Representation of Rivers and Water Bodies: An Analysis of The Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa

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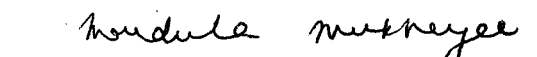New Delhi-110067, India

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Certified that the dissertation entitled Representation of Water Bodies: An Analysis of The Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa submitted by Malvika Sharma is in partial fulfilment of the **Master Of Philosophy** Degree of the university. The work presented is original and has not been submitted in part or in full for any other degree to this or any other university to best of our knowledge.

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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This Dissertation is a dedication

and celebration of the two most important People in my life.

My Mother and My Father

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Malvika Sharma

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa is an epic, regarded as an *ādikāvya*, supposed to be authored traditionally by Vālmīki, the *ādikavi* (Winternitz 1963:417). It consists of around twenty four thousand Sanskrit verses, regarding the life and times of prince Rāma and events surrounding him. The text survives in several thousand partial and complete manuscripts, the oldest of which appears to date from the 11th c A. D. (Goldman 1984:5). The poem is divided into seven *kāṇḍas* (books). These are: -

1. Bālakāṇḍa

2. Ayodhyākāṇḍa

3. Aranyakāṇḍa

4. Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa

5. Sundarakāṇḍa

6. Yuddhakāṇḍa

7. Uttarakāṇḍa

These consist of several *sargas* (chapters), which in turn consist of *ślokas* (verses).

I will attempt to study the representation of water bodies in the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa. This issue has not been dealt with specifically as our discussion of historiography shows[1]. I explore first whether the representation of water bodies varies with time, and second whether there are variations in their representation in the different geographical locales in which the story is set.

It is generally agreed upon by scholars that books one and seven of the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa i.e., the Bālakāṇḍa and the Uttarakāṇḍa are later additions to the text (Goldman 1984:6). Therefore, I will compare these two *kāṇḍas* with the rest of the text and determine whether any variation in the representation of water bodies is visible. I will also compare the description of water bodies in the three distinct geographical regions of Ayodhyā, Kiṣkindhā, and Laṅkā. Ayodhyā can be described as a relatively urban city, Kiṣkindhā a forested area and Laṅkā, a supposed island.

The chronological framework assigned to the text is from 6th century B.C. to 4th – 5th century AD[2], the region being the mid-Gaṅgā valley and Central India. I will base my study on the Critical Edition. The Critical Edition of the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa, published in seven volumes by the Oriental Institute of Baroda between 1960 and 1975 had many scholars involved: - G. H. Bhatt, U. P. Shah, P.C. Divanji, G. C. Jhala, D. R. Mankad, P. L. Vaidya. These scholars have

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[1] See section on Historiography on Pg. 4.
[2] For Discussion on Dating, refer Pg. 13.

provided the requisite critical apparatus by careful and systematic recording of manuscript evidence and delved into many issues on the evolution of the epic poem, like the authencity of certain passages and the development of the recensions (Gurugé 1991: II preface).

A map of the possible routes and regions of the Rāmāyaṇa has been given on page no. 128 (Schwartz berg 1992).

Recensions

There are two major regional recensions of the Rāmāyaṇa. The Northern and the Southern, both of which have versions defined generally by the scripts in which the manuscripts are written. The versions of the North are less homogeneous than the South, which is also supposed to be more reliable. The Northern recensions have North East and North West as its regional sub-recensions. One third of the text of each of these is not found in the other two (Goldman 1984:5). But according to Goldman, through the critical edition, it has been established that all the recensions are to be ultimately traced to a unitary archetype, which is the basic postulate that underlies the critical edition (Goldman 1984: 5-6, 87).

The Critical Edition represents Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa as an individual artistic elaboration of a pre-existing narrative, composed and transmitted orally

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(Goldman 1984:82-83). Through its methodology of correcting and purifying the text based on the other recensions that have descended from the common oral original, the critical edition has developed a most uniform, intelligible, and archaic recension of the Rāmāyaṇa. (Goldman 1984:92). The oldest manuscript is from Nepal and it bears the date A D 1020. (Sankalia 1973:14-15).

Historiography

Now a brief account of the various studies done on the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa by scholars is wont here. There are four themes on which the Rāmāyaṇa has been studied. One theme is the analysis of the data on various aspects of the Rāmāyaṇa. This has been done by various scholars.

H.D.Sankalia, in his *Rāmāyaṇa: Myth or Reality?* has used archaeology to study the Rāmāyaṇa. He believed the Rāmāyaṇa to be largely mythical, still containing traces of the original - Ādi Rāmāyaṇa. H.D.Sankalia tried to find the Ur or the original Rāmāyaṇa .The quest having begun by Prof. Jacobi, was based earlier only on literary or linguistic grounds. Now Sankalia sought to use archaeology and geographical evidence to study the characters, places and events of the Rāmāyaṇa.

Though he has not studied the rivers specifically, he makes very useful observations about the same. Excavations at Chirand, on the confluence of the

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Gangā and Ghoghra (Ghaghara) have yielded evidence which places the beginning of a pastoral-cum-early agricultural life, subsisting on rice, fishing and hunting and going back to 2000 B.C. Ayodhyā is described in the Rāmāyaṇa as having storehouses of rice, though this reference is very probably late and might not belong to the earliest phase of the city (Sankalia 1973: 45). Lack of evidence makes it impossible for us to come to any definite conclusion.

One other issue that needed to be resolved was that of the location of Laṅkā. According to Sankalia, the authors of the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa had no idea of south India, its people or customs (Sankalia 1973:17-18). I would agree with him when he locates Laṅkā, in eastern Madhya Pradesh (Sankalia 1973: 7). His study brought forth the following conclusions that the Laṅkā of Rāvaṇa was in the Chota Nagpur plateau in East Madhya Pradesh and most probably near Jabalpur, and also that the entire episode took place in a compact geographical area. (Sankalia 1973:62-63).

S. N. Vyas (1988) has gathered and analyzed data in the Rāmāyaṇa to gain a deeper understanding of the socio-economic, political, and cultural conditions of ancient India. G. S. Altekar (1987) has also studied the Rāmāyaṇa in terms of the social and political data reflected in it. He has analyzed the society and the polity of ancient India as it was at the time Vālmīki composed his Rāmāyaṇa.

A. Guruge (1991) has discussed the significance of Rāmāyaṇa in Indian life and literature, origin and the growth of the epic, its textual problem and dating, its historicity and geographical data of the Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa and Uttarakāṇḍa and the religion depicted in the Rāmāyaṇa. He has utilized the data available in all the three recensions: the North West, the South, and the North East.

His description of the geographical background of the Rāmāyaṇa is valuable, wherein he mentions all the regions and rivers, which have been mentioned in the epic. Therefore, this work would help me in giving an overall description and information regarding rivers. In addition, while I am studying the differences within the text, the data regarding which rivers are mentioned in which kāṇḍa would be helpful in comparing them.

Dev Raj Chanana (1963) has studied the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa to determine the representation of the spread of agriculture in ancient India. Chanana has divided the people described in the Rāmāyaṇa into three groups: - the Naras, the Vānaras, and the Rākṣasas. They are stated to have occupied separate areas and to have followed different ways of life. Chanana has compared the regions, occupations, food, social customs, and means of fighting associated with these three groups to determine the spread of agriculture. Through an interesting methodology and a fresh point of view of studying the Rāmāyaṇa, Chanana came to the conclusion that the Naras, the agriculture practicing people, advanced on

all sides, beyond Ayodhyā, occupying and clearing forests and cultivating the cleared land. According to him, the pioneers of this process were the ṛṣis, running their hermitages by means of cultivation and domestication of cattle. Chanana remarks that Janaka, the ploughman king gave Sītā, the furrow to Rāma in marriage. Rāvaṇa, the chief of the non-cultivating *rākṣasas*, abducted Sītā, the furrow and Rāma rescued her after a long and bitter fight. Thereafter everybody could live in peace, could plough one's furrow in peace (Chanana 1963: 18-19). This work brings out the distinction between three types of people living in three different geographical regions.

C. V. Vaidya (1972) has studied the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa and finds that historically it presents many aspects and incidents, which appear almost inexplicable. He has studied the date, historical explanation of India mythology, *rākṣasa's* origin and abode and the whole story. He has explained each happening such as the abduction of Sītā, alliance with monkeys, and the comparison of Rāma's going for exile towards the southern region as the expansion of the *Aryans*.

Ludwick (1994) bases her study on how Hanumān has been represented in the two versions, the Vālmīki's Rāmāyaṇa and the Rāmacaritamānasa.

Another theme of studies on the Rāmāyaṇas is on the basis of linguistics. J.L. Brockington (1984) has studied the Rāmāyaṇa in its total context in his

Righteous Rāma. Starting from a close linguistic study of the text, he establishes the relative chronology of the different layers of its composition and on that basis investigates the material, cultural, social, and religious milieus as they are revealed at different periods.

He has done a careful analysis of the language and style of the epic in relation to the transition from the earlier to classical Sanskrit, which is the basis for charting the various layers of composition on internal and relatively objective evidence. While identifying the layers of the epic, one can identify according to him, the changing religious character of Indian society, from the last stages of the Vedic religion to the latest stages of an incipient Vaiṣṇavism. According to him, the Rāmāyaṇa also reflects a social pattern where the transition of Indian society is taking place from the *Aryan* expansion across northern India to village based agriculture or settled life.

His charting of various temporal layers of the epic can help me in my study. According to the chronological framework he assigns to the epic, I could examine the treatment of rivers in the various layers bringing them within my scope of comparing the Bālakāṇḍa, Uttarakāṇḍa and the rest of the text and analyze whether the differences, if any, correspond with his framework.

Satya Vrat (1964) is another scholar who has done a linguistic study of the Rāmāyaṇa, to further knowledge of the Sanskrit language and arouse fresh

curiosity to know the true idiom. He has done this to find the established usage and the vocabulary that was there in Vālmīki's time.

Other works based on the Rāmāyaṇa are translations of the epic. Goldman (1984) bases his English translation of the critical edition of the text and discusses at length for each *kāṇḍa*, the characters, the storyline, and the features specific to each *kāṇḍa*.

Other translations of the epic are by Arshia Sattar (1996) and Elizabeth Seeger (1975).

The other type of studies that we find based on the Rāmāyaṇa relate with the comparison of the various versions of the Rāmāyaṇa, from within India and abroad. However, Paula Richman makes the one fundamental point that has to be considered while studying the versions of the Rāmāyaṇa.

In her book titled *Many Rāmāyaṇas* (1991), Richman mentions that there are around 300 versions of the Rāmāyaṇa. Each version represents a different socio-economic tradition and that Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa is not the Ur-Version of the Rāmāyaṇa. All these versions including Vālmīki's or Kamban's are different tellings. (Richman 1991: 9). Therefore, when we read the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa, we are looking at one type of social and economic culture and tradition.

Her second book called *Questioning Rāmāyaṇas* (2001) also emphasizes that the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa should not necessarily be taken as a fixed text and

the others necessarily as variant of this fixed texts, for the latter often contextualised the different world views of particular segments of Indian society. Richman in her book suggests that centuries of questioning have been carried on within the Rāmāyaṇa tradition- questioning of authoritative values, interrogating notions of the ideal polity, challenging the rationale for ways in which various characters behaved, querying the gender norms depicted and criticizing the ways in which members of particular castes have been portrayed. Such questions have helped to perpetuate a tradition of openness and generated a range of tellings of The Rāma-kathā, which have kept the Rāmāyaṇa tradition, vital, fluid and multi-faceted. Her book highlights the process of questioning and brings to the fore, the multiplicity of tellings and perspectives included in the Rāmāyaṇa tradition both in the past and in the present.

Monika Thiel Horstmann's (1991) work unites the majority of the papers read at the conference on contemporary Rāmāyaṇa traditions held in September 1987 in Germany. The theme common in most papers is the ethical conflicts of man and on how man tries to solve them. According to her, because the Rāmāyaṇa revolves around human conditions, it remains one of the most vital South Asian traditions.

P. K. Maity in his *Rāma-Kathā in India and abroad* (1992) has tried to assemble the whole Rāma literature. He has tried to determine the points of

similarities and differences between the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa and the other versions, composed at a later period. According to him, the Rāmāyaṇa can be dated to the third century B.C. He takes into account the versions of the Rāmāyaṇa in India and abroad. He also discusses archaeological sources, western interpretations of The Rāma-kathā, and does a comparative study of various Rāmāyaṇas depicted in select stories of the epic. He compares the Buddhist, Jaina, Tamil, Telegu, Kannada, and Malayalam versions of The Rāma-kathā.

S.A.Srinivasan (1984) discusses and compares the three versions of the Rāmāyana: - Kamban's, Tulsidāsa's, and Subrahmaṇya's in terms of the Vālin-Sugrīva episode.

K. S. Srinivasan (1994) offers a critical and comparative study of the earliest Vālmīki 's classic in Sanskrit, known as the *adikāvya*, and the first version in the Tamil language, which arose ten centuries later. He states that while Vālmīki is the source and inspiration for Kamban, the difference in the cultural milieu that influenced the two poets is reflected in the many little points of linguistic and literary excellence that enriched the narrative in either language.

Smith (1988) has studied how the Rāma theme was visualized in regional cultures of Assam, Bengal and Orissa.

Amal Sarkar (1987) in his study proceeds to enquire about whom actually were the *rākṣasas* and the *vānaras*, held as the adversaries and the allies respectively of the hero of the epic. The effort on the part of the author to show that both these, though represented as non-human, were actually human elements placed at different wave lengths of culture stands out to be given a very careful consideration. He has given the summaries of the Rāmāyaṇa in the versions of poets like Asvāghosa, Kālīdāsa, and versions of countries of Southeast Asia such as Java, Thailand, Cambodia and the versions in the local languages of India.

Another work is that of B. C. Law (1968) who has worked on the rivers of India as mentioned in the ancient Indian literature. A brief description of rivers is mentioned, although no specific importance has been given to the Rāmāyaṇa.

We see from the above discussion that, no one has studied the specific aspect of representation of rivers in the Rāmāyaṇa and hence, we feel that a discussion on the same would be necessary as an addition to the study of the various aspects of the Rāmāyaṇa.

Dating

The dating of the text has invited much debate, both in terms of its historicity and its composition and its compilation. In terms of the historicity of the Rāmāyaṇa, I would like to begin and end discussion on it by quoting Professor Romila Thapar, "Its (the epic's) historicity lies in the fact that it is a later age reflecting on an earlier one, the reflections frequently taking the form of interpolations interleaved among the fragments of the oral, bardic tradition."(Thapar 2000: 131).

It is believed that the Rāmāyaṇa was known in India by at least the 5th c A.D. It was also at this time that important scenes in the story began to be portrayed in sculpture in early temples devoted to the worship of Viṣṇu and possibly Śiva, though not to Rāma (Sankalia 1973:11). Around this time, Kālidāsa composed the Raghuvaṃsa in which the events of Rāmāyana were incorporated. Later Bhavabhūti wrote the Uttara-Ramacharita.

Brought down from generation to generation, first orally and then, in over 2000 manuscripts across temporal and geographical space, the Rāmāyana is virtually impossible to date; which also implies that the authorship of the epic is most likely not unitary but multiple. In addition, that the Bālakāṇda and the

Uttarakāṇḍa are later additions is a fact agreed upon by most scholars (Goldman 1984:15).

In the absence of any sort of reliable evidence, scholars have tried to date the epic relative to other texts, especially the Mahābhārata. The criteria for comparison with the Mahābhārata are linguistic, stylistic, cultural, political, and geographical (Goldman 1984: 15).

Linguistic evidence in comparison with the Mahābhārata has been analyzed in terms of pre-pāninian archaism on the one hand and on the other as late innovations. However, ultimately it would depend on the author's conception of the relation of the epic language to that described by Pāṇini. In addition, divergences from Pāṇini's rules cannot be used to date the epic later or earlier than the Mahābhārata.

Brockington asserts that a thorough study of language and style can provide information on the stages of the epic (Brockington 1984: 329). He identifies and dates five stages of growth of the Rāmāyaṇa as follows:

Stage 1. (orally transmitted from about the fifth to the fourth century B.C.)

All *śloka* stanzas of books 2 to 6 not listed below (37 .10 % of the text)

Stage 2. (approximately third century B.C. to 1st century A.D.)

The following complete *sargas* of books 2 to 6 (*śloka* material, 34.05% of the text):

2.1-30	3.1-4	4.13	5.1-8	6.4-5
46-7	8-11	17-18	12-17	23-14
57-8	13	21	26-7[l.v.]	30-1
61	15	23-4	33-7	46-8
65-9	25, 28-30	27-30	43	53
74	33	39-42	45-7	55
85	40	49	54-8	57-63
88-9	44-5	59-61		70-3
94-5	50	65-6		79-82
98	53			87
100-2	58			90-1
106-8	60			102-7
110-11	71			111-16

All verses in longer meters I books 2-6 (4.27% of the text)

Stage 3. (composed between the 1st and the 3rd centuries A.D.)

The Bālakāṇḍa (book 1) and the Uttarakāṇḍa (book 7): comprising 24.75 % of the text

Stage 4. (composed between about the fourth and twelfth centuries A.D.)

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*Passages (i.e. those passages relegated by the editors of the critical edition, to footnotes or to appendix one) with good manuscript support

Stage 5. (from about the 12 century A.D.)

* Passages with poor manuscript support

Stylistically, both the epics have influenced each other a great deal; also both employ the style of the popular oral-formulaic epic and share a considerable body of phrases and common places and the same meters. Although there are some features, which distinguish the Rāmāyaṇa from the Mahābhārata, it could also be looked at as a genre distinction between the two rather than a means to date the Rāmāyaṇa.

Cultural phenomena have been used as comparative criteria to date the Rāmāyaṇa relative to the Mahābhārata. The practice of sati is common in Mahābhārata, but is almost unknown in the Rāmāyaṇa. The practice of Niyojana[3] is fundamental to the development of the epic story of the Mahābhārata, but the Rāmāyaṇa shows no knowledge of it especially in the case of the royal family of Ayodhyā. The absence or presence of any cultural practice in the Rāmāyana or Mahābhārata can hardly help us date the former, because these differences may just reflect regional rather than chronological distance between the two.

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[3] This term can be defined as the practice of Levirate, in which a woman whose husband is dead or otherwise incapabale of fathering children, may conceive by another man in the name of her husband (Goldman 1984:18-19).

According to Jacobi (agreed upon also by Goldman) (Goldman 1984: 20-22), geographical and political data from the Rāmāyaṇa can be used to date the epic. Jacobi argued that although the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa appears to originate and centrally concerns the royal house of Ayodhyā of the Kosala-Magadhan region, the area in which both the great Buddhist movement and the rise of the imperial Magadhan power occurred toward the middle of the sixth century B.C., it appears to know nothing of the these important developments. The authors knew a world of small quasi-tribal kingdom whose *kṣatriya* overlords may or may not have had any special deference to the Ikṣvāku monarch reigning in Ayodhyā. The poets are fairly familiar with the geography of northern India and with the towns of the pre-magadhan period. He sites various geographical and political examples, which enable him to reach a conclusion about the dating of the epic (Goldman 1984:20-22). Thus he says that even if we grant no value to the traditional *purāṇic* dynastic lists or to the Buddhist view that the Buddha himself was a descendant of the ancient and glorious Ikṣvāku rulers of Ayodhyā and that the events recounted in the Rāmāyaṇa predate his birth by many generations, it is difficult to see how some portions could have been composed later than around the beginning of the fifth century B.C. According to him thus, it seems reasonable to accept for the composition of the oldest parts of the surviving epic a date no later than the middle of the sixth c BC. As for the earliest date for the composition of the epic, the data correlates to some extent with the late Vedic and subsequent

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periods, with small patriarchal kingdoms, heavy forestation, great emphasis on the knowledge of the Vedas, etc (Goldman 1984: 23).

P.V. Kane (1968) opines that the core of the Rāmāyaṇa story may be only as old as 300 to 250 B.C. at the most. If we accept the date of Kālidāsa as between 350 to 450 A.D., then the Rāmāyaṇa in its present form cannot be placed later than about 200 A.D. and may be placed at least a century or two earlier (Kane 1968: 396). According to him, there can be no doubt that the whole of book seven of the Rāmāyaṇa was added later to the work, but it has also long been recognized that the whole of the book one cannot have belonged to the original work of Vālmīki. There are numerous internal contradictions in the book so that the language and style stand out as being inferior to those of book 2 to 6. Moreover, in the core books of the poem there is never any reference to the events in book one; in fact there are details in this book, which directly contradict the statements of later books.

