



McMASTER
UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY

217

HANUMĀN

by

JOHN DUGGAN, B.A., M.Div.

A Project

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies

in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Master of Arts

McMaster University

August 1978

MASTER OF ARTS (1978)
(Religious Studies)

McMaster University
Hamilton, Ontario

TITLE: Hanumān

AUTHOR: John Duggan, B.A. (Guelph), M.Div. (St. Mary's).

SUPERVISOR: Dr. David Kinsley and Dr. Paul Younger.

NUMBER OF PAGES: v, 108.

ABSTRACT

The chapters of this report should be read as essays motivated by a single desire--to appreciate the figure of Hanumān as he is revealed in the Hindu tradition. Except for Chapter I, which is an introduction to the matter dealt with in Chapters II and III, the report moves in the manner of an exploration. I read Vālmīki's Rāmāyaṇa and it revealed a Hanumān with a dual character, gentle and violent aspects in uneasy tension (see Chapter II). I then read Tulsīdās' Rāmacaritamānasa and found a Hanumān who was basically a servant with vestiges of his former ambivalent self (see Chapter III). Two major questions arose from these discoveries. The first relates to the servile nature of Hanumān in the Rāmacaritamānasa (see Chapter IV). The second focuses on the dual character of Hanumān (see Chapter V). The last two chapters of this report, Chapters IV and V, rely to some extent on my reading of Tulsīdās' Vinayapatrikā and his Kavitāvalī.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Paul Younger for his interest in Hanumān, Dr. Phyllis Granoff for her perceptive comments on earlier drafts, Dr. David Kinsley for his encouragement and direction and Dr. Wayne Whillier for some good advice.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CHAPTER I -- TALE OF AN INDIAN MONKEY	1
CHAPTER II -- VĀLMĪKI'S <u>RĀMĀYANA</u> : THE FIGURE OF HANUMĀN	13
CHAPTER III -- TULSĪDĀS' <u>RĀMACARITAMĀNASA</u> : THE FIGURE OF HANUMĀN	43
CHAPTER IV -- TULSĪDĀS, HANUMĀN AND THE <u>ŚŪDRAS</u>	60
CHAPTER V -- HANUMĀN'S DUAL CHARACTER	84
APPENDIX A -- IS HANUMĀN A <u>VĀHANA</u> (VEHICLE)?	101
APPENDIX B -- A CLUE TO THE AMBIVALENT CHARACTER OF HANUMĀN	103
BIBLIOGRAPHY	106

CHAPTER I
TALE OF AN INDIAN MONKEY

I was first introduced to Hanumān one cold evening in an unheated Darjeeling cinema seven thousand feet up in the Himalayas above the plains of Bengal. The film was in Hindi, and it was a "mythological" one--a re-telling of the epic adventures of the great god Viṣṇu come down to earth as King Rāma. Noble Rāma had lost his lovely wife Sītā to the evil demon King of Laṅkā, Rāvaṇa. The story concerned Rāma and his brother Lakṣmaṇa and their search for Sītā. As the hours moved slowly on, to the discomfort of the cold theatre was added an unease created by my initiation into the world of popular Hindu religious imagination. I had not been prepared for this by my Christian and Canadian upbringing. A monkey figure began to dominate the action of the film. He showed great reverence for Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, yet seemed to excel them in power. He grew huge, leaped great distances, overcame many demons and even flew through the air with a mountain covered with medicinal herbs to be used to heal the wounds of the two brothers. This monkey, Hanumān, was alternately comic as he played before the brothers, tragic as he showed great emotion at the suffering of Rāma's wife, and heroic as he overcame the demon enemies of Rāma. I left the theatre that night with a sense that I had for a while been thrown into a world completely foreign to me. Yet I had been moved in sympathy with the joys and misfortunes of that strangest of figures, the monkey Hanumān. In some small way I had "passed

over"¹ into the Hindu reality.

Seven years later I am reporting on a further attempt to "pass over" into the world of Hinduism. Hanumān, again is the figure who both intrigues me and leaves me with the sense of unease that comes over a visitor in a strange land. In my present exploration I have taken two versions of the story of the adventures of Rāma and read and re-read them in an attempt to understand the figure of Hanumān as he is being presented. These two texts, the Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki and the Rāmācaritamānasa (RCM) of Tulsīdāsa, have been, each in its own way, the narrations of the Rāma story with the greatest impact on North Indian consciousness. Vālmīki's version, in Sanskrit, is the earliest telling of the story to survive to this day. The many retellings of the story in the various languages and dialects of India have looked back to the Valmiki Rāmāyaṇa for inspiration. As well, M. Winternitz writes:

The Indians call this Valmiki 'the first Kavi or author of ornate poetry' (adikavi) and like to call the Rāmāyaṇa 'the first ornate poem' (adikāvya). The beginnings of ornate epic poetry do indeed lead back to the Rāmāyaṇa, and Vālmīki has always remained the pattern to which all later Indian poets admiringly aspired.²

¹The American theologian John S. Dunne asks a question: "Is a religion coming to birth in our time? It could be. What seems to be occurring is a phenomenon we might call 'passing over,' passing over from one culture to another, from one way of life to another, from one religion to another." He writes, "Passing over is essentially a matter of sympathetic understanding: a man must have within him somehow what he finds in another." I feel that I have participated in this "religion coming to birth in our time!". See John S. Dunne, The Way of All the Earth (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1972), pp. ix-xi.

²M. Winternitz, A History of Indian Literature, Vol. I, (New York: Russell and Russell, 1927-1971), pp. 475-476.

Tulsīdāsa's version, the RCM, was written in a dialect of Hindi (Awādhi) during the sixteenth century in North-east India. It is the religious text that has had the greatest impact on the popular Hinduism of North India right up to the present day.³

Vālmīki's Rāmāyana

What is the history of the Vālmīki Rāmāyana? Winternitz tells us that it is an ancient story probably "composed in the third century B.C. by Vālmīki on the basis of ancient ballads."⁴ The action of the Vālmīki Rāmāyana takes place primarily in the North-eastern (kosala) section of India. This is the area from which Buddhism originated and it has been theorized that the character of the Rāma in the ballads that perhaps formed the basis for Vālmīki's work has been influenced by Buddhist ideals.⁵ Certainly, the violence that is integral to the

³M. Winternitz writes: "The religious-philosophical Hindi poem Ram-caritamanas based on the ancient epic, and composed about 1574 A.D. by the celebrated Tulsī Dās, has become almost a gospel for millions of Indians." Winternitz, History, p. 477. A present-day scholar of Tulsīdāsa, F. R. Allchin reports that, "To this day this work is under continuous private and public study and recited and it may truly be said that at least for Hindi speakers it has usurped the place of Vālmīki's original Sanskrit epic Rāmāyana." Tulsī Dās, The Petition to Rām: A Translation of Vinaya-patrika with Introduction, Notes and Glossary by F. R. Allchin (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1966), p. 18. A contemporary anthropological study of the Chhattisgarh area of Madhya Pradesh confirms the importance of the RCM for literate and non-literate alike: "The Tulsīdās version of the epic is beyond any question the most important religious book in Chhattisgarh. It is read by the literate as a form of religious exercise. The repetition of the epic is pleasing to Rāma and a source of religious merit. One of the most common forms of devotional activity is the collective singing of portions of the epic, an activity for which literacy is not required." See Lawrence A. Babb, The Divine Hierarchy: Popular Hinduism in Central India (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1975), p. 116.

⁴Winternitz, History, p. 517.

⁵Winternitz, History, p. 507.

heroes of the other great Indian epic, the Mahābhārata, is generally more muted in the character of Vālmīki's Rāma.

That the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa was most likely orally transmitted⁶ for quite a while is indicated by the existence of variant recensions. For "there are at least three different recensions of the text, representing the transmission in different regions of India."⁷ Although each recension has seven books, the versions add or omit long and often completely different passages. For our purposes in the study of Hanumān, it is perhaps possible to speculate that the dynamics of oral transmission have left evidence of popular conceptions of Hanumān in the text as it was finally stabilized.⁸ For the reciters of the epic would be sensitive to the reaction of their audience, which reaction might have had significant impact during possibly over four hundred years of oral transmission. Winternitz has made the passing observation that,

...if the audience enjoyed comical scenes, especially those in which the monkeys appear, then it was tempting for the singer not only to spin out such scenes, but also to add new similar ones....⁹

The very nature of the book that contains the most material on Hanumān

⁶Winternitz writes: "We must imagine the Rāmāyaṇa as having been orally transmitted for a long time--perhaps through centuries--in the circles of travelling singers...." History, p. 496.

⁷Winternitz, History, p. 499.

⁸Winternitz feels "It is probable that the Rāmāyaṇa had its present extent and contents as early as towards the close of the second century A.D." History, p. 516.

⁹Winternitz, History, p. 497.

(Book V, the Sundara-kāṇḍa, i.e., the "beautiful section") indicates that this book was responsive to the demands of its audience. Winternitz suggests it was called the "beautiful section",

...on account of the many poetical descriptions, or because it contains even more fabulous stories than all the other books. If the whole second half of the Rāmāyaṇa is already a 'romantic' epic, then this fifth book is very specially 'romantic' and for Indian taste the romantic is always the most beautiful.¹⁰

In addition, the critical-textual work of Jacobi has shown at least one large interpolation in the Sundarakāṇḍa, specifically chapters forty-one to fifty-five which contain the section on Hanumān's burning of Lankā.¹¹ However, the early nature of this interpolation is indicated by the explicit mention made of the burning of Lankā in the Mahābhārata's account of Vālmīki's Rāmāyaṇa (the Rāmopakhyana).¹² On this subject of the influence of the audience on the figure of Hanumān as he has been received from the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa, it should

¹⁰Winternitz, History, p. 490.

¹¹Winternitz, History, p. 491, n. 1. I would put a note of caution here. Research and thought on the process of epic oral transmission questions the concept of textual interpolation. Speaking of Pavel A. Greitser's book on the genesis of typology of the Indian epic, O'Flaherty writes: "Greitser goes on to prove that, in the light of oral transmission of textual dynamics of the epic, any reconstruction of the epic 'original' (the Ur text or core) is untenable, as is any attempt to establish non-organic interpolations in the text... Greitser demonstrates beyond dispute that the so-called contradictions and inserted episodes show a pattern every bit as basic as that of the 'core' episodes, a pattern which emerges clearly from an understanding of the processes of oral composition." See Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, review of J. A. B. von Buitenen's translation of the Mbh. Religious Studies Review, Vol. 4, No. 1, January 1978, p. 22.

¹²Winternitz, History, p. 501.

also be noted that some scholars, Winternitz and Jacobi for example, believe that the Bālakāṇḍa and Uttarakāṇḍa are separated from Books Two through Six by a long extent of time.¹³ Much of the material I have considered is from these two kāṇḍas as well as the Sundarakāṇḍa. My suspicion is that the picture of Hanumān that I have drawn from the Rāmāyaṇa is not only representative of the received text itself but also of a conception of Hanumān that existed in the popular imagination for quite some time, perhaps originating in the cult of local monkey deity.¹⁴

Hanumān's dual aspect in Vālmīki's Rāmāyaṇa

Above, in a quotation from Winternitz, the impression might be given that the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa emphasizes the "comic" aspect of the monkeys. My reading of Vālmīki has led me to highlight the destructive, violent potential of the monkeys. As well, I have found Hanumān to be an ambiguous figure manifesting at times the characteristics of an ambivalent child, with gentle and more violent tendencies in uneasy tension.¹⁵ The violent aspect is a part of the popular conception

¹³Winternitz, History, p. 516.

¹⁴H. Jacobi writes that he is "inclined to believe that Hanumān was a godling before Vālmīki sang of his friendship with Rāma, whereby he came to be recognized as a popular deity throughout India." See Jacobi's article "Heroes and Hero-gods (Indian)", in the Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, ed. by James Hastings, Vol. VI (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons), pp. 658-661.

¹⁵In "Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety", Sigmund Freud gives an analysis of a child's phobia directed against an animal. In the course of his exposition Freud defines "ambivalence" in a manner which I find acceptable for my consideration of Hanumān's personality. Freud defines "ambivalence" as "a firmly rooted love and no less well grounded hatred directed against one and the same person." See The Major Works of Sigmund Freud (Chicago: William Benton, 1952), p. 724.

of Hanumān. Crooke writes that in North India Hanumān "is a great village godling, with potent influence to scare evil spirits from his votaries."¹⁶ L. S. S. O'Malley informs us that a special caste in the Central Provinces and Berar functions to beseech Hanumān (called Mahābir) to prevent hail storms. The method of entreaty can become bloody and violent.¹⁷ A. A. Macdonnell writes concerning the violent aspect of Hanumān, that he "bears the patronymic Maruti, 'son of the Maruts' [sic--I am told that Maruti actually means 'son of the wind']". This suggests a reminiscence of Indra's association with the Maruts, or storm gods, in his fight with Vṛtra.¹⁸ Curt Maury has noted in a recent study of the folk iconography of Central India the frequent occurrence of depictions of a monkey with threatening aspect. Maury attests that 'Maroti' is a common appellation for this malevolent monkey figure. Maury speculates that Maroti is "a zoomorphic specialization of Rudra."¹⁹ Ralph T. H. Griffith writes that the title Rudra is "generally explained as the Roarer, from the sound of stormy winds, the God of tempests and father of the Maruts."²⁰ Finally, Babb's

¹⁶William Crooke, Popular Religion and Folklore of North India, p. 87.

¹⁷O'Malley writes: "If the sky does not clear, threats are used instead of prayers. The hail-wizard declares that he will kill himself, and, it may be, also his wife and children. He used to give colour to his threats by slashing himself with a sword...." See Popular Hinduism (New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1970), p. 168.

¹⁸A. A. Macdonnell, "Rāmāyaṇa" in Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons), p. 576.

¹⁹Curt Maury, Folk Origins of Indian Art (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), p. 75.

²⁰However, "Prof. Pischel (Vedische Studien, I, 55 sqq.) derives Rudra (the Red, the brilliant) from a lost root rud, to be red". See Ralph T. H. Griffith, The Hymns of the R̥gVeda, ed. by Prof. J. L. Shastri (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1973), p. 75, n. 1.

study of a region of Madhya Pradesh says of Hanumān that,

In Chhattisgarh he is a major deity. He is primarily a protective god, and his worship on Tuesday seems consistent with the fact that Tuesday is inauspicious--that is, a day on which protection is needed. This seems a reasonable supposition in view of the fact that Saturday, the least auspicious day of the week, is also an important day for worship of Hanumān.

21

Tulsīdās Rāmacaritamānasa: Hanumān as the Servant of Rāma

Early in the Bāla Kāṇḍa of the RCM, Tulsīdās informs us that his work "incorporates what has been recorded in the Rāmāyaṇa (of Vālmīki) and culled from some other sources."²² Tulsīdās thus claims some dependence on Vālmīki. My reading of the RCM has led me to suggest that Tulsīdās is intentionally drawing parallels between Hanumān and the demons. In so far as the monkeys and demons share qualities of sudden violence the RCM is in line with the received text of Vālmīki. Tulsīdās follows the Rāmāyaṇa in hinting at a darker, violent side to Hanumān's nature. However, I find that the violent potential of Hanumān is much less developed as a theme in Tulsīdās' representation of him. For the RCM Hanumān is primarily servant (sevaka) of his master (sevyā) Rāma; Hanumān is an ideal devotee. It is no surprise that Indian informants who know the RCM well, "tend to stress one characteristic

²¹ Babb, The Divine Hierarchy, p. 112.

²² All translations of Tulsīdās' work in this chapter and chapter III will be taken from Śrī Rāmacharitamānasa, The Mānasa lake brimming over with the exploits of Śrī Rāma (with Hindi text and English translation), (Gorakhpur: Gita Press, 1968). The reference will be made in the body of the text and will indicate the location in the Hindi text of the original from which the English translation has been made. The present quote is from Bālakāṇḍa, śloka 7.

of Hanumān above all others: his intense devotion to Rāma."²³

Why does Tulsīdās represent Hanumān in the RCM in a manner different from the received text of the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa? The RCM is the work of a single author which, unlike the Vālmīki text was stabilized in writing from its very inception. There was no long period of oral transmission in which the audience's taste and belief could influence the epic recitation. The history of Tulsīdās is therefore quite pertinent to understanding the figure of Hanumān in the RCM-- it is the product of one man and his era. Tulsīdās was born at a time when a decadent and weakened Hinduism was beginning to revive itself. Though his date of birth is disputed it is probable that he was born in Saṃvat 1600 (A.D. 1543) and died in Saṃvat 1680 (A.D. 1623).²⁴ North India at the time was firmly under the political control of Muslim leaders. After centuries of Muslim invasions a century and a half of relative stability followed on Babur's invasion (A.D. 1524-1526) and the coming to power of the Mughals in Delhi.²⁵ Whereas Buddhism had been destroyed in the North, Hinduism, though grown rigid under the domination of the Brāhmāns, was beginning to respond vigorously to the threat of conversions to Islam. Radical reformers like Kabīr and Nānak criticized caste restrictions and new currents of devotion originating in South India encouraged more emotional expression in North Indian Hinduism.

²³ Babb, The Divine Hierarchy, p. 116.

²⁴ Allchin, Petition, p. 35.

²⁵ Allchin, Petition, p. 23.

Born in the heartland of Hinduism, "either Rājapur or Ayodhya", perhaps of a Brāhman family (though abandoned at birth),²⁶ Tulsīdās was no doubt aware of the crisis Hinduism was facing. Though little is known of his childhood and young adulthood, it seems that at the advice of his guru (spiritual guide) he took up the singing of Rāma's praises to earn his livelihood.²⁷ Through his art he was able to come to the defence of the Hindu tradition he loved. It was on "the ninth day of Caitra month in Saṃvat 1631 (A.D. 1574) when Tulsī, at the age of thirty-one, residing at Ayodhya, the birthplace of Rāma, began the work for which he is most renowned, the Rāma-carita-mānasa or Holy Lake of Rāma's Deeds."²⁸

The RCM is the work of a poet and a mystic. Though it borrows from different philosophical traditions its main emphasis is on the bhakti mārga (way of devotion). Tulsīdās' spiritual and philosophical roots can be surmised from the copious use he makes in the RCM of the Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa. This text is believed by some to be the composition of the North Indian bhakta(devotee) and philosopher Rāmānanda.²⁹ Rāmānanda had received instruction in the Śrī Vaiṣṇava tradition of the great South Indian Rāmānuja. Thus he was well acquainted with the way of devotion (bhakti mārga) as well as the qualified monism (viśiṣṭādvaita) of Rāmānuja. But Rāmānanda had broken with the Śrī Vaiṣṇava sect on the

²⁶Allchin, Petition, p. 31.

²⁷Allchin, Petition, p. 32.

²⁸Allchin, Petition, p. 33.

²⁹Farquahar for one. See Allchin, Petition, p. 29.

matter of "restrictions of caste upon teaching, eating and religious life alike."³⁰ Under his influence, one line of disciples, including Kabīr and through him Nānak, encouraged the breakdown of caste, the unity of Hindus and Muslims, and devotion to a god without attributes (nirguṇa). At the same time, under the influence of the Bhāgavata Purāna and the devotees of Kṛṣṇa, the way of devotion to a god with attributes (sagūṇa) had become quite popular. Allchin writes:

A somewhat similar, more traditionalist, development may be found among the worshippers of Rāma, and it is to this that Tulsī Dās belongs. For it the key work, upon which Tulsī drew in making his own version of the Rāmāyana, is the Adhyātma Rāmāyana.³¹

Tulsīdās followed the Adhyātma Rāmāyana in joining the advaita (non-dual) monism of Śaṅkara with the sagūṇa conceptions of the Rāmaites. However, Tulsīdās is traditionalist not only in holding to the way of devotion to a god with attributes but also in his support of Brāhman caste values. For Tulsī the obligation of devotion to Brāhman is a close second to the duty to give respect to one's guru (Bāla, C 2:1). Tulsīdās has emphasized the traditional social hierarchy--so he has Rāma say:

A Brāhman, even though he curse you, beat you or speak harsh words to you, is still worthy of adoration: so declare the saints. A Brāhman must be respected, though lacking in amiability and virtue; not so a Sūdra, though possessing a host of virtues and rich in knowledge. (Āraṇya, C 34:1-2)

At the same time Tulsīdās comes close to the radical reformer Kabīr

³⁰ Allchin, Petition, p. 28.

³¹ Allchin, Petition, p. 29.

in his devotion to the "Name" of Rāma. For Tulsīdās the "Name" is greater than nirguṇa Brahman or saguṇa Rāma. This theme of the power of the "Name" is so characteristic of Tulsīdās that Nābhā Dās (possibly a contemporary of Tulsīdās), giving Tulsīdās the respect due a second Vālmīki, writes in his Bhakta Māla (Garland of Devotees) that,

For the salvation of beings in this perverse
Dark Age Vālmīki has become Tulsī;
In the former Treta age he made the thousand
million verses of the Rāmāyana,
Of which but one letter can redeem even a man
who has slain a Brāhman.
Now he has again published abroad God's many
wonders as a comfort for all devotees,
And intoxicated with the love of Rāma's feet
he repeats his Name both night and day according
to his vow.
Thus he has secured an easily accessible boat
for crossing the boundless ocean of existence:--
For the salvation of beings in this perverse
Dark Age Vālmīki has become Tulsī. 32

It is this synthesis of traditional caste values with a fervent faith in the equal access of all beings to mokṣa through the grace of Rāma and his "Name" that has fired the devotionism of the majority of North Indian Hindus since Tulsīdās' day. Hanumān became in Tulsīdās the image of the devotee who knows his low place in the social hierarchy yet is capable of great things by giving his total devotion to his master Rāma.

³² Allchin, Petition, pp. 33-34.

CHAPTER II

VĀLMĪKI'S RĀMĀYAṆA: THE FIGURE OF HANUMĀN

A possible impression that one could have from a review of the secondary sources on Hanumān in the Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki is that he is best considered the model of perfect service and devotion to Rāma. For example, S. N. Vyas in his book India in the Rāmāyaṇa Age devotes a few paragraphs to Hanumān representing him as "an ideal saciva (minister) and an ideal dūta (envoy) winning his ends by sweet speech."¹ Referring to a section of the Yuddhakāṇḍa, Vyas summarizes the picture of Hanumān with the words,

In short, Hanumān was a complete man, a harmonious (śobhana) personification, as it were, of bodily strength, heroism, vigour and courage, nobility of spirit (sattvam), forbearance and humility, learning and skill (VI.113.25-26).²

This project report contends that such a depiction is not adequate to fit the complex figure of Hanumān in Vālmīki's Rāmāyaṇa. Hanumān is not just represented as a "harmonious" (śobhana, "shining") personality. It cannot be denied that Hanumān is devoted to Rāma, an ideal envoy as well as a very competent minister to the monkey-king Sugrīva. It is even said in the Uttarakāṇḍa that Hanumān would become a "very

¹S. N. Vyas, India in the Rāmāyaṇa Age (Delhi: Atma Ram and Sons, 1967), p. 53.

²Vyas, Rāmāyaṇa Age, p. 54.

Brahmin."³ However, many of Hanumān's actions attest to a darker side, a basic ambivalence and very changeable nature. Nor does Hanumān manifest consistently "sattvic" qualities. At times his behaviour would be more aptly termed "rajasic", for his vibrantly emotional nature often breaks the calm of his self-control.

In order to set the stage for a consideration of the ambivalent and changeable nature of Hanumān I will first survey some of the events of his involvement in the epic. The dominant image that emerges from this consideration is that of a Hanumān devoted to the purpose of Rāma. However, along with this dominant image there are unanswered questions that arise: such as, Why does Hanumān only gradually come to realize the true extent of his power? Why do the gods and other beings consider it necessary to test Hanumān? What is the source(s) of his sudden acts of violence and why is he subject to such swift changes in mood? Before I attempt to indicate possible answers to these questions by a consideration of specific incidents, I present the following survey of Hanumān's adventures.

Hanuman's adventures: a survey

In the Bālakāṇḍa Hanumān is closely tied to the cosmic context of struggle for supremacy between the gods and the rākṣasas. The story is told that a rākṣasa by the name of Rāvana had obtained a boon by

³The Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, Vol. III, translated by Hari Prasad Shastri (London: 1962), p. 497. All translations of the Vālmīkirāmāyaṇa are taken from this edition and will be indicated in the body of the text by parentheses including within them the title Rām., the volume number and the page reference.

means of great austerities. He was given the gift of not being able to be killed by the gods and other divine beings. Believing himself secure, he overthrew the Guardians of the Earth, humbled Indra, provoked Sages and many other beings (Rām., I, 38-39). In desperation the gods turned to Brahmā who told them that "none but man can destroy him!" (Rām., I, 39). The great god Viṣṇu then volunteered to "take Birth as man" (Rām., I, 40) and divided himself in four parts, being born as the sons of King Daśaratha--the greatest part of himself going to Daśaratha's eldest son, Rāma. To aid Rāma against Rāvaṇa, Brahmā encouraged the gods to create sons in the form of monkeys. Indra took birth in Bali, Sūrya in Sugrīva, Agni in Nīla, Viśvakarmā in Nala, while,

the cherished offspring of Pavana [Vāyu, that is, the wind] was Hanumān, whose body was as hard as diamond and whose speed equalled Garuḍa's; and amongst the innumerable dwellers in the woods, he excelled in wisdom and courage (Rām., I, 43).

Since, in this early story setting the context for Rāma's adventures, Hanumān is described as excelling the other monkeys, it is no surprise that he has a significant role to play as Rāma's helper in the struggle against Rāvaṇa.

However, the purpose of his birth only becomes evident to Hanumān through contact with Rāma. In the epic, Hanumān is the first of the monkeys to encounter Rāma. This meeting took place as Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa walked through Kiṣkindha forest towards Ṛṣyamukha mountain in search of Sugrīva who, they had been told, could help them find Rāma's wife, Sītā, abducted by Rāvana. Sugrīva saw the two strangers approaching and feared that they were allies of his hostile brother Bali. Sugrīva sent Hanumān in the disguise of a monk to investigate. He approached

the two brothers with "humility", "paying obeisance to them" and "offering them every courtesy" (Rām., II, 173). He asked who they were and expostulated at length on their beauty, their strength and their weapons. Finally, in surprise he questioned them: "Why do you not answer me?" (Rām., II, 174). It is as though he had gotten carried away in his praise of them, caught himself and stopped short. But before they could respond to his question Hanumān continued speaking and forgetting his duty to Sugrīva gave his whole mission away. He told the brothers he was from Sugrīva, that he was a monkey in the disguise of a wandering monk. Hanumān then fell silent as Rāma praised him in terms that made him out to be a perfect Brāhman--"versed in the Rig-Veda", having "studied grammar thoroughly" and capable of subduing his foes by his eloquence (Rām., II, 174). Then, in a gesture symbolic of his new-found commitment, manifesting some measure of his power, Hanumān lifted the two brothers onto his shoulders and carried them to Sugrīva. Hanumān had become their personal vehicle and was to become the vehicle of their great quest (see Appendix A).

This initial depiction of Hanumān as he met Rāma is apparently in line with Vyas' description of him. Certainly Rāma and Laṅkamaṅga thought of Hanumān as a śobhana personality. Although "it is in Sanskrit literature a virtue to be overwhelmed by the good", I wonder at the fact that Hanumān, overwhelmed by the sight of Rāma and Laṅkamaṅga, so quickly forgot his duty to Sugrīva. I contend that this action in its impulsiveness foreshadows other behaviour that contradicts the image of Hanumān as brāhman-like in his self-control.

Rāma and Sugrīva became allies. Rāma helped Sugrīva by killing Bali and establishing Sugrīva in his stead as king of the monkeys. At

the end of the rainy season, Sugrīva sent the monkeys out in search of Sītā. Hanumān, still not aware of the extent of his own power, was chosen by Rāma to find Sītā. Rāma gave Hanumān a ring so that Sītā would recognize him as Rāma's messenger. With Aṅgada and the monkeys under his command, Hanumān left for the southern regions in search of Sītā. The testing of Hanumān began immediately, for Sītā was not to be found there, and in the unrelenting effort of their search the monkeys and their leaders, Aṅgada and Hanumān, wore themselves out. In search of water the monkeys entered the great cave created by Māyā and guarded by the ascetic woman Svayamprabhā. Four miles into the depths of the earth they went, finally reaching a luminous paradise of gardens and waters. Meeting the ascetic old woman there, Hanumān told her the story of their search for Sītā. Svayamprabhā was pleased by their words. She blessed them, and telling them to cover their eyes with their hands, transported them out of the cave by the power of her austerities. After this experience suggestive of a new birth Hanumān will not experience fatigue in his quest for Sītā.⁴

⁴This experience of fruitless search followed by a cave journey and renewal of energies has many of the elements of rites de passage. From the perspective of the anthropologist Victor Turner one could perhaps interpret Hanumān and the other monkeys' sojourn in the cave as both a real and a symbolic threshold. It is a real threshold in that it supplies them with new energy and commits them to the quest for Sītā in an irrevocable manner--to return to Sugrīva would mean death. The cave is cross-culturally a powerful symbol of the threshold stage. Turner writes of rites de passage: "these are marked by three phases: separation, margin (or limen--the Latin for threshold, signifying the great importance of real or symbolic thresholds at this middle period of the rites, though cunicular 'being in a tunnel', would better describe the quality of this phase, in many cases, its hidden nature, its sometimes mysterious darkness), and reaggregation." From the common experience (communitas) of the cave the monkeys re-emerge to a new structural relationship in which Hanumān's special role is more clearly defined. He will soon discover powers and take on the function of finding Sītā for the rest of the monkeys--a ritual of status elevation will have been enacted. See Victor Turner, Dramas, Field and Metaphors (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1974), pp. 231-232.

A month had elapsed in the cave. The monkeys had reached the point of no return. They had exceeded the time allotted to them by king Sugrīva and to return without Sītā was to return to humiliation, torture and death. Aṅgada's reaction to this realization was to attempt to convince the monkeys to return with him into the protective womb of the cave far from the threat of Sugrīva. Hanumān demonstrated his devotion to Rāma's mission by being forceful in opposition to this procedure. Aṅgada's counter-proposition was for the monkeys to fast to death. Hanumān again was uneasy with this course of action and attempted to reassure the monkeys about Sugrīva. But the monkeys decided to follow Aṅgada. Meanwhile, Sampati, brother of the vulture Jaṭāyu who had been killed by Rāvana when he had attempted to free Sītā from Rāvana's clutches, saw the monkeys in their fast, over-heard their conversation about his brother and decided to help them. Sampati was able to tell the monkeys where Sītā was to be found. She had been taken by Rāvana across the ocean to Laṅkā. At this point the success of Rāma's mission stood in peril. For at least one monkey must possess the strength to leap to Laṅkā, face the demons and return to the mainland. Unless Hanumān were to be revealed in his full power, the mission would be likely to fail.

The spirits of the monkeys rose. Standing on the edge of the great ocean they contemplated the vast space of water between the mainland and the island of Laṅkā. They asked one another who among them was able to leap the great gap and meet all the obstacles in the way of finding Sītā. Hanumān sat "tranquilly apart" (Rām., II, 319) while this was happening for he was unaware of his own unique nature. Only the oldest of the monkeys, Jāmbavān, who had been with the gods at the

churning of the ocean, held the key to the success of the mission. He called to Hanumān, and telling him the story of his origins and incredible powers,⁵ attempted to convince Hanumān that he was the one for this great adventure. The other monkeys praised Hanumān. Freed by his new knowledge, happy in the warmth of his fellows' praises, Hanumān began to manifest in his body the extent of his power. He grew great as a mountain, with face burning red, and with his body glowing golden like the sun, he prepared to leap to Laṅkā. Ascending Mount Mahendra in leaps and bounds, he crushed rocks beneath his feet and molten streams of metal oozed from the rocks under the pressure of his massive body. Hanumān's leap carried trees and rocks in his wake as he began his journey across the ocean. A force of vast dimensions had been released.

The leap to Laṅkā: Hanumān tested

The journey across the ocean was not merely a physical feat. It was also a travail, a testing of Hanumān's mental and spiritual qualities. The story of the leap to Laṅkā is told in a single long chapter in the epic. The events of the chapter reveal a Hanumān capable of a violence that has not been manifested by him up to this point in the epic narrative. It is a Hanumān who has a dual character, one aspect impetuous and powerful, the other gentle and intelligent. As Hanumān performed this leap "impossible to any other" (Rām., II, 338) the ocean

⁵I will examine the details of the story of Hanumān's origins (located in the present version at Rām., II, 320-321 and in the Uttarakāṇḍa version at Rām. III, 493-496) later in this essay in an attempt to answer why Hanumān did not know the extent of his great power.

saw him and wanted to help him. The ocean told the winged mountain, Mainaka, to rise from the waters to give Hanumān place to rest. Mount Mainaka attempted to aid Hanumān but Hanumān interpreted the mountain rising before him as an obstacle and smashed through it. Once the mountain, rejoicing at Hanumān's prowess, explained its intent, the gentle, sensitive side of Hanumān was instantly apparent. Hanumān refused assistance mentioning his vow to continue without rest to Laṅkā and he touched the mountain in a thankful and friendly gesture.

The renewing quality of Hanumān's 'birth' from the cave is seen in the fact that Hanumān left in his wake Indra and the last of the mountains with wings reconciled.⁶

The sun, the wind and the ocean smoothed Hanumān's way, while the gods, gandharvas, siddhas and ascetics decided to present Hanumān with a test in the person of the Mother of serpents, Surasā. They told Surasā, "We desire to test his strength and measure his fortitude to see if he is able to overcome thee or if he retires discomfited" (Rām., II, 334). As though in conspiracy with them, Hanumān smiled as he met Surasā and by his intelligence tricked her. She had told him he could not pass without entering her mouth. He expanded, getting her to open her mouth wide and then he shrank to the size of a thumb and whisked in and out of her mouth. The gods and the gandharvas rejoiced that he had passed their test and Surasā wished him success in his search for Sītā.

⁶John Dowson, A Classical Dictionary of Hindu Mythology and Religion, Geography, History and Literature (New Delhi, 1973), p. 194 tells us: "When, as the poets sing, Indra clipped the wings of the mountains, this is said to have been the only one which escaped." Thus, Indra had not fulfilled his purpose against Mainaka who, protected by the ocean, remained inaccessible to him. Indra, seeing Mainaka's good will towards Hanumān, relinquished his enmity towards the mountain.

Another obstacle soon stood in his way. This was the demoness Singhikā who wished Hanumān evil, attempting to catch his shadow and suck his strength so as to make him her victim. Hanumān revealed his full capacity for violence by diving into her extended jaws, going deep inside her and ripping her apart from inside. After seeing Hanumān defeat Singhikā "all beings who range the skies" praised Hanumān: "He, who like thee, possesses the four attributes: fixity of purpose, circumspection, wisdom and ability, does not fail in his enterprise, O Indra among Monkeys" (Rām., II, 337). Without further interference he reached the island of Laṅkā and discovered the depth of his resources for even with his great leap he did not "experience any fatigue" (Rām., II, 339). Hanumān had been tested and not been found wanting. He had discerned the difference between his obstacles--controlling himself in gentle response to Mount Mainaka, realizing Surasā's complicity with the gods and destroying the only malevolent obstacle, Singhikā.

The search for Sītā: Hanumān's mood swings

The revelation of Hanumān's great strength and intelligence was only part of what happened as he was faced with the challenge of great deeds to be done. Strangely enough, his mood was variable and he could be easily discouraged. It was the thought of Rāma and the mission with which he had been entrusted that kept him from losing hope altogether. With the successful flight across the ocean immediately behind him, Hanumān, "confident of his own strength" (Rām., II, 342), rested on Mount Saṃva looking over the city of Laṅkā. His confidence did not last long. For the sight of the mighty fortifications of Laṅkā depressed him and only as he remembered "the valour of the long-armed

Rāghava and the prowess of Lakṣmaṇa" (Rām., II, 343) did his confidence return. He received further encouragement when, after being overcome by Hanumān, the presiding deity of Laṅkā told him of Svayambhu's (Brahmā's) prophecy: "In the hour that a monkey overcomes thee by force, the titans will cease to be invincible" (Rām., II, 344). After the deity had blessed him, saying "accomplish all thou desirest" (Rām., II, 344), Hanumān set out to explore the city. He saw the beauty of the city "with delight" while he searched it "on Rāma's behalf and in the interests of Sugrīva" (Rām., II, 345). He looked on much that aroused his admiration and aesthetic appreciation but did not find Sītā. Not finding her, Hanumān "was overcome with grief and bereft of all courage" (Rām., II, 349). He explored the houses of the demons and viewed the aerial chariot Puṣpaka with astonishment, yet still did not find Sītā, and so he "felt a burning anguish take possession of his heart" (Rām., II, 353). Hanumān displayed the sensitivity and variability of his personality in all this. Totally involved in the beauty of what he saw at one moment, the next he was plunged into deep gloom at the thought of Sītā and his purpose not being fulfilled. Hanumān then entered the harem of Rāvana and at the sight of the demon-king "shrank back in fear" (Rām., II, 359). Again, this is a mood that did not last for long and when he sighted Mandodarī separated from the others and mistook her for Sītā he bounded for joy. Immediately realizing his mistake he feared he had "failed in his purpose" (Rām., II, 363). His fears of Sugrīva emerged and he descended into a "great melancholy" (Rām., II, 365). Hanumān was even brought to the point of fearing Rāma, for should he bring Rāma to Laṅkā and there be no Sītā in Laṅkā Rāma would "burn all the monkeys with the fire of his wrath" (Rām., II, 368).

The discovery of Sītā: devotion not fear

Hanumān eventually discovered Sītā, and in his enthusiasm to deliver her safely told her to climb on his back to be transported to the mainland. When Sītā doubted his ability Hanumān swelled to the size of Mount Meru and claimed he could overthrow Laṅkā. Sītā recognized that Hanumān had the power to do what he promised but decided not to go with him for a number of reasons. She feared that pursued by demons, Hanumān would fight and she would fall from his back. But her main consideration was Rāma's honour--he should gain the glory of rescuing her. She then reminded Hanumān that, "being wholly devoted to my lord, I am unable to touch the body of any save Rāma" (Rām., II, 425). Hanumān attempted to explain away his precipitate offer to carry her on his back by claiming concern "to encompass Rāma's design". Hanumān stated that, "It was my devotion for him and in regard for thee that I uttered those words" (Rām., II, 426). Hanumān had proved that he had the power to carry Sītā but because of his emotional and impetuous nature had been forgetful of the impropriety of touching Sītā. Once he was reminded of Rāma by Sītā's devotion to Rāma, Hanumān was pleased with Sītā's resolution to wait for Rāma. The dominant and finally controlling element in Hanumān's behaviour was his devotion to Rāma. This devotion brought his erratic swings of behaviour and intention back into line.

Rāma's attitude to Hanumān

Rāma recognized that Hanumān's great power was ultimately controlled by devotion. When Hanumān reported to Rāma the details of

his encounter with Sītā, Rāma's response was to praise Hanumān's power and to be overcome with deep emotion. Rāma was unhappy that he was "not able to requite the bearer of these good news in a fitting manner" (Rām., III, 3). Then the text informs us that "...Rāma, trembling with joy, clasped Hanumān in his arms, who master of himself, his mission fulfilled, had returned" (Rām., III, 3). Rāma proclaimed that the task that Hanumān had carried out "is of great significance and the most arduous in the world; none other could have achieved it even in thought" (Rām., III, 3). (This calls to mind the cosmic implications of Hanumān's actions as a major step in defeating the enemy of the gods.) Knowing where Sītā was to be found, Rāma and the monkey army built a bridge and crossed the ocean to Laṅkā. Hanumān figured prominently in the battle against the demons that subsequently took place. Ultimately Rāvana was killed and Sītā returned to Rāma.

Hanumān's dual aspect: searching for sources

From the above survey we see that Hanumān is controlled by his devotion to Rāma. However, the survey also demonstrates that his nature is complex. I believe that the epic represents Hanumān in dual aspect--brāhmanical self-control against urges to violence. This duality will become evident as specific examples are examined for clues to the source (or sources) of Hanumān's ambivalence and his violent tendencies.

I suggest that the epic tells us that the character of Hanumān's father Vāyu and mother Añjanā are sources for the ambivalence of Hanumān. In particular they are sources for the destructive (even malevolent) aspect of Hanumān's nature. The Bālakāṇḍa states that Svayambhu had asked the gods to become incarnate as the "companions" (Rām., I, 42)

of Viṣṇu. The bears and monkeys who were produced would each have the "beauty and characteristics of the God who engendered him" (Rām., I, 43). Very soon after this, in the same kāṇḍa, the epic relates the story of Vāyu and the hundred daughters of Kuśanābha. Vāyu saw these women and promised them immortality if they would marry him. They refused to break their vows and did not even condescend to turn the power they had acquired by "devotion and self-control" against the Wind-God. Vāyu then became enraged and "entering their bodies, twisted and distorted them" (Rām., I, 72). In response to their father's questions about their misfortune, the daughters told him who was responsible. It was the Wind-god, "Vāyu, who pervades all beings, delights in tormenting them; given over to evil practices, he fails to observe the law of righteousness" (Rām., I, 72-73). In connection with the earlier statement that the monkeys and bears took on the characteristics of the god they were descended from, this story about Vāyu raises a question. Did Hanumān take on the characteristics of the god who had "engendered" him? Hanumān is certainly given the speed and strength of Vāyu. Is this story suggesting that Vāyu had something else to give Hanumān--even a tendency to "evil practices"?

Another pointer to the source of malevolent elements in the character of Hanumān is the story that Jāmbavān tells about the way Hanumān came to be sired by Vāyu. The apsaras (nymph) Punjīkathalā had been cursed to take on the form of a monkey. Under the name of Āñjanā she became the consort of the monkey Keśarin. She was able to change her form at will and one day was walking on the summit of a mountain in the shape of a very beautiful woman. It happened that the Wind-god came upon her. He lifted her robe and entranced by what he

saw, "embraced her" (Rām., II, 320). Añjanā at first attempted to defend herself but the Wind-god promised her a son, "endowed with strength and intelligence, of immense energy, of noble nature, possessed of vigour and courage and in agility and speed equal to myself" (Rām., II, 320). This pleased Añjanā and she gave in to Vāyu's desires. Eventually she gave birth to Hanumān. Does this story say that the lust of the Wind-god and the vanity of the apsaras combined to produce a controlled and selfless offspring? It does say explicitly he will be of "noble nature". But Jāmbavān continued this story of Hanumān's origins and told how the child, thinking the sun was a fruit, leapt towards it and then was struck down by Indra. This was not a self-controlled Hanumān of "noble Nature". Moreover, the Vāyu who came to his son's rescue was designated by names of opposite qualities. It was Vāyu "the Destroyer, the Bearer of Fragrance" (Rām., II, 321) who refused to blow when he saw Hanumān struck down. Here the opposing elements in the character of Vāyu are explicitly outlined in quick succession. I suggest the reader of the epic is meant to draw an implication about the ambivalent character of Vāyu's son.

Hanumān's ambivalence⁷

There are indications throughout the body of the epic that Hanumān could easily bear the title "the Destroyer, the Bearer of Fragrance" (Rām., II, 321). One such indication is what transpired when

⁷I believe that Freud's definition of ambivalence bears repetition here. For him, ambivalence is "a firmly rooted love and no less well grounded hatred directed against one and the same person". See Freud, The Major Works, p. 724.

Hanumān first reached Lañkā. Young Akśā, the warrior son of Rāvana, was sent out to fight Hanumān "who resembled the fire at the dissolution of the worlds intent on destroying all creatures" (Rām., II, 446). Akśā fought skillfully and courageously but with the over-confidence of his youth. He approached close to Hanumān who roared and "assuming a formidable aspect, full of vigour, agitating his legs and arms, churned up the air" (Rām., II, 447). Leaping into the air, Hanumān "became thoughtful" (Rām., II, 448) and, suddenly shouting, recognized the skill of Akśā. Admiring the youthful Akśā for his courage and ability, Hanumān revealed his own gentle aspect for a moment. Then, deciding that Akśā was too dangerous to be allowed to live, Hanumān exploded in what seems an excess of violence. He grabbed hold of Akśā's legs "as Garuda catches hold of a snake, with a strength equal to his sire's, spun him round and round and threw him violently on the earth" (Rām., II, 449). The switch from fierce aspect to gentle aspect and the final emphatic return to violence catches the ambivalence of Hanumān's nature which in turn recalls the duality of Vāyu's designation as "the Destroyer, the Bearer of Fragrance"; "like father, like son", so to speak.

The same sudden switch of aspect is evident in another incident that took place in Lañkā. Hanumān had been captured and led bound before Rāvana. The king of the rākṣasas ordered Hanumān's tail to be wrapped in rags and set aflame. "For love of Rāma" (Rām., II, 462), Hanumān allowed this to happen, for he would be better able to survey the fortifications of the city while being led through it by the rākṣasas. Hanumān said to himself: "Let them bind me anew; even though they inflict pain on me by burning of my tail, my mind is not troubled" (Rām., II, 462). With his enemies dragging him through the city, Hanumān, "the conqueror

of his foes", was "willingly submitting himself to them" (Rām., II, 462). Though his tail was on fire Hanumān felt no pain. Noticing this, he attributed it to the merits of Sītā and Rāma and the affection of the Wind-god. With this thought about his father Vāyu, Hanumān, who had remained submissive until that moment, suddenly was grasped with an urge to violence. He asked himself:

Why should a warrior such as I, suffer himself
to be bound by these vile titans? It is meet
that I should manifest my valour and avenge
myself (Rām., II, 463).

Breaking free from his bonds and leaping into the air, "that impetuous and mighty monkey" shouted aloud and became as large as a mountain again. Then reaching the gate of the city, "long-armed Maruti" (Rām., II, 463) seized an iron bar and used it to kill the guards.

The dual aspect of Hanumān comes out strongly in the above passage. Not so much that he is evil but that his violent nature breaks loose and exceeds the bounds put on it by his purpose in serving Rāma. For at one moment he was fully committed to remaining silent and unprotesting under the scorn of the demons while suffering his tail to be burnt. Then at the thought of his father, in a swift change of mood, Hanumān decided to prove that he was a better warrior and broke his bonds, grew huge and killed all who opposed him. He was well-described at one moment as "impetuous" just as a moment earlier he was accurately represented as self-controlled and thinking only of the service of Rāma. At times, however, his "impetuous" nature moves toward darker depths dangerous to himself and his allies.

Ambivalence: darker shadings

The darker depths, the ruinously destructive potential that Hanumān has in himself is evident from the fact he set fire to Laṅkā in a fit of anger not considering the possibility that Sītā might perish in the flames. Though, in his report to Jāmbavān and the monkeys, Hanumān plays down the possibility of Sītā's being harmed, the danger to her is evident from his narration of the events. The fact that his own nature is ambivalent is also apparent from this section. For, in speaking to Hanumān, Jāmbavān initiated the tension in the passage's depiction of Hanumān, by addressing him: "O Thou who are well able to subdue thyself" (Rām., II, 475). Jāmbavān asked about Hanumān's experience in Laṅkā and Hanumān related how he had leapt "with concentrated mind" (Rām., II, 476) to Laṅkā. He told how, having discovered Sītā and talked to her, he was preparing to leave, when Sītā had pleaded that he bring Sugrīva and Rāma to her quickly as she had only two months to live. Hanumān explained that on hearing her say this, "a wave of anger surged over me and I instantly resolved on what I should do. Thereupon, expanding my body to the size of a mountain, burning to fight, I laid waste the grove" (Rām., II, 481). Hanumān told the assembled monkeys that he had then allowed himself to be captured and brought before Rāvana. Being punished by having his tail set on fire, he had again grown angry and set fire to the city of Laṅkā. Hanumān said to the monkeys that he had been worried that Sītā might have been burned in the flames. Reassured by the Chāranas that she was still alive, Hanumān reported that he had rejoiced, had visited her again, and then returned to the mainland.

In the preceding section Jāmbavān has praised Hanumān for being self-controlled, able to subdue himself. Hanumān began his story with words that supported Jāmbavān's praise. For Hanumān had told the monkeys it was with "concentrated mind" that he had begun his successful leap. However, the laying waste of the Āśoka grove and the burning of Laṅkā give a different impression. Hanumān does not control but here, at least, is controlled by his anger.

The devastation of Madhuvana is considered a light and humourous incident by some commentators; for example, Krishna Chaitanya writes of the Rāmāyaṇa:

Though the ground tone is serious, humour often relieves it...When Hanumān returns from Laṅkā with news of Sītā, there is a sudden relaxation of tension and the monkey soldiery call it a day by raiding the orchard of Sugrīva, laying it waste and beating up its keeper Dadhimukha, in spite of the fact he was the uncle of their king Sugrīva. He reports the vandalism to Sugrīva who sees in it only the sure sign that Hanumān must have come back from his mission with good news.⁸

I feel that in the context of his other rapidly changing and destructive behaviour a more sombre interpretation can be given. The text immediately sets up a tension between the controlled and uncontrolled aspects of Hanumān. After Hanumān recounted his adventures to the monkeys, they decided to go back to Rāma to await his command. They left Mount Mahendra and followed "highly powerful Hanumān gifted with velocity, having control of his senses and honoured by the Siddhas" (Rām., II, 488). The description of Hanumān as "having control of his senses" is questionable

⁸Krishna Chaitanya, A New History of Sanskrit Literature (New York: Asia Publishing House, 1962), p. 189.

here in face of what he was about to do. For the monkeys, having been given permission to eat the honey of Madhuvana, got carried away, destroyed the wood and beat up the guards. When the guards attempted to restore order Hanumān promised the monkeys he would drive out anyone who tried to stop them. Aṅgada confirmed Hanumān's words saying:

Do you all drink honey. We should be guided by all that Hanumān does, who has accomplished his purpose; even if it be improper, I am in accord with it (Rām., II, 489).

The monkeys took Hanumān's promise and Aṅgada's words of support to heart. They grew drunk with the honey, singing, whistling, laughing, crying and setting upon the guards, crushing them between their knees. The guards, in fear of their lives, turned to Dadhimukha and told him that:

Empowered by Hanumān, those terrible monkeys have, despite us, laid waste to Madhuvana and, crushed between their knees, we all but gave up our lives (Rām., II, 490).

When Dadhimukha tried to intervene all the monkeys, "headed by Hanumān" (Rām., II, 491), attacked him. Aṅgada threw Dadhimukha to the ground "without showing the least of mercy, though he merited it being his great-uncle,...Then that monkey, his arms and thighs broken and his face mutilated, bathed in blood, fell senseless for a space, thereafter, disengaging himself with difficulty, that foremost of monkeys withdrew..." (Rām., II, 491). Dadhimukha then fled to Sugrīva to inform him of the devastation of the wood. Hanumān had been the moving force behind what I interpret as the excessive violence of the monkeys in the Madhuvana. Aṅgada had caught his spirit and had said that the monkeys should follow whatever Hanumān advised. Thus Aṅgada confirmed Hanumān's advice to the monkeys and made clear the nature of Hanumān's action when he

said: "Even if it be improper (akāryam), I am in accord with it" (Rām., II, 489).

My final illustration of the ambivalent nature of Hanumān with its darker violent side is taken, perversely enough, from the same section that Vyas used to depict Hanumān as "in short" a śobhana personality. Vyas obviously believes that Sītā's praise of Hanumān here accurately portrays his character. Sītā says of Hanumān:

Thy speech which is characteristic, urbane and dictated by the eight-fold intelligence is worthy of thee....Assuredly strength, prowess, knowledge of the scriptures, courage, boldness, superior skill, energy, endurance, steadiness, constancy and humility, these brilliant [śobhana] qualities and many others are to be found in thee (Rām., III, 331).

But Hanumān's speech following this praise by Sītā shows little of the urbaneness she attributes to him, Hanumān wants permission to kill the demon women. He says:

Grant me permission to strike down those barbarians of distorted features and fearful aspect. I shall beat them with my fists, heels, long arms, thighs and knees; I shall tear them to pieces with my teeth, chew up their ears, pull out their hair, knock them down and destroy them, since they caused thee pain, O illustrious Princess: I shall exterminate those monsters.... (Rām., III, 331).

Fittingly, Sītā rebukes Hanumān for his vengeful desires, telling him that "a superior being does not render evil for evil." Perhaps the implication is that there is doubt as to whether Hanumān is a "superior being" or not.

Hanumān's monkey roots: dark side reinforced

Hanumān's origin from Vāyu, a god of variously gentle and destructive

aspect, is partial explanation for his violent switches in behaviour. I contend that this ambivalence, seen in the switch between gentle and destructive aspects, is reinforced by Hanumān's monkey qualities. It is the destructive and changeable facets of his behaviour that are given most support from his monkey roots. The incident in the Madhuvana illustrates the mercurial and violent qualities of monkeys as understood by the epic. This is not an isolated example of such characterization. For throughout the epic references are made to the monkeys as threatening, ugly, impetuous, fearful and lacking the ability to reflect on the wisdom of their actions.⁹

In the epic monkeys are at times listed as one among the many threats of the forest. In Ayodhyākāṇḍa Kauśalyā blessed her son Rāma as he prepared to go into exile. Her wish for him was that, "there be no monkeys, scorpions, mosquitoes, gnats, reptiles or insects" (Rām., I, 228) in his forest retreat. The same theme appears when Rāvana, in the guise of a sympathetic ascetic, asked Sītā if she did not fear to live in

⁹I realize that in some respects the epic portrayal of monkeys is a mythological stereotype, not a reality. Yet considering the possibility that the poet Vālmīki would have had restricted access to monkeys in their wild state, his descriptions are fairly accurate. The monkeys that dwell close to human habitations are often violent in their behaviour. S. A. Barnett writes: "Unfortunately, it is much easier to study animals in human environments than in natural conditions. As one result, we have a mass of information on the rhesus monkeys that live around Indian temples and in other human habitats. These creatures are rather violent among themselves: they do actually come to blows and inflict wounds. But the few species of monkeys closely studied in the wild do not." S. A. Barnett, "Aggression", in Some myths in Human Biology (London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1972), p. 36. See also Sarah B. Hrdy, The Langurs of Abu: Female and Male Strategies of Reproduction (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977). This is a careful study of the violence done by the dominant male hanumānlangur on the progeny of his defeated rival.

the forest "amidst monkeys, lions, tigers, deer, wolves...." (Rām., I, 97). For Śuka, a rākṣasa sent to create dissent among the monkeys, the threatening qualities of monkeys that are part of the common lore expressed by Kauśalyā and Rāvana are confirmed in their actions against him. Hardly had he begun speaking to the monkeys when they were on him, tearing his flesh and attempting to gouge out his eyes. He was only saved by the mercy of Rāma. When Śuka reported back to Rāvana, he told him that it was impossible to discuss with the monkeys who are "violent by nature" (Rām., III, 59). Besides being depicted as threatening, the monkeys are also described as very ugly. In a passage that portrays in graphic terms the ugliness of the demon women surrounding Sītā in the Āśoka grove, some of these creatures are said to have "the ears of monkeys" (Rām., II, 378).

Hanumān participates in both the ugly and the threatening qualities of the monkeys. Before showing himself to Sītā in the Āśoka grove, Hanumān was quite aware that his "insignificant form and monkey shape" (Rām., II, 405) would frighten Sītā. He remained hidden in the Āśoka grove while he told the story of Rāma in an attempt to gain her confidence. In spite of his precautions, Sītā was terrified at the sight of him and exclaimed that he was "terrible looking...unacceptable and hideous to behold" (Rām., II, 408). Sītā fainted and when she awoke thought that perhaps she had had a bad dream indicating misfortune to Rāma. She said: "This vision of a monkey is condemned by the scriptures and is an inauspicious dream" (Rām., II, 408). Similar to the other monkeys in their action against Śuka, Hanumān does not merely appear threatening; he actually is violent. The rākṣasas especially had opportunity to experience this quality in Hanumān. Like the other monkeys

he used the parts of his body as weapons; he tore off the head of the demon warrior Nikumbha with his bare hands (Rām., III, 320). Hanumān also showed the monkey enthusiasm for violence when he rejoiced on killing the demon Jambumālin (Rām., II, 441) and when, after killing the sons of Rāvana's ministers, he stood around wanting more demons to kill (Rām., II, 443).

Hanumān's monkey roots not only give force to his violent side, they also support the swift changeableness¹⁰ that is part of his ambivalent behaviour. There are repeated references in the Vālmiki Rāmāyana to the fact that by nature monkeys lack control and tend to act without reflection whether the action be cowardly or courageous. Rāma's criticism of Bali's counsellors was that they were "unable to control themselves" (Rām., II, 211). Hanumān was scornful of Aṅgada's wish to keep the monkeys under his command together in one place hidden away from the wrath of Sugrīva. He asked Aṅgada how he expected to control the monkeys who were "fickle by nature" (Rām., II, 301) and keep them from eventually leaving him to return to their families. Rāvana advised Prahasta that he should approach the monkey army making a great noise. Hearing that noise, the monkeys would run, "being volatile, undisciplined, and fickle" (Rām., III, 139).

Hanumān also possesses this complex of attributes. He is often described as "impetuous", as he was when he disturbed the Āśoka

¹⁰ Commenting on the nature of the monkeys in the Rāmāyana Rāmashraya Sharma writes that, "Inconstancy (capalatā) and fickle-mindedness (calacittatā, asthira-cittatā or laghucittatā) are stated to be the outstanding characteristics of their nature." R. Sharma, A Socio-political Study of the Vālmiki Rāmāyana (Delhi, 1971), p. 280.

grove in his search for Sītā (Rām., II, 370) and similarly when he broke loose from his bondage to the rākṣasas (Rām., II, 370) and again when he set fire to Lañkā (Rām., II, 465). Hanumān, too, is fearful at times. He fell back in awe as he viewed Rāvana lying asleep in his harem (Rām., II, 359) and he hid among the leaves of the trees as Rāvana passed through the grove bound for Sītā (Rām., II, 391). Considering his changeable nature, it is not strange that this same Hanumān was fearless when brought bound before Rāvana later in the epic (Rām., II, 459).

In places it is stated explicitly that Hanumān is showing his true nature as a monkey. This is the case when he mistook Rāvana's favourite queen Mandodarī for Sītā and gave free rein to his joy:

Thereafter, in his delight, he leapt into the air, waving his tail and manifesting his joy by his antics, frolicking, singing, climbing up the pillars from whence he dropped to the ground, thus demonstrating his monkey nature (Rām., II, 361).

Similarly, when Hanumān offered to carry Sītā across the ocean, she did not believe he was capable of doing so and said:

How canst thou hope to carry me so great a distance,
O Hanumān? This demonstrates thy monkey nature:
How dost thou deem it possible that thy little
body should convey me from here to my lord, that
king among men, O Monkey? (Rām., II, 423).

In fact, Hanumān accused himself of possessing the faults of monkeys in an attempt to excuse an instance of irrational behaviour. Hanumān saw that Lañkā had been devastated and feared that by giving vent to his anger and burning the city he had also killed Sītā. Hanumān reflected on the bad things that come from giving way to passionate feeling and accused himself: "Through my culpable anger I have manifested

my undisciplined simian nature to the Three Worlds (Rām., II, 468).

Finally, after Hanumān had told Bhārata that Rāma was coming to Ayodhya, and Rāma's arrival was delayed, Bhārata expressed his mistrust of Hanumān's words, "due to the levity of thy monkey nature" (Rām., II, 362).

From the above material, the mistaken impression could be given that Hanumān was only a common monkey. In fact there are unanswered questions about Hanumān and the other monkeys in the Vālmīki Rāmāyana. For example, does the epic consider the monkeys (vānara is the most common Sanskrit term used for monkeys in the epic) who help Rāma ordinary monkeys or are they distinguished from monkeys who inhabit the mountains and forests (Rām., I, 234 and II, 234)? There is contradicting information to be gathered from the epic in answering this question. The Bālakāṇḍa makes the monkey-companions of Rāma incarnations of the gods, hardly ordinary monkeys. Aṅgada, encouraging the monkeys in the fight against the rākṣasas asked why they fled like "common monkeys" (Rām., III, 176)--implying they were not common monkeys. Rāma, however, justified his killing of Bali by saying to him that hunters kill animals and "thou are but a monkey" (Rām., II, 212). Bali's reverent response-- "To gainsay an eminent personage is not permitted one who is of common stock" (Rām., II, 213)--indicates he agreed. The question of who the monkeys are is one that continues to be debated in the scholarly literature. Ramashraya Sharma summarizes the speculation that has gone on about their identity and their title Vānara.¹¹ He concludes that they are human beings because Vālmīki "imposes upon them practically all the salient features of Aryan culture and religion."

¹¹Sharma, A Socio-Political Study, p. 279.

Hanumān: no ordinary monkey

Whatever may be decided about the other monkeys in the epic, Hanumān is no ordinary monkey (nor ordinary human, for that matter). At one point or another most of the characters in the epic make this observation: Sugrīva says Hanumān has no match (Rām., II, 286); Rāvana warns his generals that Hanumān is a "higher being" (Rām., II, 443); the demon Prahasta says Hanumān is a monkey in form but not in prowess (Rām., II, 456); the chief demons say this is "no monkey but the God of Death" (Rām., II, 466); Aṅgada praises Hanumān saying: "thou hast no equal" (Rām., II, 474); Rāghava looks on Hanumān "in veneration" (Rām., II, 496); Hanumān kills Ākampana and is praised by all--gods, Rāma, Sugrīva, Lakṣmaṇa, Vibhīṣaṇa, and monkeys (Rām., III, 138); wounded Jāmbavān assures Vibhīṣaṇa that if Hanumān lives, the army of Rāma has a chance (Rām., III, 215); and it is promised by Rāma that Hanumān will remain alive as long as the story of Rāma is told (Rām., III, 516) so that when all the other monkeys fly up to heaven with Rāma, Hanumān remains on earth (Rām., III, 633).¹²

Final explanations: Why Hanumān forgot his power

In the Uttarakānda the epic presents what could be considered a devotee's meditation on the meaning of Hanumān as he has been presented

¹²That the promise of Rāma is efficacious is seen in a story told in the Mahābhārata in a section of the great epic that makes reference to the Rāmāyaṇa. Here Hanumān is depicted as a very old monkey who meets with his brother Bhīma. Hanumān tells Bhīma that he had asked Rāma, "Enemy-killing champion, may I live as long as the tale of Rāma survives in the worlds" and Rāma answered, "So be it." (See The Mahābhārata, Vol. II, translated by J. A. B. van Buitenen (Chicago, 1973), p. 504.

in the body of the epic. Questions that were raised earlier in this report --"Why does Hanumān only come gradually to realize the true extent of his power? Why do the gods and other beings consider it necessary to test Hanumān?"--are given the epic's own answer in this final section.

The relationship of the Uttarakāṇḍa to the other books of the epic is debated. Winternitz's judgment is that "there can be no doubt at all that the original poem ended with Book VI, and that the following Book VII, is a later addition."¹³ Rāmashraya Sharma is of the opinion that the Uttarakāṇḍa has the same authorship as the rest of the Rāmāyaṇa though he admits that this kāṇḍa was composed after the other kāṇḍas.¹⁴ Whether the section on Hanumān in the Uttarakāṇḍa was written by the author of the rest of the epic or not, that section was most likely a later reflection on the meaning of Hanumān. As we have seen, in the epic Hanumān's brahminic qualities of self-control and sweet speech are in uneasy tension with dangerous power. The historical genesis of this pattern of tension is outlined in two chapters of the Uttarakāṇḍa, one entitled "The Story of Hanumān's Childhood" and the other, "The Boons bestowed on the Child Hanumān and how he was cursed by the Ascetics". Here it is said that Hanumān's god-derived and destructive powers were used by him against the Ṛṣis and as a result were closed off by them. The Ṛṣis' curse could not eradicate Hanumān's power; the curse could only make Hanumān forget who he was. But the curse was so effective that Hanumān no longer made use of his great power and wandering about

¹³Winternitz, History, p. 49.

¹⁴Sharma, A Socio-Political Study, p. 8.

in a "placid mood", he became an "accomplished scholar" (Rām., III, 497). It is related here that through the grace of Rāma he would even become a "very Brahmin" (Rām., III, 497). It was as though a very tight lid were needed to contain a potent, highly explosive material.

This story of Hanumān's childhood was related by the Sage Agastya to Rāma. Rāma had just heard the account of Bali and Rāvana's great quarrel and alliance. He ventured the opinion to Agastya that Hanumān excelled Rāvana and Bali in prowess. After mentioning some of the mighty deeds of Hanumān, Rāma said that "such feats were never surpassed by Indra, Varuna, Vishnu or Kuvera" (Rām., III, 491). This is a surprising assertion as it implies that Hanumān had performed deeds that surpass those of Rāma who was a part of Viṣṇu come to earth. Rāma immediately asked Agastya, given that Hanumān had this great power, "how comes it, that in his devotion to Sugrīva, he did not consume Bali at the time of the quarrel, as a fire a shrub?" (Rām., III, 491). Agastya answered this question by telling Rāma that Hanumān was fathered by Vāyu on the consort of Keśarin, the monkey (formerly apsaras) Añjanā, and was gifted with great strength. This strength was so extraordinary that one day when Añjanā was away from him for a while, Hanumān, who had become hungry in the meantime, saw the sun and thinking it a flower leapt up to grab it. The sun did not burn him, for the sun (Sūrya) reflected that Hanumān did not have malicious intent: "that little one is not conscious of his error...we must act accordingly" (Rām., III, 492). However, the demon Rāhu was himself intent at that very time on consuming the sun. Coming in contact with Hanumān, he fled in fear and went to Indra to complain that another Rāhu was consuming the sun. Indra accompanied Rāhu to see this phenomenon and Indra's great elephant Airāvata as it

approached with Indra was taken for a "lovely fruit" by Hanumān. Seeing Airāvata being attacked, Indra was outraged and struck Hanumān down with a thunderbolt. Vāyu, angered at this attack on his son, withdrew from the universe and took Hanumān off to the cave where Hanumān had been born. It was at this point that the gods and all beings began to realize the significance of Vāyu. For Vāyu caused them great suffering "by preventing the passage of excreta and urine in them" and,

All sacred studies, the holy syllable 'Vashat', religious ceremonies and duties being suspended by Vayu's displeasure, the Three Worlds became as hell (Rām., III, 493).

The gods had harmed Hanumān who, being the son of Vāyu, was intimately related to the very life-breath of the universe. When questioned by the gods about the origin of their suffering, Prajāpati explained that, "now that the universe is bereft of Vāyu it is deprived of life" (Rām., III, 494). To reconcile themselves with Vāyu the gods revived Hanumān and gave many boons to him. This generosity of the gods did not tame Hanumān's exuberant spirit. As Agastya explained: "O Rāma, receiving these favours which filled him with power, and with the termerity natural to him, Hanumān resembled the ocean that is overflowing" (Rām., III, 496). With mischievousness bordering on maliciousness Hanumān upset the sacrificial preparations in the hermitages of the great Ṛṣis. At first they bore patiently with him, taking into consideration the source of his powers. Finally, their patience exhausted, they cursed him, while restraining the full violence of their anger. Perhaps they had noted what had happened to the gods and discerned that Hanumān could not be attacked with impunity. The Ṛṣis said:

Since, in the knowledge of thy power, O Plavamgama, thou dost harass us, by the adverse effect of our

curse thou shalt become unaware of it for a long time, but, when it is remembered by thee, thou shalt be able to wield it effectively (Rām., III, 496).

This was Agastya's answer to Rāma's question why Hanumān did not use his great power against Bali. It is an explanation of the gradual revelation and testing of Hanumān's power. Because the power was dangerous it was cursed; the same reasoning would justify it later being tested--it was still dangerous power, liable to go out of control. Even under Rāma's influence the power of the god-sired monkey Hanumān rested uneasily in the brahmin, scholarly guise he had been given as a result of the curse of the Ṛṣis. But the challenge of the search for Sītā and his devotion to Rāma channeled Hanumān's ambivalent and at times violent energies. As he met the challenge of his mission for Rāma his forgotten powers were revealed to himself and others.

CHAPTER III

TULSĪDĀS' RĀMACARITAMĀNĀSA: THE FIGURE OF HANUMĀN

Very early in the RCM Tulsīdās suggests that there is an affinity between the poet Vālmīki and the monkey Hanumān. Both Vālmīki and Hanumān are said to focus their attention in a playful manner on the story of Rāma. Tulsīdās finds both of them together worthy of his homage saying,

I pay homage to the king of bards (Vālmīki)
and the chief of monkeys (Hanumān), of pure
intelligence, both of whom sport in the holy
woods in the shape of glories of Sītā and Rāma
(Bala, śloka 4).

I surmise from this śloka that Tulsīdās was conversant with the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa and that he had been attentive to the Hanumān depicted by Vālmīki. However, from the words of praise for bhaktas that Tulsīdās puts into the mouth of Vālmīki in the Ayodhya kāṇḍa C 131, I conjecture that Tulsīdās understood both Hanumān and Vālmīki to be great devotees of Rāma. Tulsīdās probably felt he was being true to Vālmīki in depicting Hanumān as the image of the ideal bhakta totally dependent on Rāma and engrossed in his "glories".

Certainly, Hanumān is depicted as performing many of the same actions he had performed in the account give by Vālmīki.¹ He is the first

¹For an in-depth analysis of Tulsīdās' dependence on Vālmīki see C. Vaudeville, Étude sur les sources et la composition de Rāmāyaṇa de Tulsī Das (Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient, 1955). "Le Rāmāyaṇa de Vālmīki est l'origine de la légende contée par Tulsī-Dās et, en général, de la littérature rāmaite utilisée par lui. On peut donc reconnaître à la source vālmīkienne un droit de priorité sur les autres sources du Rāmcarita-mānas. Le récit du Mānas est conforme dans les grandes lignes à la légende

of the monkeys to meet Rāma and Laṅkamaṅga; he carries them on his shoulders to Sugrīva; he searches the southern regions for Sītā, enters Svayam-prabhā's cavern, is told by Jāmbavān of his true nature, jumps to Laṅkā and fights the demons, burns Laṅkā, returns to Rāma and so on. Hanumān in the RCM is still a powerful force with the nature of a monkey and hints of connections with dark, demonic forces. However, in the RCM there is a more explicit subordination of the figure of Hanumān to Rāma. There is subordination in at least two senses. First, in the sense that the character of Hanumān is less well-developed--K. P. Bahadur explains:

The uniqueness of Tulsī's narrative lies in its happy reticence. Even more significant than what he says is what he omits. The thought uppermost in his mind was overpowering devotion to Rāma, Laṅkamaṅga and Sītā and whatever he wrote is subordinate to this aim. The wonderful thing about his narrative is that he leaves out nothing, but shaping his recital to his central purpose, condenses in a line what he considers inappropriate to expand.²

Thus the Hanumān in the RCM is presented with all the same actions as in Vālmīki but without the development of character. The second

1 (cont'd) vālmīkienne et Tulsī a directement utilisé Vālmīki dans la composition de son poeme. Néanmoins, sauf dans Kāṅḍa II, les emprunts directs et évidents sont relativement rares. Certains sont de simples reminiscences; d'autres ont été choisis consciemment par le poete hindi afin d'illustrer ses theories morales et religieuses... Quoique largement dépendant de la tradition vālmīkienne, Tulsī-Dās manifeste, dans l'ensemble, une grande indépendance vis-à-vis du text même de Vālmīki."See Étude, p. 310.

²K. P. Bahadur, Rāmacharitmānasa: A Study in Perspective (Delhi: Ess Ess Publications, 1976), p. 5.

sense in which Hanumān is subordinated is philosophical and religious. In the RCM, Rāma, as Viṣṇu come down to earth, holds all beings in the bondage of māyā and appears among men playing at being a man. Hanumān is the great devotee of Rāma, the closest to penetrating the delusion (avidyā) of māyā,³ for he depends on no one but Rāma. Rāma is the master (sevyā) and Hanumān the servant (sevaka); Hanumān is empty of himself and has only Rāma in his heart.

Contrasting the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa and the RCM makes clear the new emphasis on Hanumān's relation of dependence on Rāma. In the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa Hanumān was forgetful of his great powers as the result of a curse by Ṛṣis. The powers he had been cursed to forget were the gift of his father Vāyu and the other gods. He remembered his powers in face of the challenge of great deeds to be done in the service of Rāma. In the RCM of Tulsīdās, Hanumān is forgetful of his true nature because of Rāma's power to delude (māyā). For in the RCM, Hanumān has forgotten, not his own independent power, but the fact that he is the devotee and servant of Rāma--that he totally depends on Rāma. He was made aware of his true nature at his initial meeting with Rāma and Laṅkamaṇa. Hanumān, in the form of a Brāhman, was sent by Sugrīva to determine the intentions of the two brothers, Rāma and Laṅkamaṇa, whether they were friends or enemies. Hanumān questioned the two brothers and they answered him, explaining that they were searching for Sītā. They

³W. D. P. Hill explains that, "There are two kinds of māyā: one kind is good and is vidyā, namely that māyā which is absolutely controlled by the Lord, who sends it forth as the cause of creation; the other is avidyā, that māyā which influences the soul and causes it to suffer rebirth and pain." The Holy Lake of the Acts of Rama: A Translation of Tulsidas' Rāmācaritāmānasa (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. xxxi.

then asked Hanumān to tell them his story. Hanumān's sudden and fervent response is indicated by the text:

Now Hanumān recognized his lord and falling to the ground clasped His feet. That joy, Uma, was more than could be described. A thrill ran through his body and no words came to his lips as he gazed on the lovely style of their dress. Then recovering himself he sang His praises and was glad at heart to have found his master. 'It was quite in the fitness of things that I questioned my lord; but how is it that You ask me like a mortal? I have been roving in error under the spell of Your Māyā (deluding potency); it was for this reason that I failed to recognize my lord.' (Kīṣ. C2:3-5).

Hanumān was raised from the ground by Rāma and embraced as he protested that he was Rāma's servant. Hanumān had been so swept away by his love for Rāma that he had again taken on his monkey form. He called himself "dull-witted and deluded, wicked at heart and ignorant" (Kīṣ. C2) and expressed fear that the Lord Rāma had forgotten him. Hanumān said he knew of no way of pleasing Rāma--"neither adoration nor any other means" (Kīṣ. C3:1-2); he said he must depend on Rāma like a servant on his master (sevaka...pati). Rāma reassured Hanumān, saying that Hanumān's very weakness, his need to totally depend on the Lord, made him very dear:

Listen, O Hanumān: be not depressed at heart; you are twice as dear to Me as Laṅkamaṇa. Everyone says that I look upon all with the same eye; but a devotee is particularly dear to Me because he too depends on one but Me. (Kīṣ. C3: 4).

That Hanumān is twice as dear to Rāma as Laṅkamaṇa does not mean that Hanumān has more good qualities than Laṅkamaṇa. Hanumān's essential quality is that he "depends on none" but Rāma--that is what endears him to Rāma. He is empty of himself to be full with Rāma.

The special relationship of Hanumān to Rāma

Bharata realized that Hanumān had a special relationship to Rāma. In the Uttarakāṇḍa Hanumān went to Bharat to deliver the news that Rāma and Sītā were finally returning to Ayodhya. Hanumān introduced himself to Bharat by saying that he was only "a humble servant of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus), the befriender of the meek" (Uttara C 2A-B: 4). Immediately, Bharat embraced Hanumān and was overcome with emotion. His words revealed the effect Hanumān had on him. Bharat said: "At your very sight, O Hanumān, all my woes have disappeared. In you I have embraced today my beloved Rāma Himself" (Uttara 2A-B: 6).

It might be thought that Bharat is speaking metaphorically when he says that in embracing Hanumān he has embraced Rāma. There is, however, a concreteness to the devotionism of the RCM that would support a different opinion. Bharat is embracing Rāma in some more literal sense. Thus, Tulsīdās does not say that Hanumān merely experienced a strong response of love to Rāma. Rather, Hanumān is so empty of self that he actually has room for Rāma, or at least his image, in his heart. Tulsīdās speaks of Hanumān's having Rāma in his heart when he praises him early in the Bāla kāṇḍa:

I greet Hanumān, the son of the Wind-God, an embodiment of wisdom, who is fire as it were for the forest of the wicked, and in the abode of whose heart resides Śrī Rāma, equipped with bows and arrows (Bāla, 17).

The text tells the reader that when Hanumān was specially delegated by Rāma to search for Sītā, "Hanumān felt he had reaped the reward of his birth and departed with the image of the All-merciful enshrined in his heart" (Kiṣ. C23: 6). Also, when Hanumān set out for Laṅkā

he did so, "full of joy with an image of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus) enshrined in his heart" (Sundara C 1:2).

The same devotional literalism is seen when Hanumān is identified with the "Name" of Rāma. As I have mentioned in the introduction to this report, Tulsīdās was famous for his devotion to the "Name" of Rāma. In this devotion to the "Name" he is one with other great religious figures of his time.⁴ The "Name" was especially significant for Tulsīdās' work in that it played a key role in his religious philosophy. By appealing to the "Name" Tulsīdās transcended the debate between devotees of a "god without attributes" and devotees of a "god with attributes".⁵ In the RCM Tulsīdās states at one point that the "Name" is "greater than Brahma (ब्रह्म) and Śrī Rāma both" (Bāla D 25). Not only is the "Name" of highest status it is most effective for, "The Name of Rāma is the bestower of one's desired object in this age of Kali" (Bāla C 27:4). With the high status and efficacy of the "Name" in mind, it is pertinent for an understanding of Hanumān's role in the RCM to emphasize his explicit identification with the "Name". Tulsīdās writes: "The age of Kālī is as it were the demon Kālanemi, the repository of all wiles; whereas the Name is the wise and might Hanumān" (Bāla C 27:4).

⁴Kabīr says: "The name of God is my wealth: I cannot tie it in a knot; or sell it for my livelihood. The Name is my field, the Name is my garden...." See A. C. Bouquet, Hinduism (London: Hutchinson and Co., 1949, 1966), p. 105.

⁵Allchin comments: "It has sometimes been suggested that while Kabīr Dās or Nānak were devotees of the Nirguṇa aspect of Rāma alone, Tulsī was devoted only to the Saguna. But this is not so,... both aspects are, as it were, superimposed upon each other. Moreover Tulsī often repeats that the Name is of greater glory than either aspect...." Petition, p. 62.

One might say that as Kālanemi is a specific instance of the Kālī Age, Hanumān is an instance of the "Name". Hanumān's identification with Rāma and the "Name" ("the bestower of one's desired object") implies that the devotee could turn to Hanumān in order to gain access to Rāma and to obtain assistance. Present day devotees influenced by the RCM approach Hanumān first. Babb writes:

Informants seem to conceive of Hanumān as a sort of intermediary between Rāma and mankind. One might suppose that people would address themselves to the more powerful deity, but informants state that Rāma is far too great a deity for ordinary people to approach directly, so instead they go to his principal servant.⁶

In the RCM Hanumān is clearly represented as an effective intermediary between petitioners and Rāma. Bharata, Lakṣmaṇa and Satrugna appreciated that Hanumān made Rāma more accessible. They wanted to ask Rāma a question, "but being too modest themselves to interrogate the Lord, they all looked at the son of the wind-god" (Uttara C 36:1). Rāma realized what was going on, and when Hanumān told him that Bharata wanted to speak to him but was too shy, Rāma said: "Hanumān, you know my disposition. Has there ever been any secrecy between Bharata and myself?" (Uttara C 36:4). In answering in this manner, Rāma acknowledged Hanumān's special knowledge of him and at the same time encouraged Bharata to approach more closely.

Part of Hanumān's effectiveness comes, not only from identification with the "Name" but also from his ability to use the "Name". Hanumān's use of the "Name" served him well on one occasion when Bharata, by

⁶Babb, Divine Hierarchy, p. 119.

mistake, wounded him. Having been struck down by Bharata's arrow, Hanumān cried out: "Rāma, Rāma, O Lord of the Raghus:" (Lañkā C 59:1) and Bharata recognized him as a devotee of Rāma. Bharata then called on Rāma to raise Hanumān from unconsciousness. Through the working of Rāma's power to attest to the purity of Bharata's devotion to him, Hanumān was raised up giving glory to Rāma.

Monkey glorify the Lord

An examination of Tulsīdās' handling of Hanumān's monkey connections indicates that his main purpose is to emphasize devotion to Rāma. For example, the theme of the negative aspects of monkeys is well-exploited by Tulsīdās to give Rāma glory. It is clear that one attitude towards monkeys as depicted by the RCM is that they were frightening forest creatures. Sītā's projected response to them would indicate this. In the Ayodhya kāṇḍa Kauśalyā addressed her son Rāma trying to convince him that Sītā should not accompany him into the forest. Kauśalyā asked: "But how, my son, will Sītā live in the forest;--she who is frightened to see even the picture of a monkey?" (Ayodhya C 60:2). It is exactly their negative characteristics that make Hanumān and the monkeys effective revelations of the power of Rāma. For Rāma's grace is not obtained through the effort or merit of the recipient. Hanumān pointed out this total dependence when he said to Rāma: "I know neither adoration nor any other means (of pleasing you). A servant depends on his master... for a master needs must take care of his servant" (Kiṣ. C 3:2). Since what is of value is given by the Lord Rāma and no one can be judged on the basis of innate qualities, the Lord can choose the lowliest. So the greatest devotee may have the lowliest appearance. The poet

tells us: "The good are honoured notwithstanding their mean appearance even as...Hanumān (the monkey-god) was honoured in this world" (Bāla C 7:4).

The various references to the character of monkeys suggests that for Tulsīdās monkeys are exactly what their appearances would indicate. In themselves, without the grace of Rāma, they are insolent, servile, frightening and lustful. The knowledge that they have these negative qualities was a consolation to Tulsīdās. Tulsīdās bemoaned his own evil nature asking, "who is duller and more impure of mind in this world than I?" (Bāla C 28:6). Yet the thought of Rāma's generosity to the monkeys gave Tulsīdās confidence that Rāma remembered him for,

While the Lord sat at the foot of trees, the
monkeys perched themselves high on the boughs;
such insolent creatures He exalted to His own
position: There is no lord so generous as Śrī
Rāma, O Tulsīdāsa (Bāla.D 29 A-B).

That the monkeys' worst qualities are no obstacle to being of service to Rāma is indicated by the case of Sugrīva. The Monkey King had neglected his duty to Rāma by not beginning the search for Sītā. He had been distracted by sensual enjoyments. To excuse himself before Rāma, Sugrīva pointed to the māyā of sensual enjoyment that afflicts all--the monkeys most of all:

Gods, men and sages, my master, are all slaves
of their senses; while I am a vile brute and a
monkey, the most libidinous of animals (Kiṣ.
C 21:2).

Sugrīva went on to say that freedom from the entrappment of lust, anger and greed only comes from the grace of Rāma, not from "personal endeavour" (Kiṣ. C 21:3). These words pleased Rāma and he told Sugrīva that he was as dear to him as Bharata (Kiṣ. 21:4).

Even Hanumān ventured a negative opinion on the qualities of monkeys. At the same time he indicated that these qualities gave an opportunity for the power of Rāma to work. Sītā had compared the monkeys unfavourably to the demons: "all the monkeys must be pygmies like you, whereas the demons are mighty and great warriors" (Sundara C 16:3). Provoked by Sītā's words Hanumān manifested his true power. He grew to great size, "colossal as a mountain of gold". But he immediately disclaimed responsibility for his own great power and gave his evaluation of the natural qualities of monkeys. He told Sītā: "Listen, mother: monkeys possess no great strength or intelligence either; but, through the Lord's might, the most tiny snake might swallow Garuḍa!" (Sundara D 16). Whereas in the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa the negative traits of the monkeys reinforced the dark aspect of Hanumān in the RCM these same traits built up the image of Rāma's glory.

Demon glorify the Lord

In the RCM the demonic shadows to Hanumān's character serve the purpose of highlighting Rāma's glory and mercy. I claimed that in the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa Hanumān has a dark, even demonic side to him. Hanumān was sired by the highly ambivalent Vāyu and cursed as a child by the Ṛṣis for the malicious use of his great powers. In my opinion his actions in the epic such as the burning of Laṅkā and the destruction of Madhuvana verge on the demonic in their careless violence. The Hanumān of Vālmīki is a great primitive force at times out of tune with his other aspect--the brahminized scholar, eloquent counsellor of Sugrīva and single-minded servant of Rāma's purpose. In contrast,

Tulsīdās omits mention of Hanumān's childhood and the curse of the Rṣis. Nor does he elaborate on the nature of Hanumān's sire, Vāyu. However, he adds a number of details to Vālmīki's picture of Hanumān that connect Hanumān with the demons. The first detail is only suggestive of the relationship between the monkey and demons. Hanumān had entered Laṅkā and come upon a house with a temple dedicated to Śrī Rāma. Wondering how a pious person could live among the demons, Hanumān heard Vibhīṣaṇa, the occupant of the house, wake with the name of Rāma on his lips. The monkey and the demon rejoiced together in devotion to Rāma. Then Vibhīṣaṇa complained of his lot. Since he was in demon form he could not perform sādhana (spiritual endeavours) and his heart could not cherish the feet of Rāma. Hanumān reassured Vibhīṣaṇa about the generosity of Rāma to his servants:

Listen, Vibhīṣaṇa: the Lord is ever affectionate to His servants; for such is His wont. Tell me what superior birth can I claim--a frivolous monkey vile in every way, so much so that if anyone mentions our name early in the morning he is sure to go without food that day (Sundara C7: 3-4).

Here Hanumān has pointed out a parallel between his condition as a monkey and the demonic state of Vibhīṣaṇa. The suggestion is that monkeys are "frivolous", "vile" and even the mention of their name puts a curse on the day. This is intended to give Vibhīṣaṇa the confidence that Rāma will act for him. "For if you think demons are bad, just look at the monkeys:--and yet Rāma has acted for them".

A second instance of demonic connections has two significant aspects to it--Hanumān is actually mistaken for a demon and he shows self-pride, perhaps the only time he does show pride in the RCM. Hanumān had been sent by the physician Suṣeṇa to gather medicinal herbs for the

cure of a wound that Lakṣmaṇa had received. Not being able to distinguish the herbs he wanted from others on a mountain, Hanumān lifted the whole mountain and began to fly back to Suṣeṇa and the others. It happened that Hanumān flew over the spot where Bharata was. Thinking Hanumān to be some sort of "demon" (niśicara) Bharata struck him down with an arrow. Having discovered his error Bharata told Hanumān that he would speed Hanumān and the mountain on their way by means of an arrow. At this suggestion the normally humble Hanumān was dubious of Bharata's ability and as the text reports, "Hanumān's pride (abhimāna) was tickled when he heard these words. 'How will the arrow fly with my weight?' he thought" (Laṅkā C 60:3-4). Hanumān then recovered very quickly from his lapse⁷ and, "recalling Śrī Rāma's glory, he bowed to Bharata's feet" (Laṅkā C 60:4) and requesting permission to depart went on his way. The manifestation of pride in this one particular place where Hanumān had just been mistaken for a demon gives concrete evidence to support the "confusion of identity". Mistaken for a demon, Hanumān then showed pride in self, the predominating characteristic of the chief demon in the RCM, Rāvana.⁸ However, Hanumān promptly recalled that "Rāma's

⁷Referring to his occasion, K. P. Bahadur writes: "Even the great and unwavering devotee, Hanumān, fell victim to vanity, and was able to overcome it with difficulty". See Rāmacharitamānasa: A Study in Perspective (Delhi: Ess Ess Publications, 1976), p. 58. See also Ch. Vandeville, Étude sur les sources et la composition du Rāmāyana de Tulsī Dās (Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient, 1955), pp. 251-252, where Vandeville mentions that this incident has its source in the Bengali recension of the Vālmīki Rāmāyana; this episode is omitted in the Adhyātma Rāmāyana.

⁸Bahadur, Rāmacharitamānasa, p. 240. Here Bahadur writes of Rāvana that, "Egoism is his outstanding characteristic...." See the RCM Lankā kanda C 8:1-2 also.

glory" is capable of such an amazing act.

Though Hanumān is the great ally of Rāma and the demons are his great enemies, in one sense there is no radical difference between the monkey Hanumān and a demon. All, including gods and demons, are in the bonds of māyā before Rāma dispenses his grace. Tulsīdās has said this explicitly in the beginning ślokas of the Bāla kānda when he praised Śrī Rāma "whose Māyā (illusive power) holds sway over the entire universe including gods from Brahmā (the Creator) downwards and demons...." (Bāla śloka 6). There is a third instance of Hanumān's demonic connections not seen in Vālmīki which is in line with this theme. One of Rāvana's most effective illusions (māyā) is a host of demonic Hanumāns who attack Rāma. Rāvana had let loose hordes of yoginīs, with swords in one hand, blood-filled skulls in the other. Rāvana sent down showers of sand on the monkeys and roared aloud so that the heroes of Rāma's army fainted. The final thrust of his attack came when,

Having thus crushed the might of all, he wrought another delusion. He manifested a host of Hanumāns, who rushed forward with rocks in their hands and encircled Śrī Rāma in a dense cordon on every side. With uplifted tails and gnashing their teeth they shouted, 'Seize and kill him; let him not escape'. Surrounded by their tails on every side, the Lord of Kosla shone in their midst (Lañkā C 101:7-8).

The sages, siddhas and gods were so under the power of māyā that they worried about the outcome of the battle. However, Rāma shot a single arrow and the illusory Hanumāns vanished. Tulsīdās concludes that all this was merely "a pastime for the Lord" (Lañkā D 101B). It is a simple variation in this "play" that Rāma's greatest ally, Hanumān, should be represented as a host of demons. Indeed, it serves to emphasize that through the playfulness of the Lord all are subject to the power of

illusion and all depend totally on the Lord for his grace.

A final detail that suggests demonic connections for Hanumān is his request for the boon of bhakti. In purānic mythology many demons ask for the boon of bhakti. Indeed, the RCM has the brother of Rāvana, the great demon Vibhīṣaṇa, make this request. Having come to Rāma, Vibhīṣaṇa claims that all his "lurking desire...has been washed away by the stream of devotion to the Lord's feet". Vibhīṣaṇa then begs for the boon of bhakti. He says: "'Now, my gracious Lord, grant me such pure devotion (to Your feet) as that which gladdens Śiva's heart'" and the Lord replies, "'So be it.'" (Sundara, C 49:3-4). In the same way, Hanumān asked Rāma for the one thing necessary, for as he said, "Nothing is unattainable, my Lord, to him who enjoys Your grace" (Sundara, D 33). The one thing Hanumān wanted was "unceasing Devotion, which is the source of supreme bliss" (Sundara, C 34:1). Rāma immediately responded to Hanumān's request, saying, "be it so".

Final images for a hierarchy of service

In the Uttarakāṇḍa Śiva acclaimed Hanumān Rāma's greatest devotee. Śiva described how Hanumān took great joy in merely standing by the Lord Rāma and fanning him. Śiva then told Pārvatī:

There is no one so blessed nor anyone so devoted to Śrī Rāma's lotus feet as Hanumān, whose love and service, O daughter of the mountain-king have been repeatedly extolled by the Lord with His own mouth (Uttara C 50:4-5).

The image of Hanumān performing the humble service of fanning Rāma and Hanumān's devotion to the lowliest part of the body, the feet,⁹

⁹Babb relates the touching of the feet to the customary pranām gesture. He writes that, "It is appropriate both before deities and before

clearly indicates the hierarchical nature of Hanumān's relationship to Rāma.

The relative position of the monkeys, Hanumān and Aṅgada, is seen in the picture Tulsīdās draws of Rāma reclining on a peak of Mount Suvela, surrounded by his closest allies and brother just after they all had crossed the sea to Laṅkā. Rāma rests with his head in Sugrīva's lap. Laṅkamaṇa is sitting behind Rāma in the pose of a warrior and Vibhīṣaṇa is whispering in Rāma's ear. Aṅgada and Hanumān are placed together specifically in the role of devoted servants for, "The blessed Aṅgada and Hanumān kneaded His lotus feet in diverse ways...." (Laṅkā C 11:4). In their lowly position at his feet the two monkeys are brought very close to Rāma.¹⁰

9 (cont'd.) persons of higher status. The meaning of the gesture is obvious: it symbolizes distinction of status by physically indicating an equivalence between one party's feet and the other party's forehead.... When a person touches the feet of another and then his own forehead he is saying, in effect, that his purest and most noble part is the same or less than the basest and most polluted part of the other". Babb, Divine Hierarchy, p. 53.

¹⁰Touching the feet of Rāma is a means of salvation as the monkey Aṅgada informed Rāvana in an amusing scene between him and the demon king. Aṅgada had gone to Rāvana to try to convince him to turn himself over to the mercy of Rāma. The monkey chief and the demon king exchanged many bitter words. Then Aṅgada challenged the demon warriors to lift Aṅgada's foot from the ground. None of them succeeded so Rāvana finally descended from his seat to try. As Rāvana reached for his foot Aṅgada made a telling and cutting comment. Aṅgada told Rāvana: "You cannot be saved by clinging to my feet. Fool, why do you not go and clasp Śrī Rāma's feet?" (Laṅkā C 35:1-2). Hearing these words, Rāvana turned away in shame. What Aṅgada and Hanumān received through touching the feet of Rāma, Rāvana would only obtain at death when struck down by Rāma's arrow. Thus Rāvana had decided to fight Rāma because he could "cross the ocean of mundane existence by falling to His arrows" (Āraṇya C 23:2).

The RCM is more emphatic than the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa that the relationship between Rāma and Hanumān is that of master to servant. The difference in emphasis between the two epics is clearly seen in the incident in which Jāmbavān made Hanumān aware that he possessed great power. In discussing who should go to Laṅkā to search for Sītā, Jāmbavān extolled Hanumān for his superior birth and talked of his great powers as son of the wind-god. Yet Hanumān had come down for one purpose--the service of Rāma:

The King of bears then turned towards Hanumān:
 'Listen, O mighty Hanumān: how is it that you are keeping mum? A son of the wind-god, you are as strong as your father and are a storehouse of intelligence, discretion and spiritual wisdom. What undertaking in this world is too difficult for you to accomplish, dear child? It is for the service of Śrī Rāma that you have come down to earth (Kiś. C 30:2-3).

In Vālmīki's Rāmāyaṇa the revelation led to a manifestation of Hanumān's great power. In Tulsīdās the power is manifested, but quickly subordinated to Rāma. Hanumān grew to the size of a mountain and, golden in colour, roared like a lion. He said he could easily leap to Laṅkā and single-handedly kill Rāvana and bring Trikūṭa mountain back. But having shown his power and said this, he immediately turned to Jāmbavān for advice on what he should do. Jāmbavān told him to find Sītā and come back with what she had to say, for Rāma must gain the glory of rescuing her.

Unlike Vālmīki's work, the RCM explicitly states that the great acts of Hanumān in his leap to Laṅkā are in the service of Rāma. When Mount Mainaka, commanded by the deity of the ocean, offered him rest,

Hanumān simply touched the mountain with his hand and then made obeisance to it saying, 'There can be no rest for me till I have accomplished Śrī Rāma's work (Sundara D 1).

When the gods wanted to test Hanumān's "extraordinary strength and intelligence", they pitted him against the mother of serpents, Surasā, who informed Hanumān that the gods had given him to her as a meal. Hanumān begged that he be allowed to finish Rāma's task before he entered her mouth. She refused his request. Hanumān then expanded his body and Surasā widened her mouth to encompass him. Hanumān then quickly shrank and flew in and out of her mouth. Surasā told him that the task set her by the gods was finished and she blessed him: "You will accomplish all the work of Śrī Rāma, a storehouse that you are of strength and intelligence" (Sundara D 2). Another example of the explicit linking of Hanumān's power to Rāma is seen in Hanumān's encounter with the demoness Laṅkinī. Hanumān had taken on a miniscule size to enter the city. The demoness, protectress of the city, stopped him and challenged him. He struck her and she fell to the ground vomiting blood. When she rose, she bowed before Hanumān again in an attitude of respect and said to him that Brahmā the Creator had told her: "When you get discomfited by a blow from a monkey, know that all is over with the demon race". She then told Hanumān: "I must have earned very great merit, dear Hanumān, that I have been blessed with the sight of Śrī Rāma's own messenger" (Sundara C 4:4). In fact, the service of Rāma is so integral to the meaning of Hanumān in the RCM that it is stated as the final command to him. When the monkeys were finally leaving Rāma and Sītā, Hanumān begged Sugrīva that he might spend "ten more days in the service of Śrī Rāma". In answer to Hanumān's request Sugrīva gave Hanumān a command that put no time limit on the duration of Hanumān's service to Rāma. Sugrīva said: "A storehouse of merit as you are, O son of the Wind-god, you go and serve the All-merciful" (Uttara C 19:5).

CHAPTER IV
TULSĪDĀS, HANUMĀN AND THE ŚŪDRAS

The following chapter is an attempt to respond to a suspicion I had about the function of Hanumān in the context of the RCM. In Chapter III I reported on my reading of the RCM. There I outlined the shape of Hanumān in the RCM and I detailed some of the contrasts between Hanumān in that work and Hanumān in the Rāmāyāna of Vālmīki. I saw Hanumān in the RCM explicitly subordinated to the purpose of glorifying Rāma. There Hanumān became "the image of the devotee who knows his low place in the social hierarchy yet is capable of great things by giving his total devotion to his master Rāma".¹ As I reflected on that summary of Hanumān in the RCM the question occurred to me: "Was the figure of Hanumān intentionally designed by Tulsīdās to function as a model for the Śūdras² in their subordination to the Brāhmins?"

My answer to that question, as well as drawing from the RCM, will incorporate material from two works of Tulsīdās that followed on his RCM, the Vinayapatrikā (VP), a work from the middle period of his life,³

¹See Chapter I, p. 12.

²I use the term "Śūdra" in this chapter to refer to untouchables and tribals as well.

³F. R. Allchin, The Petition to Rām, a translation of the Vinayapatrikā (Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 37. All translations of this work are taken from this edition and will be indicated in the body of the text by parentheses including within them the title VP and the Hymn and Verse number.

and the Kavitāvalī (Kav), one of his last works.⁴ I will first consider some historical probabilities that tend to lead to a positive answer to the question. I will then give some examples of Tulsīdās' attitudes towards Śūdras on the one hand and Brāhmanas on the other. I also indicate Hanumān's ties with the Śūdras and note that he is not limited to this identification. All these considerations tend, in my estimation, towards an affirmative answer to the question. However, a reflection on Hanumān's symbolic function with respect to the hierarchical relationships within society moves me towards an opposite conclusion. Finally, a section which explores both the history of devotion that Tulsīdās entered and his own personal spiritual history leads me to conclude that the image of Hanumān as the servant of Rāma was more an expression of Tulsīdās' personal spiritual experience than a conscious creation for Brāhman purposes.

Without an explicit statement from the poet on his understanding of Hanumān's role in relation to Śūdras the question I have asked cannot be answered in a definitive manner. However, there is evidence of an indirect nature that will allow me to begin here by proposing what I think Tulsīdās' views on Śūdras, Brāhmanas and the relationship between them might tend to be. Thus, I might suspect from the strong tradition that Tulsīdās was a Brāhman that he would be interested in seeing the status of the Brāhman maintained.⁵ However, suggestions that Tulsīdās

⁴F. R. Allchin, Kavitāvalī, a translation (New York: Barnes and Co., 1964), p. 63. All translations of this work are taken from this edition and will be indicated in the body of the text by parentheses including with them the title Kav and the page number.

⁵Allchin, Petition, p. 31.

was closely associated with the Rāmānandi sect call this theory into question. The sympathy for low-caste persons that was a feature of this sect group would modify my views on what Tulsīdās could be expected to believe about Śūdras. One scholar claims that Tulsīdās was occupied in making Rāmāite beliefs of the primarily low-caste Rāmānandis acceptable to Brāhmins.⁶ I propose that in his works Tulsīdās might be attempting a happy union of appreciation for the Śūdra with support of the Brāhman belief that the Śūdra was indeed "low-born"; he would also defend the hierarchical point of view that the Brāhman was owed reverence by all.

Tulsīdās and the Hindu context

It is clear that Hindu hierarchical caste views were being challenged in Tulsīdās' time by religious leaders and sects originating from within the Hindu fold. The roots of this criticism went back centuries, for the memory of the Jain and Buddhist assault on the Hindu scriptures and caste views was not dead. In the 8th century religious movements popular with the lower castes had freshly challenged the Hindu worldview. A Buddhist monk of the end of that century, Rāhulabhadra (sometimes call Sarahapāda), emerged as a strong critic of the Brāhmins and the caste system, encouraged inter-dining with Cāndālas and attracted a large following.⁷ In the centuries that followed, Yogins, including the Sahajayānī Siddhas and the Nātha Santas, opposed caste.⁸ The

⁶P. C. Bagchi, "Studies on the Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa", Calcutta Sanskrit Series, XI, Vol I (Calcutta: Metropolitan Printing and Publishing House, 1935), p. 7.

⁷Buddha Prakash, Aspects of Indian History and Civilization (Agra: Shiva Lal Agarwala and Co. (P.) Ltd., 1965), pp. 265-266.

⁸Prakash, Aspects, p. 266.

Bhāgavatas preached a god who loved all regardless of caste.⁹ Then there were the bhakti movements like the Rāmānandis with whom Tulsīdās was connected: the founder of that group, Rāmānanda (c. 1300-1411 but perhaps a full century later), according to the Bhakta Māla, numbered among his disciples Muslims and low caste Hindus.¹⁰ Some disciples of Rāmānanda, chief among whom were Kabīr (c. 1400-1511 A.D.) and Nānak (1469-1539 A.D.), opposed caste divisions and attitudes vigourously. In contrast, Tulsīdās defended caste views. He seems to have been especially concerned about the challenge that the Siddhas and Yogins presented to devotion and the varṇāśrāmadharma (the duties of caste and stage of life). In this connection, note that Tulsīdās begins the RCM with what has been interpreted as a reference to the Siddhas' lack of faith in Śiva and Pārvatī.¹¹ The second śloka reads:

Homage to Bhavāni and Śaṅkara [Śiva], Faith and
Trust in person, apart from who adepts [Siddhas]
see not the Lord who dwells within them.¹²

In the Kavitāvalī Tulsīdās attributes the waning of devotion and weakening of the varṇāśrama system to the influence of the Yogic beliefs of Gorakhnātha (c. 10th-12th century). He writes:

The holy law of the castes has gone,
The four estates of life have left

⁹Prakash, Aspects, pp. 275-276.

¹⁰Allchin, Petition, pp. 28-29.

¹¹Prakash, Aspects, p. 348.

¹²W. D. P. Hill, The Holy Lake of the Acts of Rama (Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1952, 1971), p. 1. All future references to the Rāmacaritamānasa will be from this translation and be indicated by "Hill" and the page number of the quoted material set in parentheses after the quote.

Their sojourn, they have fled
like fugitives, amazed with fear

....

the yoga that Gorakh awakened
drove devotion from the people,
And by injunctions of the scriptures
he in sport acted the trickster (Kav., p. 164).

As the attack on varṇāśramadharmā, even from within the Hindu tradition,
was consciously being pursued, perhaps it is valid to consider that
Tulsīdās' rebuttal to that attack was also a purposeful act.

The Muslims: a pressure from without

There was also a challenge to the traditional Hindu vision coming from without the Hindu fold. Tulsīdās lived for most of his adult life in Benares, the central city of North Indian Hinduism. Benares had been pillaged by the Uzbek, Bahadur Khan, in 1566 and by the emperor Akbar in 1567.¹³ This last attack took place no earlier than seven years from the time Tulsīdās informs us he began work on the RCM in Ayodhya (the 30th of March, 1574). It is believed that he went to Benares after completing the Āranyakāṇḍa (Hill, x). It is difficult to conceive that a Hindu thinker would not be aware of the threat Islam and its egalitarian ideals offered to the Hindu hierarchical world view. Thus, it is surprising to discover that there is little reference to the Muslims in Tulsīdās' work. Buddha Prakash informs us that, like other Hindi literature of the time, the writings of "men like Sūra and Tulsī are quite silent about the Muslims. In their

¹³ R. C. Majumdar, gen. ed., The History and Culture of the Indian People: Vol. VII (Bombay: Bharatiga Vidya Bhavan, 1974), pp. 118-120.

voluminous compositions there is hardly any reference to them".¹⁴

I suggest that the dilemma that faced Tulsīdās shaped up something as follows. Notwithstanding a personal sympathy for the low-born, Tulsīdās noted that the attacks of the Siddhas, Yogins and bhakti sects on the traditional scriptures and varṇāśramadharmā had weakened Hindu unity. He writes of his time: "In the Kaliyuga there were universal lawlessness and confusion of caste" (Hill, 478). Perhaps the military success of the Muslims was interpreted as merely a symptom of Hinduism's internal decay. To continue in the line of the groups critical of caste would only hasten the disintegration. Following this theory, Tulsīdās' concern would then be to revive Hinduism from within. The means he chose for this were devotional practice combined with a return to the Scriptures and the varṇāśramadharmā they taught.

Śūdras in Kaliyuga: Brāhmins in Rāmrajya

I see an indication of Tulsīdās' concern for maintenance of

¹⁴Prakash, Aspects, p. 347. Another possibility is that the Hindi writers from Central India had not experienced the full effect of Islam's evangelizing zeal. If statistics gathered in the 1930's can provide any clue there were few conversions to Islam in Central India. The far West, "Kashmir, the Western Punjab, the Frontier Province and Sind, and the Eastern area, were predominantly Muslim. In the rest of India, Muslims were "ordinarily less than one in ten." See W. H. Moreland and Atul Chandra Chatterjee, A Short History of India (4th ed.; Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co., 1936, 1957), p. 191. An article by Robert Cust in Calcutta Review 83 (July, 1886), pp. 164-191 entitled "The Races, Religions and Languages of India as Disclosed by the Census for 1881" suggests a similar distribution 50 years earlier. The author quotes the census as numbering the Muslims at 50,000,000 (p. 173). One half these were in Bengal and as the author says, were "nominally converted" (p. 180). 10 million were in the Punjab and many of these, according to Cust, kept "a Hindu family priest", kept their "caste title of Rajput" and went "to the same shrines as Hindus" (p. 180).

varṇāśramadharmā in the fact he seems to have been especially irritated by Śūdras who claimed to teach wisdom and who demanded the reverence traditionally owed to Brāhmins. In a long description of the Kaliyuga given in the Uttarakāṇḍa of the RCM, the crow, Kākabhusuṇḍī relates his memory of a time which is clearly Tulsīdās' perception of the depravity of his own times. Kākabhusuṇḍī says:

Śūdras gave Brāhmins lessons in wisdom, and putting on the sacred thread accepted iniquitous alms.... Śūdras argued with Brāhmins, 'Are we inferior to you? The true Brāhmin is he who knows Brahma'. Such were their impudent taunts.... Śūdras indulged in all sorts of prayers and penances and vows and seated themselves on the dias to recite the Purāṇas. Everybody did just exactly what he liked; it was an age of utterly unspeakable wickedness (Hill, 477-478).

One can only speculate on the events in Tulsīdās' life that would have given rise to such vehement condemnations of Śūdra teachers.

In contrast, Tulsīdās' depiction of the ideal order, Rāma's rule after he returns to Kosala with Sītā, emphasizes the reverence which was given to Brāhmins. In the kingdom of Kosala, "all who dwelt therein were generous and charitable and did humble service to the Brāhmins" (Hill, 444). To his brothers and Hanumān, Rāma described the distinguishing marks of a saint: "They are contented, simple, friendly, serving the feet of Brāhmins with a devotion that brings forth righteousness" (Hill, 451). Rāma lectured all the citizens of Ayodhya, including the Brāhmins and gurus, on the importance of giving reverence to Brāhmins:

There is one deed of merit in the world, no other--in thought and word and deed to worship the feet of Brāhmins; he who with unfeigned devotion serves the feet of Brāhmins finds favour with gods and sages (Hill, 454).

Tulsīdās makes it clear that the reverence owed to Brāhmins is not related to their personal merits. Rather, it is founded on a divine command. Thus, after defeating Kabandha, a gandharva cursed to be a demon for having insulted the sage Durvāsā, Rāma reprimanded Kabandha saying:

A Brāhman is to be revered even though he curse and beat you and use harsh words--so say the saints [my underlining]. A Brāhman must be revered though he be devoid of goodness or virtue, but a Śūdra never, however virtuous and learned (Hill, 317).

From such a statement a reader might conclude that Tulsīdās looked down on the Śūdras and was intent on reinforcing their social inferiority. I think that in the case of this passage, at least, such an interpretation would be inadequate. In the above passage Tulsīdās is putting a traditional ("so say the saints") view into Rāma's mouth. Tulsīdās believed in the separate dharmas of the four castes (varnas). He was critical of anyone who neglected his dharma. Tulsīdās has Vasiṣṭha, the guru of the Rāghavas, say:

Grieve rather for the Brāhman who knows not the Veda, but abandons religious duty and devotes himself to things of the sense. Grieve for that king who understands not statecraft and loves not his people as he loves his life. Grieve for the Vaiśya who is rich but niggardly...Grieve for the Śūdra who dishonours Brāhmins....(Hill, 231).

Notwithstanding Tulsīdās' concern that all abide by their dharma one point has been made especially clearly--Brāhmins, not Śūdras, are owed reverence.

Common relationship to the Lord

There are a number of occasions in which Śūdras are met and embraced in a manner which contravenes caste rules prohibiting bodily contact. Does this indicate Tulsīdās had decided to abandon his support

for varṇāśramadharmā? I think not--for, examined carefully, these events prove not to attack the principle that supports caste relationship-- the belief that one group of people is inherently low-born. For example, when Bharat entered the forest in search of Rāma, the Niṣāda king Guha came to greet him. Guha first prostrated himself before Vasiṣṭha, and the sage, recognizing Guha as Rāma's friend, informed Bharat. The text reads:

When he heard that he was Rāma's friend [my underlining], Bharat left his chariot; and dismounting, went forward to greet him with a heart bursting with affection (Hill, 239).

We are reminded of Guha's low state as he prostrated himself before Bharat and as Bharat drew Guha up, the gods called Guha "Blessed" for,

him whom the world and the Veda declare to be altogether mean, him the contact of whose shadow involves a ceremonial cleansing, Rāma's younger brother is taking to his heart and embracing with a thrill of rapturous emotion (Hill, 239).

Tulsīdās does not deny the low-born nature of Guha. Rather, he affirms that traditional caste position but renders it trivial in the context of Rāma's love. Nonetheless, the prostrations of Guha affirm the real inequality. It is not common "humankindness" that is affirmed between Bharat and Guha, but a common relationship to the Lord.

This same dual movement affirming and relativizing traditional caste views is seen earlier when Guha met Rāma as he entered the forest. The text reads:

He prostrated himself and laid his gifts before them and gazed on the Lord with utmost devotion. With spontaneous affection Raghurai inquired after his welfare and seated him beside himself (Hill, 197).

First we see the principle of inequality, then its encompassment in love.

The dual movement is also present in a scene that has been interpreted as depicting a vision Tulsīdās had (Hill, 206). Tulsīdās, in a reading of the vision that identifies the vision's main figure as Tulsīdās, is an ascetic, "young, handsome and gloriously bright, of a nature unknown to poets (kavi alakhit gati)"¹⁵ who met Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa, Sītā and Guha the Niṣāda in the forest. The ascetic prostrated himself before Rāma who then clasped the ascetic to his bosom. The ascetic next touched the feet of Lakṣmaṇa who raised him up. Then with his head the ascetic touched "the dust of Sītā's feet" who blessed him. However, concerning the outcaste tribal Guha, the text records that,

the Niṣāda prostrated himself before him (Tulsīdās?),
and the anchorite gladly embraced him as Rāma's
devoted friend (my underlining) (Hill, 206).

Again, the Śūdra had proclaimed his inequality and then was embraced, as the text makes explicit, in the context of Rāma's love.¹⁶

Hanumān and the low-born

A similar dual movement appeared when Hanumān met Rāma: "Hanumān recognized the Lord and fell and clasped his feet....Then Raghupati

¹⁵"Kavi alakhit gati" is also tentatively translated as "one who was a poet who wished to remain unidentified". Hill says "It is impossible to be certain what he means" by this phrase. See Hill, Holy Lake, p. 206, n.1.

¹⁶Dr. Ambedkar (1892-1956), the great Śūdra leader, expresses Tulsīdās' approach to the varṇa system when he writes of the Hindu saints: "The saints have never according to my study carried on a campaign against Caste and Untouchability. They were not concerned with the struggle between men. They were concerned with the relation between men and God. They did not preach all men were equal. They preached that all men were equal in the eyes of God--a very different and innocuous proposition which nobody can find difficult to preach or dangerous to believe in". See Annihilation of Caste, with a reply to Mahatma Gandhi, reprinted (Jullundur (Punjab): Bheem Patrika Publications, 1971), pp. 127-128.

raised him and clasped him to his breast" (Hill, 325). Hanumān admitted his inferiority before Bharat as well, being embraced by Bharat but falling down at his feet (Hill, 432). This parallel in the structuring of Hanumān's and the Śūdra's contacts with persons of high caste is not the only point of similarity between Hanumān and the low-caste group. The food of the monkeys and the Śūdras is similar. The Kols and Kirāts who met Rāma as he entered the forest offered him gifts of "bulbs and roots and fruit" (Hill, 216). As Hanumān prepared to jump to Lañkā at the beginning of the Sundara kāṇḍa he advised his brother monkeys to eat "bulbs and roots and fruit" (Hill, 339). However, the major parallel between the monkeys and the low-born group is the function they perform in relation to Rāma-- Their very lowliness gives glory to him and his Name. I have demonstrated this for the monkeys and Hanumān in the section Monkey glorify the Lord in Chapter III. In the RCM Tulsīdās notes that, "Cāṇḍāls, Śavaras, Khaśas, Yavanas, Kols, and Kirāts, ignorant and base though they be, by uttering the Name of Rāma become wholly pure and renowned throughout the world.... Thus did the gods declare the greatness of the Name of Rāma...." (Hill, 239-240). A like point is made in a more intimate tone in the Vinayapatrikā when Tulsīdās asks:

What master overcome by affection made friends
with bird, demon, monkey, aboriginal Bhīl or
bear? (VP., 189).

A similar list including outcaste and monkey together explains the possibility of the lowly raised high as the Lord's play:

The stone, Guha, the vulture, the monkey, the
Bhīl, the bear the demon,
In mere sport, O Compassionate, did you both
deliver and make them deliverers (VP., 244).

Such joining together of the lowly as witnesses to the glory of Rāma is often repeated by Tulsīdās. Thus he writes in the Kavitāvalī:

"He gave Shabari the outcaste and vulture his own world, and he established the monkey, as is known to all" (Kav., 135). In the same work the theme of "service" is emphasized for all these lowly beings:

Monkey, boatman, bear, bird or demon,
whichever one you cared for
Master, that very one
at once became of service (Kav., 136).

My conclusion is that Tulsīdās links Hanumān and the Śūdras together.

Transition: Hanumān within and without

Though Hanumān can be classed as a "low-born" Śūdra, he can also be considered a Kṣatriya (Warrior) or a Brāhman. With all the violence of Hanumān against the demons he has to be admitted to the status of warrior. In addition, Tulsīdās, taking up a theme of Vālmīki, in a number of places makes explicit reference to Hanumān as a Brāhman: Hanumān takes on the form of a Brāhman when he first meets Rāma (Hill, 324), when he approaches Vibhīṣan in Laṅkā (Hill, 342) and when he comes to Bharat with the news of Rāma's imminent return to Avadh (Hill, 429). Hanumān also calls on fire in uniting Rāma and Sugrīva as allies; he functions as Sugrīva's messenger; he is the prime intermediary between the god Rāma and others including Rāma's brothers and the demons--all of which functions would be those of a Brāhman.

Hanumān's warrior and priestly activities do not exclude the possibility Tulsīdās is using Hanumān as a model for the Śūdras. However, Hanumān is much more than the ideal of the "low-born". There is no pinning Hanumān to one role. He is Brāhman, Ksatriya and Śūdra; he is saint and there are the hints of his demonic connections. Yet he has his own identity. This can be expressed negatively in that

Hanumān does not have the identity of Rāma; he is not the Lord playing at being man. No one falls prostrate in adoration at Hanumān's feet. Positively speaking, Hanumān is both Brāhman and Śūdra and something less than and more than both. He is within and without any identity given him. Yet his roles in Tulsīdās works often relate to the hierarchical ordering of society.

Symbolic function: Hanumān as the Holi of the Hindu Pantheon

I think that Hanumān functions to purify hierarchical relationships. In Tulsīdās' works there is not only the masking of hierarchy in the embrace of Hindus of different caste who are encompassed by the love of Rāma, there is also an inversion of the hierarchical ordering by means of a reversal of status between the high-born and low-born. Victor Turner claims that periodic rituals in which "status reversal" occurs are typical of "hierarchical societies".¹⁷ In this context it is relevant to consider the festival of Holi, called by some "the festival of the Śūdras".¹⁸ Holi festivities in India today occasion not only a suspension of caste norms with superiors and inferiors showing great affection but, at times, an actual inversion of the caste structure. Holi is a festival in which those in a subordinate position can with relative impunity reverse the normal hierarchical relationship. The master must receive with grace the indignities the servant chooses to heap on him or her. Holi is, in Turner's words,

¹⁷Victor Turner, Dramas, Field and Metaphors, p. 275.

¹⁸Lawrence A. Babb, The Divine Hierarchy, p. 170.

...the stressing, not the overthrowing of the principle of hierarchy (i.e. of graded organisation), undoubtedly purified--even, paradoxically, by the breach of many Hindu pollution rules--through reversal, a process whereby it remains the structural vertebrae of village life.¹⁹

Holi can function to purify the hierarchical relationships of caste society. On the one hand, the master is mellowed in his arrogance by the reminder of the fragility of his position; on the other, the accumulated hostilities of the servant towards the master find an acceptable release. McKim Marriot, having participated in the festival, reflects:

Each actor playfully takes the role of others in relation to his usual self. Each may thereby learn to play his own routine roles afresh, surely with renewed understanding, possibly with greater grace, possibly with reciprocating love.²⁰

It is well to add that, "some times holi play carries overtones of genuine violence".²¹ The risk of moving beyond what is acceptable even in terms of the loosened strictures of the holi festival is always present.

I see a homology between the way holi functions in terms of the lived relations of a Hindu's year and the way Hanumān functions in the context of the Hindu pantheon. From one point of view, Hanumān, like the Śūdras, is for Tulsīdās both low-born and a servant. I note in passing that this conception of Hanumān is often seen in Indian paintings and iconography. The submissive aspect of Hanumān is most evident when he is depicted in company with Rāma.²² Yet the tradition about Hanumān

¹⁹Victor Turner, Ritual, p. 188.

²⁰Quoted in Babb, Hierarchy, p. 175.

²¹Babb, Hierarchy, p. 172.

²²As examples of this see Plates 33, 34 and 35 in K.C. Aryan, Hanumān in Art and Mythology (Delhi: Prakashan, n.d.).

consistently represents him as having a special control over Rāma. This is so in Vālmīki's Rāmāyaṇa when Rāma greets the returning Hanumān in the Yuddhakāṇḍa with the complaint that Hanumān has done so much that Rama is unable to repay him.²³ It is true in the RCM when Tulsīdās claims that "the Son of the Wind thought on that holy Name and made Rāma subject to himself" (Hill, 17). It is especially true in the Vinayapatrikā of Tulsīdās where we read statements like the following concerning Rāma that,

he became indebted through the service of the
monkey....(VP, 100:7)

the Son of Wind became such a servant, that
you--his master--go by what he says....(VP, 134:6)

I contend that Hanumān not only epitomizes the ideal submissive servant (Śūdra), but that he also denotes the purification of the hierarchical relationship in status reversal. At the same time, as with the holi festival, it must be said that the figure of Hanumān "carries overtones of genuine violence." The rationale of Hanumān's demonic connections within the overall symbolic scheme becomes more clear. In functioning to purify status relationships Hanumān also presents the possibility of a dangerous challenge to accepted structure. As Mary Douglas puts it,

...all margins are dangerous. If they are pulled
this way or that the shape of fundamental exper-
ience is altered. Any structure of ideas is
vulnerable at its margins.²⁴

Hanumān as the lowly monkey and Hanumān as the one in control of the god come to earth, Rāma, represents both the less than human, the

²³Vālmīki's Rāmāyaṇa translated by Shastri, Vol. III, p. 3.

²⁴Mary Douglas, Purity and Danger (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966), p. 121.

Śūdra, and the more than human, the Brāhman. I conclude that he is an apt model for the Śūdra--not that he subordinates the Śūdra to the Brāhman so much as purifies the hierarchical relationship, making it a spiritual bond.

Tulsīdās' Concern for the "Low-born"

The frequent references to the "low-born" with Hanumān among them and the affectionate encounters between high-caste and low-caste suggest that Tulsīdās had a special concern for the "low-born". One motivation for this "concern" could have been a desire on Tulsīdās' part to respond to the criticism directed against the belief in the inherited status of Brāhman and Śūdras. Even the discovery that Hanumān functions to purify the hierarchical relationship can be interpreted as an attempt to make the traditional roles attractive. I believe that a deeper reading of Tulsīdās' works reveals that this reactionary motivation was not his primary inspiration. I believe that Tulsīdās' concern for the "low-born" springs from Tulsīdās' personal and devotional insight. In order to explore my belief I will have to treat with both Tulsīdās' personal spiritual history and the on-going history of devotion which was the given context that Tulsīdās entered and influenced.

I think that Tulsīdās' spiritual experience resonated with certain themes of devotion that were available to him. I believe that he became personally very aware of the bond of devotion that joins master and servant. In articulating his awareness he created the image of a society in which one might say holi happened every day. In other words, the ideal master-servant relationship for Tulsīdās was the one that Hanumān experienced with Rāma.

The late medieval Hindu poets were inspired by the deeply felt emotional experience of a personal relationship with god (prema bhakti). Though Tulsīdās could write in the Advaitic monist spirit that "there is no difference between the saint and the blessed Lord" (VP 57.9), his primary concern was with the relationship (nātā) [bonds] and its characteristic emotion (rasa) that led to the state of union. Sūrdās, senior to Tulsīdās by forty or fifty years, wrote that "whether through passion, anger, love or friendship, if a man thinks of God constantly, he becomes God".²⁵ Like Sūrdās, Tulsīdās admits that many bonds (nātā) can exist between the devotee and the Lord. He has written in the RCM:

To whom, dear Lord, you are master and friend,
father, mother and guru, all these dwell in
the temple of their hearts..." (Hill, p. 214).

However, there is one bond, that between master and servant, to which Tulsīdās gives highest place. In doing so, Tulsīdās shows that his primary allegiance is with the Rāmaite stream of Vaiṣṇavite devotion.

Medieval Vaiṣṇavism can be roughly divided between the worshippers of Kṛṣṇa and the worshippers of Rāma. The Kṛṣṇaites were represented by such saints as Jāyadeva, Caitanya, Vallabhācārya and Sūrdās; they emphasized the relationship of lover to beloved, Kṛṣṇa to the gopī Rādha and they sang their praises to Kṛṣṇa in the tones of the śṛṅgāra rasa (erotic sentiment). In contrast, the worshippers of Rāma emphasized the master-servant bond and the dāśya rasa (servile sentiment) which characterized it. Hanumān of Vālmīki's Rāmāyaṇa was an apt vehicle for Tulsīdās' commitment to the Rāmaite stream of devotion. I contend that this was particularly true of Tulsīdās because

²⁵Ainslee T. Embree, ed., The Hindu Tradition (New York: Vintage Books, 1972), p. 254.

Hanumān as seen in the Rāmāyaṇa could handle some of the major conflicts in Tulsīdās' own life. For Hanumān in the Rāmāyaṇa has both brāhman qualities and the qualities of a low-born monkey. I suggest that a major conflict for Tulsīdās was between his brāhman roots and his sectarian commitment to the predominantly low-caste Rāmanāndis. P. C. Bagchi has written:

The followers of Rāmanānda were all non-Brahmins and it was probably through the activities of Tulasīdāsa that the Rām cult was introduced amongst the Brahmins.²⁶

The fact that Tulsīdās derived much from the Adhyātmārāmāyaṇa for his RCM suggests that he might have belonged to an orthodox section of Rāmaite teachers. The Adhyātmārāmāyaṇa has "the appearance of a canonical text"²⁷ and was perhaps designed by orthodox teachers of the Rāmaite group to bring Rāma worship to the Brāhmins.

Tulsīdās' Personal Spiritual History

Having given some indication of the nature of the public devotional context that Tulsīdās entered I want to turn now to his personal spiritual history. The Vinayapatrikā will be my prime source though I will also enlist the aid of the Kavitāvalī. As G. A. Grierson has characterized it, the Vinayapatrikā is,

...one of the most important works of the poet, in which his most intimate feelings towards the Deity and that Deity's relation towards the human

²⁶ Bagchi, Studies, p. 7.

²⁷ Bagchi, Studies, p. 8.

soul are displayed with a freedom from reticence
and poetic fervour that have rarely been equalled.²⁸

The Vinayapatrikā has a three-fold structure in that its 279 hymns are subdivided into the "Prologue" with 64 hymns of praise (stutī), the central petition to Rām with 211 hymns and the "Epilogue" with 3 hymns. In the "Prologue" the largest section of hymns of praise are addressed to Hanumān (12 hymns). Hymn numbers 32, 33, 34 and 35 are, in my judgment, the most open and personal of any in the Vinayapatrikā although there are verses in the Śiva praises that approach these in devotional fervour. Hymn 32 begins by acclaiming Rāma and Hanumān: "There is no other master like to Rām, nor intermediary like to you" (VP 32:1) and very quickly it becomes a cry of distress and then complaint. In "enigmatical language" (saṅdhā bhāṣā)²⁹ Tulsīdās addresses Hanumān:

Yet while you guardian-like watch over me, I
as some lions spawn would be swallowed by a frog,
It seems to me as if the Dark Age has bewitched the many
virtues of your mind (VP 32:2).

The Dark Age is seemingly the frog, the guardian lion, Hanumān, and Tulsīdās the lion's cub (spawn). Tulsīdās manifests a personal ease with Hanumān that I have not seen evidence of him showing with any other deity except Śiva. Tulsīdās is in trouble and angrily he chides Hanumān in what amounts to a taunt:

Once, hearing your bellows, Ten-head's [Ravana's]
joints grew slack, Where has that prowess now gone,
have you now grown proud? (VP 32:3).

²⁸G. A. Grierson, "Tulasī Dāsa" in Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, edited by James Hastings, Vol. XII (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons), p. 471.

²⁹This style of language is used by Kabīr. See Kabīr's Bījak trs. Ahmad Shah, p. 119. See also S. B. Dasgupta's Obscure Religious Cults, 2nd edition (Calcutta, 1962), pp. 413-414.

In hymn 33 Tulsīdās continues in this very personal tone and his words suggest that there may have been a special event in which Hanumān took Tulsīdās as his servant:

For what deeds of mine did you first take me
for your servant and respect me
And having made me your own for what fault or
sin have you now cast me out?
Taking your name I begged for scraps and ate
them,
Your strength until today has made me famous
in the world and given me life (VP 33:3-4).³⁰

As is indicated in this quotation Tulsīdās has apparently known the life of a low-born person, having to beg "for scraps" for his food. Perhaps this gave him a special affection for the humble monkey brought high in Rāma's favour. In one of the last hymns of the central petition to Rām Tulsīdās speaks of his troubles as originating at birth: "Just as a wretched insect, so did my mother and father give birth to my body and then cast it away..." (VP 275:2). Allchin accepts this as reference to Tulsīdās' birth to a Brāhman couple and his subsequent abandonment by them.³¹ The words of some holy men, apparently Rāmaites, converted his grief over his abandoned state into "content":

Seeing me afflicted some holy-men said,
'Grieve not in your heart,
The animals were even more perverse and
sinful, yet Ram did not abandon them,
For if any seek his shelter, he cares for
him till the end:
When Tulsī became yours, he became content....
(VP 275:3-4).

³⁰Allchin, *Petition*, pp. 31-32. The portions underlined in this quotation and future quotations from this text are those of the translator. They indicate a gloss which departs from the original text in order to convey the meaning that the poet intended.

³¹Allchin, *Petition*, p. 267.

This was, I suggest, the moment of his conversion and became the source for his concern for the low-born. In the Kavitāvalī, there are lines that suggest a similar sequence of grief at ill-fate and conversion to Rām on hearing of Rām's mercy to animals--here, specifically "monkeys":

Now Tulsī is the servant of Shrī Rām, this is easy to see and quite unnecessary to relate, For such a one could never have become such, had he not sung the praises of him who provided for the monkeys.

