CHAPTER 4

RĂMĀYAŅA INCIDENTS IN THE HYMNS OF THE $\bar{A}LV\bar{A}RS-$ AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter studies the various $R\bar{a}m\bar{a}yana$ incidents found in the hymns of each of the $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}rs$ and the manner in which they have used or treated the incident. Being devotees of Tirumāl, it has to be understood that their approach is more devotional than literary or historical.

The various details regarding the individual $\bar{al}v\bar{a}rs$ has already been discussed in Chapter 2. The order in which the $\bar{al}v\bar{a}rs$ and their references are discussed, follow the listing in that chapter.

4.1 THE MUTALĀLVĀRS

Poykaiyālvār, Pūtattālvār and Pēyālvār are together known as the Mutalālvārs or the early Vaishnavite saints.¹ The hymns sung by these three are referred to as the First, Second and Third *Tiruvantātis* respectively. These verses contain references to **Rāmāyaņa** incidents.

4.1.1 Poykaiyālvār

In the **First Tiruvantāti**, the author Poykaiyālvār refers to incidents like the killing of Mārīca, Rama shooting a single arrow through seven *marā* or *sāl* trees, building a bridge to cross over to Lanka and killing Rāvaņa. There are also descriptions of the appearance of Sītā and Rāvaṇa.

(i) The Slaying of Mārīcaņ

The abduction of Sita by Rāvaņa may be said to be the turning point in the story of the **Rāmāyaņa**. Rāvaņa, seeing the pitiable state of his sister Sūrpaṇakha who is disfigured becomes very angry with Rāma and Lakshmaṇa. But hearing from her of Sitā's beauty, he is overcome with intense "love" for her. He asks Mārīca to help in his plan to abduct Sītā. Mārīca agrees and appears before her as the illusory golden deer. Seeing it, Sītā is attracted by its beauty and asks Rāma to catch it for her. To please her, Rāma goes after the deer and aims an arrow.² Poykaiyālvār mentions this incident in his 82nd hymn of the **First Tiruvantāti**.³

Here he uses this to establish the religious truth that God resides anywhere and in everything that is beautiful. The saint is overwhelmed by the beauty of the Tiruveňkaṭam hill, the holy place where Lord Vishnu resides. Trying to describe it with his spiritual involvement, he mentions the incident when long ago, Rāma aimed his arrow at Mārīca, who appeared as the illusory deer and killed him. The $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ tries to point out that the killing of the illusory deer adds to the greatness of Rāma while the Lord residing there adds to the glory of the Tiruveňkaṭam hill.

(ii) Shooting Through Seven Marā Trees

This saint, Poykaiyār, derives great pleasure in singing the glories of Tirumāl in his incarnation as Rāma. During his search for Sītā, Rāma befriends Sugrīva who lives in Kishkinta and agrees to kill the latter's elder brother who had wronged him. But Sugrīva is not completely sure of Rāma's ability to do so. To remove the monkey prince's doubts and to prove his ability, Rāma bends his bow and shoots a single arrow through seven $mar\tilde{a}$ trees.⁴ Poykaiyālvār refers to this incident in his 27th verse.⁵

He uses it to express the fact that those who lose themselves in the beauty of the almighty Lord will not experience any sorrow. Being overwhelmed by his appreciation of the beauty of the Lord's hands, the saint sings their great ability as seen in the shooting of the seven $mar\bar{a}$ trees and adds that those hands are the same as the one that holds the conch as Tirumāl. He associates the incidents in the $R\bar{a}m\bar{a}vat\bar{a}ra$ with those of Tirumāl. Since the conch is one of the five weapons⁶ of Vishnu, it maybe noted that his hands are strong and always uphold *dharma*.

(iii) Building a Bridge Across the Sea

In order to cross over the sea to Lanka and free Sita from Rāvaņa, Rāma builds a bridge with the help of the *vānara* army.⁷ This incident is mentioned in the second verse⁸ of Poykaiyālvār's **First Tiruvantāti**. To establish the idea that only God is capable of performing deeds that transcend human power, the saint speaks of Lord Tirumāl's act during *Rāmāvatāra*. Rāma built the bridge by throwing hills into the part of the sea to fill it up and use as a bridge. Such acts that go beyond human abilities are treated as suitable proofs for the omnipotence of the Lord.

(iv) The Killing of Rāvaņa

Rāma invades Lanka with an army and kills Rāvaņa who had abducted Sītā to Lanka.⁹ This incident is mentioned in the 59th hymn of Poykaiyālvār's First Tiruvantāti.¹⁰ Here, the saint uses this incident to say that God is compassionate and removes all the sorrows of those who take refuge in Him. In other words all their past *karmas* and the mental suffering, physical pain as well as the sins of the present birth caused by those *karmas* may be removed by taking refuge in Him. While expressing this idea, he sings that during the *Rāmāvatāra*, Lord Tirumāl held the bow in his beautiful hands so that Rāvaṇa's pride and ego were destroyed.

This incident may be said to illustrate two aspects of the same truth: Those who are haughty and try to control others, especially those who have the Lord's favour, through tyranny, will meet the same fate as Rāvaņa. On the other hand the good people who think that all souls belong to God and treat them with respect will be saved, just as Sītā was saved from Rāvaṇa's injustice.

Through this the saint tries to point to mankind the path towards salvation – Take refuge in Rāma (or Tirumāl); he frees those who are good and follow *dharma*; he removes their sorrows.

(v) Description of Characters

Poykaiyālvār has also described very briefly, certain physical aspects of Sītā and Rāvaņa.

(a) <u>Description of Sitā</u>

In the 59th verse mentioned above (E.n.10) he states that Sitā was abducted by Rāvaņa. To denote Sitā he merely uses the phrase *nuņankitai*¹¹

meaning "the thin-waisted (lady)." No other description seems necessary in the context of the verse.

(b) <u>Description of Rāvana</u>

The 35th verse of the **First Tiruvantāti** contains a three-word description of Rāvaņa.¹²

In this hymn Poykaiyālvār expresses the idea that to reach God, one should have intense devotion. He doubts if he has the necessary merits to receive God's grace. In this situation he thinks of Rāvaņa who was a great devotee of Shiva. He denotes this *asura* with the phrase $\bar{i}r$ *aintumuţiyān* literally meaning, "he with heads (or crowns) two times five," referring to his ten heads. Through this hymn, the saint refers to the puranic story that Rāvaņa, because of his great devotion to Shiva was later born as Sisupāla who attained salvation. The path of devotion is thus stressed as a way to salvation.

4.1.2 Pūtattālvār

The Second Tiruvantāti which was authored by Pūtattālvār also contains references to incidents from the **Rāmāyaņa**. The slaying of Mārīca, the invasion and destruction of Lanka and the killing of Rāvaņa by Rāma are mentioned.

(i) The Slaying of Mārica

Rāma's separation from Sītā was caused by his chasing the *asura* Mārīca who appeared as a gold coloured deer.¹³ This incident is mentioned in the 15th hymn of this text.¹⁴

The saint uses this incident to stress the basic concept of the *avatāra*. God is born on earth to remove the defects and faults found in society. Human beings cherish their bodies with food and clothes as they please and move about with evil desires. In order to bring them to the right path the Lord is born on earth, and goes through many trials. Pūtattālvār is unable to bear this and he expresses it by referring to this incident which took place during Tirumāl's birth as Rāma.

Through this, Pūtattālvār has indirectly pointed out that even God when born as a human goes through the distressing experiences of a man's life. How much more would an ordinary person have to undergo? Since a human being's life is full of sorrow, he has to search for a way to avoid rebirths.

At another level, this may be understood as a warning. Rāma thought only of pleasing Sītā who had never asked for anything from him. He did not stop to think of the implications of the situation and the consequences. Acting on the spur of the moment, he was separated from his wife and was subject to mental and physical hardships. This verse could be the saint's indirect advice to mankind to think well before acting.

(ii) Building a Bridge through the Sea

In order to cross over to Lanka and kill Rāvaņa, Rāma had to build a bridge.¹⁵ Pūtattālvār refers to it very briefly in one of his verses.¹⁶ He says that Rāma closed up (a part of) the sea as the bridge.

(iii) The Invasion and Destruction of Lanka and the Killing of Rāvana

Rāma invades with an army Lanka, the capital and residence of Rāvaṇa who had abducted Sītā. He destroys it and kills Rāvaṇa.¹⁷ This is referred to in three verses (Num. 25, 29 and 43)¹⁸ in the Second Tiruvantāti sung by Pūtattālvār.

In the first of these three verses, the $\bar{a}\underline{l}v\bar{a}r$ sings the Venkața Hill that is cool and made holy by the presence of Tirumāl, who is forever praised by the *devas*. Here, Tirumal is merely referred to as "He with ancient fame" and his act during the *Rāmāvatāra* when he saved the *devas* by killing Rāvana. This is one of the causes for his fame.

He went to Lanka and invading it, He killed Rāvaņa out of anger.

The Lord who is merciful and compassionate takes repeated births to wipe out *adharma* which makes him angry and to establish *dharma*.

In the next verse(Num29) Pūtattālvār refers to two acts of Tirumāl - one as Krishna and another as Rāma – which were performed to destroy *adharma*. When Krishna was a child, the *rākshasi* named Bhutaki appeared as a mother who wished to suckle him. But knowing who she was, he sucked not her poisoned milk but her life itself. As Rāma, he aimed an arrow and reduced Lanka in the south, to ashes. Though these actions were those of a child and a young hero, both were aimed at destroying evil. However, both are gracious acts of God who protects *dharma*.

The last of the three verses (Num.43) deals with two different parts of the body. But with these, the saint praises the feet of Rāma. He says,

Rāma aimed an arrow so that (Rāvaṇa's) shoulders Two + Eight + Seven + three and two feet, fell. The best thing my great shoulders can do Is to worship the feet of those who worship His.

The greatness of Rāvaņa is brought out by mentioning the 20 shoulders and his two feet. But Rāma, with the body of a normal human being was able to kill him. This shows Rāma's divinity and that he is almighty. As a true devotee Pūtattālvār feels that he would reach salvation by merely worshipping the feet of devotees who fall at Rāma's feet.

4.1.3 Pēyālvār

The Third Tiruvantāti, sung by Pēyālvār also mentions these incidents from the Rāmāyaņa.

The Slaying of Mārica, Shooting an Arrow Through Seven Marā Trees and the Killing of Rāvaņa¹⁹

All these three incidents are mentioned together in hymnNum.52 of the **Third Tiruvantāti** along with Tirumāl measuring out three steps of land as a dwarf.

As Rāma, he aimed an arrow at the seven $mar\bar{a}$ trees For the Lady's sake; he aimed at the young deer; He also aimed to defeat the King of Lanka in the south.²⁰

Though Rāma aimed his arrows many times, these three occasions show the purpose of his *avatāra*. By shooting a single arrow through seven trees, he showed his superior ability, suitable for a super-human being. His shooting the illusory golden deer shows his graciousness that tries to please those who love him and the arrow that kills Rāvana shows that he punishes wrong-doers. With these, Tirumāl's three steps with which he measures the earth, the heavens and the underworld are mentioned, to show that he is Lord of everything.

(ii) The Invasion and Destruction of Lanka

Rāma's invasion of Lanka and its destruction after a war covers a great part of the **Rāmāyana**.²¹ But Pēyalvār refers to it in a single line.

In verse Num.51, he sings that Tirumāl protects, destroys and grants the fearless and clear state which is salvation. He is also the one who burnt the city of Lanka with his arrow.²²

4.2 TIRUPPĀŅĀLVĀR

In the poem of ten verses beginning with the words "Amalanātipirān", Tiruppāṇālvār sings the praises of Tirumāl. The fourth verse refers to the killing of Rāvana, the King of Lanka.²³

4.2.1 The Killing of Rāvaņa

This verse actually deals with the devotion of the saint to Tirumål who resides in Tiruvaraňkam where the honey bee hums and peacocks dance. He is the one who discharged a mighty arrow on the King of Lanka surrounded by large, square fortress walls and made his ten heads fall. "He has the colour of the sea. The waist ornament (*utarapantam*) that he wears, is always in my heart."²⁴ The beauty of the place he resides in, his beauty as the sea-coloured God and his ornaments are described here. But they serve as a background to the beauty of his actions which destroy *adharma* to save his devotees, like killing Rāvaņa to save Sītā.

4.3 TIRUMALICAIYĀLVĀR

The *pācurams* by Tirumalicaiyālvār, namely **Nānmukan** Tiruvantāti and Tiruccanta Viruttam also contain references to many incidents from the **Rāmāyana**.

4.3.1 Rāma Aiming the Catapult (Vil) at Kūni

In his boyhood, Rāma played with his catapult or *cuntu-vil*. One day, he playfully aimed it at Mantarai and hit her hunched back.²⁵ Though she was annoyed, her hunch was straightened. This $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ refers to this incident in two verses of the **Tiruccanta Viruttam**. In the first, he sings,

O Lotus-eyed Lord! Swallowing the skies, earth, Mountains and seven seas, you slept on the banyan leaf! Wearer of the garland of basil with honeyed fragrant flowers! Are you not the owner of the victorious bow that Aimed at and removed the hunch.²⁶ The word *villi* meaning "owner of the bow" refers to his catapult or toy bow used by boys to shoot pellets.

In this verse, the $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ tries to show that even the acts that may be set aside as boyish pranks have deep significance when performed by the Lord in any of his *avatāras*. The straightening of the hunch is like the removal of a soul's weaknesses, especially its ego that prevents it from reaching God.

The second verse sings of the holy town of Tiruvarankam surrounded by the waters of the Kāviri, where Lord Tirumāl lies on his serpent bed. The beauty and fertility of the surrounding district serves as a background to the grace of the Lord who by aiming the small stone at the hunchback made the hunch disappear and was happy to do so. Thus he is described as "*ul makilnta nātaņ*"²⁷ meaning the Lord who is happy to remove the problems and defects of all beings.

4.3.2 Subduing Paracurāma

After breaking the Bow of Shiva, Rāma marries Sītā and returns to Ayodhya. On his way, he is confronted by Paracurāma who was bent on killing the *ksatriyas*. But Rāma subdues him who approaches with the intent to fight.²⁸ Tirumalicaiyālvār mentions this heroic deed of Rāma that also removed the anger and vengeance of Paracurāma in his **Nānmukan Tiruvantāti**. He tells his heart that there is no other protection but Tirumāl. One of the incidents he mentions to denote the Lord's heroism and compassion is that the red-eyed Māl took away the bow which defeated Shiva long ago.²⁹

4.3.3 Killing Kavantan and Karan

During his stay in the forest with Sitā and Lakshmana, Rāma kills many *asuras*. Tirumalicaiyālvār mentions two of them along with two others that Tirumāl killed in his Krishna-incarnation.

Kavantan or Kabantan was a gandharva who became an asura due to a sage's curse. When Rāma and Lakshmana were busy looking for Sītā he caught them and was cut by them. Due to this he got back his original status as a gandharva.³⁰

Karan was the son of Sage Visiravasu. But due to the instigation of Sūrpanakha, he opposed Rāma and Lakshmana and died.³¹

 O Māyan with large hands holding many weapons that cut into pieces
 The heads of the ferocious Kavantan, Vakkaran Karan and Muran!
 Grant me an unbreaking, continuous devotion to your golden feet
 Even while sleeping, sitting, standing or moving³²

Here, the killing of these foes, especially Kavantan and Karan who were a *gandharva* and a son of a sage respectively shows that Tirumāl as Rāma killed them so as to help them get back their old status. Thus Māyavan's acts of cruelty are actually acts of grace. By this he tries to explain why the Lord should never be forgotten.

4.3.4 Aiming Through Seven Marā Trees and the Killing of Vāli

The incidents when Rāma aimed a single arrow through the seven marā trees³³ and the killing of Vāli³⁴ follow one another. In fact the earlier incident is to show that Rāma was capable of killing Vāli. Tirumalicaiyālvār, in his **Tiruccanta Viruttam** sings both the incidents together in two different verses. In the first, he advises men that even those who may rule the heavens will not achieve complete, lasting joy and prosperity, unless they think of Tirumāl's grace and desire it. Here he refers to the Lord as

"Our Lord the King of Devaloka, who once before aimed an arrow to pierce the tree and Another to pierce the chest of Vali, so that He fell defeated (and died)³⁵

In the other verse he advises men to reach the feet of Tirumāl who killed the *asura* named Kālanēmi. In order to help Sugrīva, the younger brother of the dejected Vāli, he came as Rāma and aimed his arrow through the seven *marā* trees that stood close to one another.³⁶ The use of the word *utainta* to describe Vāli is worth mention. Vāli was heroic and had received many boons from many gods. He had even succeeded against Rāvaņa. But he was angry and dejected to find that his brother Sugrīva had taken control of his kingdom and wanted to kill him. But he was not able to reach the district around the Rṣyamūkha Hill because of a curse by the Sage Matanga.³⁷ Besides, Rama came to Sugrīva's help and defeated Vāli and killed him. Hence the word *utainta* meaning agitated, broken, defeated, killed etc. is used most aptly and brings out the ability and heroism of Rāma.

In both the verses found in the **Nānmukan Tiruvantāti** only the killing of Vāli is mentioned. He sings of Rāma aiming to kill Vāli the animal (*vilanku*

 $V\bar{a}li$).³⁸ In the other verse the $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ is more specific and refers to Vali as the King of the $v\bar{a}naras$ or monkeys. He says,

The archer - who destroyed the strength of the very angry and mighty Vāli King of the *Vānaras* - is in my heart.³⁹

Here the anger and might of Vāli is mentioned because he was able to go about doing whatever he planned to do, even when he had Rāvaņa bound by his tail. Rāvaņa, angry and arrogant had lifted the Himalayas that stood in his way. Vāli was able to subdue him but Rāma killed such heroic Vāli with a single arrow. The single word *villāļan* to denote Rāma shows the omnipotence of Tirumāl who easily resides in the hearts of his devotees.

4.3.5 (i) Aiming An Arrow Into the Sea

On hearing from Hanuman that Sitā who was abducted by Rāvaņa was held captive in Lanka, Rāma leaves with the monkey army and reaches the sea-shore. There, Rāvaņa's younger brother Vibhishaṇa, Sugrīva, Hanuman and others advise him to ask Varuṇa, the Lord of the sea to show them the proper way to cross the sea to reach Lanka. So Rāma performs the worshipful rites as stated in the texts. He spreads *darbha* grass on the seashore, worships Varuṇa, sleeps on the grass and fasts – speechless and without food or drink – for three days. But Varuṇa did not oblige. At this, Rāma became angry and aimed his powerful arrow into the sea to dry it up.⁴⁰ Tirumalicaiyālvār mentions this in two of his verses.

Being a great devotee of Tirumal, he praises with devotion, the Lord who grants salvation to his devotees who desire it for devotees are his "children". The

sage refers to some of the gracious but heroic deeds of Vishnu in his different incarnations but does not use Lord's name. One description is, "The hero of victorious anger who bent his bow to boil (and dry up) the sea."⁴¹

In another hymn which sings of the beauty and religious importance of Tiruvarańkam, he says that it is the sacred town where the Lord resides. "He is the hero who discharged the able arrow from his strong and victorious bow, so that the black sea with white waves boiled, turning red."⁴² In this verse, the sage describes the great ability and heroism that can subdue even Varuņa the Sea God. The poetry with the use of opposing colours for description is remarkable.

4.3.5 (ii) Agitating the Sea and Building a Bridge

The arrow that Rāma discharged into the sea caused the earth to tremble and agitated the sea. The Lord of the Sea, unable to bear it, appeared before Rāma and promised to help them to build a bridge over the sea to cross over to Lanka. The bridge was built with the efforts of the *vānaras* who brought rocks and forest trees to build the bridge.⁴³ Tirumalicaiyālvār refers to this in five of his hymns – four of which are in the **Tiruccanta Viruttam** (Num. 28, 32, 39 and 92) and the other is from the **Nānmukan Tiruvantāti**.⁴⁴

The 28th verse of the **Tiruccanta Viruttam** merely contains a reference to the dam-like bridge built over the sea by Tirumāl. It also praises him as holding many weapons (*palpațai*) that were discharged to send *asuras* like Māli and Mālimān (also Māliyamān, Māliyavān) to the land of Yama. Though these two *asuras* were destroyed by Krishna and not Rāma, they are the brothers of Rāvaņa's maternal grandfather and their story is found in the Uttara Rāmāyana.⁴⁵

The sage listing some of the acts of Tirumāl that outwardly seem to be pitiless (*irakkam ongum ingiyē*) praises the Lord's lotus-feet. They walked over the sea, when he took the monkey army to Lanka. Here the reference is to the damlike bridge that the monkeys build after Varuna surrendered to Rāma.⁴⁶ In another hymn, he lists the three acts Tirumāl performs by lifting hills or hillocks (*verpu*) – He churns the Milky Ocean, builds a causeway (*varampu*) over the sea and protects the cowherds from the heavy rain caused by Indra.⁴⁷ The sage also talks of the four different acts He performed regarding the sea – He created it, He blocked it, He lay on it and He churned it.⁴⁸ By saying that He blocked the seas Tirumalicaiyālvār refers to the building of the bridge. The verse in Nānmukan Tiruvantāti mentions it as one of the acts Tirumāl performed by discharging an arrow. "This is *Cētu*, built to destroy the strength of Lanka."⁴⁹ Thus here, the popular name for the bridge *Cētupantanam* is found.