Winternitz (1963) adds that in the early books Rāma is merely a human hero and that it is only in books one and seven(and in few interpolated passages of the other books) that he appears as the incarnation of the god Viṣṇu. This transformation of Rāma from a man into a semi divine national hero and finally into the universal god Viṣṇu must necessarily have taken a very long time. Moreover, the poet Vālmīki appears as a pious forest hermit and *ṛṣi* and a

contemporary of the hero Rāma in the first and last books of the Rāmāyaṇa. Thus, Vālmīki had already become a legendary personage in the minds of the poets of these latest books. All this makes it seem likely that centuries elapsed between the early and the late portions of the epic. It may be concluded that at the beginning of the 2nd century A..D., the Rāmāyaṇa was already regarded as a model epic. Towards the end, however it must already have had its final form (Winternitz 1963: 435, 440, 440,450).

Ananda Gurugé believes that the material of the Rāmāyaṇa dates at least from the 4th c. B.C. while the archetype was composed somewhere before 300 B.C. The third and fourth stages of the development of the epic fall within 300 B.C. and 100 AD. The Uttarakāṇḍa according to him was in existence by the middle of the 1st c AD. The latest addition as regards Vālmīki and the *sloka* meter came into existence roundabout the 2nd c AD. Thus, he proposes that the data from the Rāmāyaṇa reflects the social conditions of India between the 4th c B.C. and 2nd c AD (Gurugé 1991: 41).

According to R. S. Sharma, the epic belongs to the first four Christian centuries, and the Bālakāṇḍa and the Uttarakāṇḍa to the Gupta period. His bases of identifying interpolations are content, style, and vocabulary (Sharma 2000: 136-7).

Considering all the above views and arguments, we would like to assume the date of the Rāmāyaṇa as largely between the 6th century B.C. and the 4th century A. D.

Political Institutions and Socio-Economic Processes between 6th c B.C. & 4th c A.D.

In order to better understand the evolution of the epic, and in turn the treatment of the rivers in the epic, a brief historical background of the regions that I will study, within the time frame I am adhering to, is needed. The Rāmāyaṇa as the epic of the Ikṣvāku linage has its nucleus in the middle Gaṅgā valley, in Kosala and Videha, and is concerned with migrations southwards in the Vindhyan region (Thapar 2000:130).

One does see archaic practices of a tribal and stateless society on the one hand and a patriarchal, *Varṇa* divided and state based society on the other in the Rāmāyaṇa (Sharma 1983: 136). According to some scholars, there has been a transition from matrilineal lineage descent (although even here the male element dominates) to a patrilineal form along with the appearance of complex forms of economy and government (Sharma 1983: 140). Some examples of tribal society are given: the *asvamedha* sacrifice matches the description of the same sacrifice in the later Vedic texts (Sharma 1983: 149). The larger portion of the Rāmāyaṇa

consists of a *Varṇa* divided; state based society in which the *Vaiśyas* appear as the principal producers and taxpayers (Sharma 1983: 150).

Another social order that is seen in the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa is that of *āṣramas* (Sharma 1983: 151). The *āṣramas* or the abodes of sages located in the forests outside the precincts of the usual settlements play an important part in the epics. The inmates of these abodes lived on food gathering, and offerings made by the royal household and the common people. These acted as radiating centres of brahmanical values and life for the backward tribal people living in tribal belts (Sharma 1983; 151-2). No land rights were established yet though.

It would be interesting to note that Ayodhyā was not inhabited on any scale before the sixth c B.C. i.e., the beginning of the NBPW phase. (Sharma 1983: 156). The rise of towns was accompanied by the use of the metallic money, mainly of silver from the 5th c B.C. onwards in the middle Gaṅgā valley. The urbanization process received further impetus in the middle of the NBP phase around 300 B.C. when we encounter more iron tools for crafts and agriculture. More and more punch marked coins and the beginning of the use of fire-baked bricks and ring wells. (Sharma 1983: 164).

Another view is that the mid-millennium may be taken as an approximate dividing line between non state and state system and it is possible to say that the

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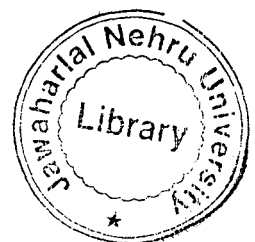
evidence of the middle Gaṅgā valley suggests the start of the process towards state formation (Thapar 2000: 377).

Before state formation, there was the lineage system, a distinctive socio-political structure. In this system, bonds of genealogy held groups of kin together. Stratification was present among the senior and junior lineage, where the former held the power and the latter were providers of tribute and prestations. This tribute was redistributed by the senior lineages through, rituals and gifts. Ownership was limited to animals at most (Thapar 2000: 378).

The lineage system was continued in the Gaṅgā valley in the *Gaṇa-Saṅghas* or chiefdoms. The controlling lineage claimed *kṣatriya* status, with the head of each family becoming the *rājā* that sat in an assembly, and claimed ownership of land as well as political control. References to land revenue are absent although some taxes are said to have been collected from the traders coming to the city associated with the *Gaṇa-Saṅghas* (Thapar 2000: 387). The *Gaṇa-Saṅgha* system can be described as representing a point along a continuum towards state formation. The state emerged together with the monarchical system in Kosala and Magadha and the factors, which lead to this change, relate to the lineage system and its transmutation into a state system. The continuation of the lineage system is evident in the establishing of *Varṇa* status as a complementary system to whatever other changes took place. Control

over marriage alliances within a careful grid of hierarchy and social distance, the maintenance of lineage connections and occupational activities were adhered to in the *Varṇa* system. The river system of the Gaṅgā in itself provided a circuit of communication with major settlements at nodal points along the rivers, which were to grow into the Mahanagars of the later period.

Two new groups emerged, the traders and the peasants. They were included in the *Vaiśya* and *Śūdra Varṇa* respectively. Both indicated the weakening of the pre-station economy as the main economic force. They were assisted in this by the new ideology of Buddhism and Jainism, which even though they arose among the *kṣatriya* of the *Gaṇa-Saṅghas* they more vigorously preached in the cities of the kingdoms of the Kosala, Kāśī and Magadha, although the Rāmāyaṇa shows no knowledge of these.

The state is characterized by a concentration of political authority generally in the hands of an erstwhile senior linage of which one family claims complete power, a claim which is legitimized by the priests as being based among other things on agencies other than human such as an association with the gods. The state claims control over the well-defined territory, which is defended by a standing army. Trade had its routes in the local circuits of exchange (Thapar 2000: 389).

A brief account of the polity, society, and economy between the 6th c B.C. and the 4th century A.D. is being given here. The specific regions are the middle Gangetic plains and central India, constituting the present Madhya Pradesh, including the Vindhyan range and the Narmada and the Tapti rivers. The middle Gaṅgā plains correspond to eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. This is where ancient Kosala, Kāśī and Magadha were situated. It was the centre of city life, money economy, and trade since the 6th century B.C[4]. This region provided the basis for Mauryan imperial expansion and it continued to be politically important until the Gupta period (5th century A.D.).

These *Mahājanapadas* came to produce varieties of resources through agriculture, pastoralism, trade, and production of various crafts and in addition to agricultural settlements; these *Mahājanapadas* came to have commercial centres and big cities in them. In the period between the 6th c B.C. and the 4th c B.C., we find the important *Mahājanapadas* fighting one another for political supremacy. The Magadhan Empire gradually became the most powerful and took into control the northwest, the Gaṅgā valley and adjacent areas to the north of the vindhyas and the Deccan. Till recently it was believed by historians that Magadha rulers, particularly Mauryan rulers, maintained very rigid and direct control over all parts of the empire through different types of officials and through a large standing army. This view is now being questioned and it is doubted whether in such a

r details, refer Pg.

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remote past it was possible to govern different parts of the empire so directly. There is also evidence that in the cities, a very efficient system of administration looked after by different communities, prevailed and that in the period of Mauryas, the state exercised significant control in all areas of economic activities.

The Magadhan Empire did not last long and by about the beginning of the 2nd century B.C., it had declined. Only minor powers, like the Sungas and Kanvas, held Magadha and some other areas for some time but they did not rule over as an empire.

The Śakas are referred to also as Scythians. A branch of these established itself in western and central India from where they continued their rule until about the fourth century AD. The Śakas along with Parthians introduced the kshatrap system of government, which was similar to that of the Achaemenid and Seleucid systems in Iran. Under this system, the kingdom was divided into provinces, each under a military governor called Mahakshatrap. Governors with lower status were called Kshatrapas. These governors issued their own instructions and also minted their own coins. This is indicative of a more independent status than was otherwise normal in an administrative set-up. The Śaka kings used such prestigious titles, as "king of kings", in addition to great king, which they took over from the Greeks.

The Kuṣāṇas succeeded the Parthians in the extreme northwest and spread themselves in successive stages in the regions of northern India. Like the Śakas and the Pallavas, they too are mentioned in the epic, *purāṇic* and other literature.

The emergence of the localities seems to be a significant development by the time of the Sātavāhanas. They provided the basis for early historic state formation in the Deccan. From the 2nd century B.C., we see the gradual expansion of agricultural settlements and the integration of new communities. First, the monasteries and Buddhism and later the Brahmans and Brahmanism helped the progress of social integration.

One large state structure, which began to emerge from the beginning of the 4th century AD, was of the Guptas. An important aspect related to kingship was the continuity of various kings in their regions once they had accepted the suzerainty of the Gupta king. There was a considerable concern towards agricultural production and this is reflected from the way irrigation got priority during this period. The practice of gifting land to religious donees had become quite common and the Brahmans extracted considerable influence over the king. There was differentiation amongst the cultivators and compared to the rich the condition of ordinary cultivators declined considerably. Similarly, the wealth and social status of different types of craftsmen also varied. Though commercial

activities continued during this period, it appears that there was a decline in craft production. The *Varṇa* system continued in society.

I will examine whether these socio-political and economic conditions have been reflected in some measure in the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa. My specific focus is on rivers in particular and other water bodies in general. I explore whether rivers are shown as being valuable economic resources- for irrigation or communication or whether rivers are treated as symbols of political and ritual idenity.

"From the earliest times, water has been regarded in India as a tangible manifestation of the divine essence. "In the beginning everything was like a sea without a light (declares a hymn of the Ṛg Veda)". And to this day, one of the most common and simple objects of daily worship in the daily ritual is a jar or pitcher filled with water, representing the presence of the divinity and serving in the place of a sacred image. The water is regarded, for the period of the worship, as a residence or seat of god (Zimmer 1990: 34).

With this in view, I analyze the data including Sanskrit terms used for the words of water bodies. I will also examine activities and settlements associated with rivers (Chapter 2).

Next, I compare the Bālakāṇḍa and Uttarakāṇḍa (taken to be later additions to the epic) with the rest of the text, in terms of the data compiled in chapter two (Chapter 3).

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Finally I compare the treatment and importance assigned to the rivers in three differently endowed geographical regions i.e., Ayodhyā (a town), Kiṣkindhā (forested area) and Laṅkā (a supposed island), again with respect to the information given in chapter two (chapter 4), before summarizing my main findings and conclusion.

Chapter 2

Sanskrit Terms, Regions, and Activities Associated with Water Bodies

In this chapter, I will tabulate and analyze the data compiled from all the seven *kāṇḍas* of the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa. I have divided this chapter into three sections, dealing with the following aspects.

In section I, I tabulate and analyze the generic Sanskrit terms for water bodies -ocean / sea, river, lake (which would include the terms pond and pool) and waterfall. Then I tabulate the number of references for specific water bodies. I also analyze and study the context in which these terms are used.

In section II, I describe and examine the types of regions surrounding water bodies. In section III, I study the various activities associated with water bodies. An appendix has been given at the end of the dissertation collating all the references cited.

I begin my discussion of generic terms, examining the evidence from each *kāṇḍa*.

Bālakāṇḍa

Table 1[5]-Generic Terms

S. NO.	TERM	SANSKRIT EQUIVALENT	NO. OF REFERENCES
1	Ocean/sea	*Samudra*	7
		Sāgara	4
		Mahārṇava	1
		Lavanārṇava	1
2	River	*Nadī*	1
		Saritāh	2

The ocean/sea is described in the Rāmāyaṇa as being mighty, deep (Rāmāyaṇa 1.1.15, 1.16.15,1.34.10). It has been compared with Rāma in terms of strength and Rāma's powers to subdue it (Rāmāyaṇa 1.1.15, 16, 64). It is mentioned that Rāvaṇa has the power to conquer the ocean/sea (Rāmāyaṇa 1.14.10). The monkeys of Kiṣkindhā are described as gods (who took birth to help Rāma to defeat and kill Rāvaṇa), who are as mighty as the ocean/sea (Rāmāyaṇa 1.16.14-15). Sage Viśvāmitra is also compared with the might of the ocean/sea in the Rāmāyaṇa (Rāmāyaṇa 1.54.20). As will be seen, the ocean/sea

is simply used as a metaphor for strength, physical, political, and moral and is not treated in naturalistic or realistic terms.

The term river is used in a generalized context where it is referred to as being a part of the whole earth complete with its forests, oceans/ seas etc (Rāmāyaṇa 1.1.26,1.2.35,1.10.14). There are no generic references to lakes or waterfalls in this *kāṇḍa*.

Table 2[6]- Named Rivers

S.NO.	TERM	NO. OF REFERENCES
1	Gaṅgā	39
	Jāhnavī	4
	Bhāgīrathī	1
	Haimavatī	2
2	Tamasā	3
3	Sarayū	6
4	Śoṇā	3
	Sumāgadhī	1
	Māgadhī	1
5	Kauśikī	2
6	Ikṣumatī	1

The river Gaṅgā is described as a holy and celestial river (Rāmāyaṇa 1.22.5, 16). It is stated that the Gaṅgā merges with the sea (Rāmāyaṇa 1.23.4). It

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[5] For references see Appendix.

is also called the Jāhnavī and the Bhāgīrathī. In naming this river as Bhāgīrathī one can identify a two way process of raising the status of the Ikṣvāku lineage on the one hand and on the other the deification of this river.[7] The Gaṅgā is described as the constant resort of the sages (Rāmāyana 1.34.6). It is depicted as thronging with wild geese and white cranes (Rāmāyana 1.34.7), and is the river that goes by three paths, meaning that it traverses the three worlds to come to the ocean/sea (Rāmāyana 1.34.10). The origin and the descent myths of the Gaṅgā have been given in detail in the Bālakāṇḍa (Rāmāyana 1.34.11-1.43)[8]. This is the only river that has been accorded the status of a goddess and has been deified in the Bālakāṇḍa. We will discuss the details of this subsequently.

The river Tamasā is mentioned as being located near the Gaṅgā. In the Rāmāyana, Sage Vālmīki finds a bathing spot on this river (Tīrtha) (Rāmāyana 1.2.3-8, 19) that is free from mud. The term tīrtha signifies the practice of glorification of holy places and was one of the brahmanical religious practices in which the right of practice extended to all, irrespective of caste or gender (Chakrabarti 2001: 47,251). The water of the Tamasā is described as lucid. This river can be identified with the present day Tonse, a branch of the Sarayū in U.P. (Dey 1971:202). But no such confluence has been mentioned in the Bālakāṇḍa . This is the only river mentioned for bathing spots or tīrthas.

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[6] For references see Appendix.
[7] For discussion on this, refer Chapter 3, Pg. 92.
[8] For details refer Chapter 3, Pg. 92

In the Rāmāyaṇa, it is mentioned that, the sacrificial ground is laid and the asvamedha is performed by Daśaratha on the northern bank of the Sarayū (Rāmāyaṇa 1.11.15, 1.13.1). Along the southern bank, after having gone a league and a half (four and a half miles) (presumably from Daśaratha's residence), Viśvāmitra is supposed to have given two spells to Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa. It is called holy (Rāmāyaṇa 1.21.9-10). A myth of the Sarayū is given: - Viśvāmitra tells Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa about its origin. He says that on Mount Kāilasa there is a lake that Brahmā produced from his mind, Manas, hence it is called Lake Mānasa. This river flows down from that lake to embrace the city of Ayodhyā. Because it rises from a lake, (Saras), it is called the holy Sarayū (Rāmāyana 1.23.7-8). This kind of mythical origin of this river in the epic is comparable with the purāṇic notion of origin of rivers from lakes. The authors of the Purāṇas believed that rivers originate in lakes, so each river has in their accounts, invariably a lake visible or invisible (underground) as its source (Ali 1973:60). The Sarayū is identified with the Ghaghara in U.P. This river rises in the mountains of Kumaon and after its junction with the Kalinadi, it is called the Sarayū. Interestingly, even according to the Māhabhārata it is thought to issue from the Mānasa Sarovara (Dey 1971:181-2).

The river Śonā is also called the Sumāgadhī (Rāmāyana 1.31.7) and Māgadhī (Rāmāyana 1.31.8). This river flowed eastwards where there were farmlands (Sukṣetra) and it is likely that the river waters facilitated agriculture. It is

also mentioned that five hills surrounded it. Śoṇā is described as shallow, limpid and studded with sand bars in the Rāmāyana (Rāmāyana 1.34.4), but modern accounts suggest that it is a quick run-off, roaring and dynamic in character (Singh 1992: 196). It is the river Sone, flowing on the western boundary of the Magadha. The Sone formerly flowed through Rajgir through the present bed of the Saraswati (Dey 1971:196).

An origin myth of the Kauśikī is cited in the Rāmāyana linking it with Viśvāmitra's family. It is supposed to be his sister, Satyavatī (Rāmāyana 1.33.1-13), who was transformed into a river. She is called a goddess with holy water. The Kauśikī river is the present day Kusi (Dey 1971:97).

The river Ikṣumatī, surrounded the city of Sāṃkāśyā (Rāmāyana 1.69.2-3). The city (now called Sankisa) was actually situated on the northern bank of the river, now called the Kalinadi.

In the Bālakāṇḍa, one **confluence** is mentioned, that of the Sarayū and Gaṅgā (Rāmāyana 1.22.5,1.22.16,1.23.1-2,4).

Table 3[9]- Named Lakes

S. NO.	TERM	NO. OF REFERENCES
1	Pampā	3
2	Bindu	1
3	Puṣkara	1

The Pampā Lake is mentioned in this *kāṇḍa*, when it is being remembered first by Brahmā (Rāmāyana 1.1.47) and then by sage Vālmīki, while they recount Rāma's story (Rāmāyaṇa 1.3.13, 1.3.14). While describing the myths associated with Gaṅgā, it is mentioned in the Rāmāyaṇa that Hara (i.e. Śiva) releases Gaṅgā into Lake Bindu (Rāmāyaṇa 1.42.6). No other information on Lake Bindu is given. When Viśvāmitra's transition from being a *kṣatriya* to a sage is being recounted the Puṣkara region and the lake of the same name is mentioned as a stopover point (Rāmāyaṇa 1.61.1-2). This could imply the interaction between eastern Rajasthan and the Gangetic plains as it is corroborated by archaeological evidence in the form of N.B.P pottery (Lahiri 1992: 289).

The Gaṅgā, the Sarayū, and the Kauśikī are represented as holy in the Bālakāṇḍa. No other river is called holy. The association of these rivers with the Ikṣvākus, the *Purāṇas* and the sage Viśvāmitra respectively could be a reason for

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[9] For references see Appendix.

their raised status.[10] One can conclude also that there was very close interaction between the epics and the *Purāṇas*. Interestingly, the Śoṇā is not regarded as sacred. This could be due to the river flowing in the region of Magadha. This fits in with the brahamanical ideology where Magadha was condemned as the land of heterodox traditions, where the *Varṇa* order was not followed. Here one sees that the mention of Lake Puṣkara, though a very limited one in the text may suggest interaction between Rajasthan and the Gangetic plains.

Ayodhyākāṇḍa

Table 4[11]-*Generic Terms*

S.NO.	TERM	SANSKRIT EQUIVALENT	NO. OF REFERENCES
1	Ocean/sea	*Samudra*	6
		Sāgara	7
		Saritāmpati	4
2	River	*Nadī*	7
		Saritāh	4
3	Lake/pond/pool	*Sarasa*	3
		Sarah	1
		Hradah	1
		Padminī	2
4	Waterfall	*Nirjhara*	1

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[10] For discussion, refer Chapter 3, Pg. 92

The ocean/ sea is unnamed in this *kāṇḍa* as well. It is called lord of rivers, profound, imperturbable, and righteous (Rāmāyaṇa 2.12.6, 2.16.6, 2.20.23, 2.31.6, and 31). The royal highway is described as jammed before Rāma's consecration and the noise is compared with that of the ocean/sea's sounds (Rāmāyaṇa 2.5.16, 2.6.27). It is mentioned that the city of Ayodhyā and its people resemble the ocean/sea teeming with creatures (Rāmāyaṇa 2.6.28). Also, it is said that the ocean/sea waits for the rising of the moon just as the people wait for Rāma (Rāmāyaṇa 2.15.14, 2.38.11). It is said that Rāma's agitation grows like that of the ocean/sea under the full moon (Rāmāyaṇa 2.16.7), it is also mentioned that Rāma after lamenting about his exile, lies like the ocean/sea becalmed (Rāmāyana 2.47.28) and a ocean/sea of grief has swallowed him (Rāmāyaṇa 2.71.13). Daśaratha is compared with the imperturbable ocean/sea being shaken (Rāmāyaṇa 2.16.6) and he is called as profound as the ocean/sea (Rāmāyaṇa 2.31.6, 31). The phrase ocean /sea of grief is used to show the sorrow of Kauśalya, and Śatrughna (Rāmāyaṇa 2.47.28, 2.71.13, 2.56.15). Kingship is compared with the ocean/sea when Bharata says that he will guard it as the shore guards the ocean/sea (Rāmāyaṇa 2.20.23). The ocean/sea's features are used to describe the character or feeling of the person it is being compared with. It is seen that the ocean/sea is a part of diverse poetic imagery, but this is richer

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[11] For references see Appendix.

than that of the Bālakānda. Not merely strength but also sound, mass, swelling, depth and grief are parts of this imagery.

