

# Title: An examination of the Tilaka Commentary of Valmiki's Ramayana

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## Abstract

पाणावामलकं यथा । (VR, 1.3.6). This verse from Valmiki's Ramayana captures the intent of Valmiki in bringing about a story with the subtle yet mundane theme of human values, in a simple and effortless way. The story of Rama is meant to be accessible and understandable to all, as after all, what more can be important to human beings than human values? In this way, the story of Rama has stretched through space and time, evoking contexts ranging from a simple bedtime story to complex literary research and culture building. The theme, human values, hides its profundity in its mundanity, becoming something accessible and familiar that leads people onto a deeper Dharmic and spiritual path. It is the commentaries of Ramayana's goal to capture these depths, to act as a manual to navigate towards the subtlety hiding amongst the simplicity of the content. Foremost amongst these commentaries is Tilaka vyakhyana, a commentary created by authored by Ramavarma, the king of Sringerapur. Seemingly written in the latter half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Tilaka vyakhyana focuses on explaining Valmiki's Ramayana as it is, trying to give shape to its fathomless depths whilst admiring its sparkling surface. This paper examines selected shlokas from the Tilaka vyaakhyaana, attempting to understand the intricacies the commentator highlights. It will also critically view the commentator's approach, asking questions to solidify a clearer understanding of Valmiki's Ramayana. Finally, it will also examine the impact this commentary has on clarity and authenticity with regards to Valmiki's Ramayana.

## Introduction

Ramavarma, the author of Tilaka vyaakhyaana was the king of Sringerapur. By the author of this commentary using this name, it is widely believed that Ramavarma wrote this commentary on Valmiki's Ramayana in the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. He is also believed to have written a commentary on Adhyatma Ramayana as well. This commentary primarily deals with Sanskrit grammar and the epistemological philosophies of Sanatana Dharma, such as Nyaya or Vedanta.

There is some speculation that the actual author of Tilaka vyaakhyaana was Nagesha Bhatta, a scholar in Ramavarma court who wrote it in the honour of Ramavarma as well.

## Discussion

Tilaka vyakhyana, as mentioned previously, aims to establish the profundity of human values the Valmiki Ramayana contains. This is the first question the commentator poses and answers, in fact:

ननु रामायणास्य ऐहिकाषुमिश्रिकफलदात्वे मनाभावात्, किं तद्व्याख्यानेन इति चेत्, न, 'इदं

पवित्रं पापघ्नं' इत्यादि 'जनश्च शूद्रोऽपि महत्त्वमीयात्' इत्यन्तश्लोकैः ऐहिकार्थसाधकत्वस्य  
स्पष्टमात्रेणैव श्रूयमाणत्वात्,

'शृण्वन् रामायणं भक्त्या यः पादं पदमेव वा। स याति ब्रम्हणः स्थानं ब्रम्हणा पूज्यते सदा  
॥"

इति मूलरामायणवचनेन ब्रम्हलोकमवाप्तेश्च स्पष्टमुक्तत्वाच्च।

To the commentator, it is of paramount importance to establish and justify that Ramayana is a text that isn't just a story, but a shastra, a place of insight meant to be analyzed and observed. He takes this further, by showing how it is different from other poems (काव्यम्), due to its nature of being composed by a Rsi, and therefore, is as spiritually significant as other texts that are viewed as paths for happiness in the present and beyond.

This thought process serves as the underlying thread behind Tilaka vyakhyana. The commentator always thinks about giving meaning as is to shlokas whilst pointing out the possible depth of simple, yet subtly profound shlokas:

यथा मृतः तथा जीवन् यथासति तथासति।

यस्यैष बुद्धिलाभः स्यात् परितप्येत केन सः॥ (VR, 2.106.4)

This shloka is uttered by Bharata as praise for Rama's understanding of how the world works. While Bharata convinces Rama to come back to the kingdom, Rama stands firm, by explaining logically how fate has a hand to play in the events that have transpired and that it is important to stay in the Dharma of safeguarding Dasharatha's promise, regardless of the circumstances. Bharata says the above, appreciating Rama's understanding. "He who looks at life and death as well as fortune and misfortune equally, what can really affect him?", thus he opines. The commentator dives deeper into the meaning of सत् and असत्:

किञ्च सति ब्रम्हणि तन्निष्ठितस्य यथा न बन्धो मुक्तिश्च भवति, तथा  
लोकसङ्ग्रहार्थमसन्निष्टस्यापि न बन्धो मुक्तिश्च भवति।

Here, सत् and असत् are taken by the commentator to show that there is no difference between and self-realization and selflessly working for universal welfare. Both predicate the dissolution of bondages, and thereby freedom (मुक्तिः). This is a key concept that Rama expounds again and again, whether by showing how knowledge of impermanence means that

one should follow in the path of universal welfare, Dharma, (आत्मा सुखे नियोक्तव्यः<sup>1</sup>), or by that self-realization and Dharma are one and the same (प्रत्यगात्ममिमं धर्म्य<sup>2</sup>).

This concept is further shown in Upanishadic texts and proponents of Vedanta as well, with commentator interpreting the meaning of सत् and असत् in a manner like विद्या and अविद्या in the Ishopanishad:

विद्याम् च अविद्याम् च यस्तद्वेद उभयं सह।

अविद्यया मृत्युं तीर्त्वा विद्ययामृतमश्नुते॥ (Ishopanishad, 1.11)

This mantra shows that after doing auspicious deeds, like working for universal welfare, one crosses attachments, and by indulging in उपासना, one attains the Self.

It shows how these two aspects go hand in hand, and that working purely for universal welfare is no different than self-realization, with it perhaps, being the only path, that ज्ञान isn't simply exclusive. As Shankara puts it, तस्य कर्मणि कर्मप्रयोजने च निवृत्ते अपि लोकसङ्ग्रहार्थं यत्नपूर्वः यथा प्रवृत्तः। (Bhagavad Gita) This shows the continuity of this insight, serving as a stellar example of how the subtleties of Ramayana can lead to the concrete concepts found on later times.

What is especially interesting is that the commentator looks at this as sign of maturity and clarity. Spirituality is not exclusive from the mundanity of doing the right thing, and as selflessness increases, the gap between day-to-day actions and self-realization decreases, with working for universal welfare being no different from self-realization. This interpretation brings out the depth and profundity of Ramayana through its simple and universal theme.

The commentator further draws on the rich spiritual insights to further give their own interpretation of another context in Aranyakanda:

स्वागतं ते रघुश्रेष्ठ राम सत्यभृतां वर।

आश्रमोऽयं त्वयाक्रान्तस्सनाथ इव साम्प्रतम्॥ (VR, 3.7.8)

प्रतीक्षमाणस्त्वामेव नारोहेऽहं महायशः।

देवलोकमितो वीर देहं त्यक्त्वा महीतले।

चित्रकूटमुपादाय राज्यभ्रष्टोऽसि मे श्रुतः॥ (VR, 3.7.9)

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<sup>1</sup> प्रत्यगात्ममिमं धर्मं सत्यं पश्याम्यहं स्वयम्।

भारस्सत्पुरुषाचीर्णस्तदर्थमभिमन्यते॥ (VR, 2.109.19)

<sup>2</sup> वयसः पतमानस्य स्रोतसो वाऽनिवर्तिनः।

आत्मा सुखे नियोक्तव्यस्सुखभाजः प्रजाः स्मृताः॥ (VR, 2.105.31)

When Rama meets Sutikshna, the hermit welcomes him to his ashrama, with him feeling like there is a protector who has come to keep the ashrama safe and in control (सनाथ इव साम्प्रतम्).