His father and mother brought him into the world and abandoned him, Destiny had written nothing good upon his forehead, He was low, a vessel for disrespect, a coward who was glad to get even the scraps thrown out for dogs;

↔-Then Tulsī heard of the nature of Rām and but once poured out his heart to the Lord; And such a master as Raghunāth left nothing lacking for my personal and highest good (Kav., p. 152).

The above passages lead me to conclude that when Tulsīdās speaks of the master-servant relationship he is not speaking as a Brāhman consciously attempting to maintain the hierarchical status quo. Rather, he is attempting to communicate the "content" that was brought into his life when he grasped that though he was himself socially ostracized, poor and rejected, the Lord Rāma loved him. As I suggested above, the example of low-born monkeys brought into Rām's favour was the concrete, specific occasion of Tulsīdās' conversion. It is not surprising that Tulsīdās feels that there is no other "intermediary" like Hanumān. Nor is it strange that Tulsīdās relates to the deity Hanumān in terms of the dāśya rasa--Hanumān is the master and Tulsīdās, the servant. But between Hanumān and Tulsīdās the dāśya rasa is a rasa of refined sentiment, not of fear but of love. Tulsīdās says to Hanumān in hymn 35:

When hard times come then one speaks bitter words,
 but a good master hearing them understands,
 And from his own goodness sets the wrong aright
 (VP 35:1).

In the purified master-servant relationship the master has responsibilities to the servant. He must listen to and understand even the complaints of the servant. Then he must act for the servant, not even debating whether the servant merits help. Tulsīdās addresses Hanumān in this vein saying:

But when you have given anyone assurance of
 your protection,
 Then nurture him in the manner of a servant,
 though he be of no service (VP 35:4).

The special control that Hanumān has over Rāma by being his servant Tulsīdās has over Hanumān by being his servant. Yet Tulsīdās realizes that the servant must be a true servant. There is a suggestion that Tulsīdās attributes the misfortunes that occasion his writing of the Petition to Ram (Vinayapatrikā) to his own failure to be a servant. In VP 32:3 we saw above that Tulsīdās questions Hanumān's seeming impotence-- "have you now grown proud?" (VP 32:3). If Hanumān had truly grown proud, this would have made him no longer Rāma's servant and an ineffective "intermediary". The last hymn of the series in which Tulsīdās very personally addresses Hanumān reveals a chastened Tulsīdās who has insight into the obstacle that his own pride could be. In that moment of insight Tulsīdās throws himself at the mercy of the deity Hanumān. He says:

Fickleness and deceit are mine, but you are
 great goodness,
 From being respected I have become presumptuous
 for I am very base in baseness (VP 35:5).

The perennial question

I suspect that Tulsīdās had to encounter much the same questions about Śūdras and the caste system as two great Indian leaders of recent times, Mahātmā Gandhi and Dr. Ambedkar. Dr. Ambedkar, having struggled with his status as a Śūdra and a Hindu for most of his life finally decided that he would have to abandon his Hindu commitment. He explained:

The Hindus hold to the sacredness of the social order. Caste has a divine basis. You must therefore destroy the sacredness and divinity with which caste has become invested. In the last analysis, this means you must destroy the authority of the Shastras and the Vedas.³²

Gandhi made another choice much in line with that of Tulsīdās. He chose to abide by the Hindu scriptures, purging them of many derogatory references to Śūdras yet still accepting the basic principle that Hindus are born to inherited callings. He writes:

The law of Varṇa teaches us that we have each one of us to earn our bread by following the ancestral calling.³³

At the same time, Gandhi showed special concern for Śūdras, cleaning latrines to demonstrate that, in his understanding, traditional Śūdra occupations do not cut one off from human society. Dr. Ambedkar was skeptical of the effect Gandhi's behaviour would have for,

...the masses have been taught that a saint might break caste but the common man must not. A saint therefore never became an example to follow. He always remained a pious man to be

³² Ambédkar, Annihilation, p. 93.

³³ From a letter in the Harijan, July 18, 1936 quoted by Dr. Ambedkar. Annihilation, p. 119.

honoured. That the masses have remained staunch believers in Caste and Untouchability shows that the pious lives and noble sermons of the saints have had no effect on the life and conduct as against the teachings of the Shāstras.³⁴

Like Gāndhi, Tulsīdās asserted that the Śūdras were born to their lowly tasks yet he did not scorn them. Rather, his work manifested special concern for them. This concern resulted in the encompassment of caste norms in the love of Rāma and an attempt to purify caste relationships. Yet the concern of a Brāhman for a Śūdra is not the concern of a Śūdra for himself and his fellows. Tulsīdās's works were not written to protest the oppression of Śūdras. They appear to me to be the works of a Brāhman with a special sensitivity to the "low-born". This Brāhman was attempting to communicate the value of a certain relationship to god in which caste inequality is made as attractive as possible. Hanumān is both a vehicle for this dogma and himself--much more than that.

³⁴ Ambedkar, Annihilation, p. 128.

CHAPTER V
HANUMĀN'S DUAL CHARACTER

As I have noted in Chapter III, the RCM subordinates the figure of Hanumān to that of Rāma. Perhaps as a result, the ambivalent structuring of Hanumān's character which is part of the Rāmāyana conception of him finds minimal expression in the RCM. That is not to say that the dual character is totally absent from this work. Certainly the fact that Hanumān takes on the form of a Brāhman¹ expresses one side of the duality while his violence against the demons as well as his demonic connections express his other side. However, neither the dual character of Hanumān nor the violent aspect of his duality is emphasized by the RCM. Rather, Rāma's glory takes the fore as he raises the lowly monkey high in his service. Since Tulsīdās' depiction of Hanumān differs so much from that of Vālmīki, it occurred to me that I might have misread Vālmīki's Rāmāyana and laid too much stress on the ambivalent and violent qualities of Hanumān as he is revealed in that work. But further reading in two later works of Tulsīdās, the Vinayapatrikā and the Kavitāvalī, suggested to me that Tulsīdās would agree with my understanding of Hanumān. For in the Vinayapatrikā Hanumān is identified with the ambivalent god Śiva. Whereas the Kavitāvalī continues to identify Hanumān with Śiva but emphasizes the destructive side of Hanumān's dual character.

¹Whenever Hanumān wants to disguise himself he takes on the form of a Brāhman: for example, when he first goes to meet Rāma (Hill, 324) or when he meets Vibhīṣan in Laṅkā (Hill, 342) and when he comes to Bharat with the news of Rāma's imminent return to Avadh (Hill, 429).

In this present chapter I will consider Tulsīdās' devotion to Śiva in the RCM. I will speculate on how it was possible for Tulsīdās, the devotee of Rāma, to manifest devotion to Śiva. Moving from the RCM to the Vinayapatrikā and Kavitāvalī I will illustrate how the ambivalent and violent character of Hanumān shows itself in connection with the ambiguous figure of Śiva. In addition, I will put forward some evidence that suggests that Hanumān's character has been understood as related to both Śiva and Viṣṇu since late Vedic times. From this evidence of Hanumān's dual identification with Viṣṇu and Śiva I will draw a conclusion on the source of the persistence of Hanumān as an ambiguous figure.

Śiva in the Rāmacaritamānasa

There is one very important divine being noted for his highly ambivalent character, alternately peaceful and destructive, who figures significantly in the RCM--this is the god Śiva. In the RCM, Śiva tells the story of Rāma's adventures to his wife Pārvatī. As well, a large part of the Bālakāṇḍa is given over to the account of Siva's abandonment of Satī, his destruction of Kāmadeva, the god of love, and his marriage to Pārvatī. At points in the RCM Śiva is addressed with titles that a Vaiṣṇavite would not apply to anyone except Viṣṇu or his avatārs--for example, the titles Bhagavān and Cidānanda. Rāma even set up a liṅga to Śiva at Rāmeśvara. Indeed, there are many references to Rāma's love for Śiva and Rāma has said that "no man can win faith in me who fails to worship Śaṅkara [Śiva]!" (Hill, 454).²

²The matter for the preceding paragraph is taken from the introduction (pp. xxv-xxvii) of the Holy Lake of the Acts of Rāma, A Translation of Tulasī Dās's Rāmacaritamānasa by W. Douglas P. Hill (Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1952, 1971).

In the RCM, Rāma's affection for Śiva and the references in the text to Śiva as "compassionate" and "friend of the humble" (Hill, 2, 12, 431) point to the possibility of connections between Śiva and Hanumān, for who is humble if not Hanumān. Also, the circumstances surrounding Hanumān's identification with demons³ can suggest a relationship with Śiva. This is so especially in the instance of the illusory Hanumāns created by Rāvana to attack Rāma, since "vampires, ghosts and goblins" (Hill, 417) often associated with Śiva there join Hanumān. Certainly, Śiva in the RCM has a dual aspect as, on the one hand, he is the calm ascetic and on the other hand, he is the destroyer whose wild features and companions frighten the children at his wedding with Pārvatī (Hill, 48).⁴ In all this, however, there are no explicitly stated connections between Śiva and Hanumān and Hanumān is not identified with Śiva.

One might wonder why the Vaiṣṇavite Tulsīdās gives Śiva such an important part in the RCM, the story of the adventures of Viṣṇu's avatār, Rāma. A comment of Jan Gonda on the common practice among Hindu poets and mystics might apply here. He writes that, though the philosophers of Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism were strict on doctrine,

poets, mystics and other exponents of more emotional forms of religion, are,...inclined to neglect, notwithstanding their allegiance to either god, doctrinal distinctions and ritual

³For instances of Hanumān's demonic connections see Chapter III of this project report, the section entitled Demon glorify the Lord.

⁴The children report to their parents: "What can we say? It's unspeakable: Is this a marriage-procession or the army of the god of death? The bridegroom is a maniac, riding on a bull; serpents and skulls and ashes are his ornaments!...he's naked, with matted hair--a fearful sight: With him are ghosts and spirits and goblins and witches and demons, hideous to behold!" (Hill, 48).

differences and to emphasize the attainment of ultimate Oneness into which not only all human but also all divine persons may ultimately merge.⁵

The RCM even opens with a prayer to Śiva and his consort:

Homage to Bhāvanī and Śaṅkara [Śiva],
Faith and Trust in person, apart from whom adepts
see not the Lord who dwells within them! (Hill, 1).

Perhaps Tulsīdās' natural tendency as a devotional Hindu mystic was the source of his enthusiastic attention to Śiva. In addition, there is a possible historical motivation for Śiva's inclusion in the RCM. This stems from the likelihood that after Tulsīdās finished the Āraṇyakāṇḍa of the RCM he moved from Ayodhya to Benares.⁶ Tulsīdās' philosophical and devotional syntheses in the RCM indicate he was a man who was able to compromise. For a Vaiṣṇava to live in the city of Benares this quality was a necessity. Gonda explains that,

in Benares, where Śiva is the presiding deity and all the principal temples are dedicated to him, his supremacy is also acknowledged by those Hindus for whom he is not the Highest Being, but no more than Viṣṇu's servant. This anomaly is accounted for by the belief that Viṣṇu-Rāma, gratified by Śiva's religious behaviour--for thousands of aeons the god used to mutter Rāma's mantra--had granted him the privilege to effect the final emancipation of everybody who dies in his sacred district at Benares.⁷

Apparently, Tulsīdās was working with at least this motivation when he

⁵Jan Gonda, Viṣṇuism and Śivaism A Comparison (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1976), p. 108.

⁶See Hill, Holy Lake, p. x. "He...returned to Kasi, after completing the Āraṇyakāṇḍa and lived there until his death...."

⁷Gonda, Viṣṇuism and Śivaism, pp. 101-102.

acknowledged Śiva. Thus the Kiṣkindhakāṇḍa, following on the Āranyakāṇḍa and presumably following on Tulsīdās' arrival in Benares [Kāśī], begins:

How can that Kāśī not be revered where
Śambhu [Śiva] and Bhāvanī dwell, as liberation's
motherland, source of all wisdom, abolisher of
sin?

and immediately continues:

Do you not worship him, O foolish soul, who
drank the deadly poison from whose burning
potency the whole host of heaven was suffering?
Who is so merciful as Śaṅkara? (Hill, 324).

Hanumān's dual character in the Vinayapatrikā

The Vinayapatrikā (The Petition to Ram), from the middle period of Tulsīdās' stay in Benares,⁸ identifies Hanumān with Śiva. Significantly, the duality of Hanumān's character formerly seen in Vālmīki's Rāmāyaṇa, but almost absent from the RCM, returns in an emphatic way. Perhaps it was that as his time in Benares grew longer, Tulsīdās' appreciation for the ambivalent figure of Śiva increased. Allowing for the fact that the form of the Vinayapatrikā, composed of individual hymns, permits much freedom of expression, still Tulsīdās' prayers to Śiva seem exceptionally personal; I believe that they are matched in their quality of intimacy only by the hymns addressed to Hanumān. At one point Tulsīdās cries out in heart-felt complaint to Śiva:

Why do you not melt for this wretched one, O
Lord of Uma,
Mine of compassion and dispeller of terrible
calamity?
The Vedas and Purāṇas tell that Hara is bounteous,
Yet in my case why have you become so miserly?
(VP 7:1-2).

⁸Perhaps sometime between 1586 and 1613 A.D. See Allchin, Petition, p. 37.

In the above passage it is evident that Tulsīdās feels close enough to the god to criticize him, the compassionate god who can avert "terrible calamity". A stanza following closely on the one above reminds us that Tulsīdās was conscious of Śiva's position in the city of Benares. Thus, he says:

Dwelling in your city, O Vāmadeva, I have never
made requests till now,
Yet at this time I am tormented by material
tribulations caused by your servants (VP 8:3).

This reference to the "servants" of Śiva indicates that Tulsīdās' reason for sending a "petition to Ram" (Vinayapatrikā) was connected with some harassment he was receiving from Śaivites. There is a tradition that specifies this conflict as one with the Śaivite Brāhmins of Benares.⁹ The outcome of this conflict, as the tradition has it, was to demonstrate to the Brāhmins that Śiva was supporting Tulsīdās fully. The implication for me is that Tulsīdās was a sincere enough devotee of Śiva to convince the most demanding of Śaivites in Benares.

The important thing about the Vinayapatrikā for this consideration of Hanumān's dual character is that in it Tulsīdās explicitly and emphatically identifies Hanumān with Śiva. Hanumān is hailed as "Rudra incarnate" (VP, 25) and "first among the Rudras" (VP 27:3). In commenting on this identification, F. R. Allchin makes reference to the present-day Vaiṣṇavite, Viyogi Hari, who says that Hanumān is sometimes called the eleventh Rudra. The story goes that at one time Śiva asked to become the servant of Rāma. Rāma agreed and eventually Śiva took the form of Hanumān.¹⁰ However, except for references to Hanumān

⁹ Allchin, Petition, pp. 39-40.

¹⁰ Allchin, Petition, p. 266.

as "skull-bearing Śīva" (VP 26:1), "Purāri's [Śīva's] form manifest in monkey guise (VP 27:1) and the use of the title "Vāmadeva" (VP 28:5)¹¹ for both Śīva and Hanumān, the demonic and destructive qualities of Hanumān's dual character are not emphasized in the Vinayapatrikā.

Nonetheless, the Hanumān of the Vinayapatrikā is distinctly of dual character. One side of the duality is indicated by Hanumān's special connection with demonic powers as their controller,¹² the other side by his brāhman-like dedication to Vedic literature, to grammar and Vedānta. That Tulsīdās wants to point out the duality is clear from the way in which successive stanzas alternate between aspects. For example, Hanumān is addressed:

Hail, grasper of the enemy's guiles of Shākinīs,
Dakinīs, Putanās, ghosts...the controller:
Hail, learned in Vedānta, skilled in varied wisdom,
knower of the Vedas and Vedāngas, exponent of the
Brahma...(VP 26:7-8).

A similar passage reads:

Hail...
Queller of agricultural calamities, great fear,
ill-planets, spirits, thieves, fire, disease,
great epidemics and afflictions:
Hail, commentator on the scriptures, the Vedas,
the grammars and the ocean of paleography, the
wonders of poetry and many arts (VP 28:4-5).

It is as though Hanumān belonged to the worlds both of the Śūdra

¹¹Allchin informs us that although Vāmadeva, a name for Śīva, can mean "beautiful", "by Tulsī's time a second meaning of Sinister was also frequently implicit, from the use of vama, left-handed...." Petition, p. 320.

¹²This function of Hanumān as "controller" of demonic powers connects him with Śīva. Jan Gonda tells us that one of the names of Śīva in the epics is Bhūtapati, "the lord of divine and demoniac beings of lower rank". See Viṣṇuism and Śivaism, p. 14.

Baiga,¹³ with his facility in dealing with pragmatic concerns, and of the Brāhman priest with his formal knowledge of scriptural lore. The figure of Hanumān developed here is clearly related to both the traditions of localized ghosts and demons and the textual tradition with its Vedic roots and philosophic emphasis.

Hanumān and his destructive aspect in the Kavitāvalī

The Kavitāvalī, a work believed to be from the last part of Tulsīdās life,¹⁴ associates Hanumān with Śiva. The first half of the Kavitāvalī is a series of disconnected scenes from the story of Rāma. It appears as though Tulsīdās was developing individual scenes that he particularly enjoyed. It is notable that the figure of Hanumān is prominent in these passages. He is repeatedly called "Tulsī's Hero" (Kav., p. 123 and so on) and he takes on an independence that he did not have in the RCM. A good amount of the development of his character in this work is in connection with Śiva in Śiva's destructive aspect. Thus the "passion shunning Son of Wind" (Kav., p. 93) is in the burning of Laṅkā described as "terrible as death" (Kav., p. 94). It is said that "in horridness he passes Death" (Kav., p. 96) and that he "appeared

¹³ Lawrence Babb tells us that the Baiga is a kind of priest-exorcist or sorcerer who must never come from the twice-born castes. Babb writes: "If the Brāhman priest is the mediator between man and the highest deities, the Baiga's main concern is with the lower regions of the pantheon. It is the local deities who warn him of impending trouble, and it is he who has a special responsibility for their worship". See pp. 207-208 in Divine Hierarchy.

¹⁴ The Kavitāvalī was probably composed between 1611 and 1623 A.D. See Allchin, Kavitāvalī, p. 63.

even as death itself to death" (Kav., p. 121). Hanumān, like Śiva,¹⁵ is associated with cemeteries:

The courageous Son of the Wind
O'er leapt the oceans,
Saw Lañkā as a holy spot
and all night kept vigil in the cemetery
(Kav., p. 105).

Moreover, on the battlefield while Hanumān was destroying the demons who were calling out "spare us, O Tulsi's hero" (Kav., p. 123), "Hara [Śiva] and his hosts of sprites were gleeful and broke into laughter" (Kav., p. 123). As a final instance of Hanumān and Śiva's affinity in destruction there are the verses which, after describing in graphic detail the battlefield that Hanumān has littered with bloody corpses, note that,

...with ghouls
and phantoms for his company, Shiva
--the lord of ghosts--joined hands
with them and seeing all chuckled (Kav., p. 127).

Rudra-Śiva and Hanumān: some connections

Moving away from Tulsīdās' writings I wish to propose a possible source for the ambiguity of the figure of Hanumān. That source is his strong ties with the two very different gods, Viṣṇu and Śiva. Though Hanumān gets his status as a messenger, scholar and so on from his relationship with Viṣṇu's avatār Rāma, he has significant roots in the Śaivite camp. There are features of Rudra-Siva in Vedic literature

¹⁵J. Estlin Carpenter, making reference to Mbh. vii, 203, 115 writes that Śiva "is the agent of destruction. Not only disease but also death is under his control; and among his favourite haunts are the cremation ground and the cemetery". See Theism in Medieval India (London: Williams and Norgate, 1921), p. 232.

that suggest a connection with Hanumān. Rudra-Śīva is closely associated with animals as paśupati ("Lord of Beasts").¹⁶ He is an ambivalent figure--alternately gentle and destructive as at one moment he is cited as patron of cattle and at another as destroyer of animals.¹⁷ Rudra-Śīva possesses features that can be easily assimilated to the figure of Hanumān: he is clothed in skin, can avert evil because he is the cause of it and "forests, mountains and wilderness are the sphere of his destructive activities".¹⁸ I note also the description of Rudra in Rig-Veda II, 33:5, 8, 9 as susīpra, which Bhattacharji translates as "with well-formed jaw", and as babhru meaning "reddish brown in complexion". In later Vedic texts Śīva's "reddish" (rohita) complexion is emphasized.¹⁹ Jan Gonda characterizes Rudra-Śīva in this later material:

He houses in forests and jungles, in places where man falls a victim to fright and terror. He is the lord of wild animals, which is said to be a manifestation of his cruel nature (SB. 12, 7, 3, 20), and the patron of those who hold aloof from the Aryan society and its way of living.²⁰

From the Rig-Veda to the Brahma Purāṇa

Aryan society and those who held aloof from it came into contact and accommodations had to be made to one another. Perhaps one hymn of

¹⁶Sukumari Bhattacharji, The Indian Theogony, (Cambridge: University Press, 1970), pp. 112ff.

¹⁷Bhattacharji, Theogony, p. 114.

¹⁸Gonda, Viṣṇuism and Sivaism, p. 3.

¹⁹Bhattacharji, Theogony, p. 109.

²⁰Gonda, Viṣṇuism and Sivaism, p. 4.

the Rig-Veda (Hymn 86 in Book 10) which has a monkey-figure in it is evidence of such a process. Although this hymn has been variously interpreted with Keith terming its problems "plainly insoluble",²¹ Sukumari Bhattacharji confidently proposes that Vṛṣākapi²² is a non-Aryan deity being reluctantly acknowledged by the Vedic people.²³ As Bhattacharji reads the hymn, Vṛṣākapi is said to be a friend of Indra, yet is accused of stealing the oblation that Indra's spouse, Indrāṇī, should have received. Thus the monkey-figure, like Rudra-Śiva, is ambiguous--both friend and enemy. Although Vṛṣākapi's specific bond is with Indra, the Aryan god and solar divinity, Vṛṣākapi is in an uneasy relationship with Indra and has to be persuaded not to flee from Indrāṇī's wrath. Bhattacharji has interpreted this late Vedic hymn as evidence that the Aryans had entered into an alliance with non-Aryan proponents of a monkey-cult but not without a certain amount of resistance from within the Aryan ranks. Bhattacharji asserts the existence of a widespread non-Aryan monkey-cult which the Vedic Indians had to come to terms with and which persists in the present-day worship of Hanumān.

Whether or not Bhattacharji is correct in her understanding of the origin of Rig-Veda, Book 10, hymn 86, the spirit of her interpretation

²¹See Sadashiv Ambadas Dange, Vedic Concept of "Field and the Divine Fructification" (Bombay: University of Bombay, 1971), p. 49ff. Claiming to have found the key to the hymn, Dange interprets the hymn as a sex fertility ritual.

²²K. F. Geldner says of Vṛṣākapi: "Name eines Affen...." See Der Rig Veda (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951), p. 140.

²³Bhattacharji, Theogony, pp. 276-277.

is consistent with a fable in chapter 129 of the Brahma Purāṇa that is similar in some textual details to the Rig Veda hymn.²⁴ F. E. Pargiter has called attention to this fable in a section of the Brahma Purāṇa eulogizing the river Godavarī (see Chapters 77-175). The fable concerns a tirtha (holy spot, confluence of rivers, river crossing) which "had the names Mārjāra, Hanūmata, Vṛṣākapa and Abjakā".²⁵

In verse 11 and following of chapter 129 it is said that Hiranya, first-born of the Daityas, had a son, Mahāśani, who overcame Indra and kept him captive. Indra sought help, and a man, Abjakā Vṛṣākapa, (who Pargiter suggests is connected with Hanumān) was born from the water at the confluence of the Godavarī and Phenā. The text says that this

²⁴ Summarizing the fable from the Brahma Purāṇa Pargiter writes: "He became Indra's friend; he was Abjakā Vṛṣākapi. And Indra, although dwelling in the sky, follows Vṛṣākapi. Seeing him devoted (āsakta) to the other, Śacī was enraged at his affection (praṇaya), and Śata-manyu (Indra) soothing her laughingly spoke thus (verses 97-100):-- 'I am not a protection, O Indraṇī, without my friend Vṛṣākapi, whose water or oblation always gives pleasure to Agni.'" Pargiter indicates that the verse quoted from the Brahma Purāṇa is almost word for word with the twelfth verse of the Rig Veda hymn. See F. E. Pargiter, "Suggestions Regarding RV X, 86", J.R.A.S., 1911, pp. 803ff.

²⁵ Pargiter tells us that there is a fable in chapter 84 of the Brahma Purāṇa that speaks of "one Keśarin" who had two wives, Añjanā with a monkey's face and Adrikā with the face of a cat (marjāra). Both wives were actually apsarases under a curse. Añjanā had a son named Hanumat from Vāyu. Hanumat delivered Adrikā from her curse by taking her to this same tirtha, "which tirtha thus gained the names Mārjāra, Hanumat and Vṛṣākapi". Pargiter continues: "The point to be noticed in this fable is this, that, although nothing is said about Vṛṣākapi in it, yet this tirtha at the confluence of the Godavarī and Phenā, where Hanumat took the cat-headed Adrikā, obtained in consequence not only the names Mārjāra and Hanumat (or rather Hanūmata as in chapter 129.1) but also that of Vṛṣākapi (or rather Vṛṣākapa) ... There would appear, therefore, to have been some connection between Hanumat and Vṛṣākapi". See Pargiter, Suggestions, pp. 806-808.

Abjakā Vṛṣākapa "had the nature of Śiva and Viṣṇu".²⁶ This comment made in passing in the text perhaps witnesses to an early evaluation of the character of Hanumān similar to that which I am proposing. Hanumān has the nature of Śiva and Viṣṇu.

Hanumān and Śiva in the Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki

In Vālmīki's Rāmāyaṇa, Hanumān is explicitly related to Viṣṇu through service to Rāma. However, aside from the implications that one might draw from Hanumān's ambivalent character, his violent aspect and the parallels between his destruction of Laṅkā and Śiva's destruction of Tripura, there are only a few tentative connections between Hanumān and Śiva in the Rāmāyaṇa. Bhattacharji informs us that all the gods which are included in what she terms "the Śiva group"²⁷ have ape sons: "Varuṇa (Hemakūṭa and Ṛṣabha), Yama (Sumukha and Durmukha), Vāyu (Hanūmat)...Agni also has ape-sons, Nīla...and Saṃnādana..."²⁸ She also mentions that Rudra-Śiva was accustomed to give his devotees weapons while in the Rāmāyaṇa Śiva gave Hanumān invulnerability from

²⁶Pargiter, Suggestions, p. 804.

²⁷Bhattacharji tells us that from the Brāhmaṇas onwards "certain gods are spoken of as guardians of certain quarters" but that Indra and the solar gods rule only one quarter. "The seven other quarters are connected with gods who are associated with death, destruction and decay". Following Śaunaka's suggestion that the gods are to be praised "by their name, form, actions and (together with their friends)" she terms the gods of the seven quarters "the Śiva group". Each of these gods in some manner or other has contributed traits related to the predominant figure of Śiva, the sectarian god. See Theogony, pp. 7-8.

²⁸Bhattacharji, Indian Theogony, p. 193.

him and his weapons.²⁹ A final possible identification of Hanumān with Śiva that I will mention is the fact that Nandin, the associate (vehicle) of Śiva, is described in the Rāmāyaṇa as vānararūpa, that is, as "monkey-faced".³⁰ Nandin is sometimes interpreted as the theriomorphic form of Śiva, usually Śiva in the form of a bull.³¹ Have we here "monkey-faced" Nandin or is it simply Śiva in the form of a monkey?

Hanumān's dual identification as seen in the arts

Not only literature but also paintings, murals and iconography such as those in K. C. Aryan's book Hanumān in Art clearly express the dual identification of Hanumān. The frequent depiction of Hanumān with five heads is the motif I wish to comment on. The idea of the five-headed representation is of Śaivite origin. The tradition of the five faces of Śiva, Sadāśiva,³² is firmly established and likely goes

²⁹Bhattacharji, Theogony, p. 118.

³⁰Shastri, trs., Rāmāyaṇa, Book III, p. 418.

³¹J. N. Banerjea, Religion in Art and Archeology (Lucknow: University of Lucknow, 1968), p. 45.

³²C. Śivarāmamurti describes Sadāśiva and a parallel depiction of Viṣṇu: "The multi-faced form of Śiva is known as Sadāśiva. In this aspect he has five faces known as Īśāna, Tatpurusha, Aghora, Sadyojatā (sic) and Vāmadeva. This concept of Śiva is to emphasize the all-pervasive nature of Śiva. He has ten arms to correspond to his five faces. An excellent representation of Sadāśiva is from Kaveripākkam, given by Gopinatha Rao (pl fig. 31). The important inscribed Sadāśiva of Pala workmanship in the Indian Museum is supposed to be inspired by southern traditions as the Sena kings trace their origin from South India. The Vishnu parallel of this is both Vaikuṇṭha and Trailokhya-mohana, each a form of Vishnu which is also multi-faceted showing in the centre the normal face and on the other sides the aspects like Narasiṃha and Varāha (pl. fig. 32). See "Parallels and Opposites in Indian Iconography", Journal of the Asiatic Society, Letters, Calcutta, XXI, 2.

back to the third century B.C.³³ Yet the depiction of Hanumān with five heads is always clearly related to Viṣṇu. For the faces on the heads are those of avatārs of Viṣṇu such as Varāha (the boar), Garuḍa (Viṣṇu's bird vehicle), Narasiṃha (the man-lion) and Hayagrīva (the horse).

It is pertinent to say as K. C. Aryan does that "the five heads (Panchmukha) of Hanumān are his universal (Virāt or Bhīmkāya) aspect".³⁴

The five-headed Hanumān is universal because it incorporates the complementary aspects of Viṣṇu and Śiva. There is in K. C. Aryan's book an intriguing portrayal of Hanumān as a five-headed Kālī (Plate 6). The plate taken from a 19th century album painting shows the five-headed Hanumān with a monkey-face in the centre, with the four other faces being those of avatārs of Viṣṇu. Yet the painting is clearly a manifestation of Kali standing on the corpse of Śiva. I conclude that Hanumān is firmly within the Śaivite sphere of influence when he can be depicted in the form of the wild goddess Kali.

My final comment on the five-headed Hanumān relates back to Tulsīdās and his identification of Hanumān with Śiva. Recently I came across a five-headed statue of Hanumān in the "Gayatree Bramb Gayatree Mandir" in San Fernando, Trinidad. Immediately behind the stature and slightly above it on the wall was painted a portrait of Tulsīdās. I do not believe that the positioning of the portrait was fortuitous.

Hanumān the "marginal"--a reflection

To summarize: Hanumān in the RCM is solidly within the sphere

³³Gonda, Viṣṇuism and Śivaism, p. 42.

³⁴K. C. Aryan, Hanumān in Art (Rekha Prakashan: Delhi, no date), p. 24.

of Viṣṇu and predominantly the lowly servant of Rāma. Hanumān's great deeds and mighty power are evidence, in that text, of the glory of Rāma. The ambiguous figure of the ambivalent monkey, who emerged from Vālmīki's Rāmāyaṇa alternating between wrathful and gentle aspects, had been reduced in the RCM to the figure of Hanumān the model devotee of Rāma. Only vestiges of his former self remained with the references to demonic connections contrasted with his disguising himself at times as a Brāhman. However, as I have demonstrated for the Vinayapatrikā and Kavitavalī, the vital Hanumān of the Rāmāyaṇa re-emerged in these two later works of Tulsīdās. It is significant that Śiva was closely connected with this re-emergence. Not only does it point to the likelihood that Tulsīdās grew in affection for the god Śiva as his years in Śiva's city, Benares, advanced, but it also underscores something about the nature of Hanumān as he lives in the Hindu religious consciousness. For the Hindu, Hanumān is as much a part of the world of Śiva as he is of the world of Viṣṇu. My claim here is not that Hanumān is only a denizen of the Śaivite world. Rather, I think of Hanumān as having a foot in both camps. He corresponds to those people who have been called "marginals", those who "are simultaneously members...of two or more groups whose social definitions and cultural norms are distinct from, and often opposed to, one another..."³⁴ I suggest that Hanumān's connections with both Viṣṇu and Śiva, who "as supreme epiphanies were inherently opposed to each other"³⁵ give a clue to the persisting ambiguity of Hanumān's character. Hanumān, as

³⁴Victor Turner, Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors (Ithaca, 1974), p. 233.

³⁵Bhattacharji, Theogony, p. 15.

I see him, is indeed a liminal, but he is not a "ritual liminar".

For "marginals like liminars are also betwixt and between, but unlike ritual liminars they have no cultural assurance of a final resolution of their ambiguity".³⁶

³⁶Turner, Dramas, p. 233.

APPENDIX A

IS HANUMĀN A VĀHANA (VEHICLE)?

Certainly, Hanumān carries out many elements of Rāma's search for Sītā and in that sense is his vehicle. However, Hanumān's relationship to Rāma (and Laṅkamaṅga) is at times explicitly that of a vehicle.

There are a number of places in the epic where Hanumān carries Rāma or Laṅkamaṅga or both of them together: Hanumān takes the two brothers to Sugrīva on his shoulders (Rām., II, 177); he tells Sītā he has done this (Rām., II, 415); he carries Laṅkamaṅga into battle against Indrajita (Rām., II, 253); Hanumān puts Laṅkamaṅga down from his shoulders in order to fight the demons (Rām., III, 259); Rāma says he will ride Hanumān into battle and Laṅkamaṅga will ride Aṅgada (Rām., III, 9); Sugrīva says that Rāma should ride Hanumān into battle and Laṅkamaṅga should ride Aṅgada (Rām., III, 55).

Garuḍa is the generally accepted vehicle of Viṣṇu. In the epic Hanumān is often described as being like Garuḍa: in a section dealing with all those sent to assist Viṣṇu, Hanumān is compared to Garuḍa (Rām., I, 43); Jambavan says Hanumān has arms as strong as the wings of Garuḍa (Rām., II, 319-320); Hanumān says he knows of none the equal of the King of Birds (Garuḍa), the Wind-God or himself (Rām., II, 323); Sītā says that Hanumān, Maruta and Garuḍa are the only ones able to cross the ocean (Rām., II, 431); Rāma says that only Garuḍa, Vāyu and Hanumān are able to cross the ocean (Rām., III, 3).

K. C. Aryan has a photo of a stone-carving from the Ranaji

temple in Vrindavān in which Hanumān is represented carrying Viṣṇu on his shoulders (See Stone-108 in K. C. Aryan, Hanumān in Art and Mythology [Delhi: Prakashan, no date]). Aryan also mentions that "The Shri cult among the Vaishnavas worship Garuda and Hanumān alike as the mounts of Vishnu" (see Aryan, p. 19).

APPENDIX B

A CLUE TO THE AMBIVALENT CHARACTER OF HANUMĀN

The monkey is no stranger to the fantasy life of Indians.

This is evident from the delight that Hanumān brings to the participants in the annual Rām Līlā (the acting out of the story of Rām) and the emphasis placed on the romantic and fantastic aspects of the monkeys in the Vālmīkirāmāyaṇa. From the discovery of terracota monkey figures in the Harappa culture, indications are that the monkey was a part of the play life of children in India as far back as 4000 years ago.¹

One might ask whether or not the monkey figure among the Harappan children held a similar relation to these children as animal figures have held for the children of our times. Children not only make fantasy animals their play companions but at times manifest an irrational fear towards animals. Anna Freud has written on the dynamics of animal fantasies in her book The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defence. In studying animal phobia among children she came to the conclusion that to the natural fear of animals is added an unconscious fear of the power of the parents. By identifying in play with the animal, the child can take on some of this power for himself. Anna Freud recounts the case of a ten year old boy who fantasised himself a circus tamer holding in check lions who

¹Walter A Fairservis, Jr., The Roots of Ancient India, 2nd edition. Revised (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), pp. 285-286. Fairservis writes of "little faience squirrels and monkeys... toys precious to the life of Harrapan children. One who doubts this probably has never lived with children...."

would in their free state be quite wild. In their tamed state they are his friends and protect him against a thief with a pistol. It seems to me that there is a parallel here to the Uttarakāṇḍa myth where Hanumān as a child was a threat until cursed. Having been cursed (or tamed?) he then became a servant of Rām who used his great powers for Rām's good. Yet, as I have contended, the violent and destructive aspect still remained close to the surface, ready to break out. Anna Freud concludes her analysis:

...in the circus fantasy it is quite clear that the father's strength, embodied in the wild beasts, served as a protection against the father himself. The stress laid on the former savageness of the animals indicates that in past they were objects of anxiety.²

Sigmund Freud suggested why animals are appropriate vehicles to carry the displacement of ambivalent feelings. He analysed an animal phobia in the case of five year old little Hans. Hans had displaced on horses the threat he felt from his father. This felt threat was actually a reversal of his own feelings of aggression against his father whom Hans perceived as a rival for his mother's affections. The motivation for the reversal and displacement was the conflict created in Hans by Hans' ambivalent feelings towards his father--he both loved and hated his father. Sigmund Freud explains why the animal figure is especially appropriate for the displacement of this ambivalent attitude. He writes:

Children do not as yet recognize or, at any rate, lay such exaggerated stress upon the gulf that separates human beings from the animal world. In

²Anna Freud, The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defence, Revised (New York: International Universities Press, Inc., 1937, 1966, 1967), p. 76.

their eyes the grown man, the object of their fear and admiration, still belongs to the same category as the big animal who has so many enviable attributes but against whom they have been warned because he may become dangerous.³

Whatever we think of Freud's comment, the monkey that lingers on the borders of human civilization, becoming at times the play pet of man, at times manifesting destructive violence, provides an apt vehicle for displacement of ambivalent feelings. His human-like appearance could only facilitate the process.

³Sigmund Freud, The Major Works, p. 725.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. Primary Works

Tulsīdās

(Kavitāvalī) Allchin, F. R. Kavitāvalī. Translation with introduction. New York: Barnes and Co., 1964.

(Rāmcāritmānas) Śrī Rāmachāritamānas. Original Hindi with translation. Gorakhpur: Gita Press, 1972. First published in 1968.

Hill, W. D. P. The Holy Lake of the Acts of Rama. English translation with introduction. Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1971. First published in 1952.

(Vinayapatrikā) Allchin, F. R. The Petition to Ram. Translation of the Vinayapatrikā with Introduction. London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1966.

Vālmīki

(Rāmāyaṇa) Shastri, H. P. The Rāmāyana of Vālmīki. Translation. 3 vols. London: Shantisadan, 1953-1959.

The Mahābhārata, Vol. II, translated by J. A. B. van Buitenen. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973.

Ṛg Veda: Griffith, Ralph T. H. The Hymns of the Ṛg Veda. Edited by Professor J. L. Shastri. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1973.

II. Secondary Works

Ambedkar, B. R. Annihilation of Caste, with a reply to Mahatma Gandhi. Reprinted. Jullundur (Punjab): Bheem Patrika Publications, 1971.

Aryan, K. C. Hanumān in Art and Mythology. Delhi: Prakashan, n.d.

Babb, Lawrence A. The Divine Hierarchy: Popular Hinduism in Central India. London: Columbia University Press, 1975.

- Bagchi, P. C. "Studies on the Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa". Calcutta Sanskrit Series, XI. Calcutta: Metropolitan Printing and Publishing House, 1935, vol. 7, pp. 1-78.
- Bahadur, K. P. Rāmācharitamānasa: A Study in Perspective. Delhi: Ess Ess Publications, 1976.
- Banerjea, J. N. Religion in Art and Archeology. Lucknow: University of Lucknow, 1968.
- Barnett, S. A. "Aggression" in Some Myths in Human Biology: Discussions from Radio 3. London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1972, p. 36.
- Bhattacharji, Sukumari. The Indian Theogony. Cambridge: University Press, 1970.
- Carpenter, J. Estlin. Theism in Medieval India. London: Williams and Norgate, 1921.
- Chaitanya, Krishna. A New History of Sanskrit Literature. New York: Asia Publishing House, 1962.
- Crooke, William. Popular Religion and Folklore of North India. New (2nd) ed., Rev. Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal; 1968, 1896, 2 vols.
- Cust, Robert. "The Races, Religions and Languages of India as Disclosed by the Census for 1881" in Calcutta Review 83 (July, 1886), pp. 164-191.
- Dange, Sadashiv Ambadas. Vedic Concept of "Field and Divine Fructification". Bombay: University of Bombay, 1971.
- Douglas, Mary. Purity and Danger. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966.
- Dunne, John S. The Way of All the Earth. New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1972.
- Embree, Ainslee T., ed. The Hindu Tradition. New York: Vintage Books, 1972.
- Fairservis, Walter A. Jr. The Roots of Ancient India. 2nd edition. Revised. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975.
- Freud, Anna. The Ego and Mechanisms of Defence. Revised. New York: International Universities Press, Inc., 1937, 1966, 1967.
- Freud, Sigmund. "Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety" in The Major Works of Sigmund Freud. Chicago: William Benton, 1952, pp. 718-754.

- Geldner, K. F. Der Rig Veda. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951.
- Gonda, Jan. Viṣṇuism and Śivaism. A Comparison. New Delhi: Munshivam Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1976.
- Grierson, G. A. "Tulasī Dāsa" in Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, ed. by James Hastings. Vol. XII. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, pp. 469-473.
- Hrdy, Sarah B. The Langurs of Abu: Female and Male Strategies of Reproduction. Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1977.
- Jacobi, H. "Heroes and Hero-gods (Indian)" in the Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. VI, pp. 658-661.
- Macdonnel, A. A. "Rāmāyaṇa", in Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, p. 576.
- Majumdar, R. C., gen. ed. The History and Culture of the Indian People. Vol. VII. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1974.
- Maury, Curt. Folk Origins of Indian Art. New York: University of Columbia Press, 1969.
- Moreland, W. H. and Atul Chandra Chatterjee. A Short History of India. 4th edition. Toronto: Longmans Green and Co., 1936, 1957.
- O'Flaherty, Wendy Doniger. "Review of J. A. B. van Buitenen's Translation of the Mbh" in Religious Studies Review, Vol. 4, No. 1, January, 1978.
- O'Malley, L. S. S. Popular Hinduism. Cambridge: University Press, 1935 (reprinted by Johnson Reprint Corporation, New York, 1970).
- Pargiter, E. F. "Suggestions Regarding RV X, 86" in J.R.A.S., 1911, pp. 803ff.
- Prakash, Buddha. Aspects of Indian History and Civilization. Agra: Shiva Lal Agarwala and Co. (P.) Ltd., 1965.
- Sharma, Ramashraya. A Socio-political Study of the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1971.
- Sivaramamurti, C. "Parallels and Opposites in Indian Iconography", Journal of the Asiatic Society, Letters, Calcutta, XXI, 2.
- Turner, Victor. Dramas, Field and Metaphors. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1974.
- Vaudeville, Ch. Étude sur les Sources et la Composition de Rāmāyaṇa de Tulsī Dās. Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient, 1955.
- Vyas, Dr. S. N. India in the Rāmāyaṇa Age. Delhi: Atma Ram and Sons, 1967.
- Winternitz, M. A History of Indian Literature. Vol. I. New York: Russell and Russell, 1971. First published 1927.