Rivers are mentioned in the Rāmāyaṇa in relation to the ocean/sea being their lord and that they flow into it finally. They are also mentioned as parts of description of the earth in general. Lakes, ponds, pools, streams, and waterfalls form a part of the description of the forest, where Rāma goes after exile (Rāmāyaṇa 2.24.13-14, 2.31.37, 2.25.11, 2.32.5). There is no other importance attached to these water bodies. A pond of blooming lotuses is used as a metaphor to describe the men and women in Rāma's house (Rāmāyaṇa 2.5.13).

Table 5[12]-Named Rivers

S. NO.	TERM	NO. OF REFERENCES
1	Gaṅgā	23
	Jāhnavī	1
	Bhāgīrathī	1
2	Tamasā	6
3	Sarayū	5
4	Yamunā	8
	Kālindī	1
5	Mandākinī	14
6	Vedaśrutī	1
7	Gomatī	2
8	Syandikā	1
9	Mālyavatī	1
10	Śaradaṇḍā	1
11	Vipāśā	1
12	Śālmalī	1
13	Śatadru	1
14	Śilāvahā	1
15	Kuliṅgā	1
16	Uttānakā	1
17	Kuṭikā	1
18	Kapīvatī	1
19	Sthāṇumatī	1

[12]For references, see Appendix.

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The Gaṅgā is called a goddess (Rāmāyaṇa 2.46.70). It is also called Jāhnavī (Rāmāyaṇa 2.46.3) and Bhāgīrathī (Rāmāyaṇa 2.80.24). It is described as swift flowing and flows to the ocean/sea (Rāmāyaṇa 2.46.3). It is described as the river which goes by three paths (Rāmāyaṇa 2.46.71), wife of the ocean/sea king (Rāmāyaṇa 2.46.71), unclogged by weeds, holy river, frequented by seers (which association would again give the river a higher status), having geese, cranes and sheldrakes, dolphins, crocodiles, sharks (Rāmāyaṇa 2.44.2-3).

The Sarayū is mentioned when Rāma during his exile remembers it otherwise no information has been given about it. (Rāmāyaṇa 2.43.12-14) and no importance has been attached to it.[13] What is especially noteworthy is that it is not regarded as sacred.

The Mandākinī is referred to as being near mountain Citrakūṭa. It is depicted as a river, where wetlands are always in flowers, (Rāmāyaṇa 2.95.25-26); it has clear waters (Rāmāyaṇa 2.89.1) with sparkling sand banks, geese and cranes, and thick vegetation on its banks (Rāmāyaṇa 2.89.3-4). It is described as having lotuses and water lilies (Rāmāyaṇa 2.89.14). This is probably the Mandākinī, a small tributary of the Paisuni in Bundelkhand (Law 1971: 124).

The Tamasā is mentioned as a river on whose banks herds of cattle are seen (Rāmāyaṇa 2.41.15). It is swift and eddying (Rāmāyaṇa 2.41.27). The

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[13] For details on comparison with Balakanda, refer Chapter 2 Pg 33.

Vedaśrutī river is mentioned as having gracious waters (Rāmāyaṇa 2.43.8). It is the river Baita in U.P. between the rivers Tonse and Gomati (Dey 1971: 28). The Gomatī is described as a chilly river flowing to the sea, its shores teeming with cows (Rāmāyaṇa 2.43.9). It is also supposed to be in U.P. (Dey 1971: 70). The Syandikā River had geese and peacocks on its shores (Rāmāyaṇa 2.43.10). This is identified as the Sai, near Banaras (Dey 1971: 200).

The Kālindī or the Yamunā is described as the daughter of the sun, thronged with geese and peacocks, swift flowing. It is described as a wave wreathed river that has thick vegetation (Rāmāyana 2.49.3, 2.8.11). The Yamunā has its source in the Yāmuna Mountain, which is also called Kalinda-giri and so the Yamunā is also called the Kālindī (Dey 1971: 215).

The Śaradaṇḍā is mentioned as heavenly, having crystal clear water, with many people on the banks and thronging with birds (Rāmāyaṇa 2.62.11). The Vipāśā and Śālmalī rivers have been mentioned on the routes of messengers travelling from Ayodhyā to Rājagṛha to meet Bharata (Rāmāyaṇa 2.62.13). The Śatadru (the modern day Sutlej) is described as a deep river with waves (Rāmāyaṇa 2.65.1). The Śilāvahā is called the river with trailing stones (Rāmāyaṇa 2.65.2-3). The Kulingā is mentioned as deep and swift, bounded by hills (Rāmāyaṇa 2.65.4). The Uttānakā, Kuṭikā, Kapīvatī, Sthānumatī, Gomatī are mentioned on the route of Bharata's travels from Rājagṛha in the northwest to

Ayodhyā (Rāmāyaṇa 2.65.10-11). Rājagṛha is the Rajagiri on the north bank of the Beas in the Punjab, the capital of Aśvapati, king of Kekaya and maternal grandfather of Bharata (Dey 1971: 165).

When messengers go from Ayodhyā to Rājagṛha, they are described as crossing on their way the above mentioned rivers as part of land routes. On his way back to Ayodhyā from Rājagṛha, Bharata also crosses many rivers again parts of the land route he takes. The route that the messengers took was a part of the Uttarāpatha, christened as such first by Pāṇini (c.500 BC). "However, nowhere in the epic(s) do we find the expression Uttarāpatha occurring or denoting a grand trunk route uniting diverse sections of the subcontinent" (Lahiri 1992: 369). The Uttarāpatha subsumed many minor routes integrating them into the transregional northern axis (Lahiri 1992: 370). It is only the Buddhist literature, which gives details of this route around the 6th-5th century B.C.

Rivers did form important arteries of communication and interaction, and this is evident from the archaeological sources. The distribution of P.G.W. and N.B.P. sites along the Ganga, Yamuna, Ghaghara, and the Sarayu (Lahiri distinguishes between these two) suggests the importance of these routes as trade channels. Although the Rāmāyaṇa does not mention anything about these routes as being important, the Buddhist literature does underline their importance (Lahiri 1992: 374).

Hence, it can be concluded that rivers did form a very important part of travelling. Either crossing them or by travelling along/on them was the fastest way to travel. These rivers also formed important landmarks in the routes of travelling, as we see in the case of Bharata's travelling from Rājagṛha to Ayodhyā. And thus, although not explicitly mentioned in the Rāmāyaṇa, trade, communication, transportation must have been facilitated by the use of rivers as is shown by other literature and authors. There is no reference to named lakes in this *kāṇḍa*. We also find that some of these rivers are regarded as sacred.

Araṇyakāṇḍa

Table 6[14]-Generic Terms

S.NO.	TERM	SANSKRIT EQUIVALENT	NO. OF REFERENCES
1	Ocean/sea	*Samudra*	12
		Sāgara	10
		Arṇava	2
		Lavaṇāmbha	1
		Mahodadhi	2
		Nadīpati	1
		Sindhurāja	1
2	River	*Nadī*	13
		Saritāḥ	5
3	Lake/pond/pool	*Padminī*	8
		Tatāka	2
		Nalinī	4
		Hradaḥ	1

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[14] For references see Appendix.

The ocean/sea is again unnamed in this *kāṇḍa*. It is called the everlasting abode of Varuṇa and the final refuge of rivers (Rāmāyaṇa 3.52.8). Rāma is compared with the ocean/sea, as being unshakeable and imperturbable (Rāmāyaṇa 3.45.29) and is mentioned that he can dry or annihilate it if he does not find Sītā (Rāmāyaṇa 3.54.11, 3.60.42-3). Rāma is described as fighting with his weapons with the *rākṣasa*, just as the ocean/sea meets the rivers (Rāmāyaṇa 3.24.11). It is mentioned that Rāvaṇa could destroy the ocean/sea, and that he' crosses over it (Rāmāyaṇa 3.30.15, 3.47.3, 3.33.6-7). The *rākṣasa* army against Rāma, is called as deep as the ocean/sea (Rāmāyaṇa 3.23.23). It is said that Śūrpaṇakhā, after being insulted and mutilated by Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa falls into the ocean/sea of grief (Rāmāyaṇa 3.20.11). Once again, the ocean/sea figures in the context of poetic imagery. Given the context of the *kāṇḍa*, it figures as an emblem of physical even military strength.

Lakes and rivers are mentioned in the context of crossing them (Rāmāyaṇa 3.6.2, 3.7.13-15, 3.10.42-43). While describing the Daṇḍaka forest, rivers with cranes and sheldrakes on the sand banks are mentioned (Rāmāyaṇa 3.10.2-4, 3.10.42-43). Rāma searches from river to river (unnamed) for Sītā after she has been abducted (Rāmāyaṇa 3.58.11, 34, 3.59.18-19). Rāma says he will dry up the rivers if he cannot find Sītā (Rāmāyaṇa 3.60.21). Kabandha says to Rāma that Sugrīva will search all the rivers to find Sītā (Rāmāyaṇa 3.68.20). The

scarcity of knowledge of the Daṇḍaka forest and its surrounding region is evident from the fact that the rivers are largely unnamed, only a couple being mentioned within this region. There are no references to waterfalls.

Table 7[15]- Named Rivers

S.NO.	TERM	NO. OF REFERENCES
1	Pampā	1
2	Mandākinī	1
3	Godāvarī	13
4	Sarayū	2
5	Gaṅgā	2
6	Vaitaraṇī	1

It is mentioned that sages live along these two rivers, the Pampā and Mandākinī[16] (Rāmāyana 3.5.16). It would be interesting to note that, there are two Pampās-one river and one lake. Pollock refers to Pampā as a lake or river (Pollock 1991: 360). According to Dey, Pampā was a tributary of the river Tungabhadra rising in Ṛśyamūka mountain, in the district of Bellary. Near this is a lake called the Pampasarovara (Dey 1971: 144).

Godāvarī is the only specifically named river that is mentioned in this *kāṇḍa* at a number of places. Settlements and activities are associated with it.[17]

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[15] For references see Appendix.
[16] See Section on settlements for more details, Pg. 64
[17] See Sections on Settlements and activities for more details, Pg. 65, 75.

The Sarayū is mentioned while being remembered by Rāma when he is talking to Lakṣmaṇa about Bharata, who would go down to the Sarayū to take bath (Rāmāyaṇa 3.15.27-8). This statement somewhat gives away itself to the reader. It shows to the reader that rivers formed an intrinsic part of the daily lives of people in ancient times.

The Gaṅgā is compared with Vaidehī's pearl necklace slipping from her neck (Rāmāyaṇa 3.50.31). Its bank is supposed to crumble before the waves, which is comparable with the *rākṣasa* who would be slayed by Rāma in battle (Rāmāyaṇa 3.54.7). One sees that the river is being used for poetic imagery. This also implies that the authors had no knowledge of other rivers in this region so that they could use them for poetic comparison.

The Vaitaraṇī River is represented as an omen of doom. Sītā says to Rāvaṇa that this river would run in torrents of blood because he has wronged Rāma (Rāmāyaṇa 3.51.18). The Vaitaraṇī is described as one of the most sacred rivers in India rising in the hills in the southern part of the District Singhbhum in Orissa. It is also called Yama's river (Law 1976: 198).

Table 8[18]-Named Lakes/Ponds

S.NO.	TERM	NO. OF REFERENCES
1	Pampā	25
2	Pañcāpsaras	1
3	Pond of Mataṅga	1

Lake Pampā is described in detail in this *kānda*[19]. Within this lake, is a pond of Mataṅga (Rāmāyaṇa 3.71.18-19). Another pond that of the Pañcāpsaras is mentioned one league across. This pond had lotuses, elephants, geese, cranes, etc. and was made by sage Māndakarṇī by his ascetic powers (Rāmāyaṇa 3.5.16).

In this *kānda*, no river is designated as being holy; the only river mentioned in detail is the Godāvarī apart from which Lake Pampā is mentioned in detail. One sees mention of few named rivers or lakes. This could imply either that the authors had scarce knowledge of this region or that they mentioned rivers that were central only to their story.

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[18] For references see Appendix.
[19] See details on settlements, Pg. 64

Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa

Table 9[20]-Generic Terms

S.NO.	TERM	SANSKRIT EQUIVALENT	NO. OF REFERENCES
1	Ocean/Sea	*Samudra*	13
		Sāgara	29
		Lavaṇāmbha	1
		Arṇava	4
		Mahodadhi	1
		Varuṇālaya	2
		Saritāmpati	2
2	River	*Nadī*	16
		Saritāh	9
3	Lake/pond/pool	*Salilā*	3
		Sarasa	5
		Hradaḥ	1
		Tatāka	4
		Nalinī	1
4	Waterfall	*Nirjhara*	4

In the Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa, the ocean/sea is not named but is described as the northern, the southern, the western and the eastern ocean/sea, when Sugrīva describing Vālin's power tells Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa that Vālin travels over all these oceans/seas (Rāmāyana 4.11.4). The ocean/sea is represented as the lord of rivers and is called righteous (Rāmāyana 4.11.8,10). It is called the abode of

Varuṇa (Rāmāyaṇa 4.52.14). Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa are said to be so powerful (by Hanumān in the Rāmāyaṇa) that they can protect the whole of earth with its ocean/sea's and forests, implying that as they can protect something as big as the ocean/sea, then they are very powerful (Rāmāyaṇa 4.3.13,4.26.13). It is mentioned that Sugrīva tries to show his prowess by saying that he has traversed the whole earth with its forests and oceans/seas (Rāmāyaṇa 4.10.22). It is also said that for Sugrīva's consecration water brought from the ocean/sea is auspicious (Rāmāyaṇa 4.25.26). The ocean/sea that Hanumān has to cross to reach Laṅkā is described as hundred leagues across, where the southern shore lies (Rāmāyaṇa 4.57.22, 23, 31). Then it is said that Hanumān shows his power when it is decided that he will cross the ocean/sea and so he shows he is much mightier than the ocean/sea, which is an epitome of strength (Rāmāyaṇa 4.65.5.9-10). The ocean/sea is powerful; its wave's noise is compared with the roar of Vālin (Rāmāyaṇa 4.14.21). When Rāma goes with Sugrīva and others to Kiṣkindhā to fight with Valīn; in the region of Kiṣkindhā, they see unnamed rivers flowing to the ocean/sea (Rāmāyaṇa 4.13.5-6). It is likely therefore that the authors had no knowledge of the region as such. The ocean/sea is also a topic of contention between monkeys when they have to cross it to reach Laṅkā (Rāmāyaṇa 4.63.8-9, 16, 20, 4.66.14-36).

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[20] For references see Appendix.

Here again what we see is that, the ocean/sea is being used to describe strength; in this context, that of the central characters Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa, Sugrīva, and Hanumān. The ocean/sea assumes importance, as its water is now regarded as auspicious. Moreover, in the absence of rivers or lack of knowledge of rivers in this region, water is taken from the ocean/sea for Sugrīva's consecration.

In terms of description of rivers, unnamed rivers are mentioned in Kiṣkindhā as flowing to the ocean/sea (Rāmāyaṇa 4.13.5-6). Rivers are used as a metaphor for political conditions to turn favorable. For instance, the flooding of a river is regarded as unfavorable and its receding is taken to be favorable (Rāmāyaṇa 4.27.43, 4.29.28, 4.31.14). It is intriguing that all the rivers in the region of Kiṣkindhā are unnamed (Rāmāyaṇa 4.36.18, 4.38.11-13, 4.45.11). It is mentioned that rivers in general are searched by monkeys while looking for Sītā (Rāmāyaṇa 4.46.2, 11, 4.47.3-4, 4.48.2-3). It is interesting to note that they also come across dry riverbeds; these rivers are also unnamed and have not been given any location (Rāmāyaṇa 4.47.6-9). Lakes, ponds, waterfalls, pools and streams are in general mentioned as parts of description of the forest near Lake Pampā and Kiṣkindhā apart from being used as metaphors (Rāmāyaṇa 4.1.48, 4.13.5-10, 4.27.25, 4.29.11, 4.59.6, 4.18-47, and 4.37.17).

Table 10[21]-Named Rivers

S. NO.	TERM	NO. OF REFERENCE
1	Pampā	1
2	Sarayū	1

Hanumān asks Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa who they are and why they have come to this region and the river Pampā (Ramayana 4.3.4-8). The Sarayū is being remembered by Rāma (Ramayana 4.27.36).

Table 11[22]-Named Lakes

S. NO.	TERM	NO. OF REFERENCE
1	Pampā	9
2	Mānasa	1

A description of the forest around Lake Pampā is given in detail.[23] Lake Mānasa is mentioned for description of the change of season (Rāmāyaṇa 4.27.16).

In this *kāṇḍa*, we see that reference to named rivers or lakes become very few; instead, as the story revolves around the ocean and the forest, these are most commonly mentioned. In fact, only lake Pampā and Mānasa are mentioned,

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[21]For references see Appendix.
[22] For references, see Appendix.
[23] See details on Pg. 64.

which implies that there was a relative lack of knowledge of the rivers in this region. Occasionally, the ocean/sea is regarded as auspicious.

Sundarakāṇḍa

Table 12[24]-Generic Terms

S.NO.	TERM	SANSKRIT	NO. OF REFERENCES
1	Ocean/sea	Samudra	18
		Sāgara	43
		Lavaṇāmbha	7
		Arṇava	5
		Varuṇālaya	2
		Mahodadhi	7
		Saritāmpati	1
2	River	Nadī	6
		Saritā	6
3	Lake/pond/pool	Hradaḥ	2
		Padminī	4
		Nalinī	2

The ocean/sea in the Sundarakāṇḍa is called the abode of ocean/sea monsters (Rāmāyaṇa 5.1.27), it is vast and salty (Rāmāyaṇa 5.1.46,53). Sāgara/Samudra is called the god of the ocean/sea (Rāmāyaṇa 5.1.75, 79). Also, it is the abode of the ocean/sea god Varuṇa (Rāmāyaṇa 5.1.157). The ocean/sea

is also called lord of rivers and streams (Rāmāyaṇa 5.1.184, 5.14.12). It is mentioned that oceans/seas surround the earth and that the rising of the moon, causes the ocean/sea to rise or high tide. (Rāmāyaṇa 5.47.2-14, 5.4.2). The ocean/sea is mentioned as being a hundred leagues in breadth, and Hanumān remarks that this distance is not too much for him to cross, which could literally mean that it was a river (Rāmāyaṇa 5.10.24). It is compared with Hanumān in terms of size. When Hanumān increases in size to leap over the ocean/sea to search for Sītā in Laṅkā, then he is compared with the size of the ocean/sea. Hanumān devours and shatters the ocean/sea with its fretwork of waves (Rāmāyaṇa 5.1.53, 65).

The other context, in which the ocean/sea is mentioned, is when Hanumān leaps over the ocean/sea from Mount Mahendra to go to Laṅkā, to search for Sītā, and back. It is mentioned that Hanumān leaps from the southern shore (where lanka is) to the northern shore to come back to Mount Mahendra the description of his leap/crossing over the ocean/sea is also given (Rāmāyaṇa 5.1.10,5.1.28,5.1.60,5.1.67,5.1.129,5.1.131-2,5.2.1,4,5). In Laṅkā, worship done by the rākṣasa is compared with the profundity of the ocean/sea. Rāma is compared with the ocean/sea in terms of being boundless, imperturbable, and unfathomable (Rāmāyaṇa 5.36.35).

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[24] For references, see Appendix.

In the Sundarakāṇḍa, there is a virtual absence of rivers; maybe it is because there is no role to be played by the rivers in the story. Hence, rivers are mentioned only in passing for instance, sleeping women resemble rivers (Rāmāyaṇa 5.7.48). Ponds are always mentioned as lotus ponds and their mention is poetic in nature. No activity is associated with them. Inside Laṅkā Hanumān finds a lotus pond with the statue of goddess Lakṣmī holding lotuses in her hands. Therefore, it could be a sacred spot. Sītā resembles a pond without lotuses, and the Aśoka grove has one pond filled with various lotuses (Rāmāyaṇa 5.6.14, 5.14.30).

Inside the Aśoka grove, Hanumān finds a pool of various shapes, fed by streams (Rāmāyana 5.12.22, 25). Streams are limpid, and feed this pool inside the Aśoka grove in Laṅkā (Rāmāyana 5.12.50).

Table 13[25]-Named Rivers

S.NO.	TERM	NO. OF REFERENCES
1	Gaṅgā	3
2	Mandākinī	1

The contexts in which these rivers are mentioned are: - Gaṅgā is mentioned while being compared with Sītā. Rāvaṇa resembles an elephant sleeping in the vast waters of the Gaṅgā. When rākṣasas fight with Hanumān,

they resemble a great whirlpool in the Gaṅgā (Rāmāyaṇa 5.8.26, 5.14.4, 5.41.12). What we see is that, the river is being remembered because it was important to the authors of the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa. In addition, maybe there was no river in the southern / central Indian region that they had knowledge of that they could use for comparison. Sītā refers to the Mandākinī, while she tells Hanumān of an incident that took place near the river, which would make Rāma believe that it was Sītā, Hanumān had met. There are no references to named lakes or ponds in this *kāṇḍa*.

In this *kāṇḍa*, as in the previous one, we see that the ocean/sea is the most important water body around which the story is centered and hence there are almost no references to rivers.

Yuddhakāṇḍa

Table 14[26]-Generic Terms

S.NO.	TERM	SANSKRIT	NO. OF REFERENCES
1	Ocean/sea	*Samudra*	4
		Sāgara	5
		Arṇava	1
		Varuṇālaya	2
		Sindhurāja	1
		Nadīpati	2
2	River	*Nadī*	2

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[25] For references, see Appendix.
[26] For references, see Appendix.

The Yuddhakāṇḍa does not mention any information on water bodies as such. This *kāṇḍa* is about the battle between Rāma and Rāvaṇa (Rāmāyaṇa 6.22); therefore, descriptions are only about the ocean/sea, its monsters, its width, and its extent. No name has been given to the ocean/sea. The ocean/sea is called formidable, impassible and the lord of rivers (Rāmāyaṇa 6.2,6.3). Sāgara is called the lord of water (Rāmāyaṇa 6.3.2) and it is said that the ocean/sea is the abode of Varuṇa (Rāmāyaṇa 6.2.21). There are no references to lakes or waterfalls in this *kāṇḍa*.

Table 15[27] Named Rivers

S.NO.	TERM	NO. OF REFERENCES
1	Narmadā	1
2	Gaṅgā	1

It is mentioned that the lord of bears (actually monkey) called Dhumra (in the army of Rāma), inhabits a mountain called Riksavat and goes to slake his thirst at the Narmadā River. Gaṅgā is again used for poetic imagery where monkeys are compared with banyan trees on the banks of Gaṅgā (Rāmāyaṇa 6.27, 6.28).

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[27] For references see Appendix.

Uttarakāṇḍa

Table 15a[28]-Generic Terms

S.NO.	TERM	SANSKRIT EQUIVALENT	NO.OF REFERENCES.
1	Ocean/sea	*Sāgara*	1
		Samudra	7
		Arṇava	5
		Sagarāmbha	1
2	River	*Nadī*	8
3	Lake	*Padminī*	2

The usages of the term ocean/sea are now few. The ocean/sea of grief and despair is mentioned as a metaphor (Rāmāyaṇa 7.24.9). Hanumān resembles the ocean/sea that is overflowing and as the ocean/sea halts when it reaches the shore, are phrases used in the Uttarakāṇda (Rāmāyaṇa 7.36.8). There are no references to waterfalls in this *kāṇḍa*.

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[28] For references, see Appendix.

Table 16[29]-Named Rivers

S.NO.	TERM	NO.OF REFERENCES
1	Gaṅgā	4
	Jāhnavī	1
2	Narmadā	16
3	Mandākinī	2
4	Sarayū	3
5	Yamunā	1

In the Uttarakāṇḍa, we find the mention of the Narmadā River the most. References regarding this river are concentrated in two *sargas* of the *kāṇḍa*. Sage Agastya is telling Rāma about Rāvaṇa and his life's story. Agastya narrates to Rāma, of a happening that takes place on the banks of the Narmadā, when Rāvaṇa starts to range the earth to conquer the whole earth. He comes to the city of Mahiśmati, which was ruled by a monarch named Arjuna. At that particular time that Rāvaṇa went to this city, the king had gone to the river Narmadā to sport with his wives. Then Rāvaṇa follows Arjuna to the Vindhya Mountains as he wants to measure his strength with him. Rāvaṇa reaches the Narmadā river whose pure waters flowed over a bed of stones and which emptied itself into the western sea. Buffalo, Srimaras, lions, tigers, bears, and elephants, tormented, by heat and

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[29] For references, see Appendix.

thirst, agitated the waters whilst chakravakas, kavandas, hamsa, sarasas, and other waterfowl, with their impassioned warbling, abounded there.

He dismounts from his chariot, near the Narmadā and tells his accompanying ministers to plunge into the Narmadā and bathe in it. This would free them of sins. He compares the Narmadā with the Gaṅgā. Hearing him, his ministers dive into the river and the Narmadā is compared with the Gangā when Vāmana, Anjana, Padma and other great tuskers dive in it. Then Rāvaṇa bathes, and recites prayers and offers flowers to a Śiva- linga (which was borne before him and which he places on a sandy altar). He also worships it with sandalwood, flowers and perfumes.

Near where Rāvaṇa had taken bath in the river, Arjuna is sporting with his wives. While playing in the water, he with his thousand arms stays the water of the Narmadā, and then releases it. Because of which Rāvaṇa's floral offerings are strewn away. Rāvaṇa asks his ministers to ask for the reason of his sacrifice to be obstructed. His ministers find Arjuna obstructing the flow of the river after two miles, and come back and tell Rāvaṇa so. When told, Rāvaṇa moves forth eagerly to enter into combat with him and reaching where Arjuna is, tells Arjuna's ministers to call him and send him the challenge. The ministers reply that, as he is drunk and with his consorts, Rāvana should wait.

The battle breaks out between the ministers of both the kings. After getting to know that his ministers have been killed by Rāvaṇa's army, Arjuna rushes out and kills the *rākṣasas*. And then a battle ensues between both the kings in which Arjuna wins. This battle takes place on the banks of the Narmadā (Rāmāyaṇa 7.31, 7.32).

Gaṅgā's giving birth to a child by the god of fire is mentioned (Rāmāyaṇa 7.4.24), having sacred banks, it is also called the Jāhnavī (Rāmāyaṇa 7.46.15).

The Mandākinī is mentioned as being near Mount Kailāsa, whereas this mountain is in Tibet (Rāmāyaṇa 7.11.35). The Sarayū is described as flowing westwards and there is an instance of Lakṣmaṇa meditating on its banks (Rāmāyaṇa 7.100.20, 22, 23). Yamunā is the other river mentioned. It is said that the sages who lived on its banks, led by Bhārgava come to Ayodhyā to meet Rāma (Rāmāyaṇa 7.60.3).

In this *kāṇḍa*, the representation of and references to rivers are few apart from the Narmadā. The representation of water bodies otherwise is almost nil in the Uttarakāṇḍa.

In this section, I will give an account of the kind of settlements mentioned around each river.

Bālakāṇḍa

Gaṅgā- In terms of settlements the town of Śṛṅgavera is mentioned as being on the banks of the Gaṅgā. No specific location of the town is given. The Sanskrit term used is *pura* (Rāmāyana 1.1.25). It is from this town that the central characters of the Rāmāyana cross the Gaṅgā to go beyond to the forest during exile. It is mentioned that the area around the city was the residence of Guha, the king of the Niṣādas. The modern day equivalent of Śṛṅgaverapura is Singraur (Dey 1971: 192). Śṛṅgaverapura can be archaeologically assigned to the NBP phase c. 700 B.C. (Chakrabarti 1995: 170), the city being 1 km along the eastern bank of the Gaṅgā (Chakrabarti 1995:199). The city of Viśālā is mentioned as being on the northern bank of the Gaṅgā (Rāmāyana 1.44.8). The Sanskrit term for the word city is *purim*. Viśālā is the Besad or Basarh in Mozaffarpur in Bihar, also the Vaiśāli of the Buddhist period (Dey 1971: 39) (Chakrabarti 1995:206). The fact that this change from Viśālā to Vaiśāli had not occurred by this time indicates that the authors of the Vālmīki Rāmāyana knew the time around or right before the time of the Buddha.

Tamasā - It is mentioned that before sage Vālmīki composes the Rāmāyana, he takes bath in the Tamasā and observes the forest *(vana)* around the river. This suggests that the area around the Tamasā was not developed (Rāmāyana 1.2.8).

Sarayū - Kosala is represented as a country on the banks of the Sarayū, which indicates that this was a more developed settlement. The Sanskrit term for 'country' is *Janapada* qualified by the term *Mahān* (great). The mention of abundance of wealth and grain would suggest agriculture (Rāmāyana 1.5.5). Then the world famous city of Ayodhyā is mentioned (Rāmāyana 1.5.6). The Sanskrit term for the word city is *Nagari*. It was during the time of the Buddha, that Ayodhyā (now the Faizabad area in U.P.) was divided into northern and southern Kosala. The river Sarayū divided the two provinces. Southern Kosala's capital was Ayodhyā, and Sravasti was the capital of the northern part. But there is no mention of any division (Dey 1971: 114) or a second capital in the Vālmīki Rāmāyana. This could then, again attest for the representation of a period before the time of the Buddha in the Vālmīki Rāmāyana. In Ayodhyā, the NBPW phase dated at c. 7th c B.C. has been discerned at the earliest level with some wattle-and-daub and mud house remains (Chakrabarti 1995: 193).

Sonā – It is said that around the river Sonā there is a forested area *(vana)*. The land is supposed to belong to Vasu, and five hills are near it. Sonā is also

called Sumāgadhī and Māgadhī, the flow of which is eastward (Rāmāyaṇa 1.30.22, 1.31.6-8).

Ikṣumatī- According to the Rāmāyaṇa, the city (purīm) of Sāṃkāśyā lies on the banks of the Ikṣumatī River. This city is called sacred (Rāmāyana 1.69.2-3). This city can be identified with the modern Sankisa, near Farrukhabad in U.P. Among antiquities found on this site, were clay seals, the earliest of which has been palaeographically dated to c. 200 B.C. (Chakrabarti 1995: 191).

It is mentioned in the Ramayana that, on the **confluence** of the Sarayū and Gaṅgā is a holy āśramas (Rāmāyana 1.22.6, 16, 1.23.10). It is mentioned that boats are available to cross these rivers, which have been arranged for by the sages. (Rāmāyana 1.22.5, 1.22.16, 1.23.1-2, 4). It is worth noting that on this confluence was the abode of sages, which might have made the confluence holy. Therefore, we find that the holiness of a river was enhanced by the presence of sages.

Ayodhyākāṇḍa

The Ayodhyākāṇḍa mentions a forest (vana) beside the Sarayū (Rāmāyana 2.43.14). Śṛngaverapura is mentioned to be on the Gaṅgā (Rāmāyana 2.44.1-2-3). After the Gaṅgā, is the forest whose king is Guha of the

Niṣādas (Rāmāyana 2.44.4-9). Towards the confluence of the Gaṅgā and Yamunā, was the forested area, indicating that most of the Gaṅgā-Yamunā doab area was uninhabited, from one side. Different types of unspecified landscapes (*vividhāndeśa*) came into being which means that this area was unexplored or that this term was used as poetic description of a region (Rāmāyana 2.48.2-3).

On the confluence of the Gaṅgā and Yamunā, one can see the *āsrama* of sage Bharadvāja. (Rāmāyana 2.48.20). It is seen that, at the confluence is a settlement of *āsramas*. These *āsramas* were built at relatively less inhabited and isolated forested areas, a little distance from which lay more developed areas. It is said that, at this confluence, when sage Bharadvāja asks Rāma to stay there for his period of exile, Rāma replies that people from the nearby area would keep coming to meet him.

It is mentioned that near the River Mālyavatī and the Mandākinī is Mount Citrakūṭa (Rāmāyana 2.50.22, 2.86.11).

Araṇyakāṇḍa

The Araṇyakāṇḍa mentions that along the Pampā and Mandākinī Rivers, sages' *āsramas* are located (Rāmāyana 3.5.16). One sees that sages' *āsramas* are located in the forested area; in fact, all the area in this *kāṇḍa* is described as

being forested. The Pancavaṭī is described in the Rāmāyaṇa as a stretch of forest near the Godāvarī river (Rāmāyaṇa 3.12.18). Pancavaṭī is the present day Nasik on the Godāvarī. This region is forested (Dey 1971: 147). This river is described as having many trees lining it, at Pancavaṭī. Nearby is a lotus pond. Godāvarī's distance from Pancavaṭī is described as being neither too near nor too far.

In the Araṇyakānda also we find that the Godāvarī has not been accorded any holy status. The river is shown to be teeming with geese, ducks and lonely sheldrakes, and thronged with herds of animals. (Rāmāyaṇa 3.14.11-13). Its bank is wet with snow because of sleet (Rāmāyaṇa 3.15.22-24) or hoarfrost (Himāḥ) (Rāmāyaṇa 3.15.20). It has a swift current (Rāmāyaṇa 3.44.7).

It is mentioned that a mountain called Ṛśyamūka is situated east to this Lake Pampā. According to the Araṇyakāṇḍa, within this mountain, is a cave where Sugrīvā lives (Rāmāyaṇa 3.69.31) (Rāmāyaṇa 3.68.12, 3.69.24). The Pampā Lake is described as lotus covered (Rāmāyaṇa 3.69.5), having geese, various types of birds, lots of fishes and crystal clear water which is good for drinking purpose. It is also mentioned that animals like boars, come to the lake for drinking water (Rāmāyaṇa 3.69.7-15.27). On the lake's western shore, sage Matanga's āsrama is mentioned. It is said that there is a shrine there, a sacred spot where Śabarī lives (Rāmāyaṇa 3.69.21-2, 3.70.1, 3, 4, 13, 18). The Pond of

Mataṅga is mentioned being near this lake having many trees, flowers, lotuses (Rāmāyaṇa 3.71.18-19).

Kiṣkindhākāṇda

Here I will take into account those specific rivers, lakes that are mentioned as being in and around the region of Kiṣkindhā. I will deal with the regions where Sugrīva sends his armies to look for Sītā in all the directions in a separate section[30].

A forest (*Kānanam*) is described around Lake Pampā. (Rāmāyaṇa 4.1.3) and a detailed description of trees is given (Rāmāyaṇa 4.1.27,32,35-40). It is depicted as overflowing with lotuses (Rāmāyaṇa 4.1.1), clear water, geese and ducks (Rāmāyaṇa 4.1.28,43) herds of elephants and deer (Rāmāyaṇa 4.1.29) and birds (Rāmāyaṇa 4.1.44). The lake is supposed to be auspicious (Rāmāyaṇa 4.1.47).

Lake Mānasa is being used to describe the change of season by Rāma, in this *kāṇda*. He says that geese have started off towards Lake Mānasa and like this change of season he is waiting for conditions to tilt in his favor (Rāmāyaṇa 4.27.16). Sarayū is referred to while remembering its current's swelling (Rāmāyaṇa 4.27.36.). Mount Prasravaṇa, near the ocean/sea, is mentioned as a

part of the Vindhyan range (Rāmāyaṇa 4.52.12). Laṅkā is represented as being a hundred leagues from here, on the southern ocean/sea. Monkeys reach the northern shore of the southern ocean/sea and camp before making the leap to reach Laṅkā (Rāmāyaṇa 4.57-20-23).

It is worth noting here that no hermitages or cities or agricultural land are referred to in the forest.

Sundarakāṇḍa

In terms of regions, in this *kāṇḍa*, at one end of the ocean/sea lies Mount Mahendra (on the northern shore) and on the other lie Laṅkā, the Malaya mountains, and the mouths of the rivers (at the southern shore)(Rāmāyaṇa 5.1.183-4,5.63.9). In yet another verse, Laṅkā lies on the southern shore of the southern ocean/sea (Rāmāyaṇa 5.63.9). It is stated that Rāma went into the Daṇḍaka forest and reached the Mahendra Mountain, which is far from the present Ceylon. The only possible explanations of these discrepancies appears to be that Vālmīki considered peninsular India to be bounded by the Vindhyas in the north, Sahaya and Malaya (known as Western Ghats today) in the west. And the Mahendra and Vindhyan ranges were supposed to be so interconnected that

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[30] For details, see Pg. 76.

they could be considered as one range enclosing the Deccan plateau on the north and east (Ali 1973: 22).

At one point, feeling dejected after not being able to find Sītā Hanumān says that he has searched the entire land, with its ponds, tanks, lakes, streams, rivers, marshlands, woods and inaccessible mountains (Rāmāyaṇa 5.11.4). This makes it likely that the region that Hanumān goes to was actually not an island but central India. Another region that is mentioned in this *kāṇḍa* is the region lying in the northeastern foothills of mount Citrakūta, not far from the Mandākinī River. It has many *āsramas* (Rāmāyaṇa 5.36.12-13).

Yuddhakāṇḍa

The only reference to any type of region is that on the southern shores of the ocean/sea is Laṅkā (Rāmāyaṇa 6.1.4, 6.2.10).

Uttarakāṇḍa

It is said that on the shores of the ocean/sea to the south there is a mountain named Trikūṭa (Rāmāyaṇa 7.3.15). Laṅkā is the other settlement that is mentioned, which is surrounded by the ocean/sea (Rāmāyaṇa 7.3.15). On the further side of the Gaṅgā by the Tamasā, Vālmīki's hermitage is mentioned

(Rāmāyaṇa 7.45). It is mentioned that _ṛṣi_ Gargya says to Rāma that on the banks

of the Sindhu River is a country of Gandharvas whose people are supposed to be

skilful warriors (Rāmāyaṇa 7. 100.5).

In terms of the activities associated with rivers, I will broadly group them into traveling (for communication also) and rituals. These two are the type of activities that are usually associated with rivers as represented in the Rāmāyaṇa. There are no direct references to trade through rivers or even to the use of river waters for irrigation.

Bālakāṇḍa

Travelling

Travelling from one region to another is generally along river courses or relative to rivers. The location of any region or person while traveling is defined according to the river nearby. Daśaratha sends Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa with Viśvāmitra to kill the demons that are hindering Viśvāmitra's sacrifice. On their journey to his *āśrama*, it is mentioned that they had gone a league and a half along the southern bank of the Sarayū (Rāmāyaṇa 1.21.9) Camping for the night is done on riverbanks (Rāmāyaṇa 1.21.19, 1.34.6-9). After killing the *rākṣasas* at Viśvāmitra's *āśrama*, these three cross the Śoṇā, and then the Jāhnavī and then reach the city of Viśālā from where they go on to Mithilā. This route taken by them was a land route and this period is representative of the emergence of land

routes along the trans-regional northern axis as the Buddhist literature apart from the epics suggest (Lahiri 1992: 374). Even the route taken by Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā from Ayodhyā towards the Vindhyas mentioning rivers between the Tamasā and the Gaṅgā along the way, was a land route (Lahiri 1992: 375).

It is interesting that boats are very seldom mentioned and these are used for crossing rather than navigation along rivers and that camping is done on the banks of rivers.

Rituals

It is mentioned that when Daśaratha approaches sage Ṛśyaśṛṅga for getting sons he is told to perform the *asvamedha* sacrifice. The Sarayū River assumes importance as the sacrifice is to be performed on its banks. It is said that the sacrificial ground is laid out on the bank of the Sarayū (Rāmāyaṇa 1.11.15, 1.13.1). Again, the river is assigned holiness when Daśaratha sends Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa with Viśvāmitra to kill demons that are hindering Viśvāmitra's sacrifice. Viśvāmitra upon reaching the Sarayū tells Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa to sip the water of the river, and gives them a set of spells (Rāmāyaṇa 1.21.9-10).

While going to Mithilā Viśvāmitra, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa camp on the Śoṇā, bathe, and make offerings of water to gods and their departed ancestors,

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as is prescribed in the ritual texts. Their oblation is compared with nectar (Rāmāyaṇa 1.34.8)

To become a Brahman Viśvāmitra comes to the river Kauśikī and performs austerities (Ramayaṇa 1.62.14). Thus, the river becomes a path through which, one can reach god, which is the reason why rivers are assigned holiness.

Thus, we note degrees of sacrality of rivers where some rivers like the Gaṅgā are treated as mythical goddesses, some like the Kauśikī and the Sarayū are important for rituals to be performed, and yet others like the Śoṇā are not designated as being sacred at all.

