

Valmeki, The Aadi Kavi: Not A Decoit

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Abstract

Valmeki the Adi Kavi, the first poet, being the composer of the Ramayana and Yogavashishtha put a special place in the ancient scriptures of India. This paper analyze whether the Adi Kavi Valmeki was a robber or not as portrayed in Puranas and the later Ramayanas and are these stoires are reliable or not. Some scholars believe that he was a robber in his early age and later became a sage after met with a group of sages who told him to quit sins and asked to chant a mantra. Most of these stories are found in the scriptures like Skand Purana and Later Ramayans which depicts the poet as a robber and suppose to deliberately defame the poet but while doing an analysis of the incidents in Skanda Purana and Later Ramayans concerning with the sage Valmeki, it seems that the stories in these scriptures are not valid. Valmeki community revered the sage as their God, believe in his philosophy and worship him in India and abroad as well. Some scholars believes that the Adi Kavi Valmeki was not robber at any time and the stories of being a robber are not relevant and the characters named as Valmeki are different in stories described in Skand Purana and Later Ramyanas. The Adi Kavi Valmeki never committed a sin at any time.

Keywords: Valmeki, Adi Kavi, Bhagwan, Valmeki Community, Decoit, Robber Adi Kavi etc.

INTRODUCTION

वियोगी होगा पहला कवि,आह से उपजा होगा गान,
निकल कर नयनों से चुपचाप,बही होगी कविता अनजान”!
(कविसुमित्रानंदन पंत)

The word ‘Valmek’ literally meaning an ‘ant-hill’ stands for deep meditation and poised state of penance. He is also called Valmeki, Ratnakar, Baba Balrik, Balmiki, Lel Beg or Lal Baig. (Crooke, 1896, pp. 262-270). While conducting research on Valmeki community, Strickler found that the majority of this community, however, make no distinction between Lal Beg and Balmik, and may use the names interchangeably. There are many different genealogies of Balmik (Strickler, 1926). R.C Temple recognized Valmekias similar as Balnik, Balmik, Balashah and Nuri Shah Bala (Temple (1962, p. 529).Numerous studies are available on the life, character of Valmeki,the Adi Kavi. Many of them portrayed the life of poet based on the stories elaborated in the Skanda Purana which was written in 8thcentrury AD. This Puran includes the stories of Valmeki by portraying him as a decoit. Many pro Valmeki writers believe that this story of Skanda Purana is not justified. They stress that the character portrayed in the Puran as a decoit in the name of Valmeki is different from the Adi Kavi Valmeki who never did a sin and never hurt a single life. It is obvious because there are little studies available on the life and journey of Adi Kavi in ancient scriptures. Except for the Phalshruti (Punch Line) of the Yudha Kanda, there is no mention of Valmeki in the authentic Valmeki Ramayana. In this Phalshruti, as well as

in the Balakanda, Uttarakanda and Mahabharata, Valmeki is considered the author of Ramayana. No reasonable argument can be made against this ancient tradition. However, it must be admitted that there is a complete lack of authentic material regarding the biography of this great poet (Bulke, 1950, p. 25). It might not be the omission of the scholars because the scarcity of sources remained a big cause for not reaching on any final conclusion about the Adi Kavi. Herein, dependency on the Skanda Purana's stories about the Valmeki could not be made final close. Very few scholars provide information in their writings after doing a comparative study of the Purans and later Ramayanas in which they proved that the sage Valmeki was not robber at any time. In addition to this, they also tell that the robber Valmeki as portrayed in the Purans is different from the Adi Kavi Valmeki who composed the Ramayana and Yogavashishtha. Since the Valmeki community got aware about their Lord, many FIRs have been registered against those who called intentionally or unintentionally Valmeki as a decoit. In some cases, the matter reached in the Court when somebody called sage Valmeki robber without knowing the facts. In this work, efforts have been made for knowing whether the information (stories) provided in the Puranas and the later Ramayanas are reliable or not in which the sage Valmeki has been portrayed as a robber. Bhavabhuti has given the title of Adi Kavi to Valmeki. Anandvardhana in his writing called Valmeki the Adi Kavi. Regarding this, Dr. Ramaswami writes that undoubtedly, Valmeki is Adi Kavi. He is an ancient and great poet. The great poet Kalidas has accepted the Ramayana as the first poem. According to Vachaspati Gerola, 'Valmeki is the first poet, the great poet, the knower of the intricacies of social life at the same time. He was also a serious critic (Gupt, 1995, pp. 25-28). Almost all the scholars are aware that the original Ramayana is the work of Valmeki and traditionally he is called Adi Kavi and his work is called Adi Kavya (Singh, 2014, p. 25)

To find out about the character of Adi Kavi Valmeki is like untangling a tangled thread, and the more you try to untangle it, the more tangled it becomes.

"मानिषादप्रतिष्ठांत्वमगमःशाश्वतीःसमाः।

यत्क्रौञ्चमिथुनादेकमवधीःकाममोहितम्॥"

(वाल्मीकिरामायण, बालकांड.- सर्ग-02, श्लोक-15, p.29)

This verse from the Valmeki Ramayana is regarded as the very first verse to have flowed from the lips of the *Adi kavi* (First Poet), Valmeki. It emerged as a curse born of Valmeki's anguish after a hunter killed one of a pair of *Krauncha* birds—birds deeply immersed in love. Its meaning is: "O Nishada! May you find neither prestige nor peace for all eternity, for you have slain one of a pair of *Krauncha* birds, birds overwhelmed with love." To date, all the scholars who have conducted research on creator Valmeki have found that the complete story of the creator Valmeki is nowhere to be found.

VALMEKI IN PURANAS AND LATER RAMAYANAS

It is an attempt to know about the character of Adi Kavi by doing a comparative study of incidents recorded in the Purans and Later Ramayanas. Vishnu Purana is the first most which time is believed to be 1st to 3rd century AD. Two references in this Puran contain information about Valmeki. In first reference, while narrating the story of Rama, the sage Valmeki is enumerated among sages present at the time of Ramas's coronation- Vishistha, Vamadeva, Markandeya, Vishwamitra, Bharadwaj and Agastya. In the second context, while associating him with the Bhrigu Dynasty. MatsyaPuran accorded to believe between 2nd and 4th century AD. This Purana, while describing the genealogy of the Ikshvaku dynasty, states that out of the four sons of Dasharatha who were forms of Narayana, the eldest son, Rama, was the one who killed Ravana. His character was composed by Valmeki Bhargava. Padam Purana's time could

not be determined however, scholars found it to be ancient. According to BaldevUpadhayaya, this is a Purana of later 5th century AD. In many sections of this Purana, the contexts of the Rama story are found. Wherein the Srishri-Khand, the stories of the Uttarkanda of Valmeki Ramayana are narrated. Whereas in the Patal-Khand, the story of the entire Ramayana is narrated. Many new contexts have been imagined here. As far as the introduction of Maharishi Valmeki is concerned, it is found only at the time of the Ashvamedha yagya organized by Rama. Lakshman, the leaves Sita, abandoned by Rama, near Valmeki's ashram. Valmeki takes Sita to his ashram. The sage gets a hut built for her (Sehdev, 2003,p.22-23).

Dr. Hazara decided the time of Vishnudharmotra Purana, between 4th and 5th century AD. Four times in this Purana, Valmeki is mentioned. In the first section of this Purana, it is said that Vishnu was born in the lineage of Bhrigu in the Treta Yuga and composed the Ramayana. In another place it is said that when Rama exiled the pregnant Sita, she took shelter in the hermitage of sage Valmeki. The she gave birth to two sons-Kush and Lav. Valmeki taught these two children about the scriptures, gave them knowledge of music and made them proficient in dhanurvedya. He taught them to sing the Ramayana he composed. In the second place it is said that when Rama exiled the pregnant Sita, she took shelter in sage Valmeki's ashram. In third section, sage Valmeki is mentioned in several places. About the sculpture of sage Valmeki some basic thing that should be kept in mind has been mentioned in this Purana. Bhagwat Purana, is believed to have been composed between 500 and 950 AD. Ninth skand of this Purana contains detail of Ikshvaku lineage as well as the complete description of Ramayana. This description says that when Rama, fearing public censure, expelled the pregnant Sita from her home, she stayed in the hermitage of Prachetas Muni. Sita's twin sons, Kush and Luv, were raised by this Muni. Finally, Sita handed over these two sons to Valmeki and sank into the earth. Kuram Purana is believed to have been composed in 6th century AD. Valmeki has been mentioned in two places in this Purana. First, in the chapter of Vedshakha-Pranyana it is said that in 23rdDwapar Yuga, the sage Trinbindu was called Vyas and later on this in 24thDwapar Yuga, Valmeki got the title of Vyas. In second place in the chapter of Yoga and Knowledge, in the context of imparting knowledge about God, the name of Valmeki has come up as follow- Parashar Muni has acquired this knowledge from Sanak Muni. Aftermath, Parashar Muni gave this knowledge to Valmeki. (Sehdev, 2003,p.24-25).

