

**A CRITICAL APPRAISAL OF KĀLIDĀSA'S
ABHIJÑĀNAŚĀKUNTALAM
IN THE LIGHT OF THE RASA THEORY**

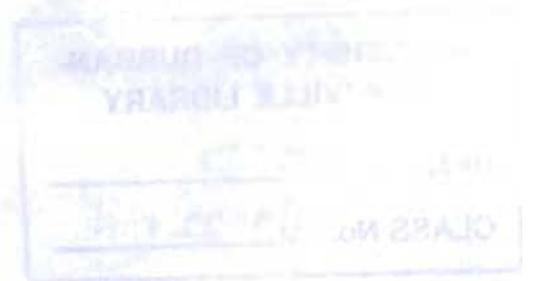
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**Submitted in part fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of
Doctor Litterarum in the Department of Indian Languages
(Sanskrit)
in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Durban Westville.**

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VĀGARTHĀVIVA SAMPRKTAU VĀGARTHAPRATIPATTAYE
JAGATAH PITARAU VANDE PĀRVATĪPARAMEŚVARAU

Just as word and meaning, though considered separate, are indeed one,
so are the Divine Mother Pārvatī and Divine Father Śiva one :

I salute them and implore that they may bless my attempts
to understand and use speech appropriately.

(Raghuvañśām I : 1)

Dedicated

to

ISHAN
the apple of my eye

and also to the cherished memory

of

My ever supportive parents-in-law

the late
Mr. Chundermun Panday

and

the late
Mrs. Kawnsilla Panday

DECLARATION

The Registrar
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Dear Sir

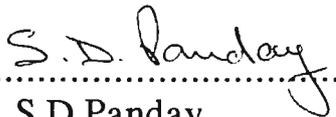
I, SHOBHANA DEVI PANDAY

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Hereby declare that the thesis entitled

"A Critical Appraisal of Kālidāsa's *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* in the Light of the *Rasa* Theory"

is the result of my own investigation and research and that it has not been submitted in part or in full for any other Degree or to any other University.


.....
S.D.Panday

10 JAN. 1997
.....
Date

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND NEED FOR THE STUDY

The great poet (*Mahākavi*) Kālidāsa is an eminent figure in the field of Sanskrit and world literature. He is indeed the crown jewel among poets of India. The ancient preceptors and *literati* honoured him with the highest praise, with epithets such as "*Nikhilakavicakra cūḍāmaṇi* - Crown jewel among poets", "*Kavikulaguru* - Mentor of poets", "*Kavitākāminī-vilāsa* - Abode of the Muse of poetry" and "*Kaniṣṭhikādhiṣṭhitā* - Poetry residing in his little finger". The first Sanskrit play to be translated into any European language was Kālidāsa's masterpiece, *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*. This was an English translation by Sir William Jones which was brought out in the year 1769. George Forster translated this English version into German. The German poet, Goethe, on reading at the end of the 18th century, Sir William Jones's English translation of "*Abhijñānaśākuntalam*" eulogised it to such an extent that study and research on Kālidāsa began to capture the imagination of all scholars. A translated version of Goethe's eulogy reads as follows :-

Wouldst thou have the blossoms of youth
and the fruits of maturity.
Wouldst thou have charms and delights,
Wouldst thou have satisfaction and support,
Wouldst thou grasp the heaven and the earth
with a single name,
I name thee, O Śakuntalā!
and thus everything is said,
(Gopal : 1984 : 1-2)

Since Goethe's exclamation 200 years ago, so much has been continuously written about Kālidāsa, and his works have been translated into so many

languages that an entire library could be dedicated to Kālidāsa. Many speculations and divergent views regarding his period, place of birth and biographical details have emerged so that his continuing popularity is further assured.

One is surprised at the vast extent and detailed critical analysis of his works, the profound research into his beliefs, ideals and historical facts and the penetrating discussions on his attitude towards love and beauty. Scholars have not only scanned every syllable of Kālidāsa's drama and poetry but subjected it to the closest critical scrutiny. Hence, it is but natural for the question to arise, "Why the need for further research on Kālidāsa ?" The answer is that the majority of research on Kālidāsa deals with the external aspects of his literature resulting in the neglect of the intrinsic and subtle elements to be found therein.

The well known critical works on Kālidāsa may be categorised as follows :-

1. HISTORICAL INVESTIGATIONS

<i>Kālidāsa</i>	- V.V.Mirashi
<i>India in Kālidāsa</i>	- B.S. Upadhyaya
<i>Viśvakavi Kālidās : Ek Adhyayan</i>	- Suryanarayan Vyas
<i>Mahakāvi Kālidās</i>	- Chandrabali Pandey
<i>Kālidāsa</i>	- K.S.Ramaswamy Shastri
<i>The Date of Kālidāsa</i>	- K.C. Chattopadhyaya
<i>The Birthplace of Kālidāsa</i>	- L.D. Kalla