Ayodhyākāṇḍa

Travelling

In the Ayodhyākāṇḍa, rivers are treated as parts of routes taken by various characters in the story to travel[31]. Therefore, when Rāma goes for exile Tamasā is the first river that comes into view (Rāmāyaṇa 2.40.30). Camping is done on the rivers' bank (Rāmāyaṇa 2.41.12,14,15). Then it is mentioned that he crosses the river Vedaśrutī (Rāmāyaṇa 2.43.8), the Gomatī (Rāmāyaṇa 2.43.9), the river Syandikā (Rāmāyana 2.43.10), and then the Gaṅgā (Rāmāyaṇa 2.46.3).

Boats are available for crossing the Gaṅgā. (Rāmāyaṇa 2.46.61,65.6.). Then they reach the Gaṅgā-Yamunā confluence (Rāmāyaṇa 2.48.23).

After taking directions from sage Bharadvāja, they cross the Kālindī river, on a raft they made themselves (Rāmāyaṇa 2.49.8, 9,10). Kālindī is mentioned as another name for the Yamunā.[32]

The Ayodhyākāṇḍa mentions that when messengers go to bring back Bharata from Rājagṛha, after Daśaratha's death, they cross the Gaṅgā at Hastināpura, then through the middle of the Kuru jungle. They cross the Śaradaṇḍā River, and then enter the city of Kuliṅgā. They then go to Abhikāla, and Tejobhibhavana, they cross the Bāhlika and then they cross the Śālmalī and Vipāśā Rivers. On their way back, Bharata's army depart from Rājagṛha and cross the Śatadru. Then they cross the river at Eladhāna, then cross the Śilāvahā. They cross the Kuliṅgā and rest on the Yamunā, before moving on. Then, while going from Ayodhyā to meet Rāma, Bharata and his army first crosses the Gaṅgā, camp on its bank (Rāmāyaṇa 2.77.19 –20, 23). Then Guha helps Bharata cross the Gaṅgā on boats (Rāmāyaṇa 2.83.7,9, 10,11,12,15,16,18,20). Then they passed the river Mandākinī, after meeting Rāma, then Yamunā, and then Gaṅgā to reach Śṛṅgaverapura (Rāmāyaṇa 2.105.3, 21, 22).

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[31] For a detailed discussion, see Pg. 41.
[32] For details, see Pg. 41.

Rituals

In terms of rituals, it is mentioned that Sītā when going to the forest after being exiled prays to the Gaṅgā (calling her a goddess). In addition, she says she would sacrifice for making her wishes come true (Rāmāyaṇa 2.46.70). She would give the Brahmans, a hundred thousand cows, garments, and food to please the river (Rāmāyaṇa 2.46.72-3).

It is also mentioned that the funerary libations of Daśaratha, are performed on the bank of the Sarayū by his wives (Rāmāyaṇa 2.70.22-3). It is said that Rāma offers funerary libations for Daśaratha, at river Mandākinī during exile (Rāmāyaṇa 2.95.23-28). Again, the river is given religious importance.

Araṇyakāṇḍa

The Araṇyakāṇḍa mentions that Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa go down from Pañcavaṭī to the Godāvarī river to bathe (Rāmāyaṇa 3.14.22,3.15.2-3,37). Apparently there are lotuses in the river, but it is supposed to have a swift current (Rāmāyaṇa 3.60.1). Sugrīva is hiding along Lake Pampā in dread of Vālin. Within this lake, the pond of Mataṅga is described, where Rāma bathes before going to meet Sugrīva (Rāmāyaṇa 3.70.15-17). Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa are shown as pouring funerary oblations for Jaṭāyus the king of vultures in the Godāvarī river (Rāmāyaṇa 3.64.35).

The ocean/sea is mentioned when Rāvaṇa crosses it. Sītā is compared with a boat upon the open ocean/sea, buffeted by gusting winds and about to sink (Rāmāyaṇa 3.53.4-5). This according to me forms an indirect reference to the prevalence of sailing.

Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa

The monkey king Sugrīva sends his armies to the eastern, southern western and northern quarters to search for Sītā and Rāvaṇa. The rivers that he asks them to search in all quarters are: -

In the eastern quarter, the rivers Bhāgīrathī, Sarayū, Kauśikī, Kālindī, Yamunā, Sarasvatī, the Sindhu, the Śoṇā, the Mahī and the Kālamahī. Afterwards they are told to go to the ocean/sea, which has dreadful islands. Then they are to go to the dreadful ocean/sea called Lohita that has red waters. Then they are to go the ocean/sea of milk within which is a lake named Sudarśana. Beyond the ocean /sea of milk is the fresh water ocean/sea (Rāmāyaṇa 4.39.1-42). It is interesting that the river Gaṅgā is mentioned as the Bhāgīrathī and not by its own name.

In the southern quarter, they are to go to the rivers, Narmadā, Kṛṣṇaveṇī, the Varadā and the Godāvarī. Then they are to go the Kāveri River, then to the Tāmraparṇī, which plunges into the ocean/sea. Within this ocean/sea is the Mount Mahendra. Beyond this ocean/sea is another ocean/sea which has a mountain named Puṣpiṭaka (Rāmāyaṇa 4.40.1-27).

In the western quarter, they are to go to the westward flowing rivers. These rivers are not named by the author, which would suggest virtually no familiarity with the region. Then they are to search for Sītā around the Sindhu

river which then meets the ocean/sea, with a mountain named Hemagiri (Rāmāyaṇa 4.41.12).

Then in the northern quarter, a river named Śailoda is mentioned. Besides, there is mention of the northern ocean/sea in the middle of which lies the mountain named Somagiri (Rāmāyaṇa 4.42.1-53).

At the end of each quarter, Sugrīva describes an ocean/sea named only as the ocean/sea in the middle of which are mountains in each quarter. These act as the boundaries beyond which no one can go (Rāmāyaṇa 3.39- 3.42). This notion of mythical oceans, and the whole concept of the seven continents, climates, empires, lands skies is said to appear for the first time in the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata (Ali 1973: 27). The *Purāṇas* also consist of a detailed account of these notions but these are not uniform in them. There are variations in the accounts of all *Purāṇas* (Ali 1973:26).

S.M.Ali has compared this description of the geographical regions in the Rāmāyaṇa with the Mahābhārata and the *Purāṇas*. According to him, the Rāmāyaṇa laid the foundation, the Mahābhārata reoriented it and the *Purāṇas* enlarged and perfected it. The *Purāṇas* practically assign similar names and location to all the mountains, rivers, and oceans. They had only to rearrange and add details of the different regions of the world so conceived and complete the picture of the surface of the earth (Ali 1973: 24).

Crossing the ocean/sea is seen as another activity being contemplated by the monkeys to search for Sītā in the Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa (Rāmāyaṇa 4.65.1-36, 4.66.1-44). The means of crossing the ocean/sea are very different from those that might have been used in reality.

Rituals

In terms of rituals, the only one mentioned is the funeral of Vālin after Rāma and Sugrīva have killed him. A pyre is said to be built on the bank of the mountain stream or river, (which is not named) and he is cremated (Rāmāyaṇa 4.24.30, 42). The concept of cremation is intriguing for the monkey king, because in the area around Kiṣkindhā (forested region) the dead were buried not cremated (Sankalia 1973: 17). We see thus the superimposition of the values and the tradition of the authors over different kind of people.

Sundarakāṇḍa

The only directly mentioned activity, with respect to water bodies is crossing over the ocean/sea, from Mount Mahendra to Laṅkā and back. There are indirect references, in the form of poetic use of ships traveling /foundering in the ocean/sea. Hanumān, when he leaps over the ocean/sea is compared with a

sailing ship (Nāva, Nauh). Sītā too is compared with the same. Rāma is mentioned as a shipwrecked sailor. All these references would suggest to me, that ships were being used for travelling purposes. Although no information is given directly, these metaphors show knowledge and familiarity (Rāmāyaṇa 5.1.63, 169, 5.17.4).

Yuddhakāṇḍa

One reference to the ocean/sea is where Rāma takes permission from the ocean/sea to build a bridge on it across the Laṅkā (Rāmāyaṇa 6.15.1-33). This is the only activity that can be associated with the ocean/sea in this *kāṇḍa*.

Uttarakāṇḍa

The Narmadā is the only most frequently mentioned river in this *kāṇḍa*. The references to the river are centred on a battle, which takes place between Rāvaṇa and a king of the city if Mahismati called Arjuna. It is also mentioned in this context that Rāvaṇa is worshiping the Śiva linga and offering flowers to the deity in the river (Rāmāyaṇa 7.31-7.32).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have analyzed all the data from each *kāṇḍa* on water bodies. In the Bālakāṇḍa and the Ayodhyākāṇḍa, we find that the references to the ocean/sea are more poetic in nature, and there are relatively more references to named rivers. We see rivers as forming an important part of land routes. In the subsequent *kāṇḍas* we find that the ocean/sea becomes more important and frequently mentioned because, the story revolves around it and references to rivers are fewer. I will now proceed to analyze the data to focus on variations in the representation of water bodies in the early and the later sections of the text.

Chapter 3

Similarities and Differences in Representation of Water Bodies:
A Comparison of the Early and Late Strata.

It is generally agreed upon by scholars that the Bālakāṇḍa and the Uttarakāṇḍa are later additions to the Rāmāyaṇa. I will study the representation of water bodies and determine whether the difference in the date of composition of the various *kāṇḍas*, corresponds with any difference in representation. Besides, I will take up the stratification made by J.L. Brockington (Brockington 1984:329), within books 2 to 6, to see whether there are variations within these books as well.[33] To briefly summarize his contention, Brockington divides the whole of the Rāmāyaṇa into five stages. Whereas he assigns the Bālakāṇḍa and the Uttarakāṇḍa to the **third** stage dated between the first and third century A.D., he divides the text in books 2 to 6, into two stages: stage **one** dated from 5th to fourth century B.C. and stage **two** dated from third century B.C. to first century A.D. (Brockington 1984:329).

Dividing this chapter into three sections, I will deal with generic terms in the first section. In the second section, I will deal with named rivers and lakes. The third section will consist of comparison of activities and settlements associated with water bodies.

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[33] For details on Brockington's dating of the text, see Chapter 1, pg. 14.

(I)

In the present section, I will compare generic references in the Bālakāṇḍa and the Uttarakāṇḍa with the rest of the text. I will also study the stratification within books 2 to 6 i.e., from the Ayodhyākāṇḍa to the Yuddhakāṇḍa.

Note: Tables 17 to 21 are based on the data in the tables in Chapter two. For references, kindly see the appendix. I have tabulated the numbers of references in each *kāṇḍa* and have mentioned the total number of *sargas* in each *kāṇḍa*. This would convey an approximate idea about frequency or lack of frequency of references to water bodies.

Table-17[34]   Generic Term – Ocean/ Sea

	BĀLA	UTTARA	AYODHYĀ	ARANYA	KISKINDHĀ	SUNDARA	YUDDHA
Samudra	7	7	6	12	13	18	4
Sāgara	4	1	7	10	29	43	5
Arṇava	-	5	-	2	4	5	1
Mahārṇava	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lavaṇārṇava	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lavaṇāmbha	-	-	-	1	1	7	-
Sagarāmbha	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Mahodadhi	-	-	-	2	1	7	-
Sindhurāja	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Nadīpati	-	-	-	1	-	-	2
Saritāmpati	-	-	4	-	2	1	-
Varuṇālaya	-	-	-	-	2	2	2
No. of references	13	14	17	31	52	83	15
No. of Sargas	76	100	111	71	66	66	116

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[34] For references, see Appendix.

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After studying these terms, we find that *Samudra* and *Sāgara* are two terms, which are seen as being used commonly, with varying frequency in all the *kāṇḍas*. What clearly emerges from studying this table is that terms for the ocean/sea are relatively infrequent in the Bālakāṇḍa and the Uttarakāṇḍa. The reason for this could be that in the Bālakāṇḍa for example, we find the emphasis more on the deification of rivers and on the principle charcters of the epic. In this context, the ocean / sea was insignificant. As such, the authors rarely mention it.

One significant point that emerges from this data is the absence of the term Varuṇālaya in these two *kāṇḍas*. The term Varuṇālaya has a special significance. It denotes a palace in the bottom of the ocean surrounded on all sides by aquatic animals (Bhattacharji 1970: 37-38). From being a sky god in the Vedic literature, in this epic, Varuṇa's designation changes to Lord of the water. It is mentioned in the Mahābhārata that once all the gods came and made Varuṇa the lord of water, or that Śiva made him so. It is implied that Varuṇa was made lord of waters in order for him to occupy a semi- respectable position as his ancient status from being a cosmic, supreme sky god had declined and he had assumed darker associations later. Therefore, in order for his raised status to be revived partially at least, he was given this association with water (Bhattacharji 1970: 37-9).

Moreover, what is also significant here are two points. One, that he is referred to as being subservient to Śiva, and two, that there is no mention of Varuṇa in the Bālakāṇḍa and the Uttarakāṇḍa believed to be Vaiṣṇavite in nature. Therefore, one can suggest that the rivalry between these two cults of Śiva and Viṣṇu,

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accompanied by Varuna's association with Śiva, may explain the absence of references to Varunālaya in the most markedly Vaiṣnava sections of the epic.

There are certain other terms that are used for the ocean/sea. These were terms indicative of its size (*Mahodadhi, Mahārnava*), saltiness (*Lavanāmbha, Lavanārnava*) and the fact that all rivers flow into the ocean/sea (*Saritāpati, Nadīpati*). As will be seen, all these references to physical attributes of the ocean/sea are part of realistic or naturalistic descriptions. We find that the vocabulary of Bālakānda and the Uttarakānda is relatively restricted in the usage of such terms and one can suggest that this may be because the authors were more preoccupied in projecting mythical origins than in the realistic or naturalistic world. The mention of these terms from the Ayodhyākānda to the Yuddhakānda and their absence in the later two *kāndas* could also signify a shift in language use. Some terms could have gone out of usage over a period of time. This would also reaffirm the chronological divide between the early and the late sections of the Rāmāyana.

What we also see is that, in the Ayodhyākānda the ocean/sea is described as imperturbable, profound and the lord of rivers (Rāmāyana 2.12.6). It is supposed to be teeming with creatures (Rāmāyana 2.6.28). Its features such as high tide under the full moon are used as metaphors for the population of Ayodhyā, which is compared with the ocean/sea. (Rāmāyana 2.15.14) Daśaratha is compared with the ocean/sea's profundity and imperturbableness (Rāmāyana 2.16.6, 2.31.6, 31). Rāma's agitation is compared with that of the ocean/sea (Rāmāyana

2.16.7). The phrase ocean/sea of grief are used to describe the sorrow of Rāma and Kausalyā and Śatrughna (Rāmāyaṇa 2.56.15, 2.47.28, 2.71.13). In this *kāṇḍa*, kingship is compared with the ocean/sea (Rāmāyaṇa 2.20.23). Here we see that the status of the rulers is not raised by their comparison with ocean/sea, but their character or feelings are being shown. In fact, Rāma is compared with the moon for which the ocean/sea (the people of Ayodhyā) waits (Rāmāyaṇa 2.15.14). Therefore, here not the might but the vastness of the ocean/sea is being compared with the people of Ayodhyā. The term ocean/sea is used for poetical imagery and metaphorical comparisons. It is worth noting that the ocean/sea was not a part of the geography of the Ayodhyākāṇḍa, which is why references to it are few.

In the Araṇyakāṇḍa, the Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa and the Sundarakāṇḍa, as the ocean/sea is a part of the geographical background we find that the references to the term are more frequent. This would imply a more realistic geography being portrayed in these earlier sections. In addition, we do not find any other motive of the authors in these *kāṇḍas* such as divinising a particular water body.

In the Araṇyakāṇḍa, the ocean/sea is described as unshakeable, imperturbable and the lord of rivers (Rāmāyaṇa 3.33.6-7, 3.45.29). It is the abode of Varuṇa (which statement has already been discussed earlier)(Rāmāyaṇa 3.52.8). Rāma has enough power to dry or destroy the ocean/sea if he does not find Sītā. (Rāmāyaṇa 3.54.11, 3.60.42-3). Rāvaṇa also has the power to do the same (Rāmāyaṇa 3.30.15). The *rākṣasa* army is compared with the ocean/sea

(Rāmāyaṇa 3.23.23). Śūrpaṇakhā falls into an ocean/sea of grief after being mutilated by Lakṣmaṇa (Rāmāyaṇa 3.20.11).

The references in the Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa are more because the story in this *kāṇḍa* is situated with the ocean/sea in the background. Vālin's power is described by his traveling from the western to the eastern ocean/sea and the southern to the northern ocean/sea (Rāmāyaṇa 4.11.4). Again, Rāma, Sugrīva and Hanumān are compared with the ocean/sea to show their strength (Rāmāyaṇa 4.65.5.9-10, 4.3.13, 4.26.13). The phrase ocean/sea of grief is again in use in this *kāṇḍa*. The ocean/sea is called righteous, lord of rivers, its waters are auspicious, and it is the abode of Varuṇa. (Rāmāyaṇa 4.11.8,10).

The ocean/sea is described as being boundless, imperturbable, unfathomable and profound, vast, salty, lord of rivers and streams in the Sundarakāṇḍa. Varuṇa (as mentioned and discussed earlier) here is called the ocean/sea god, along with Sāgara and Samudra. In this *kāṇḍa*, Hanumān being the main character is compared with the ocean/sea in terms of size (Rāmāyaṇa 5.1.53, 65). Rāma is also compared with the ocean/sea. The phrase ocean/sea of grief/suffering is also used in this *kāṇḍa*. In this *kāṇḍa*, the unnamed ocean/sea is also mentioned, when Hanumān crosses it from Mt. Mahendra to go to Laṅkā (Rāmāyaṇa 5.1.10, 5.1.28, 5.1.60, 5.1.67, 5.1.129, 5.1.131-2, 5.2.1, 4, and 5).

In each *kāṇḍa,* the central characters are compared with the ocean/sea and its virtues like strength etc. are used as a measure of strength and a good moral character though no holy status is given to it. The ocean/sea's usage as a

measuring scale for the character of any person in the epic could be because being a poem; the authors wanted all the good virtues to be reflected in this work. Therefore, each character in the Rāmāyaṇa was idealized and an exaggerated poetical imagery was depicted.

The ocean/sea is unnamed in all the *kāṇḍas*. Only in the Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa, it is called the northern, the southern, and the western and eastern ocean/sea. No specific name was given. Taking into account the stratification within books 2 to 6, when the information given on the ocean/sea is compared no differences or variances of the usage of the term itself or for comparison are found in the *kāndas*.[35]

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[35] For stratification see chapter 1 Pg. 14

Table-18[36] Generic Term- River

	BĀLA	UTTARA	AYODHYĀ	ARAṆYA	KIṢKINDHĀ	SUNDARA	YUDDHA
Nadī	1	8	7	13	16	6	2
Saritāḥ	3	-	4	5	9	6	-
Total no. of references	4	8	11	18	25	12	2
Total no. of sargas	76	100	111	71	66	66	116

After studying the above table what we see is that the usage of the general terms for rivers is less in the Bālakāṇḍa and the Uttarakāṇḍa. This is because the authors of these *kāṇḍas* were more interested in certain divine rivers like the Gaṅgā and Sarayū. Hence, the usage of terms for rivers in general was less. In the Ayodhyākāṇḍa, general references to rivers are few. Instead we find mention of a few specific ones. This can be explained by the fact that the major focus in Ayodhyākāṇḍa is on the city itself. Even in the Yuddhakāṇḍa the context of the narrative does not permit references to rivers. As such, the relative absence of such references is realistic. In the Araṇya, Kiṣkindhā and Sundara *kāṇḍas*, the region is described as being forested, and it is in this context that we find a larger number of references to rivers. However, one important point that needs to be stressed here is that the rivers mentioned in these *kāṇḍas*, apart from a few like Godāvarī, are largely unnamed. Even so, a more realistic representation of rivers is seen in the earlier sections as compared with the later

[36] for references, see Appendix.

ones. As regards Brockington's classification, no significant data has been found to distinguish a chronological divide.

Table-19 Generic Term -Lake/Pond/Pool

	BĀLA	UTTARA	AYODHYĀ	ARAṆYA	KIṢKINDHĀ	SUNDARA	YUDDHA
Salilā	-	-	-	-	3	-	-
Sarasa	-	-	3	-	5	-	-
Saraḥ	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hradaḥ	-	-	5	1	1	2	-
Padminī	-	2	-	8	-	4	-
Nalinī	-	-	-	4	1	2	-
Tatāka	-	-	-	2	4	-	-
Total no. of references	0	2	8	18	14	8	0
Total no. of sargas	76	100	111	71	66	66	116

As in the case of other water bodies the references to lakes in the Bālakāṇḍa and Uttarakāṇḍa are almost nil. One has to understand the basic motive of the authors of the Bālakāṇḍa and Uttarakāṇḍa. It was projecting a higher status for the Ikṣvāku lineage and linking it with divine rivers was a part of this process. Hence what we see is that lakes are virtually never alluded to in these kāṇḍas. However, in the other kāṇḍas, which are earlier, one finds that lakes are realistically portrayed. In the Ayodhyākāṇḍa not many lakes have been mentioned because they were not a part of Ayodhyā's geography, whereas in the other kāṇḍas they are more frequent. What is especially noteworthy is the relatively high proportion of references in the Araṇya, Kiṣkindhā and Sundara

kāṇḍas, where descriptions of lakes form part of routine poetic images. In this context, Brockington's internal stratification of the text does not have any significant consequence.