Skand Purana is a larger Purana and its composing time is given between 7th and 9th century AD. Four khand (sections) of this Purana, Vaishnava, Avantaya, Prabhas and Nagar provides descriptive stories about the sage Valmeki. Vaishnava Khand – This is the second Khand of Skanda Purana. In this section, while explaining the importance of the month of Vaisakh, the stories of Valmeki's previous births is described as follows: on the banks of the river Pampa, a famous Brahmin named Shankh lives. After the death of his Guru, he crosses the Godavari River and enters a deserted, waterless and very scary forest and does penance. There, a hunter snatches everything from him- shoes, garland and kamandal (Water Pot) and orders him to run away. The Brahmin crosses the path, groaning barefoot in the scorching heat of the sun. The hunter takes pity on this painful condition of the Brahmin. He gives him his old shoes. And ask him the way to salvation. Brahmin tells him to chant the name of Rama and tells him that by doing so, his next birth will be in the lineage of sage Valmeki. While doing this, a layer of clay, called Valmek (ant-hill), forms on his body, that's why after removing the Valmek he has been called Valmeki(स.पु.वैष्णव खंड.chap. 21). Avantya Khand – This is the fifth section of Skanda Purana. In the first part of this Khand – Avantyakshetra Mahatmaya, a story is mentioned of a character named Sumati who is a Brahmin in the lineage of Bhrigu. He has a son named Agni Sharma. When there is a break outs

in the country, Sumati takes his family and goes towards the south. Agni Sharma becomes friends with the Abhiras and dacoits who live there. At some point, a group of seven sages come towards his way. Agni Sharma tries to kill them. One of them sage Atri persuades Agni Sharma to not indulge in any type of sin and makes him sit in meditation and ask him to chant Mantra. Agni Sharma keeps chanting this mantra continuously for thirteen years while meditating. During this period a layer of clay called Valmek (ant-hill) cover his entire body. After thirteen years, the sage Atri comes to the same place and tells Agni Sharma that you have been sitting in this position, therefore you are Valmeki and you will be famous by this name (स.पु.अवन्य खण्ड, chap. 24). Nagar Khand - This is the sixth section of Skanda Purana. This section describes the story of Loh Jung, the son of Mandvaya Brahmin of Chamatkarpur. Loh Jung serves his parents. Then there is a famine in the country and seeing his family in the situation of hunger he snatches food and clothes from an old women goes home and gives them to his parents. After that, he starts stealing. Once he meets the seven sages as described in previous stories of Purana, one of them sage Puloh ask him to chant the mantra Jat-Ghot day and night. Remaining story is same as described in previous Puranas (स.पु.नागर खंड, chap. 124). PrabhasKhand – PrabhasKhand is the seventh khand of Skanda Purana. According to this sections, the story relating to Valmeki is as follows- there was a Brahmin named Shamimukh. He had a son named Vaishakh, who used to do bad deeds day and night and take care of his family by stealing. Same story is mentioned in this Purana as previous. He meets with sages who tell him to chant mantra of Jat-Ghot. Vaisakh chant that mantra and his body was covered with clay named Valmek. The sages return to him and tell that you have been chanting the mantra in spite of your body covered with Valmek that's why you will be famous on earth with the name Valmeki (स.पु.प्रभास खंड, chap.248). Aftermath, Bhavishya Purana came in existence in whichover the time, many contexts have been added to this Purana. However, scholars have considered this Purana to be a composition of the 10th century AD. As given in this Purans, there was a Brahmin in ancient times. He used to kill all three castes, Brahmin, Kshatriya and Vaishya. Sages come to him and persuade him to leave all the sins and chant the mantra of Ram-Nama. After a long time sages come to him and they take down the clay Valmek and call him Valmeki (Sehdev, 2003, pp.29-30). Adhyatam Ramayana which time is believed to be 14th and 15th century AD according to Dr. Kamik Bulke, Anand Ramayana and TatvasaraSangrih Ramayana, believed to be created in 16th and 17th century AD consequently and contains the same stories about the Valmeki as we have seen in the Purans relating to the character with stealing, dacoit then some sages come to him and tell him to chant the mantra after which a clay called Valmek covered his entire body and after coming from the Valmek the character was called Valmeki, the name given to him by the sages. In Kritivasiya Ramayan, the hunter's name is Ratnakara and when he goes to bathe in the river, the river dries up as soon he looks at it. Brahma then advises Ratnakara to chant the name of Rama, but his sinful mouth refuses to utter this sacred name. Ratnakara was then asked to chant the Mara-Mara (Bulke, 1950, pp. 32-33).