4.3.6 Invasion and Destruction of Lanka

After building the bridge with the help of the *vānara* army, Rāma and Lakshmana cross over to Lanka. There they wage war against Rāvana and destroy the island.⁵⁰ The **Tiruccanta Viruttam** of Tirumalicayālvār contains three references to this incident from the **Rāmāyana**.

The first of these addresses Tirumāl, who has the colour of the dark clouds and says "You destroyed the firm protection of Lanka surrounded by the sea and fortress walls that are high and strong like the hills.³⁵¹ Thus it mentions the fortifications of Lanka and implies the might and bravery of Rāma and Lakshmaņa. Another verse explains that the Lord who dwells in Tiruvarańkam is the one who "destroyed the defences of Lanka by discharging the arrow with a leaf-shaped tip (*ilait talaic caram*).⁵² Hence here the weapon used for the destruction of Lanka is specified. The last of these three verses describes Tirumāl as "the hero who had in the past, reduced Lanka to ashes. This reduced the life-span of the cruel *asura* who showed enmity. Then the Lord went, killed him and was victorious.⁵³ This heroic deed is mentioned here to bring out the truth that the devotees need not fear. Those who take refuge with the Lord will have their *asuric* nature and their evil deeds destroyed, so that they will be saved from the punishments meted out by Yama and also from rebirth.

4.3.7 Slaying of Kumbakarnan

Among the many *asuras* killed in Lanka during the Rāma-Rāvaņa war, was Kumbakarņaņ, the younger brother of Rāvaņa.⁵⁴ Tirumalicaiyālvār refers to this in a hymn in the **Nāņmukaņ Tiruvantāti**

While singing the praises of Tirumāl, this *āļvār* pays attention to His form and ends up mentioning how Kumbakarnan was killed.

> He himself is the embodiment of Joy; He himself is the embodiment of Lustre He himself is the embodiment of Greatness; if considered, He killed With a simple arrow and nothing else, him who had large eyebrows That were one *yōjana* apart.⁵⁵

Though Kumbakarṇan is not mentioned by name, the description of large eyebrows with a distance of one $y\bar{o}jana$ (which is about eight to nine miles) is a clear reference to him.⁵⁶ The words the $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ chose can be interpreted in various ways too. He uses *ukappu* meaning joy, desire, loftiness and excellence; *oli* meaning among others knowledge, God, pupil of the eye, fame, moon, sun, brightness, beauty, Lordship and greatness; *makappu* meaning largeness, vastness, greatness, mightiness, strength and height. Any of these meanings will suit these words in this verse, thereby showing the essence of Godhood. The description of Kumbakarṇan here serves as a comparison to bring out the greatness of Rāma and thereby Tirumāl.

4.3.8 The Slaying of Rāvaņa

The killing of Rāvaņa by Rāma, stands out as the climax of the epic, **Rāmāyaņa**.⁵⁷ This incident is referred to by Tirumalicaiyālvār in four separate hymns in the **Tiruccanta Viruttam**. In these hymns some details regarding Rāvaņa are available, though all the *pācurams* and hymns in the text praise Tirumāl and as one of his incarnations, Rāma.

Rāma had "discharged a mighty arrow that caused the *asura* (death) who had teeth like the lightning."⁵⁸ He is the Lord who "aimed arrows by bending his bow. They severed and scattered the ten heads of the King of Lanka."⁵⁹ Māl who resides at the sacred town of Kuṭantai where devotees well-versed in sacred texts, recite $V\bar{e}das$ and know the $V\bar{e}das$ and have knowledge of virtue and justice (*niti*) is a great hero. "He went to Lanka, killed Rāvaņa so that his ten beautiful heads (*paintalai*) fell to the ground in confusion, and claimed victory.⁶⁰ These verses refer to the brightness of Ravana's teeth and his ten lustrous heads. But verse Num. 116 refer to his cruelty and enmity.

In a verse in the Nānmukan Tiruvantāti, the $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ mentions the three main incidents when Rāma discharged arrows after Sītā was abducted. All these instances shows the might of Rāma and cause the defeat and death of Rāvaņa. They are – to dry the sea and build *Cētubantanam* so that Lanka may be destroyed, to kill Vāli so as to obtain the assistance of Sugrīva and the *vānara* army and finally to kill Rāvana who wore cool garlands.⁶¹

4.3.9 Rāma Making Vibhīshaņa the King of Lanka

At the end of the war between Rāma and Rāvaṇa, the victorious Rāma appoints Rāvaṇa's younger brother as King of Lanka. At his command the Coronation of Vibhishaṇa takes place at once, before Rāma and his entourage leave for home.⁶² Tirumalicaiyālvār refers to this in a single line in one of his hymns in the **Tiruccanta Viruttam**.

With great devotion and admiration for Tirumal, the sage asks him,

You have the greatness of discharging a fierce arrow to kill the *asura*With teeth shining like lightning and graciously giving the kingdom to the younger brother
O Husband of the Lady Nappinnai of good fame and sweet words!
Are you not the Lotus-Lord of lasting fame and golden colour?⁶³

Even though the first line deals with the harsh aspect of Tirumāl's grace, the other three sing the gracious, loving and beautiful nature. Explaining this **Rāmāyaņa**

incident, S. Rajagopalachari states that it illustrates one of the important concepts of Vaishnava philosophy – that of *saraņāgati* or taking refuge in the Lord. Whoever takes refuge with a pure mind is accepted by the Lord without any considerations of the person's faults. No doubts are raised. All sins are reduced to ashes by the act of *saraņāgati*. The Vibhishaņa incident is regarded as the literary example for this concept. This is also echoed in clear terms when Krishna tells Arjuna, "Do not fear. I shall free you from all sins. This is a promise."⁶⁴

4.3.10 The Greatness of Rāma

All <u>alvars</u> are ardent devotees of Tirumal and as such sing of his greatness in various incarnations. In two hymns, Tirumalicayalvar specifically addresses Rama as the object of his devotion.

You are the soul in the body; You are the consciousness in sleep;
You are the five things from the cow; You are their inherent purity.
You are the heavens and the earth; You are the benefit of the beautiful sea
Even I am You; besides You are our Lord O Rāma.⁶⁵

Here Rāma is praised as the all-pervading God.

To Tirumalicaiyālvār Rāma is also the eyes and the only relative. He address the Lord as One who has limitless, wonderful beauty (*ennilāta māya*). This is also one of the names of Tirumāl (*Māyan*). But he is the one who pushed into the fire countless *asuras* for the sake of the lady with soft, musical words and sharp (like spear or arrow) large eyes.⁶⁶ This is clearly a reference to the war with Rāvana which was fought to save Sītā. In another verse, although Tirumāl's feet

adorned with the basil, his graciousness towards devotees like the $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ himself and his lying on the Milky ocean are mentioned, the hymn ends with the line, "O Rāma who discharged the terrible arrows in the battle-field."⁶⁷

There are however some other verses in which the greatness of Rāma is implied by reference to one or more of his heroic or gracious deeds. In verse 31 of the **Tiruccanta Viruttam**, the first two lines deal with the exploits of Tirumāl in other incarnations, while the third praises him as the hero who discharged an arrow to make the waters of the sea boil. The fourth and final line says that he is the Lord that grants salvation to the devotees who desire it.⁶⁸

In one verse in Nānmukan Tiruvantāti the $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ says specifically that his "occupation is to praise the ancient name of Tirumāl" but he ends the verse with the words, "the archer who destroyed the strength of Vāli is in my heart."⁶⁹ This shows that the $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ does not differentiate between the different names of Tirumāl but treats them as being synonymous.

4.3.11 The Nature and Appearance of Sitā

The verse mentioned above (E.n. 42) is the only one where Sītā is referred to. She is not mentioned by name but it is implied that Rāma fought the war for her sake. Her sweet and gentle nature is brought out by describing the words she utters and her beauty, by the loveliness of her eyes.

4.4 TONTARATIPPOTIYĀLVĀR

Both the *pirapantams* of Tontaratippotiyalvar, namely **Tirumālai** and **Tiruppalliyelucci** contain references to **Rāmāyaņa** incidents. He refers to Rāma protecting the *yāga* performed by Sage Visvāmitra, filling up the sea to form a bridge, the squirrels' help to build it and the killing of Rāvaņa and his lineage.

4.4.1 Protecting Visvāmitra's Yāga

Sage Visvāmitra wished to perform a $y\bar{a}ga$ (or $v\bar{e}|vi$) without any disturbance from the *asuras*. So he went to Ayodhya and asked King Dasaratha to send Rāma with him to be the protector of the $y\bar{a}ga$. Though the King refused at first, he later agreed to the sage's request and sent Rāma and Lakshmaṇa with him. Rāma killed the *asuras* who disturbed it so that the $y\bar{a}ga$ comes to a successful end.⁷⁰ Tontaratippotiyālvār refers to this in the 4th verse of his **Tiruppalliyelucci**.

Tiruppalliyelucci means a waking-up. In 10 verses, the $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ entreats Tirumāl who sleeps on his serpent bed at Tiruvarańkam to wake up since the sun has reached the hills on the east.⁷¹ After mentioning other happenings of a morning, he addresses the Lord as

The Lion among the *devas*, Lord of Ayodhya Who protected the $y\bar{a}ga$ of the great sage And performed the ritual bath following it.⁷²

While all the verses in this *pirapantam* deal with Tirumāl, this alone mentions the heroic acts of Rama, without any reference to Tirumāl's deeds in the other incarnations.

4.4.2 (i) Building a Bridge Over The Sea By Aiming An Arrow

In order to cross over to Lanka and save Sitā, Rāma aimed an arrow into the part of the sea that he wanted filled up.⁷³

In the **Tirumālai** the saint expresses the view that to mention the holy name of the sacred shrine Tiruvarańkam is itself spiritually rewarding. The 4th verse begins with the divine act. "With the matchless bow you filled the sea with rising waters."⁷⁴ This brings to mind the picture of the dark hero standing near the sea, with the bow in hand.

(ii) The Squirrel's Help⁷⁵

Though Rāma's bow filled the sea to make way for him and his army, the monkey hordes are also mentioned as bringing hills to throw into the sea. The squirrels, small as they are, tried to help by dipping into the sea, rolling over the sand and then running to the place where the bridge was being built, to shake that sand.⁷⁶ Their contribution may be nothing practically but it was sincere service.

In his *pirapantam* entitled **Tirumālai** the $\bar{a}lv\bar{ar}$ laments that he does not think of Tirumāl or perform any service to him. He cites the acts of the monkey hordes and the tiny squirrels at the time the bridge connecting the shores of South India with Lanka was built. They did what each one of them could, to serve Rāma. In comparison he feels that he is unfeeling like a tree, hard-hearted, deceitful and loveless. Through this, he also expresses the view that all human beings should love God and serve Him according to one's ability.

4.4.3 The Destruction of Lanka and the Asuras

The destruction of Lanka and the killing of Rāvaṇa along with the other $asuras^{77}$ is referred to by this $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ in two different verses.

The seventh verse of the **Tirumālai** speaks of the greatness of Tirumāl, who to all true Vaishnavites, is the same as Rāma. He declares that all those who have learnt the texts on religion and virtue or *dharma* (*Kalai* + $a_{r}am$) will not even hear of the lowly teachings of Buddhism and Jainism. Only the Lord who destroyed Lanka with his bow is Lord."⁷⁸ Here, the divine nature of Rāma is brought out by implying that he destroys evil and evil-doers to establish virtue and save the good souls.

While the land of evil-doers is referred to in the above mentioned verse, the 4th verse of the **Tiruppalliyelucci** speaks of the destruction of the *asuras* living there.

When the *devas* unable to bear the tyranny of Rāvaņa and his *asuras* complained to Tirumāl and asked him to save them, he took the *Rāmāvatāra* to release them of their sorrows.⁷⁹ This saint cites this act of Tirumāl when he praises him as "Lion of the *devas* who destroyed with your strong bow, the (*asuras*) lineage of Lanka.⁸⁰ This again is an act of grace that saves the *devas* and implies that God is always on the side of *dharma* or *aram*.

4.4.4 The Killing of Rāvaņa

The culmination of the Rāma-story is the killing of Rāvaṇa, King of Lanka.⁸¹ This finds mention in the 11th verse of the **Tirumālai**.⁸²

The $\bar{a}_{l}v\bar{a}r$ singing the greatness of the Lord at Tiruvarańkam says that He is "the hero who killed in battle, the King of the *asuras* in order to save the worlds from destruction." Rāma did not kill Rāvaņa out of anger or vengeance, but merely to save the *devas* and all other beings in all the different worlds, from the tyranny of *adharma*. The use of the word *cēvakaņār* for hero is of special importance here. This word has two meanings in Tamil – hero and servant. The killing of Rāvaņa needs heroism but it is actually a great service to all the worlds. Rāma is therefore a cruel warrior and an affectionate servant.

4.5 KULACĒKARĀĻVĀR

The Perumāl Tirumoli by Kulacēkarālvār is made up of ten *Tirumolis* or "words of great persons." Three of them contain references to Rāmāyaņa incidents.⁸³

4.5.1 Protecting the Yāga of Visvāmitra⁸⁴

This incident is referred to in two of his verses.

Both the verses imply that as king or God, he is the protector of the good and pious. As such he punishes or destroys the evil-doers and those who are a hindrance to other people's good deeds. In the earlier verse, Rāma is addressed as Raghava, the descendent of Raghu and is said to be the creator of the universe and the ruler of the eight directions. It also speaks of how He bent the bow so that he discharged the arrow and pierced the chest of Tātakai who was strong and hostile.⁸⁵

The other verse mentions the incident in the proper perspective, as a precedent to Visvāmitra's $y\bar{a}ga$ and the killing of other *asuras*. The $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ sings,

See! He is the hero, who discharged an arrow To split open
The chest of the opposing Tāṭaka so that her Blood flowed.
He protected the vēlvi of the sage versed in Vēdic mantras
And took the lives of the strong asuras.⁸⁶

In these verses, Kulacēkarālvār clearly refers to incidents that took place after (Rāma) leaving Ayodhya and before reaching the vicinity of Mitila. The sage Visvāmitra requested King Dasaratha to send Rāma and Lakshmana with him to protect the $y\bar{a}ga$ he planned to perform. He wanted the princes to protect his rituals from the *asuras* who, he thought, would disturb him. On their way to the sage's hermitage they were confronted by the arrogant Tāṭakai.⁸⁷ At the advice of Visvāmitra, Rāma killed her, inspite of her being a woman. Then reaching the hermitage he protected the $y\bar{a}ga$ by killing Subhahu and other *asuras* who tried to cause obstacles. With his $v\bar{a}yavya$ missile he pushed Mārīca into the sea.

This incident serves to show that Rāma who is an incarnation of Vishnu is the protector of good and a destroyer of evil.

4.5.2 Breaking the Bow to Marry Sita

After the successful completion of his *yāga*, the sage takes Rāma and Lakshmana to Mitila, the capital of Janaka. There Rāma breaks the bow of Shiva and marries Sītā.⁸⁸ This is mentioned by Kulacēkarālvār in two verses.

In the earlier verse, he expresses his devotion to Rāma as a father. This is usually known as the *vātsalya bhāva* or showing the emotions of a father or mother towards God or personal deity. He also says, "You broke the bow of the Rider of the Bull (i.e. Shiva) to win the Lady who wears flowers in her hair and has beautiful upper arms like the bamboo."⁸⁹ The phrase "*malarāl kūntal*" also can mean the hair of the Lady on the flower (*malarāl*) and suggests that Sītā is an incarnation of Lakshmi.⁹⁰

The other verse again shows the intense devotion of the $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ and expresses the humility found in all true devotees. They are not only servants of the Lord but also his devotees' servants. Here too, the $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ expresses exactly the same idea but in different words. "You broke the bow of him who rides the angry bull, for the sake of (winning) Sitā who has lovely, black, long eyes with red lines in them."⁹¹

4.5.3 Subduing Paracurama

When Rāma returned to Ayodhya with Sītā and his entourage, he subdued the power and anger of Parasurāma who confronted him.⁹² Two hymns in the **Perumāl Tirumoli** refer to this incident using more or less the same words.

Long ago you took the bow of the User of the battle-axe And ruined all his penance.⁹³

In the other hymn too the taking of the bow is mentioned. But the bow is described as "the fierce, good bow that is bent (for discharging arrows)" and Rāma is praised as "the hero who destroyed the enmity towards Kings with spears."⁹⁴ This is a reference to Paracurāma⁹⁵ whose bow Rāma took and discharged an arrow. With that he also quenched the anger Paracurāma had towards all those of *ksatriya* origin.

4.5.4 Rama's Banishment to the Forest

Even though the coronation of Rāma as the *Yuvarāja* of the country has been decided upon, he leaves for the forest with his wife Sītā and brother Lakshmana. This was to keep his father's word and to safeguard the king's honour.⁹⁶ This incident seems to be the one that is most frequently referred to by Kulacēkarāļīvar. There are altogether 13 references in the total of 105 hymns he has sung. Of these again, ten are from the ninth *pācuram* in which the *ālvār* imagines himself as Dasaratha separated from Rāma who has left for the forest.

The cause for Rāma leaving for the forest is Kaikēyi, his step-mother (*cirravai*).⁹⁷ When Rama was about to be crowned, she was the one who said, "Go to the distant forest": Dasaratha is said to lament, crying "O our Rama" (*Em Iramavo!*).⁹⁸ In another he is shown to ask Kaikēyi, "You sent our handsome son, well-versed in the Vēdas, his brother and our gentle daughter-in-law to the forest. You have brought blame on your own son. You are sending me to the world above. What have you gained?"⁹⁹ She is therefore branded as "the wicked woman who listened to the evil-minded, hunch-backed servant, Kūni."¹⁰⁰

Kulacēkarālvār goes through the painful emotions of a father when he describes Rāma's journey. He "went to the ancient forest followed by all the relatives,¹⁰¹ Further he laments,

O son of this great sinner! You go today, (to the forest) What can I do? A man of sinful deeds who listened to the dreadful sinner Whom the King of Kēkaya had as his daughter.¹⁰²

"Hearing the cruel words from my cruel mouth", Rāma had set aside all the comforts and facilities of the life in a palace and walked to the forest with his lovely wife and Lakshmana.¹⁰³ In the forest the prince who slept on a soft bed learnt to sleep on rocks under forest trees.¹⁰⁴ Without silk, jewels and other ornamentation, the beauty of his limbs have changed now that he wears only grass garments (*vilal*).¹⁰⁵ Such laments help to bring out Kulacēkarālvār's personal distress at being separated and having to wait for his union with Tirumāl, his personal God.

4.5.5 Friendship with Guha and the Crossing of the Ganges

Departing from his capital and the Kōsala country, Rāma with Sītā and Lakshmana arrives at the bank of the Ganges River. There he befriends Guha, the King of the hunters who also ferry boats.¹⁰⁶ In one of his hymns, Kulacekaralvar mentions this incident.

> Leaving the ancient city, he crossed the Ganges that has many landing-places Transported by the devout Guha and he entered the forest.¹⁰⁷

The description of Guha¹⁰⁸ as devout (*paktiyutai*) is important here, considering that the $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ himself is a devotee. Besides, the differences in social status and way of life is of no importance to Rāma. Before God only true love and devotion matter. The $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ uses this incident to illustrate the Lord's relationship even with the lowly. This is known as *saushīlya*.

4.5.6 The Arrival of Bharata and the Granting of the *Pāduka* and Kingdom

When Rāma accepts the words of Kaikēyi and leaves for the forest, it is clear that he was leaving the kingdom of Kōsala for Bharata to become its King.¹⁰⁹ Rāma does this graciously and whole heartedly. Kulacekarālvār sings of this in two of his hymns.