The commentator finds these words to be quite interesting, and based on already provided context, interprets these shlokas to have a meaning that is aligned with the core tenets of Vedanta:

सनाथ इव सस्वामिक इव । अत्रायमाश्रमो ब्रह्मचर्याद्याश्रमव्यवहार्योऽयं देहस्त्वया  
जीवरूपेणाक्रान्तो ऽपि सांप्रतमद्य बहिश्चक्षुषा ऽनुभवन्सनाथ इव मायया सच्चिदानन्दस्यैवैवं  
शरीररूपेण प्रतिभासमानस्येदृशस्य त्वद्रूपस्य दर्शनेन चित्तशुद्ध्या पूर्वं जीवाभेदेनाहमिति  
प्रतीत्या गृहीतस्य तद्वैलक्ष्येनेदानीं ग्रहाद्भेदनिबन्धसनाथत्वव्यवहारः । इवेन  
जडानामप्यतिरिक्तत्वाभावः सूचित इति ध्वनिः ।

The commentator takes the word आश्रम to be the body as well. This body is already pervaded by the Self. If anything, all distinct manifestations have their basis in the Self! (यस्तु सर्वाणि भूतानि आत्मनि एव<sup>3</sup>). To one who has seen Rama, who is verily the Self, having the characteristics of existence, gnosis, and bliss showing as a separate entity, it feels like there is a separate lord presiding over the one who has realized the Self through internal purification (चित्तशुद्ध्या). Here, the commentator beautifully synthesizes the beauty of worshipping a separate entity and the Upanishadic insight of a common underlying existence for all distinct manifestations. There is a completeness that comes with a recognition of the Ultimate Truth, prompting one to feel that there is a change due to its discovery. This was never the case, however, as it was true even before recognition. This shows a beautiful liminal space between an Absolute Truth and the completeness emergent from recognition of it. The Upanishads take note of this:

तत्सृष्ट्वा । तदेवानुप्राविशत् । (Taittiriyaopaniṣad, 2.6)

This mantra talks about how Brahman created the world and entered it. Here, entering isn't literal, as that would mean that there is an independent existence afforded to material objects other than existence itself, but rather, the experience of it simply being there. Just like how when water in the ocean is observed as waves, the always existing (in this context) unchanging nature of water when recognized as the basis of existence for the wave leads to observations like "Waves were created by the ocean" or "The water in the ocean emerged as waves", it is the recognition of existence that is observed as entering or creating distinct objects (). The commentator picks up this insight and beautifully illustrates this observation

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<sup>3</sup> यस्तु सर्वाणि भूतानि आत्मन्येवानुपश्यति ।

सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं ततो न विजुगुप्सते ॥ (Ishopanishad, 1.6)

through the words सनाथ इव, showing the potential significance for certain shlokas in Valmiki's Ramayana.

In Kishkindhakanda, the commentator brings out the depth of the intended meaning of a simple, yet profound shloka using a similar thought process:

न कालः कालमत्येति न कालः परिहीयते।

स्वभावं च समासाद्य न कश्चिदतिवर्तते॥ (VR, 4.25.6)

न कालस्यास्ति बन्धुत्वं न हेतुर्न पराक्रमः।

न मित्रजातिसम्बन्धः कारणं नात्मनो वशः॥ (VR, 4.25.7)

As Rama consoles Tara after Vali's death, he utters the above shlokas. Reading it as it is, the meaning goes as follows "Time cannot transcend time. There is no change to time. Nothing can cross attaining its self-nature. Time is related to anything. There is no cause of Time or something that supersedes it. Time isn't under the control of friends, family, or even oneself." This meaning, whilst simple, possesses depth meriting a deep dive into its meaning:

कालात्मा भगवानेव सर्वकर्मप्रवर्तक इत्याह न काल इति । कालो भगवानीश्वरः कालं स्वकृतां कालव्यवस्थां जन्ममरणादिरूपां नात्येति नातिक्रामति, स भगवान्कालो न परिहीयते । अनुक्षणं जगद्धानिकरस्य हानिकारणाभावात् । स्वभावमुक्तलक्षणं समासाद्य किञ्चिदत्युत्कृष्टमपि जीवजातं नातिवर्तते । उत्पत्तियोग्यमुत्पद्यते नश्वरं नश्यत्येवेत्यर्थः ।

स च भगवान् न पक्षपातस्वभाव इत्याह न कालस्येति । न कालस्य बन्धुत्वमस्ति । प्राप्तकालं वस्तु सर्वथा संहरत्येव । न तु पक्षपातेन किमपि त्यजतीत्यर्थः । न हेतुः स्वसृज्ये स्वनाशये वा स्वकृतव्यवस्थातिरिक्तकारणानिरपेक्ष इत्यर्थः । यद्वा प्राप्तकालसंहारनिवर्तने न कश्चिदपि हेतुर्मन्त्रतन्त्रौषधादिः प्रभवतीत्यर्थः । तस्यैव प्रपञ्चः न पराक्रमः । महापराक्रमवतामपि कालं प्राप्ते संहारो भवत्येव । न मित्रजातिसंबन्धो न बहुमित्रता न बहुजातिता प्राप्तकालसंहारनिवर्तने हेतुः । सो ऽपि भगवानात्मनः प्रत्यग्वर्गस्य जीवजातस्य न वशस्तदिच्छाधीनो न, किंतु परमस्वतन्त्र एव । तेन च भगवता कालेन क्रियमाणो नियत्यधीनः स्वस्वकर्मपरिणाम एव सर्वसुखदुःखादिलाभ इत्येव साधु पश्यता सुमतिना विवेकवता द्रष्टव्यो जातव्यः, नतु विषादहर्षौ कर्तव्यौ नापि स्वसामर्थ्यनिन्देति भावः । एवं धर्मादयो ऽपि, चादधर्मादयो ऽपि, कालक्रमेणैव समाहिताः संपादिता भवन्ति।

The commentator analyses and integrates each detail into the overall intent of the shlokas. Here, time is taken to be Isvara, and Isvara doesn't cross the own bounds of time that he is. Similarly, there can't be any destruction of time as it serves as the reason for the destruction of the world itself to begin with (अनुक्षणं जगद्धानिकरस्य हानिकारणाभावात् ।). There are no beings that can approach and transcend the core nature of time, as their creation and destruction is determined by time itself (उत्पत्तियोग्यमुत्पद्यते नश्वरं नश्यत्येवेत्यर्थः).

Time is unbiased, simply being unable to play favourites. There is no cause for time, that is, there is no entity that is responsible for the creation and destruction of time. It can also be taken that there is no way to prevent the destruction caused by time. Strength doesn't make a difference in the face of time, and friends don't matter either. Its nature being Isvara, it isn't under the control of the Jiva either. The commentator beautifully and logically articulates the circumstances surrounding time in these shlokas.

This approach of understanding time is like the approach used in Nyaya to understand causality. Causes are classified as two types: General (साधारण) and specific (असाधारण) causes. Here, general causes are defined as those causes which lead to the existence of an effect (कार्यत्वावच्छिन्नकार्यतानिरूपितकारणताशालित्वं). For example, time and space are general causes, as it leads to the existence of an effect. Specific causes are defined as those causes which lead to a specific characteristic found in the effect aside from the existence of the effect (कार्यत्वातिरिक्तधर्मावच्छिन्नकार्यतानिरूपितकारणताशालित्वं). There normally is an intermediate state (व्यापार) in the context of specific causes, as these are necessary to show a new characteristic aside from the existence of the effect.

The commentator illustrates how time has no specific or general cause. As there is no entity that is capable of creating a specific characteristic found in time (स्वभावं च समासाद्य न कश्चिदतिवर्तते।), there is no specific cause for time. There is no general cause either, as no entity exists which can create the existence of Time, i.e., its creation and destruction (स्वसृज्ये स्वनाशये वा स्वकृतव्यवस्थातिरिक्तकारणानिरपेक्षः). The commentator seems to use a similar logical framework to this to further expound and bring out the intricacies of time explored by the Ramayana.