Based on the stories in the Skanda Purana and Later Ramayanas where the characters with different names (Agni Sharma, Loh Jung, Vaishakh, Ratnakara and someone in Vaishnava Khand) became the sages, it is clear that they are not the same as stories are different in different khandas with different characters. In Valmeki Ramayana, there is no any reference which relates the Adi Kavi Valmeki with plundering. Why in the later Ramayanas the poet has been portrayed as a robber. It appears that the title of 'dacoit' was associated with the character of the *Adikavi* Valmiki with the intention of tarnishing his reputation.

PRO VALMEKIS

Dr. Dev Singh Advaiti states that a thorough analysis of the literature concerning with Bhagwan Valmeki reveals that these are completely baseless. Modern texts on this great personality whose creation of the nectar – like words, the Ramayana, bestowed a priceless treasure upon the world, place the period of its creation between the eighth century AD and the zenith of devotionalism. In order to leave a deep impression of the influence of the name Rama on the hearts of the people, mischievous minds strategically presented the impact of the name Rama on the temple – builder of Indian literature, the ancient sage, the radiant gem of the sages, the Mandara mountain of the ocean of knowledge, the great master of character and characterization, the world's first poet, lord Valmeki. Considering the religious texts, we conclude that the accusations leveled by evil-minded people against his supremely pure and unblemished life are, in fact, false, baseless and unverifiable. The first poet, Lord Valmeki, was not a robber but a great philosopher, a great sage and pure soul (Advaiti, 2022, p. 254). During the period of Skanda Purana, people were more interested in devotion to God. The importance of reciting the name of God was increasing in the propagation and spread of devotion. In order to make this propagation and spread more effective, it became necessary to present a specific person as an example. Keeping this fact in mind, the mythological storytellers did not choose any other name than sage Valmeki, the author of the Ramayana, because the story of Rama and sage Valmeki were very popular and had received high respect. Therefore, the preachers made sage Valmeki their target. His name was derived and stories were created around him. With these stories, the propagation of Rama- bhakti started raising, but these fictional stories greatly influenced the literature to come. (Sehdev, 2003,p.32). Dr. Kamik Bulke writes that According to a tradition, the poet Valmeki was a decoit and was able to compose the Ramayana only after prolonged penance, but there is doubt about the antiquity of this story. Its developed form is first found in the Skanda Purana. Most of the material in this Purana is from after the 8th century AD and many passages have been added to it (Bulke, 1950, p.37). Prof. Prabhudayal Agnihotri in book Maharishi Valmeki Ek Samikshatamak Adhayan describe that the credit for spreading misperceptions relating to Maharishi Valmeki mainly goes to so called Ramayanas, which was created to establish the worship of Rama in its place in opposition to the worship of Shiva. The authors of these Ramayanas often attempted to prove that the name of Rama could liberate even the most fallen, and they found it easier to exemplify Maharishi Valmeki, the author of Ramayana (Sehdev,1980). A renowned writer from Valmeki community, Om Prakash Valmeki describe that, another tradition is found in Indian literature, which describes Valmeki as a robber. They say that he was first a robber and later became the author of the Ramayana. There is neither any evidence nor any logic in this story. There is also doubt about its antiquity. Its first developed form is seen in the Skanda Purana. Most of the content of this Purana is from the 8th century AD onwards. Many contradictions have been added to it, the time of its composition is not known. He opined that there was a class which was somehow afraid of Valmeki's achievements and fame and was trying to degrade him in a certain way (Translated Book of O. P.Valmeki, 2025,p.157). Dr. N.S.Vyas also did not support the story of Valmeki of being a dacoit. He writes in his book 'India In The Ramayana Age' that Mahabharata too hints at Valmeki being originally robber but the authenticity of this material of the life of Valmeki is not beyond question. The story of the conversion of a robber is intended more to underline the chastening influence of name Rama. The fanciful derivation of the name Valmeki form Valmek or an ant-hill, has been derived from the Skanda Purana (Vyas, 1988). Orientalists questioned the dates of the Puranas' writing and acknowledged Valmekias the teacher of sweepers. It is indisputable that the Puranas are sacred scriptures of Hindu