(II)

In this section, I focus on the depiction of specific rivers and lakes, comparing the Bālakāṇḍa and the Uttarakāṇḍa with the rest of the text. Again, the differences within books 2 to 6 will also be studied. I will take up the rivers mentioned most frequently individually.

Table 20[37] - Named Rivers

	BĀLA	UTTARA	AYODHYĀ	ARAṆYA	KIṢKINDHĀ	SUNDARA	YUDDHA
Gaṅgā	39	4	23	2	-	3	1
Jāhnavī	4	1	1	-	-	-	-
Bhāgīrathī	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
Haimavatī	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tamasā	3	-	6	-	-	-	-
Sarayū	6	3	5	2	1	-	-
Śoṇā	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sumāgadhī	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Māgadhī	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kauśikī	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ikṣumatī	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Yamunā	-	1	8	-	-	-	-
Kālindī	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Mandākinī	-	2	14	1	-	1	-
Vedaśrutī	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Gomatī	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Syandikā	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Mālyavatī	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Śaradandā	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Vipāśā	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Śālmalī	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Śatadrū	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Śilāvahā	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Kuliṅgā	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Uttānakā	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Kutikā	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Kapīvatī	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Sthāṇumatī	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Pampā	-	-	-	1	1	-	-
Godāvarī	-	-	-	13	-	-	-
Vaitaraṇī	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Narmadā	-	16	-	-	-	-	1
Total no. of references	63	27	74	20	2	4	2
Total no. of sargas	76	100	111	71	66	66	116

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[37] For references, see Appendix.

Gaṅgā

In the Bālakāṇḍa, the Gaṅgā is accorded various names, like, Jāhnavī,
Bhāgīrathī, and Haimavatī (Rāmāyaṇa 1.34.6,1.41.22,1.42.4). It is considered
holy and celestial and is called a goddess (Rāmāyaṇa 1.22.5,16). Its origin myth
has been described in detail (Rāmāyaṇa 1.34.11-1.43). This is the only river
deified in this *kāṇḍa* (Rāmāyaṇa 1.22.5, 16). Given below is a summary of the
myth.

Once a mountain called Himālaya (a mine of metals) had two daughters. His wife
Menā was the daughter of Mt. Meru. Their elder daughter was named Gaṅgā and the younger
one was called Umā. The gods asked for Gaṅgā's hand in marriage and her father agreed.
Therefore, she was married off to the gods and this is how she goes by the first path through
the sky.

The second daughter Umā was an ascetic and practiced austerity. She married
Rudra. The gods approached Brahmā who told them they could never father children.
Therefore, Agni was to father the child of Gaṅgā, and this child would become the commander
of the army of the gods. This was done, but Gaṅgā could not bear the powerful semen, so Agni
suggested that the embryo should be placed at the foot of the Himālayas. Then, Gaṅgā
released the semen, which turned to gold and silver in which the impurities were tin and lead.
Then the boy was born and was named Kārtikeya, Skanda and Kumāra.

There was a heroic and righteous king named Sagara, ruler of Ayodhyā. He was
childless. His elder wife was Keśinī, the daughter of the king of Vidarbha (who is unnamed). His

second wife was Ariṣṭanemi's daughter Sumati. King Sagara desired children and thus he and his two wives performed austerities on mount Bhṛguprasravaṇa.

Then they got a boon from sage Bhṛgu, who said that one wife would get one son, the other sixty thousand. Keśinī chose to bear one son (who would carry on the dynasty) and Sumati chose sixty thousand. The son born to Keśinī was called Asamanjas. This eldest son took to forcibly seizing children and throwing them into the Sarayū. Because of this, his father banished him from the city. However, Asamanjas had a son named Aṁśumant who was well liked by all people. After some time Sagara decided to perform a sacrifice. This sacrifice took place between the Himavant and the Vindhyan range and Aṁśumant, on Sagara's instructions, guarded the sacrificial horse. But Indra Vāsava carried it off. Then Sagara instructed his sixty thousand sons to look for it and tear up the world in doing so. They found the horse near sage Kapila and he cursed them and reduced them to ashes. Sagara sent Aṁśumant to find where the sixty thousand sons had gone. Aṁśumant found out and tried to perform the funeral ritual but could not find water to do so. Then it was said that only the Gaṅgā's water could be used to purify the ashes and send the sons to heaven. Even after the sacrifice was over Sagara could not think of any plan to bring down the Gaṅgā. Aṁśumant, had a son named Dilīpa who also tried to bring down the Gaṅgā but failed.

Bhagīratha, son of Dilīpa performed austerities and Brahmā gave him a boon to offer funerary libations to all the sons of Sagara. Brahmā also stated that Hara/Śiva would check Gaṅgā's fall. Then Bhagīratha pleased Śiva who agreed to bear the Gaṅgā on his head. Thus, the river came down to his hair and kept wandering in it for many years. Then Hara released her into Lake Bindu, and from there Bhagīratha led the Gaṅgā following along behind him, ultimately purifying the ashes of the sixty thousand sons. From then on, it is also called the Bhagīrathī, who sanctifies the three paths.

Now lets us compare this myth with *purāṇic* mythology. The Vāyu Purāṇa mentions the myth as such: -

From the Kailāsa mountain towards the north there is a mountain full of living beings and beneficial herbs. Its name is the Gaura mountain. There is also a divine mountain full of diamonds called the Hiraṇyaśṛnga. At the foot of that mountain, there is extremely sacred, excellent sand of gold, and there is also a beautiful lake named Bindu. Here came Bhagīratha who for the sake of Gaṅgā lived there for a number of years. There the goddess Tripathaga or the Gaṅgā was first initiated. Emerging from the foot of the soma mountain, that river divided itself into seven currents. There are found yupa, diamonds, gold etc. in the clear sky the innumerable stars (of the, milky way) which look very close to each other and shine brightly at night are nothing but the goddess Tripathaga or the Gaṅgā. This Tripathaga having flowed in the sky came down upon the earth and being checked by the lord Śankara's yoga, she fell down upon the head of lord Śankara, the few drops which fell upon the earth as a result of the anger of lord Śankara created the lake called Vindu. Therefore, it is now known as Vindu sarovara. Then having being checked by lord Śankara that river Tripathaga began to brood over her imprisonment by him. She decided to pierce the lower regions of the earth, then reappear on its surface and circumvent lord Śankara. Lord Śankara having come to know the evil design of Devī Gaṅgā lifted and kept the entire mighty river over his own head. He then angrily threw her down with great force upon the earth.

At the same time, lord Śankara saw that king Bhagīratha had grown pale and thin because of hunger and thirst, because of his love for his river. Lord Śankara who was pleased with the king took pity on him and changed his anger to a boon. Having realized the strong desire of king Bhagīratha the Tripathaga started flowing and the current of that river divided it into seven

streams three of them went towards the east and three towards the west. In this way the entire course of the river Gaṅgā divided into seven paths Nalini, Hradini and Pavani went towards the east, Sītā, Chaksu, Sindhu went towards the west. The seventh current of them went towards the south under the name of Bhāgīrathī, this Bhāgīrathī entered the Lavana sea(Ali, 1973;67-68.).

Comparing the myth of the Gaṅgā as given in the Rāmāyaṇa with that given in the *Purāṇas* we find many similarities. Here again, I would quote S.M. Ali's hypothesis that the Rāmāyaṇa provided the blueprint for *purāṇic* mythology and that the *Purāṇas* just added to it. However, in the *Purāṇas* the emphasis is different, on Śiva rather than the Ikṣvākus. At the same time, in the *Purāṇas*, all dynastic histories are traced from Manu Vaivasvata. Ikṣvāku, the founder of the solar dynasty with roots in Ayodhyā was supposed to be one of his sons (Chakrabarti 1999: 265).

In the Uttarakāṇḍa, the river is also called the Jāhnavī (Rāmāyaṇa 7.46.15) the only link with holiness is that it bore a son by the god of fire (which is reminiscent of the myth in the Bālakāṇḍa), it is supposed to have sacred banks (Rāmāyaṇa 7.4.24).

In the Ayodhyākāṇḍa, the Gaṅgā is called the Jāhnavī and the Bhāgīrathī (Rāmāyaṇa 2.46.3, 2.80.24). It is called a goddess and the wife of the ocean king and is holy. Seers frequent it (Rāmāyaṇa 2.44.2-3). Yet, the river is not mythologized in the Ayodhyākāṇḍa. It is not that the holy status was given to the

river only by the time of the Bālakāṇḍa (1st century A d to 3rd century Ad). According to Brockington's framework, the Gaṅgā was already called a goddess and given the name Bhāgīrathī around 5th to 4th century B.C. which is stage one. The name Jāhnavī and its comparison as the wife of the ocean king were done in the second stage that is 3rd century to 1st century A.D. Hence, though the myths were added to the Rāmāyaṇa, at a later stage the deification of the Gaṅgā had already taken place.

In the Araṇyakāṇḍa, references to the Gaṅgā are poetic and metaphorical in nature (Rāmāyaṇa 3.50.31,3.54.7). The Gaṅgā is compared with Vaidehī's pearl necklace slipping from her neck (Rāmāyaṇa 3.50.31). Its bank is supposed to crumble before the waves, which is comparable with *rākṣasas* who would be slayed by Rāma in battle (Rāmāyaṇa 3.54.7). The river is neither explicitly nor implicitly deified.

While in the Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa, there is no reference to this river, in the Sundarakāṇḍa and the Yuddhakāṇḍa, it is a part of poetic imagery, and no other importance is given to it. Gaṅgā is mentioned in the Sundarakāṇḍa while being compared with Sītā. Rāvaṇa resembles an elephant sleeping in the vast waters of the Gaṅgā. When *rākṣasas* fight with Hanumān, they resemble a great whirlpool in the Gaṅgā. (Rāmāyaṇa 5.8.26,5.14.4,5.41.12). The Gaṅgā is again used for poetic imagery where monkeys are compared with banyan trees on the banks of

Gaṅgā (Rāmāyaṇa 6.27,6.28). Such references would suggest that the audience of the text was familiar with the river, but did not necessarily revere it.

Tamasā

The Tamasā is refered to only in the Bālakāṇḍa and the Ayodhyākāṇḍa. In the Bālakāṇḍa, it is mentioned as being located near the Gaṅgā. The *tīrtha*'s are found on it (Rāmāyaṇa 1.2.3-8,19). In the Ayodhyākāṇḍa, the Tamasā is called a swift and eddying river with cattle on its banks for drinking water (Rāmāyaṇa 2.41.15, 27). The description is realistic / naturalistic with no attempt at attributing sacrality. It is in the third stage of Brockingon's classification (dated between 1rst century B.C. and 3rd century A.D.), which includes the Bālakāṇḍa that the term *tīrtha* figures. As we know, this term denotes the concept of pilgrimage. This was a ritual which figured marginally in the Brahmanical tradition and evolved into a well structured institution to which large sections are devoted in the Mahābhārata and in almost all major *Purāṇas* (Nath 2001: 125-6). What we see in the Rāmāyaṇa and more specifically in the later stage of its composition (Bālakāṇḍa) is maybe a beginning of the process of this evolution of this ritual into a more elaborate one.

There is no mention of the Tamasā in the Araṇyakāṇḍa, Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa, Sundarakāṇḍa, Uttarakāṇḍa or the Yuddhakāṇḍa.

Sarayū

In the Bālakāṇḍa the *asvamedha* sacrifice is performed by Daśaratha on the Sarayū. Its origin myth is given and it is called holy. Viśvāmitra tells Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa about its origin. He says that on mount Kailāsa there is a lake that Brahmā produced from his mind, manas. Because it is called lake Mānasa, this river flows down that lake to embrace the city of Ayodhyā. Because it rises from a lake, Saras, it is called the holy Sarayū. (Rāmāyaṇa 1.23.7-8). The association of this river with *purāṇic* mythology has been discussed earlier in chapter 2.

In the Uttarakāṇḍa Lakṣmaṇa meditates on its banks and it is mentioned as flowing westwards, whereas according to recent accounts it has a north-west to south eastern direction (Singh 1992: 133). In the Ayodhyākāṇḍa and the Araṇyakāṇḍa and the Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa, no information is given about it, it is just being remembered. In the Sundarakāṇḍa and the Yuddhakāṇḍa there are no references to it. Hence, we find that the authors of the Bālakāṇḍa assign more importance to this river as compared with the others, and try to assign sanctity to it.

Śonā

This river is referred to only in the Bālakāṇḍa, where it is called shallow, limpid, and studded with sand bars. This river is described while Rāma is traveling during his exile[38]. There are no references to it in any of the other kāṇḍas.

Kauśikī

In the Bālakāṇḍa, it is called holy and is supposed to be Viśvāmitra's sister[39](Rāmāyaṇa 1.33.1-13). It has not been referred to in any other kāṇḍa.

Yamunā

In the Uttarakāṇḍa, there is one reference to Yamunā, on he banks of which dwell sages. In the Ayodhyākāṇḍa, it is called the daughter of the sun and is swift (Rāmāyaṇa 2.49.3). There is no reference to it in any other kāṇḍa.

Mandākinī

In the Uttarakāṇḍa, it is mentioned as being near Mount Kailāsa. In the Ayodhyākāṇḍa it is supposed to be near Citrakūṭa. (Rāmāyaṇa 2.95.25-6) It is not depicted as being holy. It is described as having water lilies, lotuses etc.

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[38] The reference to this has been discussed on Pg. 36.
[39] For details , see Pg. 34

(Rāmāyaṇa 2.89.14). In the Araṇyakāṇda, sages are supposed to live along the Mandākinī River. (Rāmāyaṇa 3.5.16) In the Sundarakāṇda, it is mentioned only while remembering it (Rāmāyaṇa 5.36.12-3). There is no allusion to it in any other *kāṇḍa*. What is clear is that there are references to two different rivers that are assigned the same name.

Godāvarī

The Godāvarī is mentioned only in the Aranyakānda. In the other six *kāṇḍas* no reference has been made to this river. Pañcavatī is a stretch of forest near the Godāvarī river (Rāmāyaṇa 3.12.18). This river is described as having many trees lining it, at Pañcavaṭī. Nearby is a lotus pond. It is supposed to be teeming with geese, ducks and lonely sheldrakes, and thronged with herds of animals. (Rāmāyaṇa 3.14.11-13). Its bank is wet with snow because of sleet (Rāmāyaṇa 3.15.22-24) or hoarfrost (Rāmāyaṇa 3.15.20). It has a swift current (Rāmāyaṇa 3.44.7). Rāma and Laksmana go down from Pancavaṭī to the Godāvarī river to take a bath (Rāmāyaṇa 3.14.22, 3.15.2-3, 37).

Now I will mention those rivers, which are specific to each *kāṇḍa*. In the Bālakāṇda the river Iksumatī is mentioned, which surrounded the city of Sāṃkāśyā (Rāmāyaṇa 1.69.2-3).

In the Ayodhyākāṇḍa, the Vedaśrutī (Rāmāyaṇa 2.43.8).), the Gomatī (Rāmāyaṇa 2.43.9), the Syandikā (Rāmāyaṇa 2.43.10),the Śaradaṇḍā (Rāmāyaṇa 2.62.11), the Vipāśā and Śālmalī (Rāmāyaṇa 2.62.13), the Śatadru (Rāmāyaṇa 2.65.1). The Śilāvahā (Rāmāyaṇa 2.65.2-3), the Kuliṅgā (Rāmāyaṇa 2.65.4), the Uttānakā, Kuṭikā, Kapīvatī, Sthāṇumatī, and Gomatī (Rāmāyaṇa 2.65.10-11) are referred to as parts of the land routes taken by Bharata and the messengers to travel to and from from Ayodhyā to Rājagṛha. The significance of this has been discussed in the previous chapter.

In the Araṇyakāṇḍa, the Pampā and the Vaitaraṇī are mentioned (Rāmāyaṇa 3.5.16,3.51.18). In the Yuddhakāṇḍa, the Narmadā is referred to (Rāmāyaṇa 7.5.27). In the Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa, many unnamed rivers are referred to, in all parts of India.[40]

In the Uttarakāṇḍa, the Narmadā is referred to. We find that on its banks a battle between Rāvaṇa and Arjuna takes place, as described earlier[41]. While comparing the description of the Narmadā in *purāṇic* mythology, we find that no specific importance is being given to it. Another fact worth mentioning here is the significance of the references to this river. As one goes down from northern India towards the southern direction, the Narmadā is seen first and then the Godāvarī. We find a realistic description of the river in the Uttarakāṇḍa which is supposed to be a later section. This would indicate that the authors now had a proper

knowledge of the region around this river. Whereas the authors mention that Rāma and the others reach the Godāvarī first and don't mention the Narmadā in any capacity in the earlier sections of the Araṇyakāṇḍa, which would imply that the authors had just heard of the river and did not have real knowledge of it.

We find that in the Bālakāṇḍa the Gaṅgā has been deified. Its myth is comparable with that of the *purāṇic* mythology and it is linked with the Ikṣvāku lineage. In the Ayodhyākāṇḍa, although the Gaṅgā is divinised, its link with the Ikṣvākus has not been established explicitly or in the form of a myth. This signifies a chronological divide between the composing of the two *kāṇḍas*.

In terms of representation of specific rivers, we find a major difference between the early and the late sections. In the early ones from the Ayodhyākāṇḍa to the Yuddhakāṇḍa, we find a more realistic account of rivers given and information about them is realistic, whereas in the Bālakāṇḍa, and the Uttarakāṇḍa, we see myths about and deification of certain rivers like the Gaṅgā and the Sarayū.

The Sarayū assumes importance only in the Bālakāṇḍa and the *asvamedha* is associated with it. In the Ayodhyākāṇḍa, the Sarayū has not been referred to as an important river, although geographically Ayodhyā is the main center of focus, which is on the bank of the Sarayū. And interestingly the river gets

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[40] Refer Pg 76.
[41] Refer Pg. 58.

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importance and a holy status only in the Bālakāṇḍa (which is at a later stage). It is also interesting to note that in the Ayodhyākāṇḍa, Rāma is shown as yearning for the Sarayū rather than the Gaṅgā.

The Kauśikī is the only other river that is called holy, may be due to an attempt to identify it as the sister of Viśvāmitra, the preceptor of Rāma.

The Yamunā is given a semi-holy status, being regarded as the daughter of the sun in Ayodhyākāṇḍa and in the Uttarakāṇḍa, at a later stage, as a river on the banks of which sages live. No other river is given a holy status in the Rāmāyaṇa. The presence of sages abode along rivers would signify forested area, because their *āśramas* were located away from inhabited towns.

In the Kiskindhākāṇḍa, rivers are mentioned when the monkeys go to search for Sītā. This was most probably inserted to indicate similarity with the entire India. The verses showing this knowledge belong to stage two of Brockington's classification (third century B.C. to first century B.C.). The inclusion of such verses would have meant that the authors were trying to elevate a regional story into a subcontinental one.

Table – 21[42] Named Lakes and ponds

	BĀLA	UTTARA	AYODHYĀ	ARANYA	KISKINDHĀ	SUNDARA	YUDDHA
Pampā	3	-	-	25	9	-	-
Bindu	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Puṣkara	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pañcāpsars	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Pond of Mataṅga	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Mānasa	-	-	-	-	1	-	
Total no. of references	5	0	0	27	10	0	0
Total no. of sargas	76	100	111	71	66	66	116

[42] For references, see Appendix.

Lake Pampā

In the Bālakāṇḍa, this lake is alluded to while recounting the events surrounding it. (Ramayana 1.1.47, 1.3.13, 14). In the Ayodhyākāṇḍa there are no references to named lakes. Lake Pampā is described in detail in the Araṇyakāṇḍa and in the Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa. There are no references to named lakes or ponds in the Sundarakāṇḍa, the Yuddhakāṇḍa or the Uttarakāṇḍa.

In the Bālakāṇḍa, Lake Bindu and Puṣkara are mentioned (Rāmāyaṇa 1.42.6,1.61.1-2). In the Araṇyakāṇḍa, the Pañcāpsaras pond is mentioned as being one league across (which is roughly three and a half miles). This pond had lotuses, elephants, geese, cranes, etc. and was supposed to be made by sage Māṇḍakarṇī by his ascetic powers. (Rāmāyaṇa 3.5.16).

