyal companions on his path of life ——

Lavishing a wealth of affection and an exuberance of sympathy, concern, understanding and solace on Su.,
in gratitude for his deep and loving friendship, which has been a source of new life and hope to him, and which has prompted him to, as deeply as he has experienced on himself what it means to suffer for grief, identify himself with him as his brother-in-grief ——

How bleeding in an agony of love!

A heart so bleeding that it runs through all the gamut of emotions a distressed heart can run through —

through heart-rending and despair-ridden lamentations and manifestations of grief that are unbounded in their unfathomable depth and their overwhelming power of pathos —

through ardent professions of pining love that are unbounded in their tenderness and sentimentality —

through such total absorptions in grief and musings that he becomes completely disinterested in life, that, to speak in the words of H., he does not even ward off gad-flies, mosquitoes, insects and serpents from his body, that he does not get sleep, and that he awakes with the sweet utterance 'Sītā', that, when he sees a fruit or a flower or something else that delights a lady, he addresses her, saying 'O dear one' —

through sentimental musings in mystical communion with the encompassing nature, with the spirits and denizens of the forest, whom he implores for information about his beloved, with its exuberant manifestations of beauty and joy, which, as they awaken in him happy memories of love, invariably re-enforce his pangs of grief and painful longings ——
A heart so bleeding as to flare into the highest pitch of wrath and vengeance it can flare to, assuming a point where he has so totally lost control of himself as to be no longer himself, a point of seemingly no return—were it not for the magnificent display of counsel and consolation by L. ---

A heart that, in encountering the most traumatic of traumatic experiences—an experience so much a reversion of his hopes and trusts that he would never have believed it to happen to him, devoted as he was to the cause of goodness—, is so crushed down, so forlorn in grief that it has stopped, as it were, giving any signs of life---

And yet a heart that reveals through its unfathomable treasure of emotions an unfathomable depth of conjugal love as intimate in its blissful romanticism and overflowing tender sentimentialty as it is in its sublime spirituality, and as intimate in its unflinching loyalty and chastity as it is in its gentle, self-sacrificing devotion, a love that would give everything in dedication to his beloved, that would read and grant the most intimate wishes and fancies of her heart---

So, we see a R., who in the midst of the most heroic firmness to his commitment, a commitment to which he is ever and unflinchingly loyal, and loyal with the greatest cheerfulness of mind—as a par-excellence expression of the most sublime altruism and the most total self-sacrifice—, is the most human in tenderness of heart, affection and sympathy, is the most human in agony of grief and love, which is another and the most capturing expression of his sublime altruism, — the spontaneous translation of his inmost ideals and principles.
R., thus, is not only the most sublime in sublimity, the most heroic in heroism, but the most human in human-ness, a human-ness which makes him truly and genuinely a paragon of humanity. And yet he is unequalled in his god-like and unsurpassably spell-binding, super-natural lustre and heroism in battle, is a hero that delights Gods and men alike, a hero that saves Gods and men alike from the terrible harassments of the super-demon Rv., a hero who is veritably the saranga of all beings, and in all respects: as a paragon of dharma and virtues, as a protector of the righteous and the oppressed, as a saviour of the world, as a king of blessedness.
A CRITICISM OF MODERN SCHOLARS' VIEWS
ON 'THE CHARACTERIZATION OF RAMA
Since, on the one hand, V.'s over-all characterization of R. is of a rather simple nature, and, on the other hand, many articles (though of little scientific value) have been written about R., it is not useful to go into a discussion as to how scholars tackle their representation of R. Except for a few scholars, who absolutely go out of the way, like Navlekar, they generally draw a correct over-all picture of R., though they tend to deviate from the right path with regard to details and critical issues, often on account of their inclusion of late interpolations, and though they never really penetrate to the core of R.'s character. We better discuss, in this review of scholars' opinions, a few 'abstruse' issues, other than these—in our opinion very irrelevant, though hotly discussed—question of R.'s killing of Vālī, which we have dealt with extensively in our systematic analysis itself, (with references to other schools of opinions, though not explicit references to authors) and other than all such questions as arise from late interpolations or as are not or only marginally intended by the author. To give a sufficiently wide span of references to modern authors, we have to prescind from giving critical comments to all the extracts which we are going to quote—this appears to be unnecessary also for the reason that practically all the potential criticisms will be self-evident from our systematic analysis itself—; we shall do so only in unavoidable cases and in a very abrupt way, while otherwise we shall merely give an illustration, by way of extracts, of the types of opinions prevailing.

We shall highlight the following questions:

1) What kind of an ideal is the ideal R. commits himself to? A purely abstract or a highly humane ideal?
2) Is it out of a lack of insight into S.'s unfathomable devotion to her husband, or out of a lack of confidence in her strong-mindedness of heart, or out of a deep responsibility and concern for her welfare that R. tortures his wife with his insistent refusals to take her with him to the forest?

3) Is R.'s promise of protection to the rṣis in accordance with his self-imposed commitment to a life of asceticism?

4) Are R.'s agonized manifestations of grief and pining for S. and other emotional paroxysms something that elevates his character and makes it human or something that deprives it of its greatness?

M. K. Venkatarama Iyer

"Man is indebted to his parents not only for his existence but also for his upkeep and preservation in his infancy and early childhood when he is helpless and has necessarily to depend on others for his food, clothing, bed and so forth. There is no end to the services which parents render to their children in their nonage. They spend sleepless nights watching over their children, nursing and tending them when they are unwell. They render these and other services in a spirit of selfless love and devotion and do not expect anything in return at all... Rāma is full of appreciation for what his parents have done for him and hardly knows what he could do in return for it all. When
Bharata's arguments and oaths of persuasion have failed to bring about any change in Rāma's attitude, Vasiṣṭha uses his position as the family-priest to convert Rama and make him accept the offer of kingship. 'I have been the officiating priest of your family for generations. By acting up to my word you will not be swerving in the least from the strict path of righteousness. Here are the merchants and citizens of Ayodhya, who request you in one voice to accept the kingship, and by acceding to their wishes you will not be violating Dharma even by an iota. Your mothers, - pious, old ladies, - desire the same and by fulfilling their desire you will not be transgressing the strict code of Dharma even by a hair's breadth. There is Bharata, who is most earnestly supplicating you to assume the kingship and by yielding to his supplication you will not be overstepping the limits of Dharma in any sense of the term.' To this forceful and at the same time touching appeal of Vasiṣṭha, Rāma gives his reply in three stanzas, which are equally forceful and touching: 'The services which parents do to their son and giving of their best, bathing and dressing the child, coaxing and cajoling and feeding him, - all this is not capable of being requited. The least that I can do to my father is to respect his words and carry out his wishes.' (II.CXI.9-11) Sheer gratitude requires that children should not act contrary to the will of their parents especially when the reputation of father is at stake. To let down one's father in a critical situation is equivalent to murdering him, though without a weapon (Aśastravādha).