ancestry, notwithstanding the belief held by many that their age, period, and chronology are unknown (Kashyap, 2023,p.7). Dr. Karuna Sharma admits that the first mention of Valmeki's life as a decoit is found in the Vaishnava Khanda, AavantyaKhanda, PrabhasKhand and Nagar Khanda of SkandaPurana. Some stories there depict him as a decoit in his early life. This makes it clear that until the sixth and seventh centuries, no stories about Valmeki were prevalent, and the etymology of his name had not been explored in literature. The stories related to his life as a decoit found in many plays and poems are influenced by various Puranas and Ramayanas. Since the Puranas had a great influence on Indian life, the stories related to Valmeki described in them became popular that the true nature of the sage was hidden. Due to these fictitious stories, the general public believed that Valmeki, who attained sagehood by chanting Rama's name in reverse, has composed the Ramayana. It's a well-known fact that when someone becomes very popular, everyone wants to associate with him (Sharma, 2016, p.4). Dr. Rameshwar Prasad Gupt points out that Maharishi is a great poet but his life story remains a matter of controversy for us. Even before becoming a Maharishi, he was not a robber as popular folk tales about him suggest. He never committed any sin (Gupt, 1995, pp.9-12). Ruhina Prasad and Dr. Sudhir Narayan Singh writes that However, this long-held belief about Maharishi Valmeki may be called into question by a 2010 ruling by Justice Rajive Bhalla of the Punjab and Haryana High Court, which cited the research by Manjula Sehdev, head of the Maharishi Valmeki Chair at Punjabi University, Patiala, who observed that "facts appear to be lost in the mists of antiquity." The judge emphasized that there is no evidence in Vedic literature from the ninth century AD that Maharishi Valmeki was a highwayman or dacoit. Additionally, he noted that Valmeki is referred to as Bhagwan, Muni, Rishi, and Maharishi in his work "Ramayana," but his involvement in highway robbery is not mentioned (Prasad and Singh, 2025, p.191). Pandit Ishwar Chand Sharma in his article titled 'Social System in Ram Rajya' in September 1970 issue of Hindi magazine Sapta Sindhu emphasize that Adi Kavi Valmeki was not a decoit. It is impossible to believe that the killing of the crane alone inspired such compassion that Maharishi Valmeki was a hunter or a robber in his previous life. This misleading propaganda seems to be spread only foolish propagandists (Advaiti,2022, p.248). Hindus in North India placed greater importance on worshipping Rama than Shiva and Vishnu. In order to establish the latter firmly in bhakti traditions throughout the Bhakti era, aristocratic personage had to kneel down to make Rama a mythical figure. Tulsidas damaged Valmeki's reputation by quoting Adhayatam Ramayana, which gained popularity in the 15th and 16th centuries due to its clear structure, powerful emotional storylines, contributions of Bhakti poets, and socio religious and political circumstances. The existence of numerous Valmekis from the sixth to the fifteenth centuries led to the addition of numerous legendary false stories. On the basis of Vedas and their referential literature, a number of Valmeki in the different time period were found. These legends look much more hypothetical than of historical importance (Atwal,2020, p.53). Valmeki is one of those whose identity is questioned by religion, politics and law. All three have an opinion about from which caste he belongs. In the case of writings, Puranas are written by Brahmins. Second, most Oriental texts are written by foreigners. And finally, even in law, there is a scarcity of lower caste people to represent themselves. Thus, in all three scenarios, no Dalits had written about the Dalits. Since the days of yore, gates of education were closed to Dalits; hence, there is a scarcity of the literature written by them. There is hardly any narrative by them, and if there is any by chance, then it is written by non-Dalits. It is easy to say that the stories of Dalits will only be authenticated when they begin to write about their legends. Modern Dalits are learning and trying to celebrate their legends, but worshipping is not enough. It is another matter that several classical texts of past, such as Prurans, have created hurdles