2. SPIRITUAL AND CULTURAL INVESTIGATIONS

*Kālidāsa : The Human Meaning of his
works*

- Walter Ruben

<i>Kavi Kālidāske granthon par ādhārit</i>	
<i>tatkālīn bhāratīya sanskriti</i>	- Gayatri Varma
<i>Kālidāsa</i>	- Śri Aurobindo
<i>Kālidāsa, the National Poet of India</i>	- Sitaram Sahagal
<i>Kālidās se sākṣātkār</i>	- Vidya Niwas Misra

3. LITERARY INVESTIGATIONS

<i>Kālidās : Unkī Kavītā</i>	- Dvijendralal Roy
<i>Kālidās kī Lālitya Yojanā</i>	- H.P. Dvivedi
<i>Upamā Kālidāsasya</i>	- S.B. Dasgupta
<i>Mahākavi Kālidāsa</i>	- R.S. Tiwari
<i>Meghadūt : Ek Purānī Kahānī</i>	- H.P. Dvivedi

In addition to the above McDonnell's *A History of Sanskrit Literature*; Weber's *A History of Indian Literature*; Winternitz's *A History of Indian Literature*; A.B. Keith's *A History of Indian Literature and Sanskrit Drama*; M. Krishnamachariar's *A History of Classical Sanskrit Literature*; K.P. Kulkarni's *Sanskrit Drama and Dramatists*; Baldev Upadhyaya's *Sanskrit Sāhitya aur Itihās* ; and J. Gonda's *Indian Literature - Vol. on Classical Sanskrit*; A.D. Singh's *Kālidāsa - A Critical Study* and Ram Gopal's - *Kālidāsa* are some of the leading works dealing with Kālidāsa's literature. Translations and editions of Kālidāsa's literature have doubtless raised important questions and problems regarding Kālidāsa in the prefaces of their editions and even ventured to offer answers to these; however, these have generally been of a superficial nature. They have delved into questions of Kālidāsa's special gift with the *Upamā* (simile), his remarkable use of the Vaidarbhi style, his mastery over expression, his plot and changes brought about therein, characterisation and his cultural outlook.

Critics have been most allured by the *Sūkti* (aphorism) "*Upamā Kālidāsa*". Some scholars have produced undeniably excellent critiques on Kālidāsa's heroines and their beauty and love. Many others have probed into the human values inherent in Kālidāsa's literature as well as the unveiling of the theme of the curse in Kālidāsa's works. However, it becomes evident from the foregoing array of books that no writer or critic made a serious effort to examine the element of *Rasa* which is an integral part of poet Kālidāsa's works and constitutes the very life and soul of his works. Identifying this vital area needing research, this researcher has selected *Rasa* in Kālidāsa's literature as a subject of study.

PREVALENCE OF RASA IN KĀLIDĀSA AND HIS CONTEMPORARY POETS.

Kālidāsa's period (1st Century BCE) is known as the *RASAVĀDI* (dedicated to *Rasa*) age of the history of Sanskrit literature. The majority of his contemporaries subscribed to the school of *Rasa* (poetic sentiment). *Rasaniṣpatti* (the accomplishment of *Rasa*) is to be clearly seen in earlier works such as the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*. Although works of predecessors Pāṇini and Patañjali exist but in name, nevertheless, verses of Pāṇini which are to be seen in collections of aphorisms such as "*Saduktikarṇāmṛt* - the collection of aphorisms like ambrosia to the ears" clearly demonstrate their allegiance to *Rasa*. A detailed discussion of *Rasa* will follow in Chapter Two, hence only brief definitions are provided in these pages.

Amongst Kālidāsa's close contemporaries, poets Kumāradāsa and Aśvaghoṣa, are most prominent. Students of Sanskrit literature are aware of and work on the premise that a particular focus is placed on the experiences of *Rasa*

(*rasānubhūti*) in Kumaradāsa's *Jānakīharaṇam* and Mahākavi Aśvaghoṣa's *Buddhacaritam* and *Saundaranandam*. In Kālidāsa's period, and the period preceding him, poetical works were distinguished by the predominance of *Rasa* and the emotions in them. Linguistic and artistic considerations assumed a second place in these works. Their language is simple and easily intelligible. There is an absence of portraiture. They are not burdened with the excesses of pedantry and ornate, figurative language. Mahākavi Aśvaghoṣa's *Saundaranandam*, an epic poem, has the following verses depicting *vipralambha* - poem of separation of lovers :-

*tato hr̥te bhartari gauraveṇa pr̥tau hr̥tāyāmaratau kṛtāyām,
tatraiva harmyopari vartamānā na sundarā saiva tadā babhāse.(VI : 1)
sā duḥkhitā bharturadarśanena kāmēna kopēna ca dahyamānā
kṛtvā kare vaktramupopaviṣṭā cintānadīm śokajalām tatāra.(VI : 10)*

As described in the cited verses, when Lord Buddha initiated his kinsman Nanda into the Buddhist faith, Nanda's wife Sundari lamented the separation from her husband. Being unable to see her husband she was burning with passion and anger. Placing her hands on her face in a state of sorrow, she begins to swim in an ocean of misery. (Own translation)

Prior to this episode Aśvaghoṣa painted a captