

JOURNAL
OF THE
ORIENTAL INSTITUTE

M. S. UNIVERSITY OF BARODA, BARODA

Edited by
B. J. Sanskrita
Director, Oriental Institute



Oriental Institute
BARODA

Vol. XI]

December 1961

[No. 2

A FURTHER NOTE ON KRAUNCA-VADHA IN DHVANYĀLOKA
AND KĀVYAMIMĀMSĀ

By

CHARLOTTE VAUDEVILLE, Paris

G. H. Bhatt, in his paper "Kraunçavadha in Dhvanyāloka and Kāvya-mīmāṃsā",¹ has noted that the verse *mā niṣāda* in the "Kraunca-vadha" episode of the Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa (1,2,14 in Baroda edition) appears almost in the same form not only in the 86 mss. collated for the Bālakāṇḍa of this edition, but also in several other works in Sanskrit Literature. The meaning of the verse, in the Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa, is clear: it is the male Kraunca bird which has been killed by the Niṣāda, for which "murder" the Niṣāda incurs Vālmiki's malediction; this interpretation is further corroborated by the preceding stanzas, which clearly refer to the killing of the male Kraunca (cf. *pumāṃsam* 1, 2, 10).

G. H. Bhatt, after P. V. Kane², has further noted that most manuscripts of the *Dhvanyāloka* of Ānandavardhana, and also the *Locana* Commentary on the latter work by Abhinavagupta, as well as the *Kāvya-mīmāṃsā* of Rājaśekhara, which all mention this episode, make out that it was the female bird which was killed by the Niṣāda and the male which wept on her and whose lament moved the compassion of the sage Vālmiki.

Ānandavardhana, in Kārikā 1, 5 of Dhvanyāloka, refers to the Vālmikian stanza without any alteration and explains it in his own *Vṛtti*:

"tathā cādhavervālmiker nihatasahacarivirahakātarakraunçākrandajanitaḥ³
śloka eva śokatayā pariṇataḥ"

This passage seems to imply that, according to the author of the Dhvanyāloka, the female bird, and not the male, was killed.

Again Rājaśekhara, in *Kāvya-mīmāṃsā* (ed. G.O.S. I, p. 7), clearly says that Vālmiki was moved by compassion at the sight of the male Kraunca bird weeping over its mate. G. H. Bhatt says that Rājaśekhara's view must be based on the passage of Ānandavardhana's *Vṛtti*, quoted above. So it appears that Ānandavardhana and Rājaśekhara both contradict the Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa.

¹ Published in J.O.I. IX, 1959, p. 148ff.

² *History of Sanskrit Poetics*, p. 349, note I. P. V. Kane supposes that the *Dhvanyāloka* and the *Locana* have followed a different reading of the Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa "which made the female die by the arrow". But this reading is not found anywhere.

³ Some manuscripts give the reading *sannihita*.

Abhinavagupta, in his *Locana* Commentary on the Dhvanyāloka, has tried to solve the difficulty, i.e. to reconcile the view expressed by Ānandavardhana with the text of the Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa. So he breaks the long compound *nihata...janitaḥ* in two parts, the one ending with *kraunca*, the other beginning with *ākrandita*, and expressing the *bhāva* and *vibhāva* of sage Vālmiki, respectively.¹ According to Abhinavagupta, the sorrow of sage Vālmiki is caused by the male Kraunca bird when he was killed (*nihata*) and when he became nervous due to the separation from his female companion; this sorrow is further intensified by the lamentations of the female Kraunca bird, as mentioned in the Rāmāyaṇa.

So we are made to understand, according to this interpretation, that it is the same character that does the dying and the mourning! Such a construction of the compound *nihata...janitaḥ* is hardly acceptable, either from the point of view of grammar or vraisemblance, as noted by P. V. Kane. However, this interpretation had been accepted by Prof. Kuppuswami Śāstrī (Cf. G. H. Bhatt, *op. cit.* p. 150, note 12).

Another passage in the *Locana* Commentary, however, suggests that it was the female bird that was killed by the Niṣāda:

*kraunçasya dvandvaviyogena saharāhananodbhūtena sāhacaryadhvānsan-
enotthito yaḥ śokaḥ sthāyibhāvaḥ...²*

On this passage, G. H. Bhatt remarks: "This evidently goes against the later statement in the *Locana* and all other authorities including the Rāmāyaṇa; but self-contradiction is not at all possible in the case of a learned author like Abhinavagupta". The same author therefore proposes to correct the reading *sahacari* into *sahacāri* (as already suggested by Prof. Kuppuswami Śāstrī³) though he recognizes that "there is hardly any variant for the word *sahacari*" and that "all the mss of the *Locana* have the same reading"; however the author mentions the opposed view held by the editor of the Banāras edition of the Dhvanyāloka, Pandit Pattabhirama Śāstrī.⁴

It is not exact to say that the reading *sahacari*, given by practically all manuscripts of the *Locana*⁵, "goes against all authorities including the Rāmāyaṇa". Actually, it does contradict the Rāmāyaṇa, but it agrees with the interpretations that Ānandavardhana and Rājaśekhara have given of the Rāmāyaṇa episode. Even if we admitted, with G. H. Bhatt, that both Ānanda-

¹ *nihatasahacariti vibhāva uktah|ākranditāśabdenānubhāvaḥ|* (Banaras ed., p. 88).

² Banaras ed. of the Dhvanyāloka, p. 85.

³ In his commentary *Upalocana* on the *Locana* of Abhinavagupta, Madras ed., pp. 163-164.

⁴ In footnote 1, p. 88 of his edition of the *Dhvanyāloka* ("Banaras ed.").

⁵ There is one variant *sahacari* of ms. *Gha*, given in a footnote of the Madras edition p. 158, but no *sahacāri*.

vardhana and Abhinavagupta "have been loyal to the Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa", this would not solve the problem, as we would still have to explain why and how Rājaśekhara alone had strayed both from the authority of the Rāmāyaṇa and the tradition of Kashmiri pandits. Prof. Kuppaswami's correction to the text of the Kāvya-mīmāṃsā, which G. H. Bhatt is inclined to accept, is purely arbitrary (just as much as his correction to the *Locana* text, mentioned above), and not warranted by manuscript evidence.¹ There is hardly any doubt, to an impartial inquirer, that both Ānandavardhana and Rājaśekhara have contradicted the Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa; Abhinavagupta's hesitation and even his "tour de force" of interpretation, (in breaking the compound *nihata...janitah*) shows that he was conscious of the contradiction between Ānandavardhana, followed by Rājaśekhara on one side, and the Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa on the other and he made an attempt at reconciling the conflicting statements.

If such is the fact, we must naturally ask: why did Ānandavardhana choose to contradict the Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa, by deliberately reversing the situation described therein?

Pandit Pattabhirama Śāstrī has suggested an explanation: "The author of the Dhvanyāloka, being the founder of the Dhvani school, desires to suggest in the passages the main characters of the Rāmāyaṇa, by means of Dhvani". In other words, if we must take the Krauñci to be killed and the Krauñca to be lamenting his loss, it is because, in fact, in the Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa, *it is Rāma who bewails the loss of Sītā*, especially in the famous scene of Lake Pampā (R. IV, 1).

G. H. Bhatt dismisses this explanation as unsatisfactory: "That Ānandavardhana should choose to go against Vālmiki's Rāmāyaṇa, only for satisfying his own predilection for Dhvani, is rather not plausible."

Pandit Pattabhirama's explanation seems to point in the right direction. However we must concede that Ānandavardhana was not likely to contradict Vālmiki, just to impose his own views on Dhvani. But, as we find that, in fact, he did contradict the text of the Rāmāyaṇa, we must infer that he had a positive reason to do so. To interpret the strange liberty that the Kashmirian scholar has taken with the Rāmāyaṇa text, we must infer that he was convinced of the symbolic character of the Krauñca-vadha episode, while sensing a contradiction: the *upamāna*, apparently, did not fit the *upameya*. The views expressed in the Dhvanyāloka and the Kāvya-mīmāṃsā, therefore, bring out in full relief a textual problem of the Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa: (1) Is there an objective relationship between the Krauñca-vadha episode of the Bālakāṇḍa and the

¹ See foot-note 5 on p. 123.

Rāma-legend?; (2) if so, how is it that the terms of the comparison do not correspond?

A careful analysis of the Krauñca-vadha episode in the Bālakāṇḍa of the Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa has convinced me of its symbolic character. It is clear that the Krauñci, who laments in pathetic tone—or "song"—(*karuṇām giram*) the loss of her mate, is the type of a bereaved wife (*bhāryā*); the whole episode does not point at explaining the birth of a particular metre, but it suggests, by a kind of apologue, that Vālmiki had taken his lyrical inspiration from the lament of a bereaved Krauñci bird, so that the "ślokas" of the Rāmāyaṇa seem to have been born from the "śoka" of a faithful wife¹....The Krauñci's sorrow evokes Sītā's sorrow when separated from Rāma, and her lament recalls Sītā's lament, when she was an exile in Laṅkā.

It has already been remarked that the Rāmāyaṇa, at least in its most ancient parts, never speaks of Rāma's love for Sītā,² while Sītā herself appears throughout the poem as the perfect type of the *pativrata*, the faithful wife whose noble and disinterested love reveals itself in suffering and trial, as described in the ancient parts of the Sundarakāṇḍa. The Krauñca-vadha episode, therefore, seems to refer to an early stage of development of the Rāmāyaṇa legend, in which the main heroine was Sītā, the noble *pativrata*, whose love and virtue triumphed over the wicked designs of the seducer, Rāvaṇa. It is noticeable that, in the 4th canto of the Bālakāṇḍa, which seems to compose, together with the Krauñca-vadha episode, a kind of "natural" (non-mythological) introduction to the Rāmāyaṇa legend, the latter is mentioned as *Sītācaritam mahat paulastyavadham iti*: "the great story of Sītā and of the destruction of Paulastya (Rāvaṇa)".

It is well-known that the lamentations of Rāma over the loss of Sītā, and especially the famous episode of lake Pampa (IV, 1) belong to a later stage of the development of the Rāmāyaṇa; this episode was much admired and imitated by later poets as a perfect example of *kāvya* style, so that subsequent generations of poets came to look upon Rāma as a great lover, a most romantic character, while Sītā's trials and sufferings were partially forgotten or granted little importance. This shift of emphasis is noticeable in the two résumés of the contents of the great Rāmāyaṇa, given in cantos 1 and 3 of the Bālakāṇḍa: in both, we find that the lamentations of Rāma over the loss of Sītā are mentioned:

I, 1, 43: rāghavaḥ śokasantapto vilāpākulendriyaḥ |

¹ Though incorporated in a late portion of the Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa, the *Krauñca-vadha* episode appears to be ancient, but it has also suffered from interpolations; a detailed study of the episode, its signification and its relation to the text of the Rāmāyaṇa will be published later, in a general study on "Popular Sources of Kāvya".

² Cf. W. Ruben, *Vālmiki and Kālidāsa*, J.O.R. VI, 1957, p. 233 ff.

I, 3, 14: vilāpam caiva pampāyām rāghavasya mahātmanaḥ ||

In both passages, the dialogue of Sītā with Hanumat in the Aśoka grove is mentioned, but not a word is said of her sorrows and trials: only the sorrow (*śoka*) and the lamentations (*vilāpa*) of Rāma are mentioned. Of Sītā's long and touching message to Rāma, nothing is said, but I, 3, 24 does not forget to mention Hanumat's "consolation to Rāma" (*rāghavāśvāsanam*). Evidently the whole story is now told from the point of view of the hero, Rāma; the pathetic Sītā of the Sundarakāṇḍa is no more than a secondary character.

If such was the view of the later rhapsodists who composed those two résumés, one cannot doubt that their view was shared by the theoreticians of Kāvya in the IXth and Xth centuries: the latter naturally considered Rāma at Lake Pampā as the immortal type of a Lover in the *vipralambha* state, or *viraha* mood. Compared to his ravings and passionate effusions, the more simple and pathetic words of the bereaved Sītā in the Sundarakāṇḍa pale into insignificance.

Sanskrit poets always respect the correspondence of gender and sexes in comparisons and metaphors: a Krauñca bird, therefore, can only suggest a hero, and a Krauñcī bird, a heroine. But, as we have shown, for the Kashmirian poeticians, it was Rāma who had been tormented by the "fires" of *viraha* and who had bewailed, in immortal strains, the loss of his beloved; so the Krauñca-vadha episode, as it is given in the Rāmāyaṇa, appeared irrelevant. *Śoka* and *vilāpa* being associated in their minds with Rāma, rather than with Sītā, they were naturally inclined to take liberties with the text, and attribute *śoka* et *vilāpa* to the male Krauñca bird. The symbolical meaning of the Krauñca-vadha episode and its bearing on the Rāmāyaṇa legend as a whole did not escape them. But, unable to account for what must have appeared to them as a discrepancy, they chose to read the text in their own way, regardless of its literal meaning.

From this analysis, it follows that we disagree with G. H. Bhatt on the interpretation of the Krauñca-vadha episode given in Dhvanyāloka and Kāvya-mīmāṃsā. We believe, on one hand, that textual evidence sufficiently proves that Ānandavardhana, followed by Rājaśekhara, has deliberately altered the meaning of the Rāmāyaṇa text; on the other hand, we believe that this alteration does not reflect merely a preoccupation to justify the theory of Dhvani: Ānandavardhana was aware of the symbolic character of the Krauñca-vadha episode, but he found that there was a flaw in the comparison, since it did not seem to fit the characters of the Rāma-legend, as he knew it, and most probably he doubted the accuracy of the Valmikian text. His error is instructive, as it brings out the contradiction between the Krauñca-vadha episode and the text of the vulgate Rāmāyaṇa, in its final stage; it also suggests the pre-existence of a "Sītā-Rāvaṇa-carita", where Sītā as the loving and faithful wife, unconsolable in separation from her lord, was the principal character.