for them (Kashyap, 2023, pp. 10-11). He is also referred to as Munipungava (a high caliber sage) in the Ramayana. Studying his poetry clearly reveals that he was a high caliber scholar. Therefore, the narratives about him that he was formerly a robber and became Maharishi by chanting the name of Rama does not appear credible (Gupta, 2012, p. 5). According to a tradition, Valmeki was originally a robber and was able to compose the Ramayana only after prolonged penance. The antiquity of this story is doubtful. Its earliest developed form is found in the Skanda Purana. Most of this Purana's material dates from after the eighth century CE, and it contains numerous interpolations whose compositional period is unknown (Dwiwedi,2006, p.40).

During the time of Tulsidas, Adhyatam Ramayana was very popular that's why he also resorted to the Adhyatam Ramayana and wrote about sage Valmeki on the basis of this Ramayana as follows:-

जान आदिकबि नाम प्रतापू ।

भयउ सुद्ध करि उलटा जापू।।

(बालकांड, रामचरितमानस p. 41)

The hollowness of this story becomes clear from the fact that: The opposite of 'Rama' (राम) is 'Mara'(मरा), not Sanskrit 'Mar'(मर) and the word 'Mara'(मरा), has not the same meaning as Sanskrit word 'Mar'(मर). It is beyond imagination that the corrupted form of 'Mrit' (Dead) or 'Mara' would have had this meaning during the time of Maharishi Valmeki (Advaiti,2022, p.242). Dr. ManjulaSehdev also expressed the same view (Sehdev,2003). Dr. Swaminathan Sharma writes in his article, 'Maharishi Valmeki Ji KaVikas' in the hindi magazine 'Navneet' December 1970, 'as the author of the first Sanskrit poem' Maharishi Valmeki's personality was imbued with special respect and honor, and a halo of divinity began to appear around him. A profound sense of reverence and respect for him had begun to flow. The story of Ratnakar, the robber who transformed from a monk, chanting Mara-Mara (मरा-मरा) and got covered with Valmek (an ant-hill) was a later invention. This story was first mentioned in the Adhyatama Ramayana which is believed to have been composed around 1500 AD. Here (Advaiti,2022, p.243).According to some scholars, even the world's oldest literature, Rigveda, is not older than 6,000 years. They definitely consider the Rama period to be 3,000 to 4,000 years ago, because they consider Valmeki Ramayana to be a work of 2,500 years ago and the period of developed Hindi is not more than 500 to 600 years. With such a gap, how did the Hindi word 'Mara' (मरा) come into the contemporary literature (Singh,2002,p.11). PanditIshwar Chandra Sharma writes that even if Maharishi Valmeki was allowed to commit evil deeds, who could be held responsible for these. Because of the state system of that time was such that the king was considered responsible for all good and bad deeds. Even if he performed penance, what mantra did he chant? Was it Ram – Ram? The Mara – Mara argument does not prove that Valmeki chanted the name of Ram, because the practice of the name of Ram is a product of this era, the Kalyuga, and not of that era, the Treta Yuga. Even in the Mahabharata, which followed the Ramayana, in Dwapr Yuga, there is no evidence of such chanting of the name of Ram. This example proves that Maharishi Valmeki did not chant the name of Ram during his penance (Advaiti, 2022, p.249).

COURT PROCEEDINGS CONCERNED WITH THE MATTER

Dr. Dev Singh Assur vs Suresh Oberoi Chief Judicial Magistrate, Sangrur, Judgement date 08/12/2000, matter of film 'SantValmeki' , 1989

In the said film, actor used the word Daku to SantVakmeki and related to this, Additional Civil Judge Sr.

Divn announced the final decision that it is submitted that the Dr. Dev Singh Assur made research on Sant Valmeki and published a book under the title **AdiKavi Valmeki or Hindu Samaj** and mentioned at page 42 to 80 that Sant Valmeki was highly religious person and number of instances were reported in that book. Sant Valmeki was considered as Bhagwan by the plaintiffs and Valmeki community. More so there is no authentic proof available with any book that Sant Valmeki Ji was infact a decoit, rather there is a reference that he was a high character person, a scholar of high calibre. Thus, there is no authenticated record that Valmeki was a decoit. Decoit is a decoit whether he may be ultimately turning a good person or doing better for the public in the end. In my opinion the censor board had not taken this aspect in view. I am of the firm view that this depiction of Sant Valmeki is no true as or the history and other religious books. No care was taken to the feelings of the community as a whole. The certificate of film is not in accordance with the guidelines containing section 5(B) of the act. The defendants are directed to withdraw the certificate (Advaiti,2022, pp.289-301).