In the Araṇyakāṇḍa, the pond of Mataṅga being near lake Pampā was added in stage two (Rāmāyaṇa 3.71.18-19). In the Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa the Lake Mānasa and the river Sarayū (used in an insignificant context of its current swelling) were added to the text in stage two.

After studying the stratification between books two to six, in terms of regions associated with rivers or lakes no significant anomalies were found. The information given in the verses from the two different stages was similar in nature. The information given in stage one was complemented by information in stage two.

Lakes are generally not depicted as being holy. They are either mentioned as being located along routes, or in the context of providing water for bathing. Thus, from the point of view of the authors of the text, their significance was much less than that assigned to rivers.

(III)

In this section the comparison between earlier and later sections will be extended to the activities and settlements associated with rivers of the text. As discussed earlier, in all the *kāṇḍas*, activities associated with rivers can broadly be classified into traveling and ritualistic purposes. In all the *kāṇḍas* the main characters of the *kāṇḍa* are found to travel, crossing unnamed rivers.

Activities

In the Bālakāṇḍa, Daśaratha sends Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa with Viśvāmitra to kill the demons that are hindering Viśvāmitra's sacrifices. On their journey to his *āsrama*, they travel along the Sarayū (Rāmāyaṇa 1.21.9), and then cross the confluence of the Gaṅgā and the Sarayū (1.23.2-4). Then while going on to Mithilā they cross the Śoṇā (Rāmāyaṇa 1.30.18) and then the Gaṅgā (Rāmāyaṇa 1.34.6-9). At each river and the confluence, they spend the night camping on its banks. The emphasis in this *kāṇḍa* is more on the uplifting of the status of the Ikṣvākus. Hence, descriptions of rivers apart from the Gaṅgā are marginal.

In the Ayodhyākāṇḍa, rivers are represented as demarcators of routes .So, when Rāma goes for exile Tamasā is the first river that comes into view (Rāmāyaṇa 2.40.30) Camping is done on the rivers' bank (Rāmāyaṇa 2.41.12,14,15). Then he crosses the river Vedaśrutī, (Rāmāyaṇa 2.43.8), Gomatī

(Rāmāyaṇa 2.43.9), then the river Syandikā (Rāmāyaṇa 2.43.10), and Gaṅgā (Rāmāyaṇa 2.46.3). Boats are available for crossing at the Gaṅgā. (Rāmāyaṇa 2.46.61, 65.6.) Then they reach the Gaṅgā-Yamunā confluence (Rāmāyaṇa 2.48.23). Within the Ayodhyākāṇḍa, the verses (Rāmāyaṇa 2.46.61, 65, 66) which mention the availability of boats for crossing belong to stage two of Brockington's stratification of the text. Now, one sees that even a detail as small as this could be inserted when additions were being made to the epic. This would indicate a more developed form of transportation. In addition, in the Bālakāṇḍa, the use of boats is not mentioned. As mentioned earlier, this may be because the authors of this section of the text were much more preoccupied with myths than with a realistic/ naturalistic projection.

The Śaradaṇḍā (Rāmāyaṇa 2.62.11), Vipāśā and Śālmalī (Rāmāyaṇa 2.62.13), Śatadru (Rāmāyaṇa 2.65.1), Śilāvahā (Rāmāyaṇa 2.65.2-3), Kuliṅgā (Rāmāyaṇa 2.65.4), Uttānakā, Kuṭikā, Kapīvatī, Sthāṇumatī, and Gomatī (Rāmāyaṇa 2.65.10-11) are referred to while describing the journey from Ayodhyā to Rājagṛha and back, undertaken by the messengers sent to Bharata and Bharata.

In the Araṇyakāṇḍa, rivers or lakes are a part of the description of the forest Daṇḍaka. Crossing of unnamed rivers and traveling form a part of their usage. In this *kāṇḍa*, lakes, ponds and pools, are used as poetic references.

In the Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa, we find that rivers are being explicitly referred to for traveling and searching for Sītā by the monkeys (Rāmāyaṇa 4.39-4.42)[43]. The information on these rivers and regions has been positioned in stage two before the period of the Bālakāṇḍa. Here we can see that not all later additions are identical. The insertion of references in the Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa may be meant to suggest a wider scope for the text, whereas the inclusions of references to the Gaṅgā seem to have been made to enhance the importance of the Ikṣvākus.

In the Sundarakāṇḍa, the ocean/sea is crossed over by Hanumān, (Rāmāyaṇa 5.1.1-190) and that is the only activity associated with water bodies (rivers are not mentioned in it). In the Yuddhakāṇḍa, the building of a bridge is the only activity mentioned (Ramayaṇa 6.15.1-33), while there are no references to activities associated with rivers in the Uttarakāṇḍa. In all the *kāṇḍas*, we have descriptions of water bodies, except the ocean/sea, being used for bathing purposes.

The other activity associated with river is performing rituals on their banks. In the Bālakāṇḍa, when Daśaratha approaches sage Ṛṣyaśṛṅga for getting sons he is told to perform the *asvamedha* sacrifice (Rāmāyaṇa 1.11.15, 1.13.1). The

Sarayū River assumes importance as the sacrifice is to be performed on its banks. Viśvāmitra upon reaching the Sarayū tells Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa to sip the water of the river, and gives them a set of spells (Rāmāyaṇa 1.21.9-10). On the Śoṇā, Viśvāmitra, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa while going to Mithilā camp, bathe, and make offerings of water to gods and their departed ancestors, as is prescribed in the ritual texts. Their oblation is like nectar (Rāmāyaṇa 1.34.8). Viśvāmitra comes to the river Kauśikī and performs austerities to become a Brahman. Again, one notes that importance is given to a particular river.

According to Brockington's stratification, the funerary libation for Daśaratha performed on the banks of the Sarayū by his wives (Rāmāyaṇa 2.7.22-3), in the Ayodhyākāṇḍa, is associated with stage one. It is only in the second stage that Sītā when going to forest, after being exiled, prays to the Gaṅgā, calling her a goddess and says she would sacrifice for making her wishes come true (Rāmāyaṇa 2.46.70). She would give the Brahmans, a hundred thousand cows, garments and food to please the river (Rāmāyaṇa 2.46.72-3). In addition, Rāma offers funerary libations for Daśaratha, at the river Mandākinī during exile, which suggests that at a later stage, the Mandākinī also received importance (Rāmāyaṇa 2.95.23-28).

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[43] For details refer to chapter to Pg. 76.

In the Araṇyakānda, Rāma and Laksmana pour the funerary libations for Jaṭāyus the king of vultures in the Godāvarī (Rāmāyaṇa 3.64.35). In the Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa, a pyre is built on an unnamed mountain stream for Vālin's cremations (Rāmāyaṇa 4.24.30, 42).

While comparing the Bālakāṇḍa with the rest of the text, (the Uttarakāṇḍa has virtually no references), we find that the Bālakāṇḍa, has very few references to traveling associated with rivers. The Ayodhyākāṇḍa on the other hand has a detailed description of the routes. Most of these routes may be assigned to stage one of Brockington's classification. The fact that the authors of the Bālakāṇḍa had more to do with a certain agenda of divinising a particular lineage and river, may explain why they did not need to show any realistic activity associated with rivers.

Settlements

When studying the differences between the *kāṇḍas* in terms of settlements surrounding rivers, it is possible to only compare the Bālakāṇḍa and the Ayodhyākāṇḍa. This is because the rivers that are mentioned in the Bālakāṇḍa: - the Tamasā (mentioned again only in the Ayodhyākāṇḍa), the Śoṇā and the Ikṣumatī, do not find mention in any of the other *kāṇḍas*. There being no common ground for comparison, only the descriptions of the settlements around the

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Gangā and Sarayū are comparable. In both the Bālakāṇḍa and the Ayodhyākāṇḍa, it is mentioned that the town of Śṛngaverā was situated on the banks of the river Gangā. (Rāmāyaṇa 1.1.25, 2.44.1-3) No other information is given about the town. A forest beyond the river is mentioned in both the *kāṇḍas*.

It is mentioned only in the Bālakāṇḍa, that the country Kosala and 'the world famous city' of Ayodhyā are said to be situated on the bank of the Sarayū (Rāmāyaṇa 1.5.5). In the Ayodhyakāṇḍa. it is mentioned that there was a forest near the river (Rāmāyaṇa 2.43.14) and this verse belongs to stage two.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter while analyzing the data of the various *kāndas*, it has been seen that there was a difference in the representation of rivers between the Bālakāṇḍa and the rest of he text. The authors of he Bālakāṇḍa were more concerned with fulfilling their motives of portraying the Ikṣvāku lineage as divine, and hence the representation of water bodies, in generic terms, specific names and in activities and settlements associated with the water bodies is marginal while there is a great deal of attention devoted to " divine" rivers.

Whereas the authors of the rest of the text seem to be less concerned with these objectives. Therefore, while describing or narrating the story, they gave a realistic presentation of whatever surrounded them. This fact also reaffirms the

chronological divide between the early and late strata of the Rāmāyaṇa. In terms

of the internal stratification between the Ayodhyākāṇḍa and the Yuddhakāṇḍa,

according to Brockington's classification, variations are insignificant and the

details which have been added are small in comparison.

Chapter 4

Regional Variations: Representation of Water bodies in

Ayodhyā, Laṅkā and Kiṣkindhā.

Within the Rāmāyaṇa, one can broadly classify three regions within which the story is set. These are, the areas of Ayodhyā, Kiṣkindhā and Laṅkā. Ayodhyā can be described as a relatively urban region with a relatively developed society and economy. Kiṣkindhā can be identified as a forested area largely uninhabited and wild. Laṅkā has been identified as an island in the Rāmāyaṇa. At this point one needs to make a distinction. Apart from Ayodhyā (in eastern U. P.), the regions of Kiṣkindhā and Laṅkā have been variously identified. Kiṣkindhā has been identified by some as being near the Vindhyan range and by others with Anagandi, on the left bank of the Tungabhadra. Laṅkā has been identified as ancient Ceylon (Sri Lanka) by some scholars and by some in the region of Madhya Pradesh[44]. Taking into account the fact that these regions have yet to be identified conclusively, I will study the information given in the epic only. It is my contention that representation of water bodies in differently endowed geographical regions would be different. In this chapter, I will determine whether this difference in terms of features and usage of water bodies is reflected in the Rāmāyaṇa.

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[44] For details refer Sankalia (1973), Guruge (1991), Altekar (1987), Dey (1971).

According to the Rāmāyaṇa, the Sarayū and Tamasā rivers flowed through the region of Ayodhyā. There are no named rivers in the description of Kiṣkindhā. The only named water body is the Pampā[45]. Laṅkā, called an island had only the ocean/sea surrounding it on all four sides. No other water body is associated with it.

I will divide this chapter into three sections. In each section, I will compare the general representation of, settlements and activities associated with water bodies within each (previously) specified region.

(I)

Ayodhyā

In the region of Ayodhyā, there is no sea/ocean. Whatever references to the term are poetic in nature. I will discuss here the general representation or depiction of rivers in the region of Ayodhyā.

Sarayū - This river has been referred to as holy and its origin myth has been discussed earlier. A flowering forest is supposed to be located near the river (Rāmāyaṇa 2.43.12-13). It is mentioned that wild animals came down to the

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[45] In the text Pampā has been described as a river and a lake (4.3.6, 4.1.3).

riverbank to drink water and this was the time when they were hunted (Rāmāyaṇa 2.57.14-15, 2.58.12).

Tamasā- The Tamasā has been mentioned for bathing spots (*tīrthas*) on its banks (Rāmāyaṇa 1.2.3-8). It is mentioned that herds of cattle were supposed to have crowded the banks of the river (Rāmāyaṇa 2.41.15). It is described as being swift and eddying (Rāmāyaṇa 2.41.27).

Kiṣkindhā

In this region, no named rivers have been mentioned. Only one named lake has been mentioned. We find this area to be mostly forested and full of lotus ponds, which are again unnamed. However, it is mentioned that there were many (unnamed) rivers in this region (Rāmāyaṇa 4.29.11, 28).

Lake Pampā- in the Kiṣkindhā region, this is one of the most important water bodies that have been mentioned in detail. This lake is described as being lotus covered, having geese, various types of birds and fishes, having crystal clear water, with animals (such as wild boars) coming to the lake for drinking water

(Rāmāyaṇa 3.69.5,7-15,27). A forest and a detailed description of trees have been mentioned to be around this lake (Rāmāyaṇa 4.1.27, 32, 35-40).

The Pond of Mataṅga – This pond is mentioned as being near the Pampā Lake having many trees, flowers, lotuses (Rāmāyaṇa 3.71.18-19).

Laṅkā

The island has been referred to as being on the southern shore of the southern ocean/sea. The ocean/sea is the only water body that is mentioned in this region. Unnamed rivers and lakes have been said to exist in the island. The ocean/sea is mentioned for the purpose of crossing it (Rāmāyaṇa 5.36.35, 5.1.10, 5.1.28, 60, 67,129,131-2). The ocean/sea remains unnamed.

(II)

In this section, I will study the settlements associated with water bodies in all the three regions.

In the Ayodhyā region, there are three types of settlements associated with rivers: - cities or towns and sages' *āśramas*. Kosala (country) and Ayodhyā (city) are mentioned to be on the banks of the Sarayū (Rāmāyaṇa 1.5.5-6). The forest is supposed to be along the Tamasā and the Sarayū (Rāmāyaṇa 1.2.8, 2.43.14). It is mentioned that on the Sarayū, there is a holy *āśrama* (Rāmāyaṇa 1.22.6, 16, 1.23.10).

In the Kiṣkindhā region, only forested area is mentioned along the Lake Pampā (Rāmāyaṇa 4.1.3). No cities or towns are referred to near the rivers or the lakes. On the lake's western shore, sage Mataṅga's *āśrama* is mentioned. It is said that there is a shrine there, a sacred spot where Śabarī lives (Rāmāyaṇa 3.69.21-2, 3.70.1, 3, 4, 13, 18).

Laṅkā as a city surrounded by the ocean is the only one mentioned in the epic (Rāmāyaṇa 6.2.10, 6.3.7). No forests or *āśramas* are referred to as being associated with it.

(III)

The activities associated with the rivers in the three regions will be discussed in this section.

In the region of Ayodhyā apart from travelling or performing rituals, hunting is also mentioned along the river. No trade activity is however mentioned. Here, it would be worth keeping in mind the audience that authors must be catering to by composing this epic. As it is called a poem, the audience would not be very concerned with knowing through it whether any trade was going on at that time or not.

In the forested region of Kiṣkindhā, one would imagine hunting to be reflected which is not the case. Interestingly, after Rāma kills Vālin, speaking on his deathbed, Vālin mentions that he is a forest ranging monkey, living on roots and fruits (Rāmāyaṇa 4.17.20-21). This would signify gathering of food as a means of survival, unrelated with water bodies as such. The main activity associated with rivers or lakes is bathing, and their use for drinking water. Rituals are few, the cremation of Vālin being one (Rāmāyaṇa 4.24.30).

In Laṅkā there are no rivers or lakes specifically mentioned, only ponds are mentioned as adorning the city of Laṅkā. The ocean/sea again is associated with the crossing over of it. No activities like herding, bathing or rituals are

associated with it. Indirect references to ships foundering in the ocean/sea are given (Rāmāyaṇa 5.1.169)

Conclusion

We have found very scant information with regard to the reflection of variations in the geography of the Rāmāyaṇa. It is only in the region of Ayodhyā that, we find some detail of water bodies being given. The information on water bodies in the regions of Kiṣkindhā and Laṅkā is very sketchy. This would suggest apparent lack of knowledge on the part of authors of the regions apart from those of north India.

In the Ayodhyā region, we find no mention of lakes. In terms of activities associated with the water bodies one finds that the rivers are used for the purpose of travelling, performing rituals, and hunting.

In the Kiṣkindhā region, no named rivers are mentioned. One notes the absence of cities or even agricultural land or seers / people thronging the water bodies. Kiṣkindhā is supposed to be uninhabited by human population. In the forest around water bodies one would imagine hunting to be a part of the subsistence strategy, but there is no evidence of this. Lakes served the purpose of bathing and drinking water. No traveling or rituals are associated with rivers or lakes.

In Laṅkā, the only water body mentioned is the ocean/sea and vice-versa; the only settlement associated with the ocean/sea is Laṅkā. The ocean/sea has not been called holy, only its might, vastness, and depth have been discussed at various points in the story. The only activity associated with it is the crossing over it. No rituals are associated with the ocean/sea. No trade, shipping, or transportation across the ocean/sea is mentioned except for indirect references to ships foundering in the ocean/sea.

What one can conclude from the above is that, the authors of the Rāmāyaṇa were not aware of the real geography of the region of south India. They might have had knowledge of the island of Ceylon, but it was just incorporated into the story to show the reader that the Ikṣvākus rule extended over the whole of India and even beyond. When describing the forested region or Laṅkā, they described what they fancied. Otherwise, no real knowledge of regions beyond or apart from that of northern India was available.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

In the course of this dissertation, I have endeavored to examine the representation of water bodies in the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa. I have studied the generic terms of water bodies and then the depiction of specific rivers and lakes. I have determined also the various types of settlements and activities associated with specific water bodies.

One theme according to which I have analyzed the data is in terms of the early and late strata of the text. I have compared the depiction of water bodies between the Bālakāṇḍa and the Uttarakāṇḍa (the late stratum) and the rest of the text (the early stratum). I have also studied the variations in the representation of water bodies in three regions central to the Rāmāyaṇa, Ayodhyā, Kiṣkindhā and Laṅkā.

With respect to generic terms, the differences between the early and the late strata are obvious. The frequency of usage of these generic terms was less in the Bālakāṇḍa and the Uttarakāṇḍa, as compared to the earlier sections. This would bring to mind the motives of the authors of the later strata. When we study the early sections, we see that a more realistic depiction of these water bodies is given. If the geographical background of the Ayodhyākāṇḍa had no oceans/seas, the references were less. Whereas in the Sundarakāṇḍa, the geographical

background was the ocean/sea and therefore the number of references was higher.

In the Bālakāṇḍa and the Uttarakāṇḍa, one finds that the motive of the author is to divinise certain rivers like the Gaṅgā and link these with the Ikṣvākus because of which the ocean/sea has not been given much importance (hence number of references are few). This difference was found in terms of the generic terms of rivers and lakes also.

Another point that emerged was the increasing Vaiṣṇava influences on the later sections apparent in the use of the term Varuṇālaya. While this is occasionally used in the early strata, it drops out later. There is a clear distinction between the kinds of references to specific rivers in the early and later sections of the texts. References in the earliest sections tend to be poetic, realistic and naturalistic, whereas in later sections especially in the Bālakāṇḍa rivers figure as part of an elaborate mythology. One found that in the later sections the Gaṅgā was deified and explicitly linked with the Ikṣvākus through a detailed mythology comparable with that of the *Purāṇas*, giving rise to an elevated status to both of them. It can also be argued that by linking the Ikṣvāku lineage with the Gaṅgā, the authors tried to portray the suzerainty of the Ikṣvākus over all the regions (though unspecified in the epic) that the Gaṅgā flowed through.

The Sarayū and Kauśikī were other rivers which were also divinised. This may be because the former was associated with the heartland of the Ikṣvāku

domain, while the latter was associated with Viśvāmitra. What was also found was the deliberate marginalisation of certain rivers like the Sarayū as it was associated with Magadha (a rival of the Iksvakus), the land of heterodox traditions.

When comparing the activities and the settlements in the two strata, it was again visible that the primary motive of the authors in the later stratum was more to project a certain picture benefiting the Ikṣvākus. Hence, a portrayal of the real conditions was not a necessary part of their narrative.

While there are some details on references to routes along rivers in the early stratum (between third century B.C. to first century B.C.), there are relatively few in the later stratum (between first and third centuries A.D.).The text thus presents a sharp contrast with what is known from other sources, which suggest that it is a period of long distance exchange.

Here, one needs to keep in mind that the Rāmāyaṇa is called the *ādikāvya* and a poem perhaps composed for the ruling elite, hence very little attention was paid to realistic details.

The Uttarāpatha or the Dakṣiṇāpatha were not named so in the Rāmāyaṇa. Instead, some of these routes are described (in the early sections only)[46] without being specifically designated as such. What is clear is that there was considerable vagueness surrounding the great southern route and its specific alignment. The geography of Rāma's exile, which was along the

Dakṣiṇāpatha, is one such example, with many of the place names and spots in the Deccan significant in that context, still not having been satisfactorily identified (Lahiri 1992: 382).