Another example where the commentator brings out an intricacy which provides an interesting framework for the shloka can be found in Sundarakanda:

मनोरथस्स्यादिति चिन्तयामि तथापि बुद्ध्या च वितर्कयामि।

किं कारणं तस्य हि नास्ति रूपं सुव्यक्तरूपश्च वदत्ययं माम् ॥ (VR, 5.32.13)

When Sita hears the narration of Rama's story from Hanuman, who is hidden away amongst the trees, it comes as a sudden and pleasant surprise for her. After all, she is always in

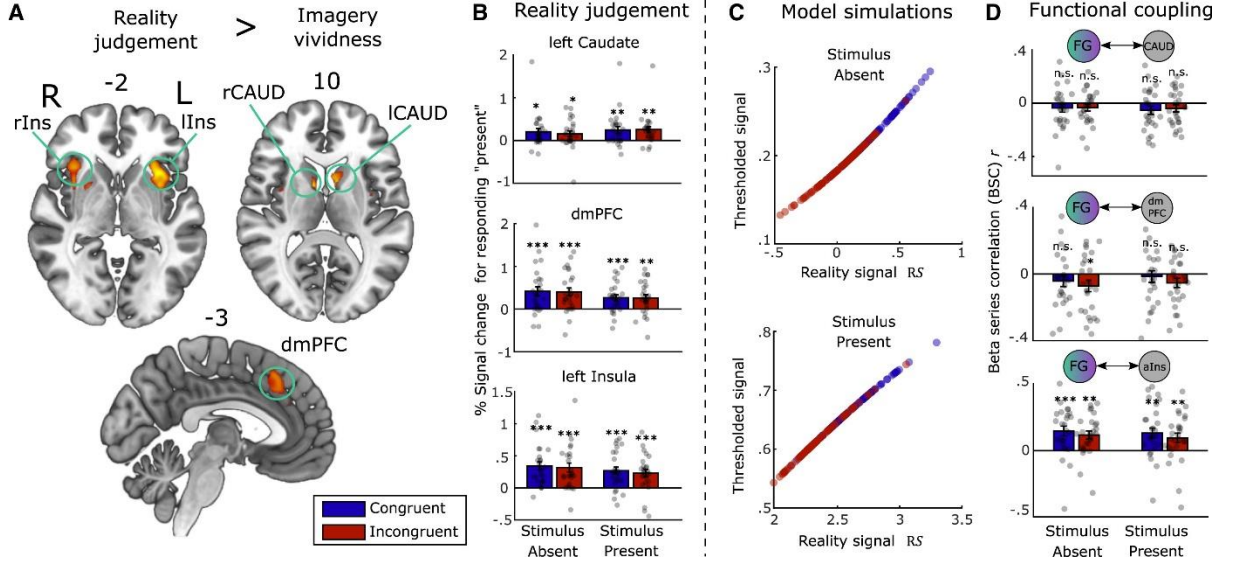
constant thought of Rama (अहम् हि तस्याद्य मनोभवेन संपीडिता तद्गतसर्वभावाः), and to hear an external narration coinciding with her thoughts is a reason to rejoice. Due to this very exact reason, however, she begins to doubt the reality of her observation, as she has been constantly thinking about Rama and seeing visions of Rama (तस्यानुरूपां च कथां तमर्थमेवं प्रपश्यामि तथा शृणोमि<sup>1</sup>). So, she begins to analyze the reality of her observation, by looking at with her intelligence (बुद्ध्या) and concludes that it must be real, as she seems to be aware of an actual stimulus (सुव्यक्तरूपश्च वदत्ययं) with no cause, leaving her confused. The commentator takes note of this interesting observation and offers his insight:

अथ मनोरथमात्रमेतदिति संभाव्य तदपि नेति निश्चिनोति मनोरथ इति । मनोराज्यमित्यर्थः । स नेत्याह तथापीति । तथैवेत्यर्थः । यथा मनोरथोन्नीतोऽर्थस्तं तथैव बुद्ध्यापि निश्चयात्मकान्तःकरणवृत्त्यापि विषयीकृतं तर्कयामि । मनोराज्यं सङ्कल्पविकल्पपरं चञ्चलवृत्तिरूपम्, बुद्धिस्तु निश्चयात्मिका स्थिरा चेति विरुद्धमित्यर्थः । ननु तर्हि मनोराज्यत्वमेवास्त्वितरदेवारोपितं तत्राह किं कारणमिति । मनोराज्यत्वाभाव इति शेषः । उत्तरं तस्य हि मनोराज्यभूतार्थस्य नास्ति रूपमनुभवार्हं रूपं नास्तीति हि प्रसिद्धम् । प्रकृते तु दृश्यं रूपमस्तीत्याह सुव्यक्तेति । यो मां वदति सुव्यक्तरूपो दृश्यते सुव्यक्तरूपं च वदति यत इत्यर्थः । मनोराज्यार्थो दृष्टनष्टो बाह्येन्द्रियजस्थिरानुभवानर्हः । अतो वास्तव एवायमिति भावः ।