To Rāma Daśaratha is something more than mere father. He is his king, his elder, and therefore his Guru. 'Daśaratha is my Guru, my king, my father and my elder. Whatever command he gives - whether out of passion or anger or pleasure - who that walks in the path of duty will fail to carry out!' (II.XXI.59) In another context he says: 'Daśaratha is our king, our protector, our Guru and our superior. He is our overlord. His words
must therefore be respected not only by me but by you (Śītā) also.' (II.XXIV.16) This view, that Daśaratha, by virtue of his seniority, his experience and worldly wisdom, is entitled to be treated as one's respected 'Guru', invests his words with additional weight. They are not to be lightly set aside. They emanate from one who has seen more of life than the youngsters. He has no selfish ends in view and he gives advice solely in the interests of his children. Daśaratha is also their king and protector. He has a right to issue commands and they have to be peremptorily obeyed. 'Over his wives and sons the king wields unquestioned supremacy.' (II.CIV.18) If we put these ideas together we form an impression of the esteem in which Rāma held his father. He was at once an object of love, respect, adoration and fear. The king combined in himself the role of the protector, of the wise teacher, of the supreme commander and, in the case of his children, the role of the loving father. It is said in another context: 'By his superior bearing and conduct, the king excels Yama, Vaiśravana, Indra and Varuṇa of might.' (II.LXVII.35) Ravana tells Mārīcha: 'A king has a five-fold aspect, the benignity of Soma, the severity of Yama and the graciousness of Varuṇa' (III.XL.12-13). Emphasizing his superior might he observes in another place: 'I cannot be slighted and overcome in battle either by the fierce arrows of the thousand-eyed Indra, or of Varuṇa or of Yama.' (VI.XXIV.45) At the back of these statements there is the conception of the king as the concrete and living embodiment on earth of Lord Viṣṇu.

If we take Rāma's view against this background, we can easily understand his willing obedience to his father and the cheerful manner in which he undertook to carry out his wishes. To him his father's word carried the same authority as the injunctions of the Veda. There is no gainsaying it nor does it lie in the power of the son to question it or examine it or place clever interpretations on it to suit his convenience. It is not
for a son to ask whether his father gave the order out of his own will and pleasure or under duress from any one else. It is equally irrelevant to ask whether he gave the order with a full awareness of its implications and consequences.

It is Rāma's firm conviction that 'no man will ever come to harm by obeying the orders of his father.' (II.XXI.37) This faith is so strong in him that 'at the word of his father he will unhesitatingly leap into the roaring flames or plunge headlong into deep water or dry deadly poison.' (II.XVIII.28-29) Having promised to carry out his father's wishes, whatever they are, he will not shift or prevaricate and, without counting the cost, will fulfill them to the very letter. What inspires him to commit himself in such an irretrievable manner is his rooted faith in his father's good intentions. He firmly believes that whatever is enjoined on him by his father will be in his own best interests. 'niyukto guruṇā pitṛā nṛpene ca hitena ca' he says in one context. Here the important word is 'hitena'. A father will always be intent on promoting the abiding welfare of his son. The course of action that he lays down may mean present discomfort, but it will prove to be most beneficial in the long run... Renouncing his claim to the throne and proceeding to the forest and agreeing to remain there for full fourteen years means incalculable danger and discomfort and yet Rāma accepts the order most cheerfully. He must have had an intuition that this renunciation was the harbinger of a most glorious future for him. He tells his brother: '0 Lakṣmaṇa, please do not be upset by this adverse turn of events. City-life or forest-life - it is all one to me. In fact, I feel that the latter will prove a great blessing to me.' (II.XXII.28) Sumitrā says to console Kausalyā by assuring her that 'Rāma's fame will spread far and wide.' (II.XLIV.7) Guha also has shrewd insight into Rāma's future (II.II.5)
Another line of thought in Rāma's mind was that if the promise that his father had given to Kaikeyī was broken, his reputation will suffer irreparable harm. People will come to speak of him as one who made sweet promises to the ear but broke them to the heart. Such a situation will lead ultimately to all-round deterioration of standards. To prevent such a catastrophe it is worth making any sacrifice. A private loss is a public gain. By giving up his claim to the throne and betaking himself to the forest in pursuance of his father's promise to Kaikeyī, Rāma will no doubt be losing a great thing and subjecting himself to much suffering and discomfort; but nothing great or good can be attained without paying an adequate price for it. The fair name of the Īkṣvāku family was a previous heritage handed down by his forbears. It had to be safeguarded at any cost. Incidentally public morality would stand high."

Critical Comments : Iyer's reflections are very good. They, so to say, make explicit the implicit psychological motivations behind R.'s fervent commitment to the word of his father. The poet makes R. allude to these motivations only casually, and even then makes him state them categorically rather than making him advance further explanations to substantiate them (the R.-Vasistha-sadhvāda is not original!), except in the case of a few vital points, as the undying value of making his father truthful, which he expounds with great vigour. But the motivation for his unflinching determination to do any sacrifice for his father, even if it were to renounce his life, with the greatest cheer is never consciously expressed. And deliberately so: For the poet wants to show that R. does not reflect at all on why he should be obedient to his father. For R. obedience to one's father is an eternal law, is the par-excellence-expression of satyadharma, and the sign-posts that indicate to him this truth are invariably inscribed in his nature, which is through and through permeated by dharma. On the
other hand, the poet takes pains to expound R.'s commitment to make his father truthful to his word as the expression of the most sublime filial love a son can bear witness to in a spirit of utmost forbearance and self-sacrifice.