Rama bestowed the great wealth of ruling the country on the eminent Bharata.¹¹⁰ Later when he crossed the Ganges and stayed at the Citrakūța, Bharata arrives with a large entourage. He tries to persuade Rama to return to Ayodhya and be crowned King of the Kōsala country.¹¹¹ But Rama explains that in order to upkeep their father's words of honour he will return only after the 14 years. He appoints Bharata to rule the land and gives his *pāduka* or wooden sandals to be taken back as his representative. Bharata returns, places the sandals on the throne and lives in Nandi-grama. He considers himself the servant of Rāma's sandals and his duties of kingship as a penance.¹¹²

4.5.7 Slaying of Virātaṇ; Receiving a Bow from Sage Agastya; Cutting the Limbs of Sūrpanakha; Killing Karan, Tūtanan and later Máricaṇ

During their stay in the forest, Rāma, Sītā and Lakshmaņa go through various experiences, both pleasant and unpleasant. Once the *asura* Virātan tries to carry Sītā away and is killed by Rāma.¹¹³ When they visit the hemitage of Sage Agastya, he receives a bow from the sage.¹¹⁴ At Paňcavati, Sūrpanakha, attracted by Rāma's manliness and good looks creates trouble and has her nose cut by Lakshmana.¹¹⁵ When she sends Karan, Dutan (Dūshanan) and Tiriciran they are also killed by Rāma¹¹⁶ Mārīcan sent as a golden-deer by Rāvana is also killed by Rāma.¹¹⁷ All these incidents are sung together in a single hymn by Kulacēkarālvār who has condensed the whole **Rāmayāna** story in just ten verses.

Killing Virātan whose strong high shoulders can bend mountains,
Receiving the bow tightly bound, given by the great sage of beautiful Tamil,
Removing the nose of the *asura* woman whose eyes put to shame a deer's,
Taking the lives of Karan and Tūtanan,
He bent the bow and aimed to kill the deer.¹¹⁸

In this hymn, the *alvār* attributes the cutting of Sūrpanakha's nose to Rāma himself. In reality it was Lakshmana who did it. But when Rāma is worshipped as no other than Tirumāl himself, there is no act that may be done without his will. Besides, Lakshmana's emotions, thoughts and actions, especially during their banishment were surrendered to the will and well-being by Rāma. Moreover Lakshmana is also said to be the right arm of Rāma. These must be the reasons for attributing this incident to Rāma. Even when mentioning the *asuras* Karan and Tūṭanan, the third named Tiriciran also sent by Sūrpanakha is left out. The need for brevity may be the cause of this omission.

4.5.8 The Death of Jadayu; Friendship with Sugriva; Killing of Vali

When Răvaņa abducted Sītā and took her away, Jadāyu the Eagle King fights with the *asura* to save her. But he is fatally hurt. Rāma who finds him in this condition performs the final rites for Jadāyu who dies.¹¹⁹ Then he gains the friendship of Sugrīva¹²⁰ for whose sake he kills Vāli.¹²¹ All these three incidents which take place after Rāma's separation from Sītā are seen together in one and the same hymn.¹²²

> Being separated from Vaidēki who is like wealth He was languid; (yet) he sent Jadāyu¹²³ to the Heaven of Vishnu Obtained the affections of the wealthy King of the Vānaras¹²⁴ (and) Killed Vāli¹²⁵

4.5.9 Killing Vāli and Making Sugrīva King

The incidents in which Rāma kills Vāli and crowns Sugrīva as the King of Kishkinta¹²⁶ is mentioned twice both in single lines, by Kulacēkarālvār. Apart from the above mentioned verse, it is also found in another which is composed like a lullaby sung by Queen Kōsala to Rāma. In it, the prince is addressed as "the One who killed Vāli and gave the kingdom to the younger *vānara* i.e. Sugrīva."¹²⁷

4.5.10 Setting Fire to Lanka

Hanuman who goes to Lanka as a messenger from Rāma is enraged by the behaviour of Rāvaņa and he sets fire to the island city before returning.¹²⁸ This the $\bar{a}\lfloor v\bar{a}r$ refers to it in a single line as an act of Rāma performed through Hanuman. He says,

"He who burnt the city of Lanka through Hanuman To subdue the anger of the *asura* King"¹²⁹

Thus here the burning of Lanka is treated as an act of kindness, an attempt to subdue the ego of Rāvana.

4.5.11 Building a Dam-like Bridge in the Sea

In order to cross over to Lanka and save Sītā, Rāma builds a bridge connecting the two shores.¹³⁰ This is referred to by Kulacēkarālvār in two different verses.

As Kōsala singing a lullaby to Rāma, he says that he built the bridge with $hills^{131}$ referring to the hills and rocks brought by the *vānaras* to build it. In the other he sings,

Piercing the roaring sea with the victorious arrow to distress it Built a bridge by which (you) crossed to the other shore.¹³²

Thus this hymn contains an additional information which refers to Rāma's anger at the Sea-god who would not help inspite of the strict ritualistic worship that was performed.¹³³

4.5.12 Invasion and Destruction of Lanka

Rāma entering Lanka with his army and destroying it¹³⁴ is merely mentioned in two of the hymns in Kulacēkarālvār's lullaby to Rāma. In both of them the epic hero is addressed as "the one who destroyed Lanka."¹³⁵ The word used to denote destruction is *alittal* which may also mean defeat. Since this is a war both meanings are applicable together. The latter of these hymns, however, mentions that he did so by "bending the unique (*oru*) bow." This clearly is a reference to his skill in archery which has already been proved when he shot a single arrow through to seven *marā* trees and when he subdued the Sea-god with his arrow.

4.5.13 The Killing of Ravana and Other Asuras

The primary aim of the *Rāmāvatāra* is the killing of Rāvaņa. This incident¹³⁶ is mentioned by Kulacēkarālvār in two of his hymns. He begins the lullaby,

"Born of the precious womb of Kausalya with lasting fame You scattered the heads of the King of Lanka In the south"¹³⁷

In the other verse, the *ālvār* sings of Rāma who entered Lanka and took away the dear life of Rāvaņa and the *asuras* holding long spears, dreadful like fire.¹³⁸ This incident where Rāma in human form confronts Rāvaņa with ten heads and his soldiers with spears speaks of the courage, strength and ability of the hero.

4.5.14 The Coronation of Vibhishana

The killing of Rāvaņa and the defeat of Lanka is followed by the appointment and coronation of its new King, Vibhīshaņa. This is done at the orders of Rāma,¹³⁹ Kulacēkarālvār sings of this saying that Rāma took away the life of Rāvana and gave the kingdom to his younger brother.¹⁴⁰ Hence the killing of Rāvaņa was not out of greed for more land, but to establish a rule in Lanka that was just and kind.

4.5.15 Rāma Hears His Story Recited by Lava and Kusa

Years after his return from the forest, Rāma holds an *asvamedha yāga* and his sons Lava and Kusa recite the story of Rāma during the celebration.¹⁴¹ Kulacēkarālvār mentions this with poetic beauty when he sings that the King heard it from the round ruby-red lips"¹⁴² of his own sons, denoting that the boys were still young. They had learnt it from the sage Vālmīki himself.¹⁴³

4.5.16 Rāma's Separation from Lakshmaņa

After years of beneficial rule Rāma is placed in a situation where he has to send Lakshmana away and be thus separated from him.¹⁴⁴ Kulacēkarālvār mentions this very briefly saying that because the sage asked so, Rāma had to be separated from the courageous and victorious brother, Lakshmana.¹⁴⁵ This is another of the instances where Rāma overcomes personal emotions to uphold *satva*.¹⁴⁶

4.5.17 Rāma:

(i) Terms of Address and Characteristics

Though Kulacēkarālvār sometimes uses the name Rāma or Sirāma (Sri Rāma)¹⁴⁷ he mostly denotes Rāma by the heroic acts mentioned in the above sections or by his relationship to some of the main characters of the epic, especially Kausalya his mother, Dasaratha his father and Sītā his wife.

The $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ addresses him as the one born of Kausalya's worthy womb and as the child of her family (*Kōcalaitan kulamatalay*).¹⁴⁸ In one hymn the hero is praised as the descendent or offspring as Dasaratha (*Dãsarathi*)¹⁴⁹ while some others refer to him as the son of Dasaratha's line (*Dasarathan tan kulamatalay*). In the 9th $p\bar{a}curam$ which is sung in the form of Dasaratha's lament when Rāma went to the forest, Rāma is referred to as "my son" (*en makan, en putalvan*).¹⁵⁰ The name Rāghava meaning a prince of the line of Raghu is also used.¹⁵¹

Besides he is "the sacred son-in-law of Janaka who has lasting great fame" and the husband of Maithili or $S\bar{i}t\bar{a}$, the princess from the city of Mithila.¹⁵²

(ii) Rāma's Greatness

The aim of all the $\bar{a}\underline{l}v\bar{a}rs$ who mention incidents from the Rāmāyaņa is to bring out the glories and greatness of Tirumāl in his incarnation as Rāma. Hence all references to the epic are used to attain this aim. However there are some hymns where the descriptions bring out certain aspects of Rāma's appearance in greater detail.

Though Rāma as a prince and warrior was able to use all weapons he has always been associated with the bow that was always victorious. He is said to carry the bent bow and have shoulders that are strong and firm as the hills $(mallanainta \ varait \ t\bar{o}!\bar{a})^{153}$ This is suggestive of all the acts of heroism and compassion that he has performed in that incarnation.

When singing the story of Rāma in brief, he begins the *pācuram* saying

In the beautiful city of Ayodhya, decorated and surrounded by walls, he is the light that brightens the whole world, He is born as the lamp of the Sūrya race who saved (and therefore could rule) the
heavens He is the long, red-eyed Rāma resembling a dark cloud.¹⁵⁴

Here Rāma's capital Ayodhya, its beauty and security is praised. But more than that, his greatness as the light of the Ikshvahu race which traces its origin from the sun and as the illuminator of the world are glorified. By his actions throughout his life he has upheld *dharma* by supporting it and destroying *adharma*. Then his dark colour is compared to the dark cloud that generously sheds rain on the whole world. His long reddish eyes show that he has a kind but discerning look or *kannottam*. This is considered to a very important characteristic of a benevolent king and certainly of God who is compassionate but just.

4.5.18 Sitā's Characteristics and Appearance

Kulacēkavālvār refers to Sitā in six different hymns but uses her name only once. He sings of her as the

Lady wearing fine ornaments and having long eyes, sharp and glittering like welloiled spears.¹⁵⁵

The term $n\bar{e}rilai$ that he uses to denote her, besides meaning someone who wears fine ornaments can also be used to denote a gentle woman. Another verse also describes her eyes but gives different details about them.

Sita with lovely dark, long eyes with red lines (*cevvari*).¹⁵⁶

Her hair with flowers, upper arms, slim waist, sweet voice and gentleness are praised in the following lines.

Lady with hair decorated with flowers and Beautiful upper arms resembling the bamboo¹⁵⁷

And,

Lady like a parrot having a slim waist resembling lightning and a gentle nature.¹⁵⁸

Comparing her to a parrot is a clear mention of her voice and speech which are gentle and sweet. The word used here is $p\bar{u}vai$ which may mean a parrot or an Indian cuckoo known as *kuyil*.

She is also referred to as Maitili¹⁵⁹ and Vaidēki.¹⁶⁰ These are names that she has derived from her native capital Mitila and country Vidēka. In the hymn where the latter name is used the *ālvār* calls her *tana-maruvu Vaidēki* which means Vaidēki who is united with wealth. This may simply mean that she is the princess from the rich country of Vidēka. But when Rāma is praised as Tirumāl in one of his incarnations, then surely Sītā is his consort Lakshmi, the Goddess of Wealth. Thus the description of Sītā's beauty and nature shows her as a princess and a goddess.

*4.6 PERIYĀLVĀR

The **Periyālvār Tirumoli** and **Tiruppallānțu** by Periyālvār also contain references to incidents that took place during Tirumāl's incarnation as Rāma.

4.6.1 Killing of Tātakai

Periyālvär in his Tirumoli mentions Rāma killing Tātakai when accompanying Sage Visvāmitra to protect the sacrifice that the sage wished to perform in his hermitage.¹⁶¹

In his decade which is set like the songs to be sung during a game of *untipara* usually between two maidens or two groups, the <u>alvar</u> alternates verses singing the praise of the Krishna and Rāma incarnations. While singing of Rāma's skill in archery, he says,

> Previously he bent the bow and seized the life of the older woman, Sing the prowess of his bow and play *unti*¹⁶²

Though Tāṭakai is mentioned as *mutu-peṇ* (old woman) it may be remembered that she was an *asuri* of great might and full of vengeance.

4.6.2 Breaking the Bow to Win Sita

Rāma broke the bow of Shiva at King Janaka's capital and won Sītā as his bride.¹⁶³ This incident is mentioned in three verses by Periyālvār. In the first reference he sings this as being said by Yashoda when she tries to persuade Krishna to be fearless and patient during his ear-piercing ceremony. She pacifies him by praising his various deeds, and adds "You broke the bow"¹⁶⁴ which is a clear reference to this incident in his incarnation as Rāma. The other two are found in the same decade which is supposed to be what Hanuman said to Sītā when he met her in captivity in Lanka. Hanuman has to first prove that he is actually a messenger from Rāma. So he says,

O Lady with wavy dark hair! Your servant's supplication Breaking the bow of Janaka who wears a crown densely set with gems He brought you ... (this is) one proof.

In another verse, he mentions that he has brought the ring from Rāma whose fame fills all directions. When he went to (protect) the fire-sacrifice (of Visvāmitra) he broke the bow in the presence of a very large assembly. Hearing Hanuman's words which seem to summarise the incidents from the time she met Rāma and seeing his ring, she says "The proofs tally, Hanuman" and placing the ring on her head, she is happy.¹⁶⁵

4.6.3 Subduing Paracurāma

After his marriage to Sītā, Rāma returns to Ayodhya with his family and entourage. On his way he was stopped by Paracurāma¹⁶⁶ but Rāma coveted his bow of Vishnu and destroyed the power of his penance that made him haughty. Periyālvār sings this as follows:

Rāma took away the bow and the penance Of him who confronted him saying, Proceed after seeing the might of my bow.¹⁶⁷

In another verse the $\bar{a}\underline{l}v\bar{a}r$ speaks of Paracurāma as one who removed kings and *ksatriyas* as if they were weeds (*aracu kalai katta*) and as having the merits of rare and great penance (*aruntavatton*). But when he stopped Rāma on the way, the latter destroyed these merits with his tight bow.¹⁶⁸

4.6.4 Rāma Leaving for the Forest

One of the turning points in the **Rāmāyaņa** is Rāma's acceptance of his father's orders and his departure to the forest.¹⁶⁹ What he really leaves behind without any sense of loss or regret is brought out in one of the verses of Periyāļvār.

Accepting the word of Kūni, hard as a tree knob He granted to Bharata the country, Victorious elephants, horses and kingship And reached the forest.¹⁷⁰

Here the hunchback handmaid is described as *koṅkaivaŋ Kūŋi* which may also mean a hunchback with the hard breasts meaning one who has not nursed babies and therefore does not know the love for a child like Rāma. It is clearly mentioned in other verses that Kūni is the cause behind the banishment of Rāma to the forest. Hearing the foolish words of this Kūni, Kaikēyi wants Rāma to go away so that her son will become king. So with her usually calm mind now confused she asks for her boons. The bewildered Dasaratha is unable to contradict.¹⁷¹ Thus the banishment of Rāma is attributed to Kūni, the step-mother Kaikēyi and father Dasaratha.

Though according to the epic, Rāma was accompanied by his wife and brother, this $\bar{a}_{l}v\bar{a}r$ mentions only once¹⁷² that he went with Lakshmana. There is no mention of Sītā going with them.

4.6.5 Rāma's Friendship with Guha

The friendship that Rāma formed with Guha¹⁷³ who was a chieftain of a hunting tribe that also ferried boats across the Ganges is usually used to illustrate his simple and loving nature befitting a good king. Periyālvār mentions this only

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once in his hymns as a proof that Hanuman cites to show that he is actually Rāma's messenger. He says,

O Great Queen of the King of Ayodhya With chariots, Please listen. The skilled archer with sharp arrows Accepted in great friendship With Guha at the (bank of) the Ganges.¹⁷⁴

Here Rāma's royal status, power and bravery are mentioned while nothing is said of Guha.

4.6.6 Arrival of Bharata and the Granting of the Sandals

When Rāma stopped near the Citrakūța Hill, Bharata arrived and begged him to return even though he had left for the forest so that the latter can become king.¹⁷⁵ What transpired between the two at Citrakūța is referred to in three verses by this $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$.¹⁷⁶ On reaching Rāma, Bharata bows to him in reverence (*panital*).¹⁷⁷

> To the eminent Bharata of unmatched character Who followed him saying, "Grace this slave; Wear the crown and rule the three worlds." He gave his wooden sandals.¹⁷⁸

In another hymn, the $\bar{a}\underline{l}v\bar{a}r$ says that the wooden sandals were given as a pledge or compensation ($\bar{i}tu$) while he stayed away to save the *devas*.¹⁷⁹

4.6.7 Plucking the Eye of Kākācuran

Rāma and Sītā enjoyed the natural surroundings near the Citrakūța Hill. Once when they were in each other's company Cayantan, the son of Indra appeared as a crow and pecked at Sita. This angered Rāma who plucked away one of its eyes.¹⁸⁰ Two hymns of Periyālvār use this incident. One is in the decade where Yashoda asks the crow to bring a stick for Krishna who wishes to accompany the other cowherd children to tend cows. Here she tells the crow that at the Citrakūța Hill that shines like gold, he as Rāma has taken away one eye and adds that the crow had better bring the stick; if not he might remove the other eye as well.¹⁸¹ In the other verse, this incident is mentioned with more details and is sung as if Hanuman is saying it to Sītā.

When staying at Citrakūța The small crow pecked at your breast.
When the missile was discharged The bird ran about the whole world
And cried "O Great One! Rāma! I am your refuge." This missile
Plucked it's eye. This is one proof.¹⁸²

4.6.8 Cutting off the Nose and Ear of Sūrpanakha

While Rāma stayed at Pañcavadi in the Dandaka forest, Sūrpanakha, the sister of Rāvana sees him and is enamoured of his youthful manliness and good looks. When all her attempts to win him failed, she approached Lakshmana who cuts off some of her limbs.¹⁸³ The most mentioned of these is her nose. This occurrence is found mentioned in four of the hymns of Periyālvār as well. But he too mentions the severing of the nose in all these verses.¹⁸⁴ Only one verse contains a description of Sūrpanakha and her loud wails. "He cut off the ear and nose of the slim-waisted Sūrpanakha, while she made loud noise."¹⁸⁵

4.6.9 The Appearance of the Golden Deer; Rāma Goes in Pursuit of It and Lakshmana Leaves to Help Him

In the Rāmāyaņa, Rāvaņa plans successfully to separate Sītā from Rāma and Lakshmaņa. He sends Mārīca in the form of a lovely golden deer. It frisks about where Sītā could see. She is attracted by it and asks Rāma to get it for her. When Rāma attempts to catch it, the deer runs away and Rāma follows it and shoots it with an arrow. Mārīca, when he dies shouts for Lakshmaņa but in the voice of Rāma. Hearing this Sītā, overcome with anxiety for her husband insists that Lakshmaņa goes in search of him. Even when Lakshmaņa explains that the deer is not real she speaks to him harshly and thus Lakshmaņa leaves her guardless, to help Rāma.¹⁸⁶ Periyālvār mentions this incident once in his decade that is sung as the words of Hanuman to Sītā in captivity.

He says, "A gold-like deer entered (the hermitage) and played happily. (When you asked for it) Our Lord, following his love for you, took the bow and went (after it). Then Lakshmana also went (to help). This, is one proof."¹⁸⁷

4.6.10 Aiming One Arrow through Seven Mara Trees

At Kishkinta, the country of the $v\bar{a}naras$, Rāma shoots an arrow that fells seven marā trees to prove his skill in archery.¹⁸⁸ Periyālvār merely mentions this incident in two of his verses and in both they are attributed to Krishna. In a verse in which Yashodara tries to coax Kannan to have his oil-bath by praising him, one of his praiseworthy deeds she lists is "You felled the marā tree."¹⁸⁹ Though she mentions it in the singular, anyone familiar with the incidents of the Rāmāyana epic would certainly understand what is meant. Another hymn reveres him as "the Lord who aimed the *marā* tree with his bow (and one arrow)."¹⁹⁰

4.6.11 The Search for Sitā

With the Kishkinta army at his disposal, Rāma is able to send men in all directions to look for Sītā. Hanuman who goes southwards finds her at Ashoka Vana in Lanka.¹⁹¹ There is a whole decade sung by Periyālvār (3-10) which is composed as what Hanuman said to Sītā on meeting her.¹⁹² This serves as an excuse to sing of the various incidents that had taken place since her abduction by Rāvana. Having listed them in seven verses, Hanuman says in the eighth verse,

O Vaidēki! A supplication The Lord of the rich, beautiful Ayodhya, When searching for you, together with The King of the *Vānaras*, of equal fame, Mentioned these as proofs.¹⁹³

This is the only instance when the search for Sita is referred to by this alvar.

This decade mentions some incidents known only to Rāma and Sītā. One such incident which happened during their happy days at the palace in Ayodhya is mentioned. Hanuman says, "Once, on a beautiful evening after sun-set which you spent together happily, you bound him with a garland of jasmines. This is one proof."¹⁹⁴

4.6.12 Building a Bridge Across the Sea and the Destruction of

Lanka

Inspite of Rāma's ritualistic prayers, the Sea-god does not offer any help to Rāma. So the latter shoots and arrow in to the sea to forcefully obtain consent. When the bridge is completed,¹⁹⁵ he crosses over to Lanka and destroys it in war.¹⁹⁶ Periyālvār refers to this in no less than seven hymns. Most of them talk of his archery.

Two of these hymns are put in the mouth of Krishna's mother who plays with him, asking him to clap his hands. She says,

> When the dashing waves beat against the hands That offered prayers to the broad, roaring sea, To distress the Sea God who was in hiding (Your) hands bent the bow. Clap with them O the Holder of the *Cārńka* bow. Clap.¹⁹⁷

Similarly she sings of the hands that attacked and killed the *asuras* with fatal arrows after crossing over to Lanka surrounded by the sea. The bridge to cross the sea was built by the monkey hordes after the sea deity himself was pressurized.¹⁹⁸

This archery also destroys Lanka which has a strong and able government $(val-\bar{a}l \ Ilankai)$.¹⁹⁹ The arrow that he discharged from the bow to destroy Lanka is said to have sparks spilling from it.²⁰⁰ In a verse in the **Tiruppallānțu** decade the $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ only mentions that Rāma fought with weapons to destroy Lanka, the residence of *asuras* without specific reference to the bow.²⁰¹ One hymn merely says,

He blocked the sea resembling rain clouds, entered Lanka And severed the golden crowns, nine plus one, of the thoughtless one.²⁰²

Who had abducted another's wife.

4.6.13 Killing of Rāvaņa

The killing of Rāvaņa by Rāma²⁰³ is referred to just as often. Apart from the reference above (E.n. 200) Periyālvār also sings that the bow which Rāma bent to save Sītā's honour was unique and without comparison. It caused the ten crowns of Rāvaņa, the king of Lanka to fall simultaneously. In the verse immediately next to it he adds that the shoulders were also cut off with the heads.²⁰⁴ This *ālvār* also depicts Rāvaņa as a pious person who through his penances had obtained great boons. With these boons for support he set out for war with a roaring army. But Rāma defeated him, destroying his ego.²⁰⁵

> With powerful boons for support Rāvaņa committed wrong deeds. (Rāma) fought and destroyed him Thus gaining for the world compassion.²⁰⁶

This is a reference to the tyranny of Rāvaņa that caused suffering and hardship to the *devas* and others. Thus the killing of Rāvaņa wins them peace and is like obtaining for them kindness. Most other references in this *ālvārs* hymns merely mention that Rāvaņa's shoulders and heads were severed.²⁰⁷

Though the incident where the *asura* king's sister has her nose cut off takes place much earlier than his defeat and death, Periyālvār sometimes mentions both the incidents together, but very briefly.²⁰⁸

4.6.14 Apointing Vibhishana as King

The granting of royal powers over Lanka to Vibhishaṇa²⁰⁹ is sung by Periyālvār in three hymns. Like others, he too mentions that after killing Rāvaņa Rāma gave the kingdom to the former's younger brother.²¹⁰ But he refers to Vibhishaṇa as being eminent among men (*nampi*) and in Rāma's words, "You shall rule as long as my fame lasts."²¹¹ While praising Tirumāl and pledging his total love and loyalty to him who resides at Tiruvaraňkam, he sings,

> My Lord of Tiruvarankam Turned his flower-like eyes in the direction of Lanka with fortress walls. For the sake of Vibhishana who has greatness.²¹²

This verse suggests that Rāma's war against Rāvaņa was not only to save Sītā's honour but also to help devotees like Vibhīshaņa.

4.6.15 The Greatness of Rāma

The greatness of Rāma's looks and ability is found not only in descriptions and the incidents mentioned above but also in the terms used by Periyalvar to refer to the epic hero.

> Rāma who has no equal Has long, lustrous knot of hair That seems like a combination Of the rays of a thousand suns.²¹³

His valour and fame are praised as if by Hanuman. He is also the "Rāma with beautiful shoulders" who discharged an arrow and destroyed the *asuras*.²¹⁴

His fame fills the directions (of the compass). When he went to (protect) the fire rituals, He broke the vow amidst the great assembly.²¹⁵ This is clearly a reference to his breaking the bow of Shiva at Janaka's court.

The terms and phrases used to refer to Rāma show that he is the son of a great family $(kulakkum\bar{a}r\bar{a})^{216}$ and the son or descendent of King Dasaratha $(D\bar{a}sarathi)^{217}$ Many hymns sing of him as the King of Ayodhya though various synonyms in Tamil are used (Ayodhik-karacan, Ayodhyar kon koman and $V\bar{e}ntan$).²¹⁸ He is also the husband of Sītā (Sīta-manālan).²¹⁹

There are however some names used to show that he has supernatural powers and that he is God incarnate. He possesses great skill and true knowledge $(vittakan)^{220}$. He is also called *tiruvālan*.²²¹ Though in current usage it would seem equal to the English address Mr. used before male names, this is traditionally used to refer to Shiva and Vishnu. Literally it means either a rich man or the Lord of Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth. He is also "Our Lord" (*Empirān*),²²² though his given name Rāma is also used.²²³

4.6.16 Sitā's Beauty and Nature

Periyālvār uses such terms and phrases to refer to or address Sītā as well. While her given name Sītā is sometimes used.,²²⁴ she is also referred to as Vaidēki²²⁵ which is a variation of Vaidēhi meaning the Princess of the Vidēha country.

She is described as having dark, wavy hair adorned with flowers. The darkness of her hair is said to be like the black surm applied to eyes.²²⁶ Her eyes are like that of a deer, gentle and modest. They are also compared to a pair of

flowers.²²⁷ Her ears are adorned by gold ear-ornaments.²²⁸ The traditional bodice known as *kaccu* or *vār* covers her breasts²²⁹ while her waist is slim and dainty like the lightning.²³⁰ Her fingers are soft and gentle like the petals of a glorisa superba (*kāntal*) bud.²³¹ She is pictured as a modest woman (*maṭavāl*)²³² and is compared to a beautiful garland made up of the inner petals of flowers (*alli am pū malark kōtāy*)²³³ It is noteworthy that this phrase may also mean the flower like lady (*malark kōtai*) who resides on the beautiful lotus flower (*alli am pū*). This would refer to Lakshmi, the consort of Tirumāl and addressing Sītā as: such is very suitable because Rāma is an incarnation of Tirumāl.

4.6.17 Hanuman

While there is a whole decade sung by Periyālvār as if they are the words of Hanuman bearing a message to Sītā from Rāma, only one verse refers to his ability. That too is the last verse which states the spiritual benefit one would receive by reciting that decade.²³⁴ In it, the $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ says that Hanuman of strength that always brings victory presented his proof and the message with selected words.

4.7 SRI ĀNTĀL

4.7.1 Cutting off the Limbs of Surpanakha

The **Rāmāyaņa** relates that when Rāma stayed at the hermitage at Pañcavadi in the Dandaka forest, Sūrpanakha, the sister of Rāvana causes them irritation. This leads to some of her limbs being cut off.²³⁵ Ānḍāl refers to this in one of her hymns which shows a maiden pining for her lover Kannan. When the maiden sees the buds of the Arabian jasmine (*mullai*) she thinks that it is making fun of her because Kannan has not come. So the woman in love says

> O Lady *Mullai*! Do not distress me with your (derisive) smile If the words of the youth who cut off the nose of the *asuri* who discards decorum If false, then my birth (existence) is also false.²³⁶

4.7.2 Building a Bridge in the Sea

The building of a bridge connecting the shores of India and Lanka²³⁷ is mentioned twice in Anțāl's hymns. She mentions that once Krishna whom she loves, "forsaking food and sleep, had pierced the roaring ocean and split it."²³⁸ This is a reference to Rāma shooting his strong arrow into the sea when he finds that his fasting and lying on a bed of grass is not accepted by the Sea-god. He built the necessary bridge by filling up or blocking up (*kațalai ațaittu*) a section of the sea.²³⁹

4.7.3 Destruction of Lanka and the Asuras

Lanka's destruction by Rāma²⁴⁰ is referred to thrice in Antal's hymns. Having built the bridge he goes into Lanka. There he

Kills the asura tribes completely and

He accomplishes this with his bow.²⁴²

4.7.4 Killing of Kumbakarnan

In the epic Kumbakarnan, the younger brother of Rāvana is killed by Rāma in battle.²⁴³ He is always spoken of, even popularly, as someone who sleeps nearly all the time. $\bar{A}ntal$ uses this in her **Tiruppāvai** while waking up one of her friends before dawn to go for their ritual bath and prayers. Since the friend does not wake easily she asks,

Once, long ago Kumbakarnan fell prey to the God of Death When he lost (the war with Rama). Did he bequeath to you his abundant sleep?²⁴⁴

Thus this reference pays more attention to this continuous sleep which she playfully attributes to her friends.

4.7.5 Slaying of Rāvaņa

Sri Antal refers to the killing of Ravana by Rama²⁴⁵ in three of her hymns.

Rāma is,

The hero who shot Rāvaṇa with incessant arrows like rain So that his heads being severed one by one, fell.²⁴⁶

The epic hero is said to have killed the King of Lanka in the south, out of anger.²⁴⁷ The anger that one feels at seeing innocent people suffer because of another's tyranny is further enhanced in Rāma's case by the abduction of Sītā. This makes Rāvaņa an undesirable member of society. He is like a weed in a fertile field. So Rāma removed him just as weeds are pulled out (*kaļaintāŋ*). When singing the praises of Kaņņaŋ this devotee adds this incident as a famous one²⁴⁸ in his many incarnations.

4.7.6 Rāma's Characteristics

The terms $\bar{\Lambda}$ nțāļ uses to denote Rāma refer to his youth and heroism. He is the young man (*Kumaranār*)²⁴⁹ who cut off Sūrpanakha's nose. It may be mentioned here that the name Kumaran is usually used for Lord Murukan who is always associated with youth, heroism and good looks. Rāma is also called $c\bar{c}vaka^{250}$ who crossed the sea by building a bridge and killed the *asuras* and King of Lanka. This clearly shows his heroism. But apart from meaning a hero, the word also means a servant. The almighty Lord Vishnu comes down to earth to help or serve his devotees in various ways. Here he has destroyed the *asuras* which is a service done to all his devotees who had suffered due to the arrogance of the *asuras*. He is the *talaivan*²⁵¹ or hero who killed Rāvana. This term again is used in traditional love poetry to denote a maiden's lover. It may be borne in mind that Ānţāļ loved Tirumāl at Tiruvarańkam as her future husband. Similarly *manattukiniyān*²⁵² meaning "one who is pleasant to think of" or a person who is loving, can mean the Lord who is loved by Ānţāļ or by all devotees for that matter.

4.8 TIRUMANKAIYĀĻVĀR

The 1253 verses sung by Tirumankaiyālvār are in six separate collections namely Periya Tirumoli, Tirukkuruntāntakam, Tirunetuntāntakam,

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Tiruvelukkūrrirukkai, Ciriya Tirumațal and **Periya Tirumațal**. Of these the first is the longest running into more than a 1000 hymns. These works of Tirumankaiyālvār contain numerous references to **Rāmāyaņa** incidents.

4.8.1 Aiming at Kuni's Back with his Catapult

In his boyhood Rāma, playing with his catapult sees the hunchbacked maid, Kūni. He set a pebble to it and aims that pebble at her bent back.²⁵³ Tirumankaiyālvār refers to it in his **Periya Tirumoli**. He sings, "Once you stood and propelled a pebble to straighten the well-set hunch." He also adds, as a true devotee of Tirumāl, that it was an act that the Lord intended²⁵⁴ and not a childish prank. Thus the compassion of Tirumāl is hinted at though like Kūni, the recipients may not know it.

4.8.2 Protecting the Yaga of Sage Visvamitra

Another incident in the Bāla Kāndam of the **Rāmāyana** is Rāma's departure from Ayodhya with Sage Visvāmitra. During his journey with the sage, accompanied by Lakshmana, two incidents take place. He kills Tātaka²⁵⁵ and also helps Akalya to regain her original form. The second incident is not mentioned, perhaps because it is the result of another's curse and the redemption is also granted. But this $\bar{a}_{l}v\bar{a}r$ sings how Rāma defeated Tātakai, who is of the *asura* class of beings and protected the sage's *velvi* by using the skill in archery that he had learnt earlier.²⁵⁶ In another hymn he describes Tātakai as lacking feminine qualities or goodness (*nīrmai*). Rama killed her by discharging the destructive arrow from his victorious bow.²⁵⁷ The lines from the **Periya Tirumatal** further clarifies the greatness of Rāma's act by describing Tatakai as being large and firm

as a hill and incomparable. But with his firm strength and valour he sent her to the Land of Yama for the sake of the great sage.²⁵⁸ Thus the killing of Tāṭakai is shown as part of Rāma's duties as the protector of the sacrificial rites.

4.8.3 Breaking the Bow to Win Sitā

Rāma wins Sītā as his bride by breaking the bow of Shiva.²⁵⁹ According to Tirumaňkaiyālvār Rāma, hearing the words, "this bow is with the lady who has soft wavy hair and wears good suitable ornaments," he promptly broke it. Thus he was happily united with her in love.²⁶⁰ The association between Sītā and the bow is said to be based on the decision that she would be married to the man who breaks it.²⁶¹ In another verse he is described as a dark unique youth who broke the strong bow.²⁶² In a poem which depicts a young woman who pines out of love for Krishna, she mentions his various acts of love and heroism in all his incarnations. "You broke the bow and embraced the shoulders of the gentle lady"²⁶³ describes one such deed.

4.8.4 Rāma's Banishment and His Stay in the Forest

The banishment of Rāma and his journey to the forest with his wife Sitaand brother Lakshmaņa²⁶⁴ is mentioned by the $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ with details in four verses.

Due to the cruel words of the hunchbacked woman Kūni the dark-coloured Rāma wandered in the forest with his gentle wife.²⁶⁵ In another verse their loneliness is brought out by saying, "with his younger brother Lakshmana, and his loving wife for company he wandered in the forest burning with heat."²⁶⁶ Crossing the areas where deer, elephants and horses roam, he went into the forest with only

the forest with only his bow and arrows for protection.²⁶⁷ The harshness of the forest heat and the tender nature of Sita are described in the Periya Tirumatal –

Through the scorching forest that indicates death, On the hot pebbles roasted by the sun's intense heat, Did not the beautiful Vaidēki With a swan's gait and feet soft as cotton, Walk behind King Rāma?²⁶⁸

These lines are supposed to be what a woman in love with Tirumāl said. She lists in this text the troubles that women in love were prepared to bear to stay united with their men. Hence Rāma's journey through the forest is depicted stressing the hardships that Sītā faced for love.

4.8.5 Accepting Guha as His Friend

Rāma who has never even heard of Guha, the hunter-boatman, accepts him as his friend and brother.²⁶⁹ This is usually cited by devotees who doubt their own worth but long for Tirumāl's grace. Tirumańkaiyālvār sings this incident only once.

> Not thinking he is uneducated, lowly or a stranger, Your heart melted and was filled with compassion, You said to him, "This young lady With modest deer-like eyes is your friend Your brother is my brother"; "not stopping there Added happily "You are my friend, stay here." These words have entered my heart, O Oceancoloured Lord. I take refuge at your feet, God of Tiruvarańkam adorned by parks.²⁷⁰

This verse does not mention Guha by name. But the words with which Rāma accepts the chief of the hunters is sufficient to show who is meant. The incident is

used to suggest that God who readily accepts a stranger as a member of his family will surely accept as his devoted slave someone who loves and trusts him.

4.8.6 Cutting the Nose and Ears of Sūrpanakha

The cutting off of Sūrpanakha's limbs²⁷¹ receive more detailed mention in the hymns of Tirumankaiyālvār. She is said to be the princess of Lanka in the south belonging to the *asura* race and the younger sister of Rāvaņa. She has bright teeth and is hot tempered. Her desire for Rāma made her pine for him and thus she became pale and yellow like gold. But Rāma became angry and cut off her nose.²⁷² In another verse the $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ mentions that she thought she could equal Sītā but she had her nose and both her ears cut off with a sharp sword.²⁷³ Though she is referred to as an *asuri* resembling a hill,²⁷⁴ with her mouth like a cave²⁷⁵ most of the verses refer to her beauty. She is the creeper of the *asura* family with broad hips swaying artistically.²⁷⁶ Since her bright teeth shine like lightning, lightning itself moves away on seeing her.²⁷⁷ When her nose and her ears were cut she screamed and ran into Lanka with her palm on her head.²⁷⁸

4.8.7 The Killing of Marica

Rāvaņa, hearing of Sīta from Sūrpanakha, sends one of his *asuras* named Mārīca to have Rāma removed from the hermitage in which they live.²⁷⁹ This $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ mentions in four verses the appearance of the deer and Rāma aiming his harsh arrow. The deer with shining spots walked about and Rāma followed it.²⁸⁰ But it is a deer only in form hence the $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ says that Rāma shot an arrow at the form (*uru*) in the forest and realised the truth. Besides it did not frisk as a normal deer would (*tulla varumān*).²⁸¹ One of his verses, however, gives details regarding

this incident. Rāvaņa is said to be the cause for the death of Mārīca who went to the hermitage which had only beds made of leaves. He appeared as an illusory deer. The purpose of sending Mārīca was to take away Sītā. The other verse describes how Rāma seeing before his eyes the form of the deer playing about, followed it with his fiery arrow and aiming it pierced the fleshy chest and the arrow was bathed (in blood). Thus the Lord killed the *asura*.²⁸²

4.8.8 Rāvaņa's Desire for Sītā

When Rāvana, instigated by the words of his sister Sūrpanakha, succeeds in separating Rāma and Lakshmana from Sītā he appears as an ascetic and asks for alms.²⁸³ Tirumankaiyālvār mentions the details when he says the $t\bar{a}nava$ or asura who had obtained a sword from Shiva ($v\bar{a}larakkan$) concealed himself in ochre robes, hastened to the place where Sītā stayed and fell in love with her. The $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ uses the word $k\bar{a}tal$ in both the verses to describe the emotion he had for her.²⁸⁴

4.8.9 Abduction and Captivity of Sitā

Rāvaņa, enamoured of her beauty, abducted Sītā and kept her at Asōkavaṇa in Lanka with many women to watch over her.²⁸⁵ This incident is mentioned three times but in the same decade which is composed as if it were the pleadings of the *asuras* after defeat.

Entering the Dandaka forest our unjust king Brought the lady and is (now) destroyed.²⁸⁶

He kept her, the goddess Sītā, as a captive in the park fragrant with flowers and vegetation but guarded.²⁸⁷ Rāvaṇa is at fault because he kept the gentle woman who, forgetting her feminine charms, has taken refuge with some sages.²⁸⁸ By

showing that she was living like a *tapasvini*, Rāvaņa's act is shown as an atrocious one.

4.8.10 Slaying of Asuras like Karan, Kavantan and Viratan

During his stay in the forest, Rāma killed many *asuras*.²⁸⁹ This is briefly mentioned with the names of the *asuras* grouped together.

Sūrpanakha's brother Karan who protects her in the forest is killed by Rāma after cutting off Sūrpanakha's limbs.²⁹⁰ Tirumankaiyālvār refers to it in less than two lines in his Ciriya Tirumatal. He sings that Rāma bent his bow and sent Sūrpanakha's older brother to burning hell.²⁹¹ In one of the verses, Rāma is praised as killing Karan and Kavantan (Kabantan) each with a single arrow.²⁹² In another verse Karan is left out but Virātan is added. The *ālvār* advises the people,

> Approach the feet of the King of the *devas* Who bent his bow in the wide forest To kill Kavantan and brave Virātan With weapons in his strong hands And anger in his eyes.²⁹³

The use of the word *vinnavar* to denote the *devas* along with the killing of Virātan seems to suggest the story of the latter. He was a *deva* turned *asura* by a curse but his death at Rāma's hands gave him back his original status.

4.8.11 Aiming an Arrow through Seven Marā Trees

One of the celebrated actions of Rāma that brings out his skill in archery is his aiming a single arrow through seven $mar\bar{a}$ trees.²⁹⁴ Of the two hymns by Tirumahkaiyālvār which refer to this incident is one supposed to be said by the mother of a young maiden in love with Tirumāl. The mother laments at her daughter's plight and indirectly blames the youth (Tirumāl) for having unsettled the heart of the maiden.

He is the Lord of the *devas*, the victorious archer Who aimed (through) seven $mar\bar{a}$ trees.²⁹⁵

The other verse which refers to this incident has one additional information. His bow was tight.²⁹⁶ This means the arrows shot would be forceful and travel a greater distance.

4.8.12 Killing Vāli and Making Sugrīva King

Rāma in need of allies to search for Sītā becomes involved in the affairs of Kishkinta. There, having proven to Sugrīva and Hanuman his skill with the bow and arrows, kills Vāli,²⁹⁷ thus paving the way for Sugrīva to ascend the throne.²⁹⁸ While the killing of Vāli is mentioned with the slaying of some *asuras*²⁹⁹ the ability of Vāli is also brought out. His eyes are cool (*painkan*); he is brave and victorious (*viral*). By referring to him as being red-faced (*cem-mukam*) the fact that he is a monkey or *vānara* is brought out.³⁰⁰ Only one hymn states the purpose and result of the killing, which is to make Sugrīva king of the *vānaras*:

Sending an arrow to pierce the chest of Vāli who rose in anger You gave the kingdom to (his) younger brother whom you intended.³⁰¹

4.8.13 Hanuman in Lanka

Hanuman as a messenger of Rāma enters Lanka searches for Sitā and finds her at Asōka Vana. The haughty behaviour of Rāvana angers him and wishing to show the might of Rāma and his army he breaks the trees of the Asōka vaṇa, kills the asura soldiers and army chieftians as well as Akshaya Kumāraṇ, a son of Rāvana.³⁰²

He also sets fire to his capital.³⁰³ This is also mentioned in Tirumańkaiyalvārs hymns. "Formerly, Tirumāl as Rāma, had sent a message through a monkey,"³⁰⁴ sings the $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ referring to the sending of Hanuman to Lanka. This Hanuman later sets fire to this island in the south so that it was destroyed.³⁰⁵

The monkey that came with a message Crossed the large ocean of waves, climbed The tall, broad, fragrant park and burnt it. He killed (our) beloved children and relatives. Not surrendering your Prince's wife to him The ignorant are now suffering.³⁰⁶

Thus the asuras are supposed to have lamented after their defeat.

4.8.14 Vibhishana's Advice to Ravana

Though Răvana is the powerful king of Lanka and elder brother to Vibhīshana, it does not prevent the latter from advising the King to send back Sītā.³⁰⁷ This he does to save the *asura* king and his people from being wiped out. Tirumankaiyālvār puts this incident in the mouth of the *asuras* themselves after their defeat.

> Bowing before our King, the Lord of faultless Lanka His own brother said, in front of our own eyes, "The Lady is surely poison to the *asura* people We have suffered as the *devas* desired."³⁰⁸

The last line also suggests the cause for the Rāma incarnation – which is to avenge Rāvana for his cruel acts.

4.8.15 Discharging an Arrow into the Sea and Building a Bridge

In order to enter Lanka Rāma aims an arrow into the sea causing it to split up so that he could build the bridge he needs.³⁰⁹ Many references to this incident are found in the hymns of Tirumańkaiyālvār. One explains clearly why Rāma desires to go to Lanka.

> Due to the cruelty of separating the Goddess Lovely with wavy hair and sweet lips, He wished to stare fiery-eyed at the swift *asura* Crush his shiny crowns of gems and destroy Lanka. So bending his well-bound bow he discharged A destructive arrow for the sea to make way. With the *vānara* hordes he built a bridge Using hills.³¹⁰

Rama subdued the unrelenting Sea-god,³¹¹ with an arrow which was fiery as if it was dipped in oil. At that the sea split up making way for building a dam-like bridge. The $v\bar{a}naras$ bringing hills, filled up the sea-bed to raise the bridge.³¹² The army that helped Rāma to build the bridge consisted of the bears of the forest, and monkeys including the type known as *mucu*. With their assistance he was able to subdue the haughty *asuras*.³¹³ This $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ also uses this incident in his hymns where the maiden in love with Tirumāl pines in separation.

The valiant hero – who bent his tight, cruel bow Discharging a fiery arrow with roaring flames Thus scorching the sea lashed by white-crested waves, Has not come. What shall I do?

The next verse also refers to it as a prelude to killing Rāvana.³¹⁴

4.8.16 Invasion and Destruction of Lanka

The attack on Lanka and its destruction³¹⁵ is mentioned no less than 13 times by Tirumańkaiyalvár. He does not sing of an invasion as such but uses the word *cerra* meaning destroyed.³¹⁶ He also uses the words *poți ceyta*³¹⁷ meaning destroyed or caused to crumble and *citari*³¹⁸ meaning scattered. Those words suggest the total destruction of Lanka.

Lanka of the South, however, is not an easy city to destroy. It had protective fort-walls³¹⁹ surrounded by the deep sea.³²⁰ There were also the four traditional sections of a sizeable army. But Rāma attacked and destroyed the whole army with the divisions – elephant, horse, chariot and foot-soldiers.³²¹

The Tiruvelukkūrrirukkai contains more details about the heroic act.

Once you destroyed Lanka with three fortifications. Over which the sun and moon Never passed. With a single arrow – fiery and Two pointed Discharged by bending the two Ends Of your unique arrow.³²²

The three fortifications are the sea, forest and fortress walls surrounding it. Rāma is said to have been angry so that he destroyed this royal town of the *asura* Rāvaņa, with his arrows aimed from the bow.³²³ With the city, Rāvaņa and his family were also wiped out.³²⁴

The *ālvār* sings that Rāma destroyed beautiful Lanka and the *asura* lineage for the sake of the *devas*³²⁵ who begged to be relieved of Rāvaṇa's tyranny. However, he also mentions that Rāma destroyed Lanka for Sītā's sake.³²⁶

4.8.17 Killing of Kumban and Nikumban

The two sons of Kumbakarna, Kumban and Nikumban are killed by the *vānara* King Sugrīva and his adviser Hanuman respectively.³²⁷ This is mentioned in a single line by Tirumankaiyālvār. He sings like the *asuras* lamenting after defeat.

"With Kumban Nikumban also perished"

and adds,

Death appearing as a human Kills us with arrows.³²⁸

This shows that Rāma kills many asuras during his war with Rāvaņa.

4.8.18 Killing of Kumbakarnan and Indrajit

Rāma himself kills Kumbakarnan, the younger brother or Rāvana³²⁹ and then Lakshmana kills Indrajit,³³⁰ the son of Rāvana. This $\bar{a}\underline{l}v\bar{a}r$ refers to this too as the words of the vanguished *asuras*.

Not crying out "Our Lord! Accept this slave" Indrajit died unable to bear the piercing arrow.

They also say that Kumbakarnan perished.331

4.8.19 Killing of Rāvaņa

The death of Rāvaņa at the hands of Rāma³³² is mentioned no less than 16 times by Tirumaňkaiyālvár. He states that the *asura* was killed for the sake of or because of Sītā. Rāma crushed the tall crowns of the King of Lanka and the "cause was the modest lady."³³³ This incident where Rāvaņa's heads or crowns are severed is mentioned in many hymns as an act of heroism. Rāvaņa was King of Lanka over which the sun feared to pass, out of fear and respect for its king. His hands were strong and firm. But Rāma with his arrow that surely kills, caused them to be cut off so that they rolled on the ground like palmyra fruits.³³⁴

The archer Who discharged the choice, fiery arrow To split the strong chest of the dark *asura* Of Lanka protected by encircling stone walls.³³⁵

These hymns also show that Rāvana was strong, and heroic, feared even by the sun. By saying that Rāma killed him, the $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ only enhances the courage and ability of the epic hero.

This act of killing Rāvaņa is also said to have sent him to the world of Yama situated in the southern region.³³⁶ One of the hymns describes Rāma as

The handsome Lord who struck with his arrow So that the lover of Mandotari, with fragrant hair Entered heaven.³³⁷

4.8.20 Granting the Kingdom to Vibhishana

After killing Rāvaņa, Rāma makes Vibhishaņa the King of Lanka.³³⁸ This receives mention in the hymns of Tirumankaiyālvar as well. Two of these

references mention the two incidents involved in the same order. "He cut off the ten crowns of the *asura* king and gave the kingdom to the king's younger brother.³³⁹ But one verse places them in reverse though the meaning is the same.

He gave the kingdom to the younger brother Of Dasagrīva, of Lanka among the waves; Earlier he aimed with the great divine bow.³⁴⁰

The phrase *kalai-māc cilai* is used to describe the bow suggesting that the bow is a manifestation of divine power. This $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ also brings out the grace and good-will Rāma had towards Vibhīshaņa. He split the breast of Rāvaņa but to "the meritorious (*celva*) Vibhīshaņa, he was different – good."³⁴¹ It may be noted that this contrast has not been pointed out by other $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}rs$.

4.8.21 Rama Sharing His Leaf with Hanuman to Eat

This incident not found in the Vālmiki Rāmāyana is mentioned by Tirumankaiyālvār in one of his hymns. He sings

> You did not forsake him (thinking) he is the great son of Vāyu, A monkey, an animal, another kind of being. With loving respect swelling greater than the sea Thinking there's no recompense for his important deed You said, "I shall eat with him of faultless truth" Wishing to obtain that great objective myself, I stand at your feet, O Lord of Tiruvarankam Adorned by beautiful parks.³⁴²

4.8.22 Rāma – Terms of Address and Eminence

Tirumańkaiyālvār uses various terms and phrases to address Rāma or to refer to him. He is called King Rāma³⁴³ and also the son of the King of Ayodhya, Dasarathan though different words are used like *cēy*, *matalai* and *ciruvan*.³⁴⁴ Even

the defeated *asuras* refer to him as "Your king who rules the world."³⁴⁵ His unique qualities and youth makes him comparable to a bull ($k\bar{a}lai$; $\bar{e}ru$) which is traditional in Tamil literature.³⁴⁶ Rāma is handsome like Ananga, the God of Love and has firm strong shoulders and arms.³⁴⁷ His strength and skill make his bow comparable to the sun, always victorious.³⁴⁸ The $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ in one of the verses calls Rāma "*arral mikunta ārralān*"³⁴⁹ a man with much capabilities, manliness, power, firmness, endurance and effort.

His divinity is seen in calling him *Perumān* and *Pirān* words usually used for God. The name *Ninmalan* (the pure one) confirms this.³⁵⁰ In one verse he is "Our Tirumāl."³⁵¹ However, he is also the king and protector who used his arrows to seize the lives of groups of *asuras*. For this reason he is also described as Yama in human form.³⁵²

4.8.23 Sītā - Names, Beauty and Nature

The gentle qualities of the beautiful wife of Rāma find very subtle mention in Tirumaňkaiyalvār's hymns. She is referred to by her names as Sītā, Maitili and Vaidēki³⁵³ and sometimes by general terms like "the Queen of the Eminent Man (i.e. Rāma)"³⁵⁴ or just, lady (*taiyal, naňkai*).³⁵⁵ She had soft wavy hair adorned with flowers³⁵⁶ and an arched forehead like a bow (*vil*)³⁵⁷ Her eyes are described as long (*nețuňkaņ*), sharp like a spear, beautiful, restless and also bright.³⁵⁸ Yet her look was modest and lovely like that of a young doe.³⁵⁹ She had red lips like coral and shapely breasts covered by the bodice.³⁶⁰ Below them were her slender waist described as being fine and slim like lightning on a creeper. Therefore she is also referred to as a "young creeper." Her fingers were slender and soft (*mel viral*)³⁶¹ and so were her feet, resembling cotton. She had the gait of a swan.³⁶² She wore some fine jewellery. Thus the *asuras* themselves admit that keeping her in captivity was like imprisoning a gentle peacock from the hill-slopes in a cage.³⁶³ Apart from comparing to gentle things or beings, like creeper, cotton and deer, the $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ specifically uses the term *melliyal* – a woman with a gentle nature.³⁶⁴

In two instances he speaks of her as a goddess. She is a gentle deity (ananku) and the goddess called Sita.³⁶⁵

4.8.24 Ravana – Strength and Nature

Rāvaņa with ten heads and 20 shoulders is also called Dasagrīva (literally "having ten necks").³⁶⁶ He had attractive, broad shoulders and impressive heads, adorned with tall golden crowns.³⁶⁷ His strength never diminished. His weapon, like the ever victorious bow, spear with a leaf-like tip, sword and his chariot ($t\bar{e}r$) gave him great power.³⁶⁸ Thus he could cause distress to the *devas* so that even the sun was afraid to pass over his island of Lanka.³⁶⁹

All this greatness and his wealth was lost because his mind was set on women. This made him sinful and therefore lowly (*punmaiyān*).³⁷⁰

4.8.25 Hanuman – Dear to Rama

Hanuman is the great son of the Wind God and has the form of a monkey. Yet due to his ability to complete successfully the duties entrusted to him he became a very dear friend of $R\bar{a}ma$.³⁷¹ This is no secret for even the defeated

asuras begging for mercy and refuge say to each other that, to appease Rāma they should get together and say "Long live Hanuman."³⁷²

4.9 NAMMĀĻVĀR:

The devotional hymns of Nammālvär are in four *pirapantams* viz **Tiruvāymoli**, **Periya Tiruvantāti**, **Tiruvāciriyam** and **Tiruviruttam**. These also contain some brief references to incidents in the **Rāmāyaņa**.

4.9.1 Aiming at Kūņi's Back with His Catapult

The boyish prank of Rāma makes him aim the pellet from his catapult at Kūni's bent back.³⁷³ This $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ mentions this in just one line in one of his hymns. According to him Rāma aimed and shot the pellet (*untai*) in the middle part of her body (at the back) so that the hunch on the back of the maid-servant was removed.³⁷⁴

4.9.2 Cutting the Nose and Ear of Sūrpanakha

The cutting of the limbs of Rāvaņa's sister Sūrpaṇakha³⁷⁵ is mentioned twice in Nammālvār's hymns. In one of them he says that as a devotee he has taken refuge with Rāma, famous for cutting off the *asuri's* nose.³⁷⁶ In the other he talks of the wicked or cruel *asuri* whose nose and large ear were cut off.³⁷⁷ The mere mention of the incident seems enough to know the character meant, for neither of the hymns mention names of those involved in the incident.

4.9.3 Rāma Following Mārica

The *asura* Mārīca, in order to help Rāvaņa to abduct Sītā appears as a golden deer. Since Sītā wishes to have it Rāma follows it.³⁷⁸ Nammālvār merely mentions that before Rāma "went after that deer which hid the true form"³⁷⁹ implying that Tirumāl who holds the wheel in one of his hands did so in an earlier incarnation. There is no mention of killing the *asura* who came as the illusory deer.

4.9.4 Sita's Captivity

When Rāvaņa abducts Sītā, he keeps her captive in the Asōkavaṇa³⁸⁰ in his island state. The place was luxuriant "not lacking in greenery" but she turned pale in her lonely, guarded state.³⁸¹ This shows that her emaciation was not due to her surroundings but the captive situation and her separation from Rāma.

4.9.5 Aiming an Arrow through seven marā Trees

Rāma shoots a single arrow through seven trees³⁸² to prove his skill to Hanuman and Sugrīva who do not know him yet. In his hymns, Nammalvār sometimes refers to just seven trees without mentioning the species,³⁸³ while two verses mention them as *marā* trees.³⁸⁴ But they also contain descriptions not found in the hymns of the other $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}rs$. These trees stood separate and were not joined together (*puṇarā*). They grew with luxuriant branches in a park dripping with honey.³⁸⁵

4.9.6 Destruction of Lanka

In the war between Rāma and Rāvana, Lanka the residence of the asuras is

destroyed.³⁸⁶ While mentioning this incident, Nammälvär also pictures Lanka's

beauty and grandeur. It was beautiful with tall mansions and huge fortress walls

surrounded by the sea. Rāma set fire to the city with the arrow shot from his

bow³⁸⁷ so that the mansions crumbled and the city and fortresses were reduced to

ashes. Thus Lanka of the south became a cruel battle field.³⁸⁸ This $\overline{al}v\overline{ar}$ also

mentions two reasons for Rāma to destroy this city. The hero burnt the city of the

furious asura for Sita's sake.³⁸⁹ But earlier,

The devas touching the ground, worship your (Rama's) feet Begging, "Burn the tall city at sea, the large abode Of the asuras who possess no goodness worth saving."³⁹⁰

Hence Rama burnt it to ashes for the sake of the devas.

4.9.7 Killing of Rāvaņa

The slaying or Rāvaņa by Rāma³⁹¹ is alluded to in seven hymns by Nammālvār. Rama bent his bow to kill the King of Lanka, fortified by walls.³⁹² The arrow he sent cut off his shoulders and heads, which fell like crumbling This act of Rama removed the harshness and stubbornness of the asura hills.³⁹³

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4.9.9 Rāma – Terms of Address and Greatness

The hymns of Nammälvär hardly mention Rāma by name but the terms and adjectives used make it easy to make out who is meant. Rāma belongs to the Ikshvaku race with many eminent ancestors. One such is Kākutta. So Rāma is "Kākutta with a cruel bow" and "an eminent person of the Kākutta line of Kings."³⁹⁷ He is the son of Dasaratha and resembles a pond, blue like sapphire. His dark colour is also compared to the black clouds that bring rain.³⁹⁸ His strength and bravery are brought out by terms like $\bar{e}_{\underline{r}}u$ (a lion) and $c\bar{e}vakan$ (soldier).³⁹⁹ His skill at archery is mentioned or implied whenever the defeat of the *asuras*, the Sea-god and others is mentioned. But Nammälvär, when praising him for aiming through the seven *mara* trees, says that Rāma is skilled in using his unique bow.⁴⁰⁰ The $\bar{a}_{\underline{l}}v\bar{a}r$ also reveres him as God or *Pirān*, *Emmān*, and *Pemmān*. Rāma is also God to the *devas*.⁴⁰¹ But to the *asuras* he is like poison that kills (*nañcan*).⁴⁰²

4.9.10 Sītā - Beauty and Nature

Sītā too is not mentioned by name. But the situation in which she is referred to points out that she is the woman meant. Her speech was pleasing like that of a parrot. When she was kept under guard at the Asōka Vana, rich in greenery she became pale. Though the greenery would have made the place cool, she became pale. This was certainly due to her separation from her beloved Rāma.⁴⁰³
4.9.11 Rāvana – His Nature and Valour

Rāvaņa, the King of Lanka was the famous and powerful ruler of great hordes of *asuras*.⁴⁰⁴ He was arrogant, self-conceited and cruel.⁴⁰⁵ He never retreated in battle.⁴⁰⁶ Since he had masculine courage and strength fit for a great leader, he always performed cruel deeds, like Yama, the God of Death. The word $m\bar{l}li^{407}$ used in this verse fits him well for it means, besides others, a king, a leader, commander of an army, an evil spirit and Yama, the God of Death.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The facts discussed in this chapter suggest certain conclusions. To begin with, it is clear that the $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}rs$ have not sung or referred to all the events of the Rama-katha. It may be said that they did not aim to sing or popularise the story but merely used the incidents or characters that suited the emotion or purpose of their hymns. Yet, a compilation of the incidents they have touched on, though separately and individually, shows that they have touched most of the events. (See Appendix: Table 1-9). Most of all, this chapter shows that the concept of Rāma being an *avatāra* of Tirumāl attains completion and a firm hold among the Tamils during the time of the $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}rs$.

Table 1 : The Mutalalvars

Pācuram/Hymn			
	Poykaiyā <u>l</u> vār	Pūtattālvār	Pēyā <u>l</u> vār
	First	Second	Third
Canto/Incident:	Tiruvantāti	Tiruvantāti	Tiruvantati
<u>Aranya Kandam:</u>			
4.1.1 The Slaying of Mārīcan	82	15	52
<u>Kishkinta Kandam:</u>			
4.1.2 Shooting Through Seven <i>Marā</i> trees	27	-	52
<u>Yutta Kandam:</u>			
4.1.3 Building a Bridge across the Sea	2	-	-
4.1.4 Invading and Destroying Lanka	-	25	51
4.1.5 The Killing of Rāvaņa – The Killing of Rāvaņa for Sītā	59	25, 29, 43	52 -
Others:			
4.1.6 Description of Characters			
(i) Description of Sita	59	-	-
(ii) Description of Rāvaņa	35		

Table 2 : Tiruppānālvār

Pācuram/Hymn	
	Amalan Ātipirān
Canto/Incident:	
Yutta Kandam	
4.2.1 Killing of Rāvaņa	4

Table 3 : Tirumalicaiyālvār

	Pācuram/Hymn:	Nānmukan Tiruvantāti	Tiruccanta
Canto	/Incident:	Thuvanian	Viruttam
<u>Bala k</u>	Kandam		
4.3.1	Rāma Aiming the Catapult (<i>Vil</i>) at Kūni Subduing Paracurāma	8	30, 49
	-	8	
Arany	a Kandam		
4.3.3	Killing Kavantan and Karan		104
<u>Kishki</u>	nta Kandam		
4.3.4	Aiming through Seven <i>Marā</i> trees and the killing of Vāli	28, 85	73, 81
Yutta]	Kandam		
4.3.5	(i) Aiming an Arrow into the Sea		31, 50
	4.3 Agitating the Sea and Building a Bridge	28	28, 32, 39, 92
4.3.6	Invasion and Destruction of Lanka	29	39, 54, 116
4.3.7	Slaying of Rāvaņa	28	
4.3.8 4.3.9	Slaying of Kumbakarṇaṇ Rama Making Vibhishaṇa the King of Lanka	29	33, 51, 56, 116 33
<u>Others</u>			
	The Greatness of Rāma The Nature and Appearance of Sitā	85	31, 91, 93, 94 91

Pācuram/Hymn: Canto/Incident:	Tirumālai	Tiruppalliyelucci
Bala Kandam:		
4.4.1 Protecting Visvāmitra's Yāga		4
Yutta Kantam:		
4.4.2 (i) Building a Bridge over the Sea by Aiming an Arrow	11	
(ii) The Squirrel's Help	27	
4.4.3 The Destruction of Lanka and the Asuras	7	4
4.4.4 The Killing of Rāvaņa	11	

<u>Table 5 : Kulacēkarālvār</u>

	Pācuram/Hymn:	
Canto/I	neident:	Perumal Tirumoli
<u>Bala Ka</u>	indam:	
4.5.1 4.5.2 4.5.3	Protecting the Yāga of Visvāmitra Breaking the Bow to Marry Sītā Subduing Paracurāma	8-2, 10-2 9-4, 10-3 9-9, 10-3
Ayodhy	<u>a Kandam</u> :	
4.5.4	Rāma's Banishment to the Forest	8-5, 8-6, 9-1, 9-2, 9-3, 9-4, 9-5, 9-7, 9-8, 9-9, 9-10, 9-11, 10-4
4.5.5	Friendship with Guha and the Crossing of the Ganges	10-4
4.5.6	The Arrival of Bharata and the Granting of the Paduka and Kingdom	8-5, 10-4
Aranya	Kandam:	
4.5.7 4.5.8	Slaying of Virātan; Receiving a Bow from Sage Agastya; Cutting the Limbs of Sūrpanakha; Killing Karan, Tūṭanan and later Mārīcan The Death of Jadāyu and	10-5
<u>Kishkin</u> t	ta Kandam	
	Friendship with Sugrīva and Killing Vali	8-7, 10-6
4.5.9	Making Sugriva King	8-7
<u>Cuntara</u>	Kandam:	
4.5.10	Setting Fire to Lanka	10-6
Yutta Ka	andam	
4.5.11 4.5.12 4.5.13 4.5.14	Building a Dam-like Bridge in the Sea Invasion and Destruction of Lanka The Killing of Ravana and Other Asuras The Coronation of Vibhishana	8-8 8-8, 8-9, 10-7 8-1, 10-7 10-7
<u>Uttara K</u>	andam:	
4.5.15 4.5.16	Rāma Hears His Story Recited by Lava and Kusa Rāma's Separation from Lakshmaņa	10-8 10-9
Others		
4.5.17	Rāma:(i)Terms of Address and Characteristics(ii)Rāma's Greatness	8-8 9-3, 10-1
4.5.18	Sītā's Characteristics and Appearance	8-4, 9-2, 9-4, 9-8, 10-3, 10-6

<u>Table 6 : Periyālvār</u>

	Pācuram / Hym		
		Periyālvār Tirumoli	Timer
Canto	/ Incident		Tiruppallāņţu
<u>Bala I</u>	<u>Candam</u>		
4.6.1 4.6.2	Killing of Tāṭakai Breaking of the Bow to Win Sitā	3-9-2 2-3-7, 3-10-1,	
4.6.3	Subduing Paracurāma	3-10-9 3-9-2, 3-10-1	
Ayodh	iya Kandam		
4.6.4	Rama Leaving for the Forest	2-1-8, 3-9-4, 3-9-8, 3-10-3, 4-8-4	
4.6.5 4.6.6	Raīna's Friendship with Guha Arrival of Bharata and the Granting of Sandals	3-10-4 2-1-8, 3-9-6, 3-10-5, 4-9-1	
Aranya	<u>a Kandam</u>		
4.6.7 4.6.8 4.6.9	Plucking the Eyes of Kākācuran Cutting off the Nose and Ear of Sūrpanakha The Apppearance of the Golden Deer, Rāma goes in pursuit of it and Lakshmana Leaves to Help Him	2-6-7, 3-10-6 2-7-5, 3-9-8, 4-2-2, 4-7-1 3-10-7	
<u>Kishkir</u>	ita Kandam		
4.6.10	Aiming One Arrow through Seven <i>Marā</i> Trees	2-4-2, 4-1-3	
Cuntara	Kandam		
4.6.11	The Search for Sitā by Hanuman	3-10-2, 3-10-8	
<u>Yutta K</u>	andam		
4.6.12 4.6.13	Building a Bridge Across the Sea and the Destruction of Lanka Killing of Rāvaņa	1-6-7, 1-6-8, 2-1-10, 2-6-8, 3-9-10 2-6-8, 2-6-9, 2-7-5, 3-9-10, 4-2-2, 4-3-8, 4-7-1, 4-8-5, 4-8-10	3
4.6.14	Appointing Vibhishaṇa as King	2-6-9, 3-9-10, 4-9-2	
Others			
	The Greatness of Rāma Sītā's Beauty and Nature	3-9-2, 3-10-9, 4-1-1, 2.6.8, 3-10-1, 3-10-2, 3-10-4, 3-10-5, 3-10-7, 3-10-8, 3-10-9, 3-10-10,	
4.6.17	Hanuman	4-1-2, 4-3-7 3-10-10	

Pācuram / Verse No Canto / Incident	Tiruppāvai	Nācciyār Tirumo <u>l</u> i
<u>Aranya Kandam</u> : 4.6.18 Cutting off the Limbs of Sūrpanakha <u>Yutta Kandam</u> :		10-4
 4.6.19 Building a Bridge in the Sea 4.6.20 Destruction of Lanka and the Asuras 4.6.21 Killing of Kumbakarnan 4.6.22 Slaying of Rāvana 	24 10 12, 13	2-6, 11-7 2-6, 3-3 5-3
Others: 4.6.23 Rama's Characteristics		10-4

<u> Table 8 : Tirumańkaiyālvār</u>

Canto/I	Pācuram/ Hymn ncident	Periya Tirumo <u>l</u> i	Tirukkuruntäntakam	Tirunețuntănțakam	Tiruvelukkūrīnkkai	Ciriya Tirumatal	Periya Tirumatal
<u>Bala Ka</u> 4.8.1	ndam: Aiming at Kūni's Back with His Catapult	10-6-2					
4.8.2 4.8.3	Protecting the Yāga of Sage Visvāmitra Breaking the Bow to win S ī tā	8-6-3, 9-8-4 4-1-8, 10-6-8		13			Lines: 146- 147
Ayodhy 4.8.4	v <u>a Kandam</u> : Rāma's Banishment and His stay in the Forest	1-5-1, 3-1-6, 5-10-6					Lines: 49-53
4.8.5	Accepting Guha as His Friend	5-8-1					
<u>Aranya</u> 4.8.6	Kandam: Cutting the Nose and Ears of Sũrpaṇakha	1-5-5, 3-9-4 7-4-3, 10-6-9				Lines: 38-40	Lines: 144- 146
4.8.7	The Killing of Marica	2-5-6, 6-7-3, 11-4-7					
4.8.8 4.8.9	Ravana's Desire for Sita Abduction and Captivity of Sita	2-2-1, 2-2-2 10-2-3, 10-2-5 10-2-8					
4.8.10	Slaying of <i>Asuras</i> like Kara <u>n</u> , Kavantan and Virātan	2-10-5, 3-4-6				Lines: 40-41	
<u>Kishki</u> 4.8.11	nta Kandam: Aiming an Arrow through Seven Marā Trees	5-5-2, 10-6-9					
4.8.12		1-4-2, 2-10-5, 3-4-6, 4-6-3					
<u>Cuntar</u> 4.8.13	<u>a Kandam</u> : The Search for Sita and the Burning of Lanka	2-2-3, 6-4-6 10-2-6		20, 28			
<u>Yutta</u> 4.8.14 4.8.15	the for and	10-2-4 1-2-2, 4-2-1, 5-7-7. 6-10-6, 8-6-5, 8-6-6, 10-6-7					Line: 97
4.8.16	Invasion and Destruction of Lanka	1-2-2, 2-2-3, 3-9-5, 4-8-5, 6-5-8, 9-4-5, 10-2-10	2		Lines: 2-6	Line: 26	
4.8.17		10-2-10 10-2-5 10-3-2					

Canto	Pācuram/ Hymn /Incident	Periya Tirumo <u>l</u> i	Tirukkuruntántakam	Tirunetuntănțakam	Tiruvelukkūrrirukkai	Ciriya Tirumatal	Periya Tirumatal
			Tin	Tiru	Tiru	Ciriy	Periy
4.8.19	Killing of Rāvaņa	1-5-1, 2-2-2, 3-1-7, 4-2-1, 4-6-4, 5-4-5, 6-8-5, 7-5-3, 7-8-7, 8-6-3,		28, 29			Lines: 97-98
4.8.20	Granting the Kingdom to Vibhishana	9-1-7, 9-6-4 4-2-1, 4-6-4, 6-8-5, 8-6-7					
4.8.21	Răma Sharing His Leaf with Hanuman to Eat	5-8-2					
<u>Others</u> : 4.8.22	Rāma – Terms of Address and Eminence	3-9-4, 3-9-5, 3-10-6, 4-1-8, 4-3-5, 4-8-5, 5-4-4, 5-4-5, 5-5-2, 8-6-3, 9-1-5, 9-1-7, 9-4-5, 10-2-6, 10-2-8, 10-3-1, 10-3-2, 10-3-3, 10-3-4, 10-3-8,	2				Line: 52
4.8.23	Sītā – Names, Beauty and Nature	11-4-10 2-2-2, 2-2-3, 3-1-6, 3-1-7, 3-9-5, 3-10-6, 5-8-1, 7-1-5, 7-8-7, 8-6-3, 10-2-4, 10-2-5, 10-2-7, 10-2-8,				Line: 42	Line: 52
4.8.24	Rāvaņa – Strength and Nature	10-6-8, 11-4-7 3-4-7, 7-8-7, 8-6-7, 9-1-7, 10-2-2, 10-3-4, 10-3-9		20		Line: 43	Line: 51
4.8.25	Hanuman – Dear to Rãma	5-8-2, 10-2-2, 10-3-4, 10-3-7					

<u>Table 9 : Nammālvār</u>

Pācuram/Hymn	TT:		Periya	
Canto/Incident	Tiruviruttam	Tiruvāciriyam	Tiruvantāti	Tiruvāymo <u>l</u> i
<u>Bala Kandam</u> : 4.9.1 Aiming at Kūni's Back with His Catapult				1-5-5
<u>Aranya Kandam</u> 4.9.2 Cutting the Nose and Ear of Sūrpaŋakha			63	2-3-6
 4.9.3 Rāma Following Mārīca 4.9.4 Sīta's Captivity 		х 	82	4-8-5
				4-0-5
<u>Kishkinta Kandam</u> 4.9.5 Aiming An Arrow through Seven <i>Marā</i> Trees			64	1-5-6, 2-5-7, 6-10-5, 9-1-2
<u>Yutta Kandam</u> 4.9.6 Destruction of Lanka	36, 77, 92			2-1-3, 3-6-2, 4-8-5, 6-1-10,
4.9.7 Killing of Rāvaņa			11, 17, 66	7-3-7 1-6-7, 2-7-10,
4.9.8 Granting the Kingdom to Vibhishana				3-8-2, 4-3-1 7-6-9
<u>Others</u> 4.9.9 Rāma – Terms of Address and Greatness	36, 37			2-7-10, 3-8-2, 5-4-3, 6-1-10, 6-6-9, 6-10-5, 7-3-7, 9-1-2,
4.9.10 Sīta – Beauty and Nature				10-1-8 4-8-5
4.9.11 Rāvaņa – His Nature and Valour				2-3-11, 4-8-5, 5-6-9, 6-1-10, 7-6-9

Endnotes

- Arunasalam, P. 1982. <u>Vainava Camayam Ör Arimukam</u>. Cennai: Thamarai Achagam, p. 98.
- 2. <u>RV</u>., III, 17-44: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., 7 II, pp. 38-92.
- 3. Poykai., <u>1st Tiru.</u>: 82.
- 4. <u>RV</u>., IV. 2-12: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., II, pp. 171-198.
- 5. Poykai., <u>1st Tiru</u>.: 27.
- 6. Tiruman., 1950. <u>Peri. Tiru</u>: 2-8-3, Annangaracharyarin Tivyartta Tipikaiyurai, Kanchipuram, p. 173. This verse mentions the eight objects held by Vishnu in his eight hands, such as:
 (1) Arrow, (2) Bow, (3) Club, (4) Conch, (5) Sword, (6) Cakra or Wheel, (7) Shield, (8) Lotus. The above (2)-(6) are referred to as the five weapons of Vishnu.
- 7. <u>RV</u>., IV, 21-23: <u>RV</u> (HPS)., III, pp. 48-55 and 57.
- 8. Poykai., <u>1st Tiru.</u>: 2.
- 9. <u>RV.</u>, VI, 110: <u>RV (HPS</u>)., III, pp. 314-316.
- 10. Poykai., <u>1st Tiru</u>.: 59.
- 11. <u>Ibid.</u>, Line 2.
- 12. Ibid., 35.
- 13. <u>RV.</u>, III, 17-74: <u>RV (HPS</u>)., II, pp. 38-158.
- 14. Putat., 2nd Tiru.: 15.
- 15. <u>RV.</u>, IV, 19 and 21-23: <u>RV (HPS)</u>., III, pp. 45-46 and 48-55, 57.
- 16. Putat., 2nd Tiru.: 30.
- 17. <u>RV.</u>, VI, 110: <u>RV (HPS</u>)., III, pp. 314-316.
- 18. Putat., <u>2nd Tiru</u>.: 25, 29 and 43.
- 19. See E.n. 2, 4 and 9 respectively.
- 20. Peyal., <u>3rd Tiru</u>.: 52.
- 21. <u>RV.</u>, VI, 22-110: <u>RV (HPS</u>)., III, pp. 51-316.
- 22. Peyal., <u>3rd Tiru</u>.: 51.
- 23. <u>RV.</u>, VI, 110: <u>RV (HPS)</u>., III, pp. 314-316.
- 24. Tiruppan., Amala.: 4.
- 25. This incident is not found in <u>RV</u>.

- 26. Tirumali., <u>Tiruccan</u>.: 30 and 49.
- 27. <u>Ibid.</u>, 49.
- 28. <u>RV.</u>, I, 75-76: <u>RV (HPS)</u>., I, pp. 148-151.
- 29. The bow that defeated Shiva.

Once, Visvakarma the architect of the gods made two special bows of which Shiva and Vishnu took one each. Later the gods wished to know which of the two was better. So Brahma caused a misunderstanding between the two. In the fight that followed, they used the bows made by Visvakarma. At one stage, the bow of Shiva was slightly damaged. It was then given to Devarātan an ancestor of King Janaka, and remained in the family till it was broken by Rāma. The bow that Vishnu had was given to the Sage Rūcika and passed down to his son Jamadagni and in turn his son Paracurāma.

When Rāma broke the bow of Shiva which was kept by Janaka as a gift to be given to Sītā, married her and went back to Ayodhya, he met Paracurāma. Rāma took the bow of Vishnu from him, fixed an arrow and bent it in readiness to shoot. Then he asked Paracurāma, "What shall I aim this at?" Paracurāma offered all the merits of his *tapas*. But Rāma merely removes the strength of his religious merits and does not kill Paracurāma out of respect for his knowledge of the Vēdas and his religious merits. Tirumali., <u>Nan.</u> <u>Tiru.</u>: 8, Annangaracharyarin Tivyartta Tipikaiyurai. 1946. Karaikkudi, p. 9.

- 30. <u>RV.</u>, III, 70: <u>RV (HPS</u>)., II, pp. 147-148.
- 31. <u>RV.</u>, III, 22-30: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., II, pp. 47-65.
- 32. <u>Tirumali.</u>, <u>Tiruccan</u>.: 104.
- 33. <u>RV.</u>, VI, 9-12: <u>RV (HPS</u>)., II, pp. 186-197.
- 34. <u>RV.</u>, VI, 16-17: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., II, pp. 204-206.
- 35. <u>Tirumali.</u>, <u>Tiruccan</u>.: 73.
- 36. <u>Ibid.</u>, 81.
- 37. There was an asura with the form of a buffalo and named Tuntupi. Due to a boon he had received his strength became a 1000 fold. Not knowing how to put that strength to good use, he tried to pick a fight with the King of the Sea and Himavān, the King of the Himalayas. He learnt from the latter that Vāli was the hero who was equal to him in strength. So approaching Vāli, he spoke degradingly to him. Becoming very angry, Vāli killed him and threw the body which fell one yōjana away. Drops of blood from the body of the slain asura, carried by the wind, fell in the hermitage of Sage Matanga. Knowing by his supernatural powers, what has happened, the angry sage cursed Vāli saying "Vāli who arrogantly threw a corpse in this manner, causing its impure blood-drops to fall on the grounds of this hermitage, will die if he steps on the soil adjoined to this hermitage." Because of this curse, Vāli was unable to enter the premises of the Rishyamūka Hill. <u>RV.</u>, IV, 11: <u>RV (HPS)</u>., II, pp. 189-194.
- 38. Tirumali., Nan. Tiru.: 28.
- 39. <u>Ibid.</u>, 85.
- 40. <u>RV</u>., IV, 19 and 21-23: <u>RV (HPS)</u>., III, pp. 45-46 and 48-55 and 57.
- 41. Tirumali., <u>Tiruccan</u>.: 31.
- 42. <u>Ibid</u>., 50.
- 43. <u>RV.</u>, IV, 21-23: <u>RV (HPS)</u>., III, pp. 48-55 and 57.

- 44. Tirumali., <u>Tiruccan.</u>; 28, 32, 39 and 92; <u>Nan. Tiru.</u>: 28.
- 45. The *asura* named Sukesan had three sons, named Māliyamān (or Māliyavān), Māli and Sumāli. They obtained great strength through penance and marrying in Lanka, settled there and had many children. They also became the rulers of Lanka. Unable to bear the troubles they created, the *devas* complained to Lord Siva who advised to take refuge with Tirumāl. Hearing of this, the *asuras* became very angry and waged war with Tirumāl. Of them, Māli was killed and the other two reach the nether world (*pātāļam*). Sumāli's daughter Kaikaci is the mother of Rāvaņa and others *Uttara Sri Rāmāyaņa* Canto 5-8. Tirumali., <u>Tiruccan</u>.: 28. Annagaracharyarin Tivyartta Tipikaiyurai. p. 76.
- 46. Tirumali., Tiruccan.: 32.
- 47. <u>Ibid.</u>, 39.
- 48. <u>Ibid.</u>, 92.
- 49. Tirumali., Nan. Tiru.: 28.
- 50. <u>RV.</u>, VI, 22-110: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., III, pp. 51-316.
- 51. <u>Tirumali.</u>, <u>Tiruccan</u>.: 39.
- 52. <u>Ibid.</u>, 54.
- 53. <u>Ibid.</u>, 116.
- 54. <u>RV.</u>, VI, 110: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., III, pp. 314-316.
- 55. Tirumali., <u>Tiruccan</u>.: 33.
- 56. <u>Ibid.</u>, 51.
- 57. <u>Ibid.</u>, 56.
- 58. Tirumali., Nan. Tiru.: 28.
- 59. <u>RV.</u>, VI, 67-68: <u>RV (HPS</u>)., III, pp. 183-189.
- 60. Tirumali., Nan. Tiru.: 29.
- 61. <u>Ibid</u>.
- 62. <u>RV.</u>, VI, 111-114: <u>RV (HPS</u>)., III, pp. 316-329.
- 63. Tirumali., <u>Tiruccan</u>.: 33.
- 64. Rajagopalachari, S. 1973. <u>Rāmāyanam</u>. Chennai: Vanati Patippakam, pp. 519-521.
- 65. Tirumali., <u>Tiruccan</u>.: 94.
- 66. <u>Ibid</u>., 91.
- 67. <u>Ibid.</u>, 93.
- 68. <u>Ibid</u>., 31.
- 69. Tirumali., <u>Nan. Tiru</u>.: 85.
- 70. <u>RV.</u>, I, 29-31: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., I, pp. 65-69

- 71. Tonta., <u>Tiruppalli</u>.: 1
- 72. <u>Ibid</u>., 4.
- 73. <u>RV.</u>, IV, 19 and 21-23: <u>RV (HPS)</u>., III, pp. 45-56 and 48-55, 57.
- 74. Tonta., <u>Tiruma</u>.: 11.
- 75. This incident is not found in <u>RV</u>.
- 76. Tonta., <u>Tiruma</u>.: 27.
- 77. <u>RV.</u>, VI, 22-110: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., III, pp. 51-316.
- 78. Tonta., <u>Tiruma</u>.: 7
- 79. <u>RV</u>., I, 15: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., I, pp. 38-40.
- 80. Tonta., <u>Tiruppalli</u>.: 4.
- 81. <u>RV.</u>, VI, 110: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., III, pp. 314-316.
- 82. Tonta., <u>Tiruma</u>.: 11.
- 83. Kulace., Peru. Tiru., Annangarachariyarin Tivyartta Tipikai Urai, 1930. Chennai.

 8^{th} *Tirumoli:* Thinking of the good fortune of Kausalya the mother of Rāma, he imagines himself to be her, placing the baby Rāma in the cradle and singing a lullaby. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 100.

 9^{th} *Tirumoli*: King Dasaratha enjoyed the boyhood of his son Rāma. But since Rāma went away to the forest, the king was not able to appreciate the son's youth. The $\bar{a}lv\bar{a}r$ puts himself in the king's place and laments the separation. Ibid., p. 112.

10th *Tirumoli*: Kulacēkarālvār was always engrossed in the Rāmacaritam and always recited the verses of the story. He recites the story of the *Rāmāvatāra* so that others may easily understand it and to enjoy singing in just as Vālmīki himself had done. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 127.

- 84. <u>RV</u>., I, 29-31: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., I, pp. 65-69.
- 85. Kulace., Peru. Tiru.: 8-2.
- 86. <u>Ibid.</u>, 10-2.
- 87. <u>Tătakai</u> was the daughter of a *yaksa* named Sukētu and the wife of Cuntan. She had the strength of a 1000 elephants. When she hears that her husband was burnt to ashes by the anger of Sage Agastya, she opposes him with her sons Subāhu and Mārīca. Due to the sage's curse she and her sons acquire *asuric* nature and disturbed the *yāgas* performed by sages. <u>Ibid.</u>, 8-2. Annangaracharyarin Tivyartta Tipikai Urai, p. 102.
- 88. <u>RV.</u>, I, 66-67: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., I, pp. 131-134.
- 89. Kulace., <u>Peru. Tiru</u>.: 9-4.
- 90. The name Sitā is changed to Citai in Tamil. In Sanskrit Sitā means the track of a ploughshare. When King Janaka ploughed the land to prepare the sacred court to perform a $y\bar{a}ga$, a baby girl appeared on the plough track. So Janaka named her Sitā and brought her up. She was not born of a womb and this brings out her eminence as an *avatāra*. This also makes her the daughter of Mother Earth. <u>Ibid.</u>, 10-3. Annangaracharyarin Tivyartta Tipikai Urai., p. 131.

- 91. <u>Ibid.</u>, 10-3.
- 92. <u>RV</u>., I, 75-76: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., I, pp. 148-151.
- 93. Kulace., Peru. Tiru.: 9-9.
- 94. <u>Ibid</u>., 10-3
- 95. The name *Paracu-Rāma* itself means the Rāma who uses the *paracu* or battle axe as his weapon. *Malu* is a synonym. The term *maluvāli* is used as a name for Paracurāma and also for Shiva. It can mean either *malu* + $\bar{a}li$ *ie.* One who uses the *malu* as a weapon or *malu* + $v\bar{a}li$ is one whose weapon is the *malu*. In *Peru. Tiru.*: 10-4 the term *malu* + $v\bar{a}l + \bar{e}nti$ meaning the one who holds the *malu* as a weapon is used. <u>Ibid.</u>, 9-9. Annangaracharyarin Tivyartta Tipikai Urai, p. 125.
- 96. <u>RV</u>., II, 11-14, 18-19, 21-31, 40-50: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., I, pp. 186-197, 207-210, 216-242 and 262-284.
- 97. Kulace., <u>Peru. Tiru.</u>: 8-6.
- 98. <u>Ibid</u>., 9-1.
- 99. <u>Ibid</u>., 9-8.
- 100. <u>Ibid.</u>, 9-9.
- 101. When Rāma left for the forest, his subjects, unable to face the separation followed him. They would not listen to his requests to return to the city. At night, when they slept on the banks of the Tamacā River, Rāma stealthily drove away in the chariot. Waking in the morning they could not find him. So they cried and wailed but not knowing where to go, they returned to Ayodhya. This incident is implied in this line. <u>Ibid.</u>, 8-6. Annangaracharyarin Tivyartta Tipikai Urai, p. 106.
- 102. At the request of Indra, Dasaratha wages a war against the asura named Sambara. During the war Dasaratha was hurt and he fainted. At that time, Kaikēyi who was with him took him away from the battle field and saved him. When he recovered, the King out of joy and gratitude promised to grant her two boons. Kaikēyi said that she would ask for them later. When Rāma was about to be crowned yuvarājā, influenced by Mantarai, the hunch-back Kaikēyi asked for those two boons. One was to crown her son Bharata as the future king and the other to banish Rāma to the forest for 14 years. Dasaratha was caught between his honour and his intense love for Rāma. So Kaikēyi sends for Rāma and tells him herself. As a dutiful son who upheld truth and honour he went to the forest. Sītā and Lakshmaņa followed him because they could not bear to be separated from him. Ibid., 9-5. Annangaracharyarin Tivyartta Tipikai Urai., p. 119.
- 103. <u>Ibid.</u>, 9-2.
- 104. <u>Ibid.</u>, 9-3.
- 105. <u>Ibid.</u>, 9-7.
- 106. <u>RV</u>., II, 18-19, 21-23 and 40-52: <u>RV (HPS)</u>., I, pp. 207-210, 216-224. 233-242 and 262-293
- 107. Kulace., Peru. Tiru.: 10-4.
- 108. Guha was the king of Ciruńkipuram on the bank of the Ganges. He and his people were hunters but also ferried boats across the river. He owned 1000 boats. When Rāma, Sitā and Lakshmana arrived at the landing place on the river bank, he came with bounteous gifts and paid homage. Rāma accepted him as a dear friend and requested him to bring a

boat. He crossed the river in the boat that Guha brought. <u>Ibid.</u>, 10-4. Annangaracharyarin Tivyartta Tipikai Urai, p. 134.

- 109. <u>RV</u>., II, 11-14, 18-19, 21-31 and 40-50: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., I, pp. 186-197, 207-210, 216-242 and 262-284.
- 110. Bharata means one who can administer kingship with ability. When Rāma left for the forest and Dasaratha died, he had to protect the land that was kingless. Vasista who named the four princes must have named him Bharata knowing this future situation through his yōgic powers. Kulace., Peru. Tiru.: 8-5. Annangarachariyarin Tivyartta Tipikai Urai., p. 106.
- 111. <u>RV</u>., II, 98, 101-102, 106-107 and 112-115: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., I, pp. 390, 398-401, 409-413 and 422-429.
- 112. Kulace., Peru. Tiru.: 10-4.
- 113. <u>RV</u>., III, 2-4: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., II, pp. 4-10.
- 114. <u>RV.</u>, III, 12-13: <u>RV (HPS)</u>., II, pp. 27-31.
- 115. <u>RV</u>., III, 17-18: <u>RV</u> (HPS)., II, pp. 38-42.
- 116. <u>RV</u>.,III, 22-30: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., II, pp. 47-65.
- 117. <u>RV.</u>, III, 42-44: <u>RV (HPS)</u>., II, pp. 86-92.
- 118. Kulace., Peru. Tiru.: 10-5:
 - (a) <u>Virātan</u>:

The name Virātan is Sanskrit means one who has committed many crimes. He was earlier a *gandharva* named Tumburu but due to a curse from Kubēra he became an *asura* and roamed the forest. When Rāma, Sītā and Lakshmaņa were going to the Dandaka forest, he saw Sīta and carries her. Seeing this Rāma and Lakshmana confronted him, he leaves her and carried away the two brothers. They cut away his shoulders and kill him. Just before dying he tells them his story and begs them to bury his body. They do so and continue their journey. Ibid., Annangarachariyarin Tivyartta Tipikai Urai, p. 136.

(b) Agastya:

This sage received instruction on Tamil from Lord Shiva himself and came southwards. He is the author of the Akattiyam, a text on Tamil grammar. By teaching it to his students he helped in the development of Tamil. Hence he was called the Tamil sage.

When Rāma took away the Bow of Vishnu and subdued Paracurāma, many *devas* came to praise him. One of them was Varuna. Rāma gave the bow to him asking him to return it to Rāma at the proper time. Varuna who did as he was told came to Agastya's hermitage when Rāma arrived there. Agastya hands it over with its quiver and a sword, to Rāma. <u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 136-137.

- (c) <u>Karan</u>: This name means a cruel person. He was a younger brother of Rāvaņa, appointed as the chief of the *asura* band entrusted with the protection of Surpanakha in the Dandaka forest. Instigated by her when disgraced by Rāma and Lakshmana, Karan confronted them with very large armies, 60 lakhs soldiers, 14,000 chariots and 14 army commanders among whom are his brothers Tūṭaṇaŋ and Tirivarās. Rāma places Lakshmaṇa as guard for Sita, fights single-handedly against them and kills all of them. <u>Ibid., p. 137</u>.
- (d) Hearing of Sita and her charms from Sürpanakha, Ravana was overcome with desire for her. He asks Marica to help him and the latter obliges him. Through

his illusory powers Mārīca takes the form of a golden deer and plays about near the hermitage where Sītā dwelt. Seeing it she asks Rāma to catch it for her. He too follows the deer. Since it could not be caught even after going a long distance, Rāma felt sure that it was not an ordinary deer but an illusory one. So he aimed an arrow at it and kills it. Ibid., p. 137.

- 119. <u>RV</u>., III, 68: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., II, pp. 142-144.
- 120. <u>RV</u>., IV, 5: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., II, pp. 177-179.
- 121. <u>RV</u>., IV, 16: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., II, pp. 204-206.
- 122. Kulace., Peru. Tiru.: 10-6.
- 123. Ravana separates Rāma and Lakshamana by using Mārīca who took the form of the golden deer. Taking this opportunity when Sītā is alone, he takes her away in his chariot. Hearing her cries for help, the Eagle King Jadāyu confronts Rāvana. In the fight that took place between them, Rāvana cuts off the wings of Jadāyu with his divine sword so that he falls down. The *asura* then takes Sītā and keeps her captive in the Asōkavaŋam. When the brothers returned and found Sītā missing they went in search of her. On their way they see Jadāyu lying on the ground hurt and about to die. After relating what happened, Jadāyu died. Rāma grants him salvation and performs his final rites.

The Sanskrit word Jadāyu if separated as jada and $\bar{a}yu$ can mean one of the following: one who has a strong life like many strands of hair twisted together or one whose life is in his wings. He is the son of Aruṇaṇ, the charioteer of the Sun and the younger brother of Campati. He was a very dear friend of King Dasaratha. Later when he met Rāma and Lakshmaṇa in the Dandaka forest he was affectionate and protective towards them. They too regarded him who was older then their father, as an uncle. Ibid., Annangaracharyarin Tivyartta Tipikai Urai, pp. 138-139.

- 124. When Rāma and Lakshmana continued their search for Sitā, they meet Hanuman and through him Sugriva, the son of the Sun God. At his request, Rāma kills Vāli and crowns Sugriva as king of the *vānaras* at Kishkinta. Later, he kills the *asuras* with Sugriva's help. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 139.
- 125. The Sanskrit name *Vāli* is etymologically explained as meaning one whose tail is strong or one born from the tail. He is the son of Indra and the elder brother of Sugrīva. He ruled Kishkinta. He had a boon by which he would get half the strength of anyone who confronted him in a fight. Once he had defeated Rāvaņa and then due to the latter's request became a friend with the fire as a witness. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 139.
- 126. <u>RV</u>., IV, 16 and 26: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., II, pp. 206 and 231-234.
- 127. Kulace., Peru. Tiru.: 8-7.
- 128. <u>RV</u>., V, 54: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., II, pp. 464-467.
- 129. Kulace., Peru. Tiru.: 10-6.

Hanuman crossed over to Lanka was not only to look for Sitä but also to act as Rama's messenger to Rāvaņa. After meeting her and speaking to her he wished to meet Rāvaņa. So he tried to destroy the forest and killed the *asuras* who attacked him. Then Indrajit, the son of Rāvaņa managed to bind him with the *Brahma-astra* (the weapon granted by Brahma) and took him to the king's court. There Rāvaņa wanted to kill Hanuman but Vibhishaņa restrained him saying that it was not proper to kill a messenger. Later at Rāvaņa's orders, the *asuras* bind his tail with cloth doused in oil and set fire to it before releasing him. With his burning tail he set fire to different parts of the city before returning to Rāma. <u>Ibid</u>. Annangaracharyarin Tivyartta Tipikai Urai, p. 138.

130. <u>RV</u>., IV, 19 and 21-23: <u>RV (HPS)</u>., III, pp. 45-46 and 48-55, 57.

- 131. Kulace., Peru. Tiru.: 8-8 and see also, 4.3.5(i).
- 132. <u>Ibid</u>., 10-7.
- 133. <u>Ibid.</u>, 8-8 and see also, 4.3.5(i).
- 134. <u>RV.</u>, VI, 22-110: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., III, pp. 51-316.
- 135. Kulace., Peru. Tiru.: 8-8 and 8-9.
- 136. <u>RV.</u>, VI, 110: <u>RV (HPS</u>)., III, pp. 314-316.
- 137. Kulace., Peru. Tiru.: 8-1.
- 138. <u>Ibid.</u>, 10-7.
- 139. <u>RV.</u>, VI, 21-114: <u>RV (HPS)</u>., III, pp. 48-329
- 140. Rāma sets out with a large vānara army to kill Rāvaņa and his army and arrives at the sea shore. Vibhīshaņa who had tried to advise his older brother Rāvaņa but failed to convince him, leaves him and takes refuge with Rāma. Rāma too accepts him and announces him as the king of Lanka. Then, with the help of Vibhīshaņa he learns of the situation in Lanka, crosses the sea and reaches Lanka with Vibhīshaņa. There he wages war against Rāvaņa and kills him, his relatives and his army. Then he officiates the coronation of Vibhīshaņa. Kulace., <u>Peru. Tiru.</u>: 10-7. Annangaracharyarin Tivyartta Tipikai Urai, p. 138.
- 141. <u>RV.</u>, VII, 93-94: <u>RV (HPS</u>)., III, pp. 610-613.
- 142. Kulace. Peru. Tiru. 10-8.
- When Rāma returns to Ayodhya with his wife and brother, he is crowned king. Later, 143. during Sita's pregnancy he asks her if there is anything she would like. She replies that she would like to revisit the hermitages of the sages along the River Ganges and to admire their natural beauty. Rāma consents to this. Later, he hears through his spies the talk among some of his subjects. They had doubted the purity of the queen who had been kept captive by Ravana for nearly a year and wondered about the moral values of the king who had accepted her back. Fearing social slander, he decides to leave her in the forest. Telling her that it was a journey to see the hermitages as she desired, he got Lakshmana to take her to the vicinity of Valmiki's hermitage. There she is cared for by the hermit women and she gives birth to two sons. The sage names them Lava and Kusa and teaches them to sing the Ramayana he composed, with proper rhythm to the accompaniment of the lute. When they were still young, Rama unaware of the sons, performs horse-sacrifice. Before the large audience that attended the sacrifice and celebrations that followed, the two boys who accompany Sage Valmiki sing the story and this pleases Rama. Ibid., Annangaracharyarin Tivyartta Tipikai Urai, pp. 142-143.
- 144. <u>RV.</u>, VII, 106: <u>RV (HPS</u>)., III, pp. 627-628.
- 145. Kulace. Peru. Tiru, 10-9.
- 146. Please see, 5.7.2 of Chapter Five.
- 147. Kulace., Peru. Tiru.: 9-1 and 2, 10-3 and 6, 8-6 and 8 etc.
- 148. The name *Kausalya* (Kōcalai, Kaucalai) means the princess of the country of Kōcala. There were two states known as the Uttara (Northern) Kōcala and the Dakshina (Southern) Kōcala. Of these she is the princess of the latter. <u>Ibid.</u>, 8-1 and 3, 9-3. Annangaracharyarin Tivyartta Tipikai Urai, p. 103.

- 149. The name Dasaratha can mean the owner of 10 chariots or having chariots that can go in 10 different directions. This implies that he can go anywhere without obstruction. Once, when Indra was made powerless by the asura. Dasaratha followed the asura who moved about with his power of socery and killed him. Hence he is said to have this name. Ibid., 8-3. Annangaracharyarin Tivyartta Tipikai Urai, p. 105.
- 150. <u>Ibid.</u>, 8-4 and 9 and 9-6.
- 151. <u>Ibid.</u>, 8-1, 4, 9 and 10.
- 152. Janaka ruled the Vidēka county with Mithila as his capital. <u>Ibid</u>., 8-3 and 4. Annangarachanyarin Tivyartta Tipikai Urai, p. 103.
- 153. <u>Ibid.</u>, 9-3.
- 154. The Sanskrit name *Ayodhya* means that it cannot be defeated in battle. So the name itself suggests that it has strong fortifications and the kings of that city cannot be defeated by anyone. <u>Ibid.</u>, 10-1. Annangaracharyarin Tivyartta Tipikai Urai, p. 128.
- 155. <u>Ibid.</u>, 9-2.
- 156. <u>Ibid.</u>, 10-3.
- 157. <u>Ibid.</u>, 9-4.
- 158. <u>Ibid.</u>, 9-8.
- 159. <u>Ibid.</u>, 8-4.
- 160. <u>Ibid.</u>, 10-6.
- 161. <u>RV</u>., I, 29-31: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., I, pp. 65-69.
- 162. Periya., Periya. Tiru.: 3-9-2.
- 163. <u>RV</u>., I, 66-67: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., pp. 131-134.
- 164. Periya., Periya. Tiru.: 2-3-7.
- 165. Ibid., 3-10-1 and 9.
- 166. <u>RV</u>., I, 75-76: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., I, pp. 148-151.
- 167. Periya., Periya. Tiru.: 3-9-2.
- 168. <u>Ibid.</u>, 3-10-1.
- 169. <u>RV</u>., II, 11-14, 18-19, 21-31, 27-31 and 40-50: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., I, pp. 186-197, 207-210, 216-224, 233-242 and 262-284.
- 170. Periya., Periya Tiru.: 2-1-8.
- 171. Ibid., 3-9-4 and 8, 3-10-3 and 4-8-4.
- 172. <u>Ibid.</u>, 3-10-3.
- 173. <u>RV.</u>, II, 50: <u>RV (HPS</u>)., I, pp. 282-285.
- 174. Periya., Periya Tiru.: 3-10-4.