JAI HANUMAN SERIAL CONTROVERSY, 1998

In Jai Hanuman serial, the Adi Kavi Valmeki was depicted as a decoit which hurt the religious feelings of Valmeki community. It was Dr. Dev Singh Advaiti who, in protest against the serial 'Jai Hanuman' led a delegation including the then Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Parkash Singh Badal, Late. Gurucharan Singh Tohra and various heads of Valmeki community, met the then Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Valpayee on May 12, 1998. However, information and Broadcasting minister SushmaSwaraj asked to prove that the first poet, lord Valmeki, was not a decoit in order to ban the serial 'Jai Hanuman'. Dr. Advaiti, by providing authentic facts form scriptures got the serial 'Jai Hanuman' banned and made the Valmeki community proud. Apart from this, he made various preachers write apologies and quoted religious scriptures to them

Star India Private Limited v. State Of Punjab 2010

A 2010 judgement by Justice Rajive Bhalla of the Punjab and Haryana High Court could challenge this long-standing belief about Maharishi Valmeki. Justice Bhalla cited research by Manjula Sehdev, head of the Maharishi Valmeki Chair at Punjabi University, Patiala, who noted that "facts appear to be lost in the mists of antiquity. The judge emphasized that there is no evidence in Vedic literature from the ninth century AD that Maharishi Valmeki was a highwayman or dacoit. Additionally, he noted that Valmeki is referred to as Bhagwan, Muni, Rishi, and Maharishi in his work "Ramayana," but his involvement in highway robbery is not mentioned.

Manjula Sahdev&Ors vs State Of Punjab on 23 April, 2019

In a tele-serial, one character queries another on whether Maharishi Valmeki was a dacoit before he turned into a saint. The other guy praises Maharishi Valmeki while acknowledging this truth. The veracity of the tale and whether Maharshi Valmeki was a dacoit are topics of ongoing discussion among academics and religious scholars. The mists of antiquity seem to have obscured the true realities. One such scholar, Dr. Manjula Sehdev, graciously agreed to speak to this court. The argument made by the respondent's attorney that there is no historical or mythological foundation for the claim that Maharishi Valmeki was a dacoit before he became a sage may have merit if her thorough investigation into the origin and veracity of this tale is to be accepted as accurate. Therefore, it would be crucial to replicate a few key aspects of her study.

1. From Vedic literature upto 9th Century A.D. there is no reference as such that Maharishi Valmeki led a life of a dacoit or a Highwayman.

2. Even upto 9th Century A.D. the etymology of the word Valmeki (a person born from an Ant-hill) is not available.
3. In his own work 'Ramayana', he is called Bhagwan, Muni, Rishi and Maharishi. No reference of his Highwaymanship is available there.
4. First reference regarding Rishi Valmeki as a Highwayman is mentioned in the Skand – Purana. The time of this Purana is considered 10th Century A.D.
5. The First reference of the mantra 'Mara-Mara' has been mentioned in the Adhyatma Ramayana (Ayodhya- Kanda, 6.80-81). The time of Adhyatma Ramayana has been considered 15th Century A.D. by the Scholars. In the same way we find Mantra 'Mara-Mara' in Ananda Ramayana (Rajya-Kanda, 4.141). This work has been considered of 16th Century A.D.
6. The Bhakti movement was started in the South part of India about 8th&9th Century A.D. by Alwaras. When this movement came at its peak from 13th to 16th Centuries A.D. many stories were woven around the personality of Rishi Valmeki keeping in view the importance of Sri Rama as an incarnation of Vishnu.