V. Raghavan

"At the root of all the goodness of Rama was 'sympathy' and 'sensitiveness'. He strove that he might lead a blamishless life and live an untainted name. Such fame, he esteemed as heaven (Manyate parayaa Kiirtyaa mahat svaaraphalam tatah II 1: 16). His anxiety was that there should not be even a speck of dust in him. Not a single being in the world should have anything to say against him. This he worked for and persuaded as his ideal for a king, the greatest of the servants of the people. Lakshmana said that that the tragedy of his banishment was that there was nothing against him to warrant that act and that there would be none in the entire kingdom to say a word against him. Even an enemy had nothing to say ill of him, even in his absence. Dasaratha tells Kaikeyi: 'Ill-natured or slanderous talk is unthinkable in Rama' (Parivaadh apavaado va raghave no'upapalyati II.12:25). Rama sought to please all and earn a universal good name. If Kaikeyi wanted the kingdom, he gave up; and before entering the city after the exile, he was still as desireless of the kingdom as before and sent Hanuman to see how Bharata was. If Bharata had meantime acquired a liking for the throne, Rama would retire again. Rama looked upon the public as God, and propitiated them in every way. He practised the religion of Loka-aradhana.
Critical comments: Yes and no. While I would agree with Raghavan in saying that R.'s anxiety is to be absolutely unblemishable before the people, I would disagree with him in stressing this point as the primary aspect of his motivation. There is a far deeper motivation in R. than loka-ārājana. In fact, the whole Rm. goes to show the supreme altruism and selflessness of R. behind his 'sensitiveness' in according all his actions to the path of dharma and truth.

V. S. Srinivasa Sastri

"But at this point it is worth remembering that Rama was a unique character, and therefore it is necessary to remember that, according to the Poet, these merely human attachments, these personal affections all yielded place in his heart to an even greater passion. And what was that? The passion for righteousness, the passion for high honour, the passion for Dharma! It was an active element in his nature, and we find that put to a supreme test more than once and Rama coming out triumphantly as an eternal claimant to truth. This is what he says to Kaikcyi when with great misgiving as to his attitude she breaks the news to him and asks him to abandon his coronation as 'yuvaraj'; Sri Rama says to her - this is remarkable - , 'Why was I not told that before? Don't you know my nature?'

ahā hi sitāḥ rājayāḥ ca prāparniṣṭān dhanāni ca /
hrṣṭo bhrātre svayaṁ dadyāṁ bharatēyaprācuditaḥ //
II.19.7

'Shaśi! I would have given to him if it were right and proper that I should do so, wealth and kingdom and' (I blush to add) 'Sita? I would have given everything to Bharata. Why was I not told quickly and in time?'
Then there is the famous scene where Sita assumes the character of his confidential adviser. You remember the famous scene where Sri Rama made a pact with the Rishis to punish the Rakshasas. 'Why do you agree to make war against them?' she says. vinā vairāḥ ca raudratā (III.9.4). 'To make war without righteous cause is one of the things you should avoid.' Let those who will judge Sita in their small minds for this daring of hers, but truly considered, she only did her duty, a duty which we don't allow our wives to perform, and which, alas, they are not qualified to perform. There is no sphere of life in which a wife is not entitled to give counsel. Let us take example from the way Sri Rama did it. 'You have a claim,' he says, 'to be heard in all these matters, and I honour you for this confidence of yours,' and he adds in striking words,

apyahaṁ jīvitaṁ jahyāṁ tvāṁ vā sīte salakṣṇām
na tu pratijñāṁ saṁśrutya brāhmaṇeḥbhyo viśeṣataḥ //

III.10.19

'I may abandon my life, I may abandon you, I may abandon Lakshmana, I may abandon everything, but not my promise once made and particularly to Brahmans.' A promise made must be carried out, no matter what tribulations and trials there may be. It is supreme. There then is Sri Rama's character shining out as a beacon to all humanity. Not that this is stated for the first time. But it is worth remembering that many a man among us will keep a promise so long as it suits him, but there is no one who will risk all and lose all rather than break his promise."

What does Rama stand for today? He stands for the highest in man— as son, husband, king and ally or friend of the oppressed. Take his act of self-sacrifice, for instance. When only five or six and twenty he accepted exile without a demur and without visible sign of disappointment. Did not listen to prayers, entreaties, counsel. Asserted the sanctity of promise and
the virtue of obedience. So unquestioned was his moral authority that he lectured dharma to father, mother, brother, wife and subjects. All who came into contact with him bowed to him in reverence.

The most striking proof of his moral supremacy is his repudiation of Sita. The world was shocked, but durst not protest. Their attitude was one of awe as to a god; they accepted Sita's ordeal as some doom of fate.

Or take these incidents -
Inspite of the advice of eminent counsellors including Lakshmana, he granted protection to Vibhishana.

Having beaten Ravana in the first encounter, he magnanimously let him off, refusing to pursue his advantage.

When Vibhishana refused to perform Ravana's obsequies, he offered to do them himself and brought Vibhishana to a sense of right.

Such were the heights of moral purity and grandeur reached by Rama. No wonder that the world bowed deeply and devoutly to him. He was almost immaculate.

Critical comments: According to Sastri's explanation in these texts, R.'s commitment to dharma is a commitment to a moral abstraction. And yet, it is evident from the second quotation itself and from other texts that he is very well aware of the high altruism and humanism governing the actions of R. There seems then to be some kind of dichotomy in R., at least, it would appear so from Sastri's exposition, or, and this seems to be more likely, Sastri does not see the need of explaining R.'s ideal of dharma in line with his altruism. It is true that V. does not give us an explicit explanation of this either, but he does make it unmistakeably clear that the ideal of dharma R.
ascribes himself to is not a mere abstraction, but an ideal grounded in supreme truth and goodness, i.e. altruism. One can argue that R.'s repudiation of S. totally destroys this conception of dharma, but precisely this episode is not part of the original.