- 175. <u>RV</u>., II, 98, 101-102, 106-107 and 112-115: <u>RV</u> (HPS)., I, pp. 390, 398-401, 409-413 and 422-429.
- 176. Periya., Periya. Tiru.: 2-1-8.
- 177. Ibid., 3-10-5.
- 178. <u>Ibid.</u>, 3-9-6.
- 179. <u>Ibid</u>., 4-9-1.
- 180. <u>RV</u>., V, 38: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., II, pp. 426-428.
- 181. Periya., Periya. Tiru.: 2-6-7.
- 182. Once during their stay at Citrakūța Rāma, placing his head on Sitā's lap, slept. At that time Jayantan, the son of Indra saw her beauty and desired her. He took the form of a crow and pecked at her breast, not knowing who she was. Realising it Rāma became angry. He took a *darbha* grass and uttering the *mantra* of Brahma he aimed it at the crow. It ran everywhere but could not find anyone who could offer refuge. So it took refuge in Rāma himself. Rāma saved its life out of compassion but since the missile of Brahma cannot be wasted, it took one of the eyes of the crow. Ibid., 3-10-6. Annagaracharyarin Tivyartta Tipikaiyurai, 1928, pp. 107-108.
- 183. <u>RV.</u>, III, 17-18: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., II, pp. 38-42..
- 184. Periya., Periya Tiru.: 2-7-5, 4-2-2 and 4-7-1.
- 185. <u>Ibid.</u>, 3-9-8.
- 186. <u>RV.</u>, III, 42-45: <u>RV (HPS)</u>., II, pp. 86-95.
- 187. Periya., Periya Tiru.: 3-10-7.
- 188. RV., IV, 9-12: RV (HPS)., II, pp. 186-196
- 189. Periya., Periya. Tiru.: 2-4-2.
- 190. <u>Ibid.</u>, 4-1-3.
- 191. <u>RV.</u>, V, 2, 15 and 33-35: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., II, pp. 338-341, 372-375 and 409-418.
- 192. Periya., Periya Tiru.: 3-10-1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8.
- 193. <u>Ibid.</u>, 3-10-8.
- 194. <u>Ibid.</u>, 3-10-2.
- 195. <u>RV</u>., IV, 19 and 21-23: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., III, pp. 45-46 and 48-55, 57.
- 196. <u>RV.</u>, IV, 22-110: <u>RV (HPS)</u>., III, pp. 51-316.
- 197. Periya., Periya. Tiru.: 1-7-7.
- 198. <u>Ibid.</u>, 1-7-8.
- 199. <u>Ibid.</u>, 2-1-10.
- 200. <u>Ibid</u>., 4-3-8.

- 201. <u>Ibid.</u>, 1-1-3.
- 202. <u>Ibid.</u>, 3-9-10.
- 203. <u>RV</u>., VI, 110: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., III, pp. 314-316.
- 204. Periya., Periya. Tiru.: 2-6-8 and 9.
- 205. <u>Ibid.</u>, 4-8-10.
- 206. <u>Ibid.</u>, 4-8-5.
- 207. <u>Ibid</u>., 2-7-5.
- 208. <u>Ibid.</u>; see also 4-2-2 and 4-7-1.
- 209. <u>RV</u>., VI, 114: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., III, pp. 328-329.
- 210. Periya., <u>Periya.Tiru</u>.: 3-9-10.
- 211. <u>Ibid.</u>, 2-6-9.
- 212. <u>Ibid.</u>, 4-9-2.
- 213. <u>Ibid.</u>, 4-1-1.
- 214. <u>Ibid.</u>, 4-3-7.
- 215. <u>Ibid.</u>, 3-10-9.
- 216. <u>Ibid.</u>, 3-10-3.
- 217. <u>Ibid.</u>, 3-9-2 and 4-7-1.
- 218. Ibid., 3-9-6, 8 and 10, 3-10-4 and 8.
- 219. <u>Ibid.</u>, 3-9-3.
- 220. <u>Ibid.</u>, 3-10-6.
- 221. <u>Ibid.</u>, 4-8-10.
- 222. <u>Ibid.</u>, 3-10-7.
- 223. <u>Ibid.</u>, 3-10-6, 4-1-1 and 2 etc.
- 224. <u>Ibid.</u>, 3-10-9, 4-1-1 and 2.
- 225. <u>Ibid</u>., 3-10-4, 5, 8 and 10.
- 226. <u>Ibid.</u>, 3-10-1, 8 and 9.
- 227. <u>Ibid</u>., 3-10-2 and 5.
- 228. <u>Ibid</u>., 4-3-7.
- 229. Ibid., 3-10-4 and 10.
- 230. <u>Ibid.</u>, 2-6-8 and 3-10-7.
- 231. <u>Ibid</u>., 4-1-2.

- 232. <u>Ibid.</u>, 3-10-10. Also see 3-10-4.
- 233. <u>Ibid.</u>, 3-10-2.
- 234. <u>Ibid.</u>, 3-10-10.
- 235. <u>RV</u>., III, 17-18: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., II, pp. 38-41.
- 236. <u>Ant.</u>, <u>Nac. Tiru</u>.: 10-4.
- 237. <u>RV</u>., IV, 22: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., III, pp. 51-55.
- 238. Ant., Nac. Tiru.: 11-7.
- 239. <u>Ibid</u>., 2-6.
- 240. <u>RV</u>., IV, 22-110: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., III, pp. 51-316.
- 241. Ant., Nac. Tiru.: 2-6. See also 3-3.
- 242. Ant., Tiruppa.: 24.
- 243. <u>RV</u>., VI, 67-68: <u>RV (HPS</u>)., III, pp. 183-189.
- 244. Ant., Tiruppa.: 10.
- 245. <u>RV</u>., VI, 110: <u>RV (HPS</u>)., III, pp. 314-316.
- 246. Ant., Nac. Tiru.: 5-3.
- 247. Ant., <u>Tiruppa</u>.: 12.
- 248. <u>Ibid</u>., 13.
- 249. Ant., Nac. Tiru.: 10-4.
- 250. <u>Ibid.</u>, 2-6.
- 251. <u>Ibid.</u>, 5-3.
- 252. Ant., Tiruppa.: 12.
- 253. This incident is not found in <u>RV</u>.
- 254. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 10-6-2.
- 255. <u>RV</u>., I, 29-31: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., I, pp. 65-69.
- 256. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 8-6-3.
- 257. <u>Ibid</u>., 9-8-4.
- 258. Tiruman., Peri. Tiruma.: Lines 147-148.
- 259. <u>RV</u>., I, 66-67: <u>RV</u>., <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., II, pp. 131-134.
- 260. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 10-6-8.
- 261. Ibid., 10-6-8. Annangarachariyarin Tivyartta Tipikaiyurai, p. 57.

- 262. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 4-1-8.
- 263. Tiruman., Tirunetu.: 13.
- 264. <u>RV</u>., II, 11-14, 18-19, 21-31 and 40-50: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., I, pp. 186-197, 207-210, 216-242 and 262-284.
- 265. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 3-1-6.
- 266. <u>Ibid</u>., 5-10-6.
- 267. <u>Ibid</u>., 1-5-1.
- 268. Tiruman., Peri Tiruma.: Lines 49-53.
- 269. <u>RV</u>., II, 50: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., I, pp. 282-285.
- 270. Tiruman., Peri Tiru.: 5-8-1.
- 271. <u>RV</u>., III, 17-18: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., II, pp. 38-42.
- 272. Tiruman., Peri. Tiruma.: Lines 144-146.
- 273. Tiruman., Ciri. Tiruma.: Lines 38-40.
- 274. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 10-6-9.
- 275. <u>Ibid.</u>, 1-5-5.
- 276. <u>Ibid</u>., 3-9-4.
- 277. <u>Ibid.</u>, 7-4-3.
- 278. Ibid., 3-9-4. See also 1-5-5.
- 279. <u>RV</u>., III, 42-44: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., II, pp. 86-92.
- 280. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 2-5-6.
- 281. <u>Ibid.</u>, 11-4-7 and 6-7-3.
- 282. <u>Ibid.</u>, 1-4-2.
- 283. <u>RV</u>., III, 46: <u>RV (HPS</u>)., II, pp. 95-97.
- 284. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 2-2-1 and 2.
- 285. <u>RV</u>., III, 46-49, 54-56: <u>RV (HPS)</u>., II, pp. 98-104 and 114-120.
- 286. <u>The Dandaka Forest</u>: The Emperor Ikshvahu, the son of Emperor Manu belongs to the solar race. (Sūrya vamsa). He had 100 sons of whom the youngest was stupid, obstinate and wicked. The father, capable of knowing the future, named him Dandaka, meaning he is fit for punishment. He carved out a kingdom in the area between the Vindhyas and Saivala hill and ruled over it from his capital at Madhumandam. During that time he entered the hermitage of Sukrācārya his chief priest. There he saw his lovely daughter Arajā. Attracted by her beauty he rapes her. Realising what has happened her father, the chief priest cursed him that within seven days he will perish along with his family, army and retinue and that all form of life in his country will be destroyed by a sandstorm. Thus the country perished and with time trees grew making it a forest. Hence the name

Dandaka aranya or the Dandaka forest. Tiruman., <u>Peri. Tiru</u>.: 10-2-3. Annangaracharyarin Tivyartta Tipikaiyurai, p. 14.

- 287. <u>Ibid.</u>, 10-2-5.
- 288. <u>Ibid</u>., 10-2-8.
- (a) Viratan: <u>RV</u>., III, 2-4: <u>RV (HPS)</u>., II, pp. 4-10;
 (b) Karan: <u>RV</u>., III, 22-30: <u>RV (HPS)</u>., II, pp. 47-65;
 (c) Kavantan: <u>RV</u>., III, 70: <u>RV (HPS)</u>., II, pp. 147-148.
- 290. See En. 287. (b).
- 291. Tiruman., Ciri Tiruma.: Lines. 40-41.
- 292. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 2-10-5.
- 293. Ibid., 3-4-6.
- 294. <u>RV.</u>, IV, 9-12: <u>RV (HPS</u>)., II, pp. 186-196.
- 295. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 5-5-2.
- 296. Ibid., 10-6-9.
- 297. <u>RV</u>., IV, 16-17: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., II, pp. 204-206.
- 298. <u>RV</u>., IV, 16 and 26: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., II, pp. 206 and 231-234.
- 299. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 1-4-2 and 2-10-5.
- 300. Ibid., 3-4-6. Cemmukak Kurańku, Cemmuka manti. Puranānūru. 200, 378 etc.
- 301. <u>Ibid.</u>, 4-6-3.
- 302. <u>RV</u>., V, 2, 15 and 33-35: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., II, pp. 338-341, 372-375 and 409-418. <u>RV</u>., V, 41-47: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., II, pp. 435-449.
- 303. <u>RV.</u>, V, 54: <u>RV (HPS)</u>., II, pp. 464-467.
- 304. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 2-2-3.
- 305. Ibid., 6-4-6; Tirunetu.: 20.
- 306. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 10-2-6.
- 307. <u>RV</u>., VI, 9-10: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., III, pp. 21-24.
- 308. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 10-2-4.
- 309. <u>RV</u>., IV, 19 and 21-23: <u>RV (HPS)</u>., III, pp. 45-46 and 48-55, 57.
- 310. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 5-7-7.
- 311. <u>Ibid.</u>, 10-6-7.
- 312. <u>Ibid.</u>, 3-2-6. Also see 4-2-1, 1-2-2 and 10-6-7; <u>Peri Tiruma</u>.: Line 97.
- 313. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 6-10-6.

- 314. <u>Ibid.</u>, 8-6-5 and 6.
- 315. <u>RV</u>., VI, 22-110: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., III, pp. 51-316.
- 316. Tiruman., <u>Tirukkuru</u>: Line 2.
- 317. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 1-2-2, 3-9-5 and 11-4-10; Ciri. Tiruma.: Line 26.
- 318. Tiruman, Tirunetu.: 28.
- 319. Tiruman., <u>Tirukkuru</u>.: Line 2.
- 320. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 4-8-5.
- 321. Ibid., 6-5-8.
- 322. Tiruman., Tiruvelu.: Lines 2-6.
- 323. Tiruman., Peri Tiru.: 2-2-3 and 9-4-5.
- 324. Ibid., 4-8-5 and 10-2-10; Tirunetu.: 28.
- 325. Ibid., 10-2-10.
- 326. <u>Ibid.</u>, 3-9-5.
- 327. <u>RV</u>., VI, 76-77: <u>RV (HPS</u>)., III, pp. 224-231.
- 328. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 10-2-5.
- 329. <u>RV</u>., VI, 67-68: <u>RV (HPS</u>)., III, pp. 183-189.
- 330. <u>RV.</u>, VI, 91: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., III, pp. 261-266.
- 331. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 10-3-2.
- 332. <u>RV</u>., VI, 110: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., III, pp. 314-316.
- 333. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 3-1-7, 7-8-7 and 8-6-3. Also see 2-2-2.
- 334. Tiruman., <u>Peri. Tiru</u>.: 7-8-7 and 9-1-7. Also see 1-5-1, 4-2-1, 4-6-4, 7-5-3 and 9-6-4; <u>Peri.</u> <u>Tiruma</u>.: Lines 97-98; <u>Tirunetu</u>.: 28 and 29.
- 335. Tiruman., Peri.Tiru.: 6-8-5.
- 336. Tiruman., Peri Tiruma.: Lines 97-98.
- 337. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 5-4-5.
- 338. <u>RV.</u>, VI, 111-114: <u>RV (HPS</u>)., III, pp. 316-329.
- 339. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 4-2-1 and 4-6-4.
- 340. <u>Ibid.</u>, 8-6-7.
- 341. <u>Ibid.</u>, 6-8-5.
- 342. (a) After the victory over Rāvaņa, Rāma with his entourage including Sita, Lakshmaņa, Sugrīva, Hanuman and Vibhishaņa, returns to Ayodhya in the Pushpaka Vimāna. Sage Bharatvāja who lives at Prayāga at the meeting place of

the Ganges and Yamuna rivers wished that Rāma and his retinue visit his hermitage and partake of his hospitality. Rāma agreeing, stops at the hermitage. But before that, fearing that Bharata might kill himself by entering the fire because of Rama's delay, he sends Hanuman to inform Bharata. In the mean time, the sage serves a sumptuous meal obtained through his power of penance. Everyone sits at a banana leaf each and partake of the food. When Hanuman arrives, after completing his mission, Rama in order to save the sage the trouble of serving up the meal on a fresh leaf invites Hanuman to share his leaf. He draws with his finger a line across the leaf demarcating their respective sections and also shares some fruits with Hanuman. It is also said that the banana leaf came to have the middle stem only after this incident. This is not found in the Vālmīki Rāmāyaņa but in the Rāmāyaņa of Vasishta. This is also found in the commentary of Manavāla Māmunikal for Sutra 85 of the Acāryahrdaya. It explains that while Sugriva and Vibhishana helped Rāma, expecting a favour in return, Hanuman did so without any such expectations. Therefore Rama felt that it is proper that he shares his leaf. In his commentary for this hymn, the commentator Periyavaccan Pillai explains that this act is very distinctive. It is like Rāma embracing Hanuman as a dear friend of equal status with whom he may share his joys and sorrows. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 5-8-2. Annangaracharyarin Tivyartta Tipikaiyurai, pp. 236-237.

- (b) This incident of Rāma and Hanuman sharing the same leaf is also found in the Malay version of the epic Hikayat Seri Rama. But it is placed in an earlier part of the story. In order to confirm estimation regarding Sītā's position, Rāma requests one of the vānara soldiers to cross the sea and enter Lanka. When no one comes forward, he asks Hanuman to do so. He agrees on condition Rāma eats out of the same leaf as Hanuman. Rāma consents. He brings a banana leaf, draws a line in the middle with his finger and they eat together, one on each side. (as related by Rajantheran, M. in his Hikayat Seri Rama: Perbandingan Versi Melayu, Saksrit dan Tamil. KL: DBP, 1995, pp. 130-131.
- 343. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 10-3-1; Peri. Tiruma.: Line 52.
- 344. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 3-10-6, 4-3-5 and 10-3-8. See also 10-2-6.
- 345. <u>Ibid.</u>, 10-3-3.
- 346. Ibid., 4-1-8; Tirukkuru.: Line 2.
- 347. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 5-4-4 and 5, 3-9-4 and 5 and 10-2-8.
- 348. <u>Ibid.</u>, 5-5-2, 9-1-5 and 7, 9-4-5.
- 349. <u>Ibid</u>., 8-6-3.
- 350. Ibid., 4-8-5, 10-3-2 and 3.
- 351. <u>Ibid.</u>, 11-4-10.
- 352. <u>Ibid</u>., 10-3-3 and 4, 10-2-5.
- 353. Ibid., 7-8-7, 10-2-5, 3-10-6; Peri. Tiruma.: Line 51; Ciri. Tiruma.: Line 42 etc.
- 354. <u>Ibid.</u>, 10-2-6.
- 355. Ibid., 2-2-2 and 3, 10-2-4.
- 356. Ibid., 3-10-6 and 10-6-8-,
- 357. <u>Ibid.</u>, 7-1-5.

- 358. Ibid., 11-4-7 and 3-10-6. Also see 7-1-5.
- 359. <u>Ibid</u>., 5-8-1 and 10-2-7.
- 360. Ibid., Ciri. Tiruma.: Line 42.
- 361. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 3-1-6 and 7, 3-9-5, 8-6-3 and 10-2-7.
- 362. Ibid., Peri. Tiruman.: Line 51.
- 363. Tiruman., Peri Tiru.: 10-2-8.
- 364. <u>Ibid</u>., 3-9-5.
- 365. Ibid., 10-2-5; Peri. Tiruma.: Line 51.
- 366. Tiruman., Peri Tiru.: 8-6-7 and 10-2-2.
- 367. Ibid., 10-2-5; Ciri. Tiruma.: Line 43.
- 368. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 3-4-7 and 10-3-9; Tirunetu: 20 and 29.
- 369. Tiruman., Peri. Tiru.: 7-8-7 and 9-1-7.
- 370. Ibid., 10-2-2 and 10-3-4.
- 371. <u>Ibid.</u>, 5-8-2.
- 372. <u>Ibid.</u>, 10-3-7.
- 373. This incident is not found in <u>RV</u>.
- 374. Namma. <u>Tiruvay</u>. 1-5-5.
- 375. <u>RV</u>., III, 17-18: <u>RV (HPS</u>)., II, pp. 38-42.
- 376. Namma., Tiruvay.: 2-3-6.
- 377. Namma., Peri. Tiruva.: 63.
- 378. <u>RV.</u>, III, 42-44: <u>RV (HPS</u>)., II, pp. 47-65.
- 379. Namma., Peri. Tiruva.: 82.
- 380. <u>RV</u>., III, 55 and 56: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., II, pp. 114-115 and 118-120.
- 381. Namma., <u>Tiruvay</u>.: 4-8-5.
- 382. <u>RV.</u>, IV, 9-12: <u>RV (HPS</u>)., II, pp. 186-196.
- 383. Namma., <u>Tiruvay</u>.: 6-10-5 and 9-1-2; <u>Peri. Tiruva</u>.: 64.
- 384. Namma., <u>Tiruvay</u>.: 1-5-6 and 2-5-7.
- 385. Ibid., 6-10-5, 1-5-6 and 2-5-7.
- 386. <u>RV</u>., VI, 22-110: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., 111, pp. 51-316.
- 387. Namma., Tiruvay.: 3-6-2.

- 388. <u>Ibid.</u>, 6-1-10 and 7-3-7. See also 2-1-3; <u>Tiruviru</u>.: 36 and 77.
- 389. Namma., <u>Tiruvay</u>.: 4-8-5.
- 390. Namma., <u>Tiruviru</u>.: 92.
- 391. <u>RV</u>., VI, 110: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., III, pp. 314-316
- 392. Namma., <u>Tiruvay</u>.: 4-3-1; <u>Peri. Tiruva</u>.: 17.
- 393. Ibid., Tiruvay.: 1-6-7, 3-8-2; Peri. Tiruva.: 66.
- 394. <u>Ibid.</u>, <u>Tiruvay</u>.: 2-7-10; <u>Peri. Tiruva</u>.: 11.
- 395. <u>RV</u>., VI, 114: <u>RV</u> (<u>HPS</u>)., III, pp. 328-329.
- 396. Namma., <u>Tiruvay</u>.: 7-6-9.
- 397. Ibid., 5-4-3 and 6-6-9.
- 398. <u>Ibid.</u>, 10-1-8 and 9-1-2.
- 399. <u>Ibid.</u>, 6-1-10.
- 400. <u>Ibid</u>., 6-10-5.
- 401. Ibid., 2-7-10 and 7-3-7; Tiruviru.: 36 and 77.
- 402. Namma., Tiruvay.: 3-8-2.
- 403. <u>Ibid</u>., 4-8-5.
- 404. <u>Ibid.</u>, 2-3-11.
- 405. <u>Ibid.</u>, 4-8-5 and 5-6-9.
- 406. <u>Ibid</u>., 6-1-10.
- 407. <u>Ibid</u>., 7-6-9.