The commentator notes not what is seen as a desire here (मनोरथ) is essentially a perception created solely by the mind with no external basis. If there is only such a perception, its very nature would be ephemeral, as it comes under the function of the मनः, the aspect of the mind which spews thoughts based on incoming perceptual data, whether internal or external. Here, however, there is a determined nature to this perception, i.e., Rama's story narrated by Hanuman, making it fall under the jurisdiction of the deciding faculty. It may be argued that this is a simply a superimposition of an illusory made to feel real, that has taken shape due to Sita's desire, but that isn't the case here, as there is a clear registering of seeing the source of the speech, the Vanara. This further roots into it not being a figment of the imagination, but a determined processing of external stimuli.

This is quite interesting, as it matches with current neurological research into how the brain differentiates real images from imaginary ones. Studies indicate that the brain has a certain reality threshold, where observed stimuli, both real and imaginary are processed by the same set of neurons. Based on certain actions done by certain neurons, the brain then infers whether the observed object is real or not. When examining the regulation of stimuli by neurons, the frontal cortex plays a heavy role in the regulation of determining an image to be based on real, external stimuli or a figment of the imagination (Dijkstra et al., 2024). The

frontal cortex's role in brain architecture and delegation is very much similar to the determining faculty mentioned in Sanatana Dharma (बुद्धि):



This shows the intricacies that can emerge in a simple story. After all, this discussion stemming from a particular observation, whether from a philosophical or scientific perspective, doesn't come from an important treatise or from a scientific discussion, but from a story about mundane occurrences or from everyday experiences. This highlights how philosophy or science cannot exist without the basis of normal, mundane experiences.

The commentator notes certain epistemological approaches that can be helpful in giving a sound, rigorous, proof of the analyses in Valmiki's Ramayana. Take, for example, the following shloka:

भूतानांस्थावाराणां च जङ्गमानां च दर्शनम् ।

यथास्ति न तथाधर्मस्तेननास्तीतिमेमतिः ॥ (VR, 6.83.15)

This shloka is uttered by Lakshmana to Rama, showing his frustration that Rama suffers, regardless of conviction and practice of being in Dharma. He then tries to provide a logical explanation as to the pointlessness of following Dharma, as it there is no causative link between the practice of Dharma and the happiness of animate and inanimate beings. The commentator expands upon this line of reasoning and refutes it:

एवं धर्मपदार्थमङ्गीकृत्य तस्यार्थत्वं नास्तीतिनुभवात्प्रदर्शयदानीं धर्मपदार्थ एव नास्ति, फलानुमेयता हि तस्योक्ता, फलं च सुखं। प्रकृते च सुखान्वयव्यतिरेकयोर्धर्मसभावेन न तेन तदनुमानमित्याह- भूतानामिति। स्थावराणां जङ्गमानां च पश्वादिरूपाणां भूतानां दर्शनं

सुखापरोक्षदर्शनं यथास्ति तथा धर्मो नास्ति। असामर्थ्यादनधिकाराच्च। तस्माद्धर्मः  
सुखसाधनत्वव्याप्तो नेति मे मतिः। जन्मान्तरादिकं नास्त्येवेति बौद्धमतेनेयमुक्तिः। नहि तं  
विना जायमानस्यापि तत्करणकत्वमिति भावः। यत्- यथा स्थावरादीनां दर्शनत्सता तथा  
धर्मस्य दर्शनाभावाद्धर्मो नास्तीति व्याचक्षते तन्न, योग्यानुपलम्भस्यैवाभावसाधकत्वात्,  
धर्मस्य च पिशाचादिवदयोग्यत्वात्।