M. K. Venkatarama Iyer

"The period of testing came when Rāma had to leave for the forest. He tried his best to persuade Sītā to stay in Ayodhya, leading a sheltered life in the palace. Forest-life was open to many dangers, discomforts and privations. They would have to go without good food, water and shelter. They would have to face many other hardships. If she stayed at home she could not only look to the comforts of her mother-in-law but also be a source of consolation to her, in view of her separation from her son. In many other ways also Rāma tried to persuade her to stay on in Ayodhya, but all his arguments proved of no avail. She met his arguments by counter-arguments and clinched the whole matter by freely shedding tears. Rāma had no option but to yield to her request. He was now perfectly convinced of her transparent sincerity. 'Oh lady! I do not care even for Heaven if it is to be attained without you.' (II.0XX.27) He knew full well that Sītā would never agree to be left behind. When his mother insisted on accompanying him to the forest, he advised her to stay behind and attend to the needs of the old king. There was no higher duty for a woman than to attend on her husband. Applying the same principle to Sītā, he should have agreed quite at the outset to take her along with him. But he
tried his best to keep her at home. Was he guilty of double-standard? Did he adopt one standard for his mother and another for his wife? Superficially it may look like that, but really it is not so. His object in trying to persuade Sītā again and again was to make public the strength of her determination. He wanted to create an opportunity for her to state her unswerving loyalty to her husband in clear and unmistakeable terms. Not a trace of doubt must be left in anybody's mind that Rāma took Sītā to the forest against her consent. He wanted it to be widely known that since she was determined, he had no alternative but to yield to her request."

V. Raghunathan

"The ṛṣis of the Daṇḍaka forest are men of this stamp. It is the like of them that Śrī Rāma has vowed to protect from the violence of the Rākṣasas. Sītā gently remonstrates with him for taking upon himself without provocation other people's quarrels, when the proper thing for one who has come to live the forest life is to give up the use of arms for the duration. In reply Śrī Rāma points out that he has passed his word; he will give up his own life (not to speak of Sītā herself or Lakṣmanā) rather than break his plighted word, especially when the promise has been given to Brāhmaṇas. Śrī Rāma in this situation may be expected to guide himself by the light of the example of these revered Brāhmaṇas. What did they do? They allowed themselves to be harried or even killed by the Rākṣasas rather than waste their tapas by retaliation or anger. Now, literal copying of their
conduct would have meant Śrī Rāma's making the same gesture of non-violence towards the Rākṣasas. But it would have been merely a gesture. There would have been no reality behind it. For Rāma was a Kṣatriya and King even though in exile: he was not a Brāhmaṇa. His dharma was not absolute forbearance, but the violence necessary to put down evil. The vānaprastha dharma, in so far as it could apply to him during his Daṇḍaka sojourn, could be regarded as imposing upon him only the kind of restraint, and allowing him only the kind of indulgence, that was not contrary to his Varna-dharma or Kula-dharma. Śrī Rāma must have weighed all these considerations in his mind and come to the conclusion that he should follow the practice of the Brāhmaṇa tapasvis, not literally, but in accordance with the spirit thereof. He realizes that he shall be prepared to give up everything, including his own life if need be, in doing his duty of protecting the helpless, as the Brāhmaṇas are prepared to stick to their duty of non-violence even if it should mean death to themselves.

Critical comments: While the point is very well seen by the writer, his article, on the whole, is rather vitiated by the inclusion of material from late interpolations and a tendency to philosophize away from V.'s mind.

M. K. Venkatarama Iyer

"In fact, Rāma is the meeting-ground of contrary qualities. He could be mild like the lamb and yet, when the occasion demanded it, ferocious like the lion; he was patient like Mother
Earth and yet, when he was angered, not even the gods dared make a stand against him; he could speak the harsh, unpalatable truth without however offending the susceptibilities of people; he could be kind, loving and accommodating, and yet remain adamant like the rock when fundamental principles were at stake. This is the mark of a truly spiritual personality. What appear like opposite qualities lose their opposition in all-embracing spirituality."

Critical comments: There is some truth in it, but Iyer does not show how. It appears that for Iyer, who is a staunch believer that V., in drawing R.'s character, expounds his mission as an avatāra, these polarities are the essential facets of the personality of an avatāra, and that all his actions are done from his superior, supernatural plane. If so, the writer misses by far the message of the poet.

V. S. Srinivasa Sastrī\(^\text{12}\)

"Well, ladies and gentlemen, if there was a human being who could reach those unimaginable heights of moral purity and grandeur, is it any wonder that all the world bowed to him, accepted his smallest wish as the decree of Heaven? That he was. And yet, thanks be to human nature which we all have, as the poets say, as the world says, one nature is common to us all. Full of dread and awe as we are, as we contemplate Sri Rama, it fills us now and then with pride that he too, he too thought very much as we should have thought. Trouble depressed him; sorrow struck him hard; he had his moments of anguish. Alas, the Poet says he cried and wept bitter tears now and then! He grew angry sometimes, he was in despair sometimes; he was
about to commit suicide now and then. He said harsh things of people. He suspected just as you and I would suspect. He did everything that we with flesh and blood do. Don't think that we bring him down from his high level; we raise ourselves to kinship with him as we notice these incidents. If being like us with flesh and blood, actuated by our motives now and then, feeling angry, feeling depressed, feeling sorry, if being like us, it was still possible for him to rise to those great altitudes, though we may not soar so high, may we not rise half an inch above ourselves? May we not subdue our nature to some extent? It won't turn all to gold, this base lead of which we are made. No, it won't. Nevertheless we could clean that lead, make it shine according to its own nature and then, ladies and gentlemen, we shall have read of Sri Rama to some purpose. We shall have heard the Ramayana with some advantage, and upon our lives and our character some influence of a very exalted and almost divine nature will have been exerted so that we shall all be somewhat the better for having come under the influence of this great epic of Valmiki."

"If he was always on the highest level and never came down, if he was always unapproachably great, what good is he going to be to us? In some respects he must be like us. There are other instances in which we perceive the kinship between Rama and ourselves, and as an adoring study of the great epic is only of value in proportion as it raises our nature, as it enables us to conquer our lower selves and live as long as possible and as firmly as possible on our own higher level, since our business is, if possible, to get from this epic that which will enable us from bad to get to good, we shall do well to dwell on the next occasion on some of the other episodes where Rama shows his human qualities in a degree which so far from interfering with our adoration and worship of him, only make us love him the more dearly, regard him as closely bound with us, as also one through
whose example we may be enabled in ever so humble a measure to rise above ourselves, as they say, from our lower to our higher selves. For so man improves. Not that he ever is above weakness, but when weakness assails him, he remembers these mighty examples and tries to rise above it. He may not succeed but even the trial is good for something. One trial may fail; two trials may fail, may often fail. The third may meet with partial success. The fourth, fifth and so on. Our lives may be short; our lives may be bounded on every side by things that are coarse and sordid, nevertheless they are lives, let us remember, similar in quality to the life that Sri Rama had; and if, when we grapple with our weaknesses, we try to remember him, may be, as I said before, in some humble measure we shall improve our own nature and learn to live our better selves more often, more firmly and to better purpose."