TITLE OF GOD

Valmeki community gave the Poet title of Srishtikarta, Bhagwan, Dayawan, Kamleshwar, Ishwar, etc and believe in his teachings (Yogavishatha), Purusharth Hi Dev Hai means giving priority to hard work. They call temple as Anant and in the beginning of the year they visit holy place Paavan Valmeki Tirath, Amritsar and join a National level program Called Yogima Parv organized by an organisation named Aadi Dharam Samaj AADHAS, Bharat, Darshan Ratan Raavan is the chief of which. They created their own Aadi Nitnem and follow the teachings of Valmeki. They greet with each other with Jai Valmeki and Har Har Valmeki and Jo Bole So Nirbhaya, Srishtikarta Valmeki Dayawan ki Jai. The preachment of Valmeki name, his teachings is increasing in this community. They believe in the philosophy of Yogavashishta, a scripture created by Valmeki except than the Ramayana. Overall, Valmeki community is the devotee of sage Valmeki, follow his teachings, have faith in his Righteousness and worship him as a God. Aashrams (Tiraths) in different states in India and Nepal as well has been found relating to the sage Valmeki and it is believed that the Poet had stayed there in ancient times. The Valmeki Tirath Sthal, Amritsar is famous where the people from the Valmeki community make pilgrims to this place throughout the year. There are also saints in Valmeki community and two out of them are Shri Shri 108 Satguru Gyan Nath Ji and Guru Khak Shah Ji, who preached the name and teachings of Lord Valmeki throughout their whole life and established Aashrams, Guru Gyan Nath Aashram, Bhagwan Valmeki Tirath, Amritsar, Punjab and Pratap Bagh Delhi (Guru Khak Shah Ji) where the devotees of Lord Valmeki visit. Apart from Yogavashishta and Ramayana, there is also the book AksharLakshya by the first poet Valmeki. It contains 325 formulas used in mathematics including modern geometry, algebra, trigonometry, physics or applied mathematics, even mining science, hydel, methods of measuring air, heat and electricity, geography etc. (Raavan, 2019, p. 8). The poet Valmeki is regarded as the Adi Kavi means the first poet. The number of followers of sage Valmeki has increased since last 5 decades in India and temples of the sage has been established in India as well as foreign countries.

CONCLUSION

The revered sage Valmeki is worshipped around the world by the Valmeki community as they believe that he is their ancestor from the ancient period. The matter of being decoit, after analyzing the stories

given in the scriptures it is sure that the Adi Kavi Valmeki is different from the other Valmekis depicted in Skanda Purana that portrayed him as a decoit and become a sage after a meeting with a group of sages who gave him a mantra to chant. While analyzing the incidents relating to Valmeki in Purans, different characters come before us. Coming to the first Puran, that is Vishnu Puana, creation time is believed to be between 1st and 3rd century AD, Matsya Purana which is believed to be created between 2nd and 4th century AD, Padam Puran (5th Century AD), VishnudharmotraPuran (between 4th and 5th Century AD), Bhagwat Purana (between 4th and 9th century AD) and Kuram Purana (6th century AD). In these Puranas, dacoit character of Valmeki doesn't exist. The stories describing the character Valmeki as decoit started from the Skanda Purana (between 7th and 9th century AD). Four incidents in four Khands, with different names of decoits in this Purana contain. It should be noted here that if the Puarans that had been created before the Skanda Purana, doesn't provide the information about the decoit Valmeki then why the incidents in the Skanda Purana and Later Ramayans presents the Poet Valmeki as a decoit. Unique thing that these scriptures contain the same stories with different characters. It seems that the later Ramayanas as Adhyatam Ramayana, Anand Ramayana and TatvasaraSangrih Ramayana which depicts the poet Valmeki as a robber, decoit, are motivated from the SkandaPurana as these Ramayanas contain the stories as described in the Skanda Purana. Dr. Dev Singh Advaiti and Dr. Manjula Sehdev has proved in their writing by giving the examples of scriptures that the Adi Kavi Valmeki was not a decoit at any time and the Valmekis of Skanda Purana are different from the Adi Kavi Valmeki who composed the epic Ramayana and Yogavashishtha. As mentioned in earlier that the word Valmek literally meaning an ant-hill stands for deep meditation and poised state of penance and whoever come from the ant-hill after a deep meditation had been called Valmeki but is should be kept in mind that every person who come over the ant-hill could not be related with the Adi KaviValmeki because he is the only one who has been regarded as Lord, Maharishi, Bhagwan etc. Therefore, the stories which portrayed the Adi Kavi Valmeki as decoit, robber are not valid. These can be nullified after having a comparative study of Puranas and the later Ramayanas. There might be characters named Valmeki who were actually indulged in looting but they had no connection with the Adi Kavi Valmeki who composed the epic Ramayana and Yogavishta and he is the only one who is regarded as Adi Kavi, Bhagwan, Maharishi etc.

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