The commentator talks about how this approach can be viewed as a method to refute Dharma's substantiveness (पदार्थत्वं). If Dharma is to be inferred from its fruit, which is happiness, in this context, there is no affirmative or negative concomitance of dharma and happiness, as can be observed in the beings (). Furthermore, Dharma cannot be perceived directly like the animate and inanimate beings or happiness and sadness, due to its nature and our limitations. This further strengthens the argument that as Dharma cannot be perceived directly, and there is no causative link to infer it indirectly, Dharma does not exist. Here, the commentator refutes the above argument by providing the fact the legitimate non-existence of something can only be proved by non-perception when the object itself qualifies to be perceivable. In a sense, just cause direct perception doesn't exist for dharma does not mean that it is illogical, as its absence cannot be explained by direct perception either. In this way, the commentator dissects and analyses Rama and Lakshmana's conversation and provides an epistemological framework to logically grasp the intuitive meaning of the shloka.

Finally, the commentator provides clarity in the Ramayana by discussing and identifying later additions that are not written by Valmiki. Perhaps the strongest example of this is as follows. In the Balakanda, the commentator takes note of the following shloka:

तदुपगतसमाससन्धियोगं

सममधुरोपनतार्थवाक्यबद्धम् ।

रघुवरचरितं मुनिप्रणीतं

दशशिरसश्च वधं निशामयध्वम् ॥ (VR, 1.2.43)

He writes,

दशशिरसश्च वधमित्यनेन वधान्तमिदं श्रोतव्यमिति सूचितम्, तेनैव सूचितफललाभात् ।  
उत्तरकाण्डं त्वस्य खिलम्, भारतस्य हरिवंशवत् । अत एवाग्रिमसर्गे  
वनसञ्चरणपर्यन्तवृत्तान्वेषणमेव समाधिना ऋषिर्वक्ष्यतीति प्राञ्चः ।

The indication of this shloka is that one should listen to the end, which is the destruction of Ravana. This further illustrates that Uttarakanda is a remainder text (खिलम). He elaborates on this concept further by giving an example, भारतस्य हरिवंशवत्. Uttarakanda is of the same status of authenticity with respect to Valmiki's Ramayana as Harivamsha is to Mahabharata. He concludes by pointing out that in Valmiki's meditation, there is only mention up to the death of Ravana, further cementing this statement.

This mention is significant, as it shows clear evidence of traditionalists rejecting Valmiki's authorship of Uttarakanda before Western Indologists and researchers. It is well known that most Western researchers largely agree that Uttara Ramayana is a separate addition to the main text. This thought can be traced back to Gaspere Gorresio, who translated Valmiki's Ramayana into Italian in the 1800s. His main reasons stem from a mismatch in the events and cosmogenic stories found in Uttara Ramayana compared to the original text. There are links that posit that this idea came from traditionalism to his writings. Dr. R Rangan posits that a significant reason for such a thought process could stem from Gorresio primarily dealing with the Manohara commentary of Lokanatha Chakravartin, which has no Uttara Ramayana, and the Tilaka commentary, which views the Uttara Ramayana in the above manner (Ramakrishnan, 2023, p316). These show the possible contributions the commentator of Tilaka had in positively influencing research and clarity with regards to Valmiki's Ramayana, showing that tradition endeavours for logical discussion rather than blind faith.

## Conclusion

Valmiki's Ramayana is a seminal text in Sanatana Dharma, being the first ever epic written in its ever-expanding tapestry. It holds universal values as its theme, something that is mundane yet profound, encapsulating it in a story showing the lives of human beings. This theme itself is both mundane and profound, with the commentator of Tilaka vyaakhyaana, Ramavarma, capturing the intricacies and providing unique viewpoints that show that universal values can serve as the basis for spiritual and epistemological discussions, or perhaps that human values are the basis for such lofty ideas. He paints the simplicity of Ramayana along with these ideas, showing readers, for the most part, that it is possible for something to be profound as it is.

## References

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¹ रामेति रामेति सदैव बुद्ध्या विचिन्त्य वाचा ब्रुवती तमेव।  
तस्यानुरूपां च कथां तदर्थमेवं प्रपश्यामि तथा शृणोमि॥ (VR, 5.32.11)