Critical comments: The author refers to the same idea in several places. We agree fully with his argument that the human weaknesses of R. do not take away anything from his ideal character, and that they make us feel united with him more closely in kinship, make us love him more deeply and inspire us to imitate his great ideals, and to some extent agree with his argument that they are meant to show how R. has conquered his emotional trials to rise to soaring altitudes of sublimity, how his sublime nature has triumphed over his lower nature, and how we can do this with him. (In all that, we consider R. an ideal man, not an ideal God-man) Sastri, however, has failed to see that, besides all that, R.'s emotional paroxysms, though being weaknesses in one way, have a highly positive value: They reveal the unfathomable depth of his ideals of conjugal love, filial devotion, brotherly attachment etc. They render his sublimity of character really human and genuinely sublime since human emotions are the spontaneous translations of the innermost
1) We would like to mention in passing that, in depicting R.'s homage to eminent rṣis like Atri, Anasūya, Sarabhaṅga, Sutikṣṇa, Agastya and Sabarī, on the one hand, and their desire for and gratification at R.'s visitation and their eagerness to bestow their blessings or favours - obtained by their yogic power - on him, in some form or other, on the other hand, V. makes R. reflect both his filial respect for men of spiritual perfection as well as his own radiating spiritual glory, which is of an insatiable inspiration even to such eminent sages.

2) Earlier (II 108), the sages of Citrakūṭa intimate their anxiety to him - an anxiety caused by Khara's eradication of the rṣis of Janasthāna and the Rks.' recent attacks on and harassments of them - , and their decision to leave the place and request to R. to come along with them. At that occasion, R. listens sympathetically to them, but does not comply with their request to go with them - though their propitiation subconsciously induces him, together with other motives, to leave the place (II 109 beginning).

3) I owe this idea to M. K. Venkatarama Iyer, Siṭā. KK XXVII 54-60; 83-87 p.58.

4) For contents of the story see s.v. Hanumān pp.433-475 , Sugrīva pp.422-426 , Vālī pp.376ff...

5) Some scholars would like to equate R.'s giving saranagatarāksana to Vībhīṣaṇa with his friendship pact with Su. We do not agree with this. The situation is quite different: First of all, from the outset, the friendship between R. and Su. is mutual. R. is trying for Su.'s friendship, and Su., when he meets R., for R.'s. Secondly, there is no controversy, no possibility of any apprehension involved whatsoever. Both intuit each other's sincerity and virtuousness. Not that the ideal of saranagatarāksana is not implied in the background of each one's mind - no partners-in-grief can find together as friends without being ready to give protection to one another in need - , but since it does not entail any point of ambiguity or controversy, it is as spontaneous and natural as any other ideal that is part of the character of a virtuous man, like affection to persons in grief, generosity to persons in need etc. So, the whole idea of saranagatarāksana is only presupposed, but it does not have any decisive role to play in the pact of friendship between R. and Su.
6) Śrī Rāma as a Dutiful Son. KK XXVI 50-55; pp.51-54.

7) The Infinite Excellences of Sri Rama (or Rama Guna Manasa). VK XXIV 218-222; 270-276; p.275.

8) pp.31-32; p.V (of Summary).

9) Rāma and Sītā. KK XXVI 174-181 p.175.

10) Sri Rama: The Ideal Guru. VK XL 135-142.

11) The Personality of Rāma. KK XXVII 22-29. p.27.

12) pp.64-65; p.72

13) Further articles on R. :
M.V. Iyengar pp.123-143.
M.K. Venkatarama Iyer, Śrī Rāma's Relationship with Lākṣmaṇa and Bārata. KK XXVI 81-88.
N.R. Navlekar (absurd!)
V. Raghavan, Ramayana-Triveni: Duty to People. VK XXXIX 148-152.
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VALMIKI'S POETICAL MISSION
AND THE MESSAGE OF HIS
CHARACTER - PORTRAYALS
For generations the heroic story (ākhyāna) of R. has been sung by rhapsodists in the courts of the Ikṣvākus. It has been a delightful, enthralling story about the heroism of his exploits and the heroism of his Self in meeting the odysseys of his life.

There comes a man of great genius and great spirit of mind, a rhapsodist by disposition and a first full-fledged poet by vocation, with a deep psychological insight into the human heart with its emotions, ideals and aspirations, who, inspired by the vision of the ideal character of R., is inflamed with a poetical mission, the mission to picture this story anew, and picture it as an ideal story of life with an ideal message of life embodying in it a whole cosmos of life, enthralling in its exuberant riches and edifying in its capturing message, a story truly rhapsodic and truly poetic at the same time - a story truly rhapsodic in that it would depict a gallery of scenes and its environment of life as flowing from the inspiration of the moment, never failing to capture the hearts and minds of the audience; a story truly poetic in that it would impregnate this whole gallery with a poetico-psychological spirit of delightfulness and edification, the spirit of a great message embodied in an enthralling act of life throbbing with emotions, ideals and aspirations; the vision of the unfathomable wealth of the soul of life with its telling ethos and its inspiring models.