The deification of the Gaṅgā and the depiction of the myth whereby Bhagīratha of the Ikṣvāku lineage brought and led down the Gaṅgā from Śiva's head to the earth, implies that the authors were trying to claim rule over all the regions that the Gaṅgā flowed over. Discreetly, they tried to hegemonise their rule over a large part of the northern India. The deliberate effort to demean the river Śoṇā which flowed down to the Magadhan region, the seat of power of the Mauryans could be a part of a rival campaign carried out by the Ikṣvākus or those who claimed to be their descendants. It is noteworthy that claims to connection with the Sūryavaṃśis become particularly important in the early medieval period.

The fact that the ocean/sea was not given any name means that the authors were not very familiar with it, broad knowledge of its features such as the tides, its vastness, depth and the rivers flowing down to merge with it were known.

The fact that the authors had very limited knowledge of south India (especially in the early section) is well attested. In terms of water bodies, in south India especially rivers I would like to add that their knowledge was quite scanty. In the early sections of the Rāmāyaṇa, the Godāvarī, Mandākinī, and Lake Pampā

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[46] In the late sections, even these descriptions were not given.

are the only ones referred to. Only between 3rd c. B.C. and 1st c.A.D. were references to other rivers inserted, including those to the Narmadā.Thus in terms of representation of rivers, also one can see that the information on rivers does reflect a relative date and knowledge of Rāmāyaṇa.
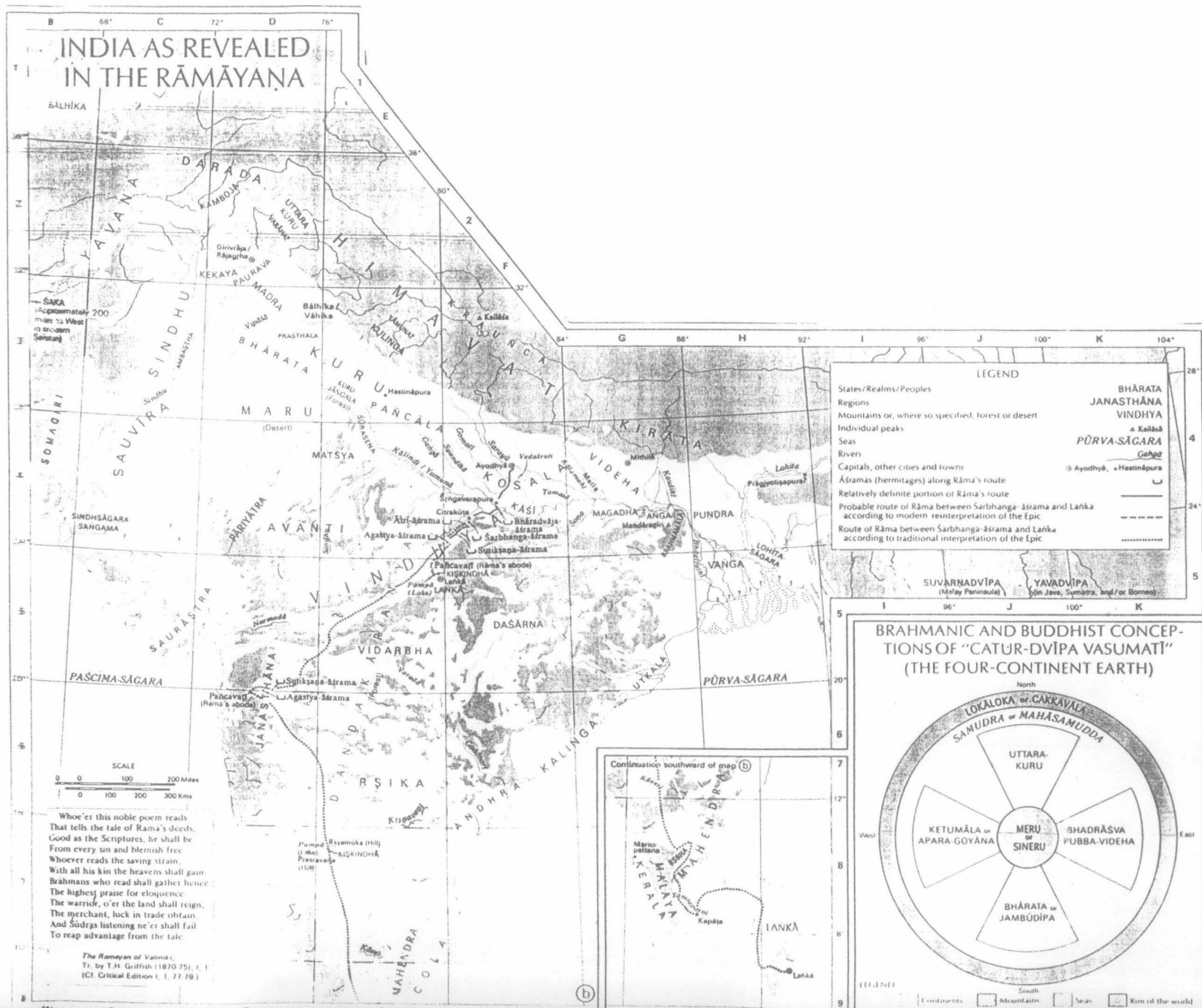
In terms of description of the water bodies in different geographical contexts, one finds that the authors tried to portray a certain difference. One impediment was its scarcity of knowledge of the Kiṣkindhā and Laṅkā regions. Most of the information was imagined and fantasized. In the region of Ayodhyā, we have descriptions of rivers being used for traveling and ritual purposes. Whereas, in Kiṣkindhā the rivers or lakes are shown as being part of routine activities. Hunting was shown in the Ayodhyā region where as no such activity was mentioned in the Kiṣkindhā region, though this would be expected in a forested region. In fact, we can see that the authors projected details of their own practices onto Kiṣkindhā, evident in the description of the cremation of Vālin (Sankalia 1973 :17).

In Laṅkā, one finds no mention of rivers, only the ocean is mentioned. One reason would be Laṅkā's identification as an island, but I have identified Laṅkā with the area of Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh, following H. D. Sankalia's theory. Even then, no river apart from the Narmadā (which was the most major river and also which was added in the later sections of the epic) or any tributary is mentioned. Coming to the depiction of the ocean/sea, one sees that it was not

given any specific importance. Crossing the ocean/sea was shown as the only means of reaching Laṅkā (as Laṅkā was said to be surrounded by the sea on all four sides). The ocean/sea was not regarded as holy. It was only called the abode of the ocean/sea god Varuṇa. No other importance was given to it.

What one needs to understand is who the epic's authors were and who their audience was. The authors of this epic were most likely bards in the courts of the Ikṣvākus or later rulers who may have claimed direct descent, or who tried to uphold identical values about kingship and society. As such, realistic representations are few. Instead, especially in the later section, divinisation is a prominent trend. The most outstanding instance of this is to attempt to link the genealogy of the Ikṣvākus with the deified/divine river. It is a two way process where the status of both the river and the Ikṣvākus was being uplifted to a divine level. In the process, the realms through which the river flowed could be claimed as part of a unified territory. While realizing this claim may not have been possible in reality, it remained as an ideal for rulers.
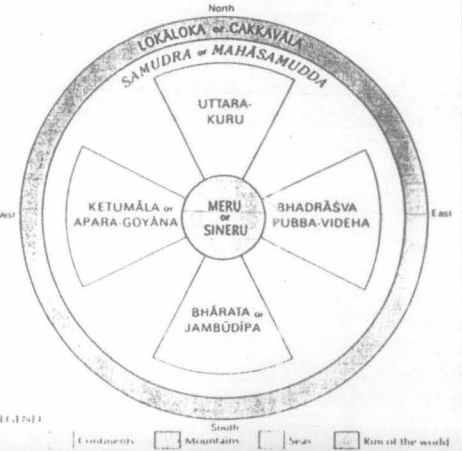
INDIA AS REVEALED IN THE RĀMĀYAṆA

BĀLHIKA

YAVANA DARADA KAMBOJA UTTARA KURU HIMALAYA

Girivāja / Rājagṛha
KEKAYA PAURAVA MADRA
SAKA (Approximately 200 miles to West in modern Seistan)
SINDHU AMBASTHA PRASTHALA BHĀRATA KURU Bālhika / Vāhika △ Kailāsa
Vipāśā KALINGA VIDEHA Mithilā
SOMAGIRI SAUVIRA MARU (Desert) KURU JĀNGALA (Forest) Hastināpura PAÑCĀLA ŚŪRASENA KIRATA
MATSYA Kālindī / Yamunā Ayodhyā Vedaśruti KOSALA Lohita Prāgjyotiṣapura
SINDHSĀGARA SANGAMA PĀRIYĀTRA AVANTI Śṛṇgaverapura KĀŚI Tamasā MAGADHA ANGA PUNDRA
Citrakūṭa Atri-āśrama Bhāradvāja-āśrama Mandāragiri VANGA
Agastya-āśrama Śarbhanga-āśrama LOHITA SĀGARA
Sutīkṣaṇa-āśrama Pañcavaṭī (Rāma's abode) KISKINDHĀ Pampā (Lake) LANKĀ
VINDHYA DAŚĀRNA
SAURĀSTRA Narmadā VIDARBHA ANDHRA KALINGA UTKALA PŪRVA-SĀGARA
PAŚCIMA-SĀGARA Pañcavaṭī (Rāma's abode) Sutīkṣaṇa-āśrama Agastya-āśrama
DANDAKA RṢIKA Kṛṣṇavenī
Pampā (Lake) Ṛṣyamūka (Hill) KISKINDHĀ Prasravaṇa (Hill)
MAHENDRA KERALA COLA

LEGEND

States/Realms/Peoples	**BHĀRATA**
Regions	JANASTHĀNA
Mountains or, where so specified, forest or desert	VINDHYA
Individual peaks	△ Kailāsa
Seas	*PŪRVA-SĀGARA*
Rivers	Gaṅgā
Capitals, other cities and towns	⊚ Ayodhyā, ∘ Hastināpura
Āśramas (hermitages) along Rāma's route	⊔

Relatively definite portion of Rāma's route
Probable route of Rāma between Śarbhanga-āśrama and Lanka according to modern reinterpretation of the Epic
Route of Rāma between Śarbhanga-āśrama and Lanka according to traditional interpretation of the Epic

SUVARNADVĪPA (Malay Peninsula)   YAVADVĪPA (in Java, Sumatra, and/or Borneo)

Continuation southward of map (b)
KERALA MAHENDRA Tāmraparṇī Kapāta LANKĀ Lanka

BRAHMANIC AND BUDDHIST CONCEPTIONS OF "CATUR-DVĪPA VASUMATĪ" (THE FOUR-CONTINENT EARTH)

North

LOKĀLOKA or CAKKAVĀLA
SAMUDRA or MAHĀSAMUDDA
UTTARA-KURU
KETUMĀLA or APARA-GOYĀNA   MERU or SINERU   BHADRĀŚVA or PUBBA-VIDEHA
West   East
BHĀRATA or JAMBŪDĪPA
South

LEGEND
Continents   Mountains   Seas   Rim of the world

SCALE
0   100   200 Miles
0   100   200   300 Kms

(b)

Appendix

All references are to the critical edition published at Baroda using its system of notation for references to text.

Bālakāṇḍa

Table 1- Generic Terms

Ocean/Sea- 1.1.15, 16, 57; 1.3.19, 24, 25; 1.5.13; 1.14.10; 1.16.14, 15; 1.29.15; 1.54.9; 1.64.7.

River- 1.1.26; 1.2.35; 1.10.14; 1.16.14.

Table 2- Named Rivers

Gaṅgā-1.1.25; 1.3.8; 1.22.23,51; 1.30.14; 1.34.6, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20; 1.35.4; 1.36.7, 12, 14, 16, 17, 31; 1.40.19, 20, 25; 1.41.6, 18, 22, 23, 24; 1.42.6; 1.43.1, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13, 19, 20; 1.44.2, 8.

Jāhanvī - 1.3.2; 1.23.9; 1.30.14; 1.34.9.

Haimavatī - 1.41.22; 1.42.4.

Tamasā- 1.2.3, 4, 5.

Sarayū- 1.5.5; 1.11.15; 1.13.1; 1.21.9,19; 1.23.8.

Śoṇā- 1.30.18; 1.34.1,4-3.

Sumāgadhī- 1.31.7.

Māgādhī- 1.31.8.

Kauśikī- 1.33.11; 1.62.14.

Ikṣumatī- 1.69.2-3.

Table 3- Named Lakes

Lake Pampā- 1.1.47; 1.3.13,14.

Lake Bindu- 1.42.6.

Lake Puṣkara- 1.61.1-2.

Lake Mānasa- 1.23.7.

Ayodhyākāṇḍa

Table 4-Generic Terms

Ocean/Sea – 2.5.16; 2.6.27, 28; 2.12.6; 2.15.14; 2.16.6, 7; 2.18.24; 2.20.23; 2.31.6,31(2); 2.38.11; 2.47.28; 2.56.15; 2.71.13; 2.74.4.

River- 2.12.6; 2.13.5; 2.17.28; 2.25.11; 2.31.31, 37; 2.32.5; 2.56.15; 2.85.12, 28, 68-72.

Lake/Pond/Pool- 2.5.13, 2.13.4-7; 2.24.14; 2.31.37; 2.42.8.

Waterfall- 2.42.12.

Table 5-Named Rivers

Gaṅgā- 2.13.4-7; 2.44.2-3; 2.46.5, 61, 68, 70, 74,78; 2.48.2-3, 6, 8; 2.62.10; 2.77.19,23; 2.78.1,5,6,8; 2.79.4; 2.83.1, 7, 21; 2.105.21.

Jāhnavī- 2.46.3.

Bhāgīrathī- 2.48.2-3.

Tamasā- 2.40.30; 2.41.1, 12, 14, 15, 27.

Sarayū- 2.43.12-13, 14; 2.57.14; 2.70.22; 2.89.15.

Yamunā- 2.13.4-7; 2.48.2-3, 6, 8; 2.49.11,14; 2.65.4; 2.105.21.

Mandākinī- 2.86.11; 2.87.8; 2.89.1, 3-4, 6, 9, 12-14; 2.93.8; 2.95.23-24,25-26; 2.96.2; 2.98.2; 2.105.3.

Vedaśrutī- 2.43.8.

Gomatī- 2.43.9; 2.65.10-11.

Syandikā- 2.43.10.

Kālindī- 2.49.3, 8.

Mālyavatī- 2.50.22.

Śaradaṇḍā- 2.62.11.

Vipāśā- 2.62.13.

Śālmalī- 2.62.13.

Śatadrū- 2.65.1.

Śilāvahā- 2.65.2-3.

Kuliṅgā- 2.65.4.

Uttānakā- 2.65.10-11.

Kuṭikā- 2.65.10-11.

Kapīvatī- 2.65.10-11.

Sthānumatī- 2.65.10.11.

Araṇyakāṇḍa

Table 6-Generic Terms

Ocean/Sea-3.15cd-16ab; 3.20.11; 3.21.2; 3.23.23; 3.24.11; 3.30.11; 3.31.6 ; 3.33. 6-7, 18, 26cd-27a b, 36; 3.36.16, 36, 17; 3. 45.25, 29, 37, 40; 3 .46.10; 3. 47. 3; 3. 52.8; 3. 53.4-5, 19; 3.54.11; 3.60.42-3; 3.61.13; 3.63.12, 22; 3.70.21; 3.71.4.

River- 3.6.2; 3.10.2-4, 15 , 42-3; 3.24.11; 3.33.6-7, 36; 3.42.8; 3.44.20; 3.46.9; 3.58.9, 11, 34; 3.59.15,18-19; 3.60.9, 10, 21; 3.63.2 2; 3 .68.20.

Lake/ Pond/ Pool- 3.1.6-7; 3.10.5-6, 16, 38; 3.14.11; 3.30.15; 3.33.12; 3.44.15; 3. 50.33; 3. 58.5, 9; 3.59.14; 3.61.13,3.69.24, 31.

Table 7- Named Rivers

Pampā River- 3.5.16.

Mandākinī- 3.5.16.

Godāvarī- 3.12.18; 3.14.12, 22; 3.15.2-3, 37; 3.16.1; 3.43.33; 3.44.7; 3.47.31;3 . 60. 1, 2,5,7,14,35.

Sarayū- 3.15.27, 28.

Gaṅgā- 3.50.31; 3.54.7.

Vaitaraṇī- 3.51.18.

Table 8- Named Lakes/Ponds/Pools

Lake Pampā- 3.68.12, 16; 3.69.5, 7, 9-10,11-12,13,14-15, 21, 24, 27;

3.70.1, 3, 4, 13; 3.71.6, 10, 12-13,14,15-17,18-19,20,21, 23, 26.

Pañcāpsaras- 3.10.11.

Pond of Mataṅga- 3.71.12-13.

Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa

Table 9- Generic Terms

Ocean/Sea-4.3.13; 4.10.22, 29; 4.11.4,8(2), 9, 10, 14; 4.13.5; 4.14.21;

4.16.22; 4.17.42; 4.20.9; 4.23.9; 4.25.30; 4.26.13; 4.27.3, 17, 22;

4.36.2-9, 18, 36; 4.3 8.12; 4.44.12, 14; 4.52.12(2), 14(2), 27;

4.57.20,4.57.22, 23, 31; 4.58.14; 4.59.6; 4.63.2, 4, 8, 9, 16, 20;

4.65.5; 4.66.9,10(2), 14, 15, 19, 22, 29.

River- 4.3.6; 4.8.29; 4.11.8; 4.13.5; 4.15.7; 4.24.42; 4.25.29; 4.27.22,

43; 4.29.11, 28; 4.31.14; 4.36.18, 26; 4.38.12; 4.39.18; 4.45.11;

4.46.2; 4.47.3-4, 7, 13; 4.48.2-3,4.59.6,4.66.9.

Lake/ Pond /Pool- 4.13.7, 10, 4.15.4; 4.18.47, 4.29.11, 29; 4.31.14, 4.37.17; 4.46.2; 4.47.3-4; 4.49.23 ; 4.59.6; 4.66.9.

Waterfall- 4.1.48; 4.11.13; 4.13.5; 4.27.25.

Table 10-Named Rivers

Pampā- 4.3.6.

Sarayū- 4.27.36.

Table 11-Named Lakes

Lake Pampā- 4.1.3, 27, 28, 32, 35, 44, 47; 4.3.5; 4.4.4.

Lake Mānasa- 4.27.16.

Sundarakāṇḍa

Table 12-Generic Terms

Ocean/Sea- 5.1.9, 10, 27, 28, 46(2), 49, 51, 53, 60, 63, 65, 66, 67, 70, 75, 79, 89, 19, 99, 119-20, 129, 131-2, 134, 135, 157, 169, 170, 184, 188, 190; 5.2.1, 4, 5, 24, 39; 5.4.2, 3; 5.5.10, 12; 5.7.6; 5.10.24; 5.11.8,10 (2), 4 1, 50; 5.14. 12, 13; 5.17.4; 5.24.16; 5.25.11, 23; 5.28.34, 39; 5.32.37; 5. 33. 63, 71; 5.34.7, 12, 33; 5.35.5, 22 , 27 , 4 6,7; 5.36.3,5, 8; 5.37.16, 24, 25, 36; 5.50.12; 5.51.31; 5.53.9; 5.54.16-17; 5.56. 16, 21, 42, 44, 47; 5.58.9; 5.63.9.

River- 5.7.48; 5.11.4; 5.14.12; 5.32.18; 5.33.45, 74; 5.51.31; 5.60.5.

Lake/ Pond/ Pool- 5.1.61; 5.4.11;5.11.4; 5.12.32, 43; 5.13.20; 5.14.30; 5.17. 14; 5.57.12.

Table 13- Named Rivers

Gaṅgā- 5.8.26; 5.14.4; 5.41.12.

Mandākinī- 5.36.12-13.

Yuddhakāṇḍa

Table 14- Generic Terms

Ocean/sea- 6.2.17, 19(2), 21; 6.3.2,8,79; 6.4.35, 85, 83, 86; 6.9.11; 6.22.16; 6.103.7.

River- 6.3.19; 6.5.3.

Table 15-Named Rivers

Narmadā - 6 .27.

Gaṅgā - 6.28.

Uttarakāṇḍa

Table 15a-Generic Terms

Ocean/Sea- 7.3.24; 7.4.23; 7.6.45; 7.7.3,17,49; 7.8.1; 7.12.20, 21; 7.14.6; 7.32.7,19; 7.34.15.

River- 7.4.9; 7.7.36; 7.14.3, 25; 7.31.30, 7.32.10,18; 7.97.15.

Lake/pond/pool- 7.8.2; 7.26.3.

Table 16- Named Rivers

Gaṅgā- 7.4.24; 7.31.29,36; 7.45.28.

Jāhnavī- 7.46.15.

Narmadā- 7.5.27; 7.31.17,22,27,29,32-5,37; 7.32.1, 2,4,6,23,31.

Mandākinī- 7.11.35; 7.26.3.

Sarayū- 7.100.20,22,23.

Yamunā- 7.60.3.

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