V.'s foremost ethical message is the message of inspiring ideals of life which express the deepest aspirations of the human heart, a message embodied in the portrayal of ideal characters woven into enthralling and edifying stories of their odysseys of life. The apex of all models of life is the ever-inspiring hero R., the paragon of all virtues, the prototype of humanity, the gārāṇya of all beings. His ideal personality is surrounded by
a number of other, more or less, ideal characters embodying variegated ideals of life: the ideal of wifely devotion (S.), the ideal of brotherly love (L., Bh.), the ideal of parental love (D., Ks.), the ideal of wise and dedicated counsellorship (H., Vibhiṣaṇa), the ideal of dedicated service (Sumantra), the ideal of friendship (Su.) and many others. But models though they are, they are designed, with a host of other characters, to highlight the rich wealth of the psyche of life. Life is not life with ideals alone. Life becomes life if it unravels all that is in its depth, all the phosphorescent richness of emotions, feelings and tenets, of joy and sorrow, love and hatred, of forbearance and wrath, of altruism and selfishness etc. etc., and if it encompasses all that is in its bosom, encompasses the milieu of variegated strata of society, of variegated walks of life, of variegated classes of beings, and if it encompasses all that makes up its environment. For then only, life is truly and vividly life. And life that is truly and vividly life is not only delightful for its pulsing heartbeat and its exuberant wealth and richness, but has an abundance of messages; and, more than that, the poet's foremost message, the message of ideals, becomes truly and genuinely embedded in its life-source through its oscillation with other manifestations of life, and so stands out triumphantly and inspiringly. Such life with its unfathomable depth and its all-encompassing horizon, with its motivation in creating delight and proclaiming a host of messages, and with its arrow pointed towards the elevation of great ideals, is almost totally captured in the poet's portrayal of characters specially designed at getting their design from their involvement in the story. To show the richness of the pulsating soul of life and its all-encompassing width, to expound its innumerable messages which are conducing in an invaluable way to the elevation of ideals, V.'s depiction of ideal characters, the prime urge of his mind, is woven into a wider context, the context of the portrayal of manifold
characters of manifold temperaments, with manifold life-situations, from manifold paths of life, from manifold classes of beings.

We are going to unfold a little this portrait-gallery of Y.'s characters in a few moments, but let us first say a word or two about those aspects of life and its environment which are not taken into the character-portrayals: They are as encompassing in their richness as the aspects of life mirrored in the character-portrayals, and far more. They, in the truest sense of the word, encompass a whole universe of life,

a universe of beings: Gods, mythological figures, super-humans, humans, super-animals, animals etc. etc. -

a universe of walks of life and ways of civilization: the kingly walk of life, the Brāhmanic walk of life, the domestic walk of life, the attendant's walk of life, the tribal walk of life, the ascetic walk of life, different vanavāsi walks of life, the Vn. walk of life, the Rākṣasūric walk of life, the warrior walk of life; the Aryan way of civilization, the tribal way of civilization, the Vn. way of civilization, the Rā. way of civilization -

a universe of dharmas = views of life: the satyadharma-view-of-life, the kṣatradharma-view-of-life, the grhaastha-dharma-view-of-life, the sākṣyasa-dharma-view-of-life, the Rāksasa-dharma-view-of-life -

a universe of social activities, customs and festivities -

a universe of life-environments: cities, palaces, garden, forests, battles etc. -

in short, a universe to capture which it would require many books. But encompassing and elaborate as they may be, these aspects lack
the depth of heart and lack a message. But they do have a vital function: They, first of all, because of their richness and embellishment, capture, in a truly rhapsodic manner, the hearts and minds of the audience. But they also contribute to enhancing the life-spirit captured in the character-portrayals in a variety of ways: They lead up to and enforce climaxes, they retard and divert so as to produce excitement, they relieve tension etc. etc. And, they broaden the vision of the already rich horizon of life.

Let us now unfold a little V.'s portrait-gallery of characters and see their messages in relation to the poet's primary message: the portrayal of ideals which express the deepest aspirations of the human heart.

1) First and foremost, V.'s characters are characters with manifold individual inclinations and temperaments mirroring manifold states of the soul, or they themselves run, in meeting with manifold experiences of life, through manifold states of the soul. These states of the soul range over the entire gamut of emotions, sentiments, urges, tenets, principles of which life is built, from sublime altruism to heinous selfishness, from tender-hearted affection to tyrannic cruelty, from patient forbearance to relentless wrath, from sublime goodness to vicious atrocity, etc., and are as unfathomable and fluorescent as the waters of the ocean. And yet, amidst this vastness of fluorescent states of the soul, there emerges a universal pattern of polar forces. There is a struggle between the forces of goodness and the forces of evil, between the daivic and the ghoric forces, there is a struggle between the sattvic and the rajasic mentality, between the mentality of satyadharma and the mentality of kṣatradharma, there is a struggle between the elysium of happiness and the niraya of agony, between the spell of fortune and the doom of misfortune, between the light of hope and the darkness of despair, between the sublime glory of the
ideal and the diabolic magic of the anti-ideal. And the universal message of all these conflicts is the message of the final victory of the forces of light over the forces of darkness, of the sublime glory of the ideals over the diabolic magic of the anti-ideals. Whatever trials and reversals the highest ideals of life do have to undergo, whatever stages of darkness, agony and despair they do have to pass, with many a bitter tragedy on the way, they are bound to lead to a happy end, the final victory is bound to be theirs. Thus, the loftiest ideals of life are not only sublimely beautiful, are not only the expressions of the deepest dreams and aspirations of the human heart, but they are the eternal guiding-stars of the universe, dimmed by clouds though often they may be. They are thus eternal milestones on man's path through life, they have a sure and glorious goal, though hard and disheartening this path may be. Surely, this is the universal message of V., however this message will be soon obscured, with pathos and pessimism taking hold of it.\(^3\)

2) V.'s characters are characters from manifold walks of life, manifold classes of beings, encompassing a manifold psyche and gallery of life. Though some of the characters reach an elevation far beyond the capacities of the average man, many other characters are flesh-and-blood characters from all walks of life, and even the greatest characters, however sublime in loftiness of character, are in their human-ness and emotionality as flesh and blood as the common man is, are, as it were, fellow-travellers on his path through life. The Rm. is not composed for the spiritual perfection of a few individuals, but for the common man from every walk of life. True, the loftiest characters are guiding-stars of a sheer unattainable sublimity, but yet they do have all the wealth of emotions and sentiments which mark the common man, and they do have to undergo all the ordeals of life, all the tragedies which the common man has to cope with. The very audience of the Rm. is largely the common man, the common man from all walks and classes of society. And
it is precisely because these loftiest of characters are so human, so flesh and blood of their own that they are such inspiring models to them. But the common man needs not only these ideal characters, these guiding stars, however much he can identify himself with them, he can love, rejoice, lament, agonize and triumph with them, but he needs characters who, though perhaps still greater than them, are fully their own, who like themselves are not able to transcend their weaknesses and cope with their emotional trials and reversals. And he needs such characters as are below him, on whom he can, with the author, pour out his contempt, or such characters as are outspoken villains, against whom he can lash his wrath and vengeance, and with whom he can feel the devility of evil. And what could be more apt than thereby, next to delving into the depths of the heart, also to extend the horizon of life and take characters from all walks of life and even from all classes of beings. By widening the cosmos of life, the poet not only enhances the delight and interest of the common man, but enhances his identification with the story and its messages. Whose these characters are we have explained in our thesis. We have spoken about them as characters-in-themselves. But though they are all character-in-themselves, to a greater or lesser extent, they do have, on account of their messages, a relational value, both in their oscillation to one another (as spoken about above) and in their communication with the audience.

Let us therefore pick out a few of them, namely those characters who very much mirror the mentality of the people in some form or other, and with whom they can especially identify themselves, and let us situate them in this psycho-communicative perspective:

There are the princes Bh. and L., who, in their attempt, prompted by their boundless love and concern for R., to dissuade him from his firm determination to go to the forest, fall into a frenzy.
of psychic upsurges, and, spell-bound by them, take recourse to a rājasic display of ideologies (L.), or to a frenzied display of arguments and psychological pressures (Bh.). There is king D., an aged father, who loves R. with paternal affection, but pays his infatuation for his younger wife, against his own intention, with the loss of his dear son, and, unable to cope with the grief and agony taking hold of him, breathes his last. There is queen Ks., who as the loving mother of R., cannot overcome her son's misfortune, and, thinking that all her life has been a life of gloom and unending miseries, never finds consolation till R.'s return. There is the charioteer Sumantra, who is so full of devotion and attachment to his master that he cannot help projecting the disconsolateness arising from his departure from R. even on D. and Ks., and thereby re-enforces their grief. There are the people of Ayodhya, who are so full of devotion to their R. that they would irresistibly follow his chariot, eagerly determined to leave house and home and share his ascetic life till they would move his mind to return to Ayodhya, and who, frustrated in their intention, take recourse to a spirit of melancholy and mourning, utterly disinterested in life. There is the Vn. king Su., who, though an amiable and affectionate friend of R. and full of concern for him and readiness to help, in his exuberant mood at the recovery of his kingdom, so loses himself in sexual pleasures and inebriety that he for some time completely forgets his dutifulness towards R., and in this and other aspects reveals himself as a genuine representative of the monkeys. There is the Rk. Mārīca, who is converted to a sage, and who in his conscientiousness does everything to dissuade Rv. from his intention, but, realizing its futility, succumbs to his wishes. There are the various vanavāsī, who are all full of hospitality, and, greatly inspired by R.'s heroism, want to lavish all that is in their power on him. There is the devout sage-wife of Atri, Anasūyā, who, inspired by S.'s great idealism in following her husband, is prompted to instruct
her about the virtue of a wife's devotion to her husband, and to lavish her presents on her, and is filled with intimate curiosity to know about her life and marriage. There are the Vn. hosts, who, though heroic and impetuous in their fight, are timid in face of danger, dispirited in face of difficulties, fickle-minded in face of trials, and indulgent and mischievous in their exuberance of joy. Many more such examples could be given.

\[\text{What then is the Rm., the ādikāvya? It is an ideal story with an ideal message of life, woven into the contexture of a dramatic story, truly rhapsodic and truly poetic, that captures a universe of life - no less enthralling in its pulsation and richness than edifying in its messages. It is a story that expounds the highest ideals of life embodied in the life-experiential portrayal of ideal characters, woven into a story that, for the sake of showing the rich pulsation of the soul of life and its all-encompassing width, for the sake of expounding innumerable messages which conduce in an invaluable way to the elevation of ideals, captures a whole universe of life in the life-experiential portrayal of a universe of characters - a universe of characters which, rifted by polar forces, the forces of light and darkness, of sublime ideals and diabolic anti-ideals, embodies the gladdening message of the victory of light over darkness and of ideals over anti-ideals, - ideals which, while reflecting the deepest aspirations of man, are expounded as his eternal milestones with a sure and glorious goal on his weary path through life; and a universe of characters which [though of characters-in-themselves to create delight - yet with a psycho-communicative dimension ], mirroring the wealth of emotions, sentiments and ordeals of life of the common man of all walks, sets a stage towards his living identification with those lofty ideals embodied in the portrayal of those ideal characters, - characters who, unattained in their perfection, as it were, are flesh and blood of their own in their human-ness.}\]
There could not be any more fitting conclusion to our thesis than a quotation from Sri Aurobindo,\(^5\) no doubt the most intuitive aesthetic critic of V. as a poet and a seer.\(^6\) Let us note that, though our investigations have led us to an estimate of the overall picture of V.'s poem and his poetical mission different from Aurobindo's, and though we would consider Aurobindo's approach too one-sided in as far as it overstresses the artistic mould of the Rm., there is much on which we have fully identical views.

"The subject is the same as in the Mahabharata, the strife of the divine with the titanic forces in the life of the earth, but in more purely ideal forms, in frankly supernatural dimensions and an imaginative heightening of both the good and the evil in human character. On one side is portrayed an ideal manhood, a divine beauty of virtue and ethical order, a civilization founded on the Dharma and realising an exaltation of the moral ideal which is presented with a singularly strong appeal of aesthetic grace and harmony and sweetness; on the other are wild and anarchic and almost amorphous forces of superhuman egoism and self-will and exultant violence, and the two ideas and powers of mental nature living and embodied are brought into conflict and led to a decisive issue of the victory of the divine man over the Rakshasa. All shade and complexity are omitted which would diminish the single purity of the idea, the representative force in the outline of the figures, the significance of the temperamental colour and only so much admitted as is sufficient to humanise the appeal and the significance. The poet makes us conscious of the immense forces that are behind our life and sets his action in a magnificent epic scenery, the great imperial city, the mountains and the ocean, the forest and wilderness, described with such a largeness as to make us feel as if the whole world were the scene of his poem and its subject the whole divine and titanic possibility of man imaged in a few great or
monstrous figures. The ethical and the aesthetic mind of India have here fused themselves into a harmonious unity and reached an unexampled pure wideness and beauty of self-expression. The Ramayana embodied for the Indian imagination its highest and tenderest human ideals of character, made strength and courage and gentleness and purity and fidelity and self-sacrifice familiar to it in the suavest and most harmonious forms coloured so as to attract the emotion and the aesthetic sense, stripped morals of all repellent austerity on one side or on the other of mere commonness and lent a certain high divineness to the ordinary things of life, conjugal and filial and maternal and fraternal feeling, the duty of the prince and leader and the loyalty of follower and subject, the greatness of the great and the truth and worth of the simple, toning things ethical to the beauty of a more psychical meaning by the glow of its ideal hues. The work of Valmiki has been an agent of almost incalculable power in the moulding of the cultural mind of India: it has presented to it to be loved and imitated in figures like Rama and Sita, made so divinely and with such a revelation of reality as to become objects of enduring cult and worship, or like Hanuman, Lakshmana, Bharata the living human image of its ethical ideal; it has fashioned much of what is best and sweetest in the national character, and it has evoked and fixed in it those finer and exquisite yet firm soul tones and that more delicate humanity of temperament which are a more valuable thing than the formal outsides of virtue and conduct."

1) This chapter intends to be a psychological reconstruction of V.'s poetical mission and the special message of his character-portrayals. It is not a critical, but intuitive chapter. 'And in as far as critical statements are made, they are made categorically without any discussion. They are all such as have already been dealt with earlier or are self-evident or can only be surmised.'
2) To determine what the exact nature of this akhyāna was within the frame of the universal genres of oral narrative and semi-narrative poetry such as the shamanistic poem, the panegyric, the heroic poem, the heroic saga, the ballad, the legend, the romance etc. (see Bowra pp.1-47), and also what the elements were which V. had imbibed from such sources to form his first refined poem - is difficult without first establishing the genesis and development of Epic literature in India in general and bring it into relief against the strands of literature that have influenced it.


In another article of his Essays (VII : Rasa as a canon of Literary Criticism. pp.64-71, ib. pp.67-69) Krishnamoorthy criticizes Anandavardhana's theory as contradictory from the point of view of V.'s poetico-ethical intention and the Sanskrit conception of literature, and then suggests as a variant interpretation that the sentiment of even the tragic finale of the Rm. may be interpreted, from the over-all point of view of the dominant rasa of the Rm., i.e. the vīraraśa, as a gamut of the heroic sentiment known as dharmavīra:

"The main point at issue is whether Anandavardhana has rightly interpreted the spirit of the Rāmayāna in regarding Karuna as its prominent rasa. We have seen that the Sanskrit conception of literature, emphasizing the reward of virtue, does not allow room for the hero's failure or frustration. Is it a feeling of good over evil we get prominently in the epic, or a sense of the unrewarded suffering of the good? Do Rama and Sītā represent for us models of heroic duty and feminine fortitude or just objects of pity? If our answer is the latter, we are almost accepting the practical success of Rāvana, the embodiment of evil, in inflicting irrevocable sorrow on Rama and Sītā; and this gives the lie to the very credo of success as the core of ethics. The present writer feels that the greatness of Rāma and Sītā stands out not so much in their passive sorrow as in their positive heroism in the midst of sorrow. No one can deny the presence of sorrow and suffering in the epic in a large measure. But one might say that the emphasis of the poet is not sorrow but on the heroic attitude to sorrow... If we understand that in the Rāmayāna the poet's emphasis is on the hero's stern sense of duty amidst trials and tribulations that might have unnerved another of a weaker fibre, the poet's natural ending of the story would be a trial, perhaps the greatest trial, that ever man faced. Such is the episode of the banishment of Sītā
culminating in her descent to the Netherworld. On this view, the rasa can be described as that variety of the Heroic known as Dharmavira (Heroic-in-Duty).

While we fully agree with Krishnamoorthy's criticism of Anandavardhana's theory and also with his view that the dominant rasa of the Rm. is the vīra, or more exactly, the dharmavīra, we feel that, by equating R.'s active heroic commitment to the ideal of a dharma which, unflinching (not stern!) as it is, is motivated by truth, love and altruism, in the original Vālmikian Epic with his passive heroic submission to a dharma that is stamped by some kind of a taboo mentality, in the late Epic, the moral sublimity of R.'s dharmavirata as visualized by V. is both downgraded and vitiated, for then the impression cannot be gainsaid that, after all, R. is not wholly irresponsible for the tragic development.

Now, what was the primary motive in the minds of the later bards, a tendency towards a greater rigidity of the dharmavīra ideal, and consequently, of the dharmavīrarasa, or a tendency towards a stronger enforcement of the karunārasa? While we are unable to give an appropriate answer to this, since the process of elaboration was complex and went through many hands, it cannot be doubted that both processes (next to a variety of other processes) played a major role in transforming the original Rm., most probably working hand in hand and possibly being the different outlets of a more intense penetration into the Epic of the dreary side of life, which was up to then mirrored in the work only in an idealistic state, as also of an actually more rigid and dismal outlook on life.

In the final analysis then, Anandavardhana's view of the Rm., though contradictory, reveals nevertheless a remarkable insight into the spirit of the forces that pervaded the Rm. as it lay before him.

4) The reader might expect a chapter on V.'s art of characterization. We prescind from it for the following reasons:

1) As far as the over-all visionary art of characterization is concerned, we have said everything in the previous chapter. In fact, our thesis has been largely concerned with characterization in the sense of over-all presentation of characters in the Rm. As far as the detailed compositional art in its interrelation with the conception of characters is concerned, the reader may get a fairly comprehensive idea by reading the various chapters on the conception of individual characters. A synthetic view of the detailed compositional art of characterization as such
should be better envisaged at the end of a special treatise that delves deep into the yet-much-to-be-unravelled aspect of emotional characterization. We plan to write a treatise on 'Vālmīki's Art of Emotional Characterization.'

2) Last but not least, a real evaluation, and not mere exposition, of V.'s compositional art of characterization could not be envisaged without an evaluation of V.'s compositional art as such, and this would exceed far the scope of this thesis.


6) Though he wrote little on the subject and his planned essay on V. remained in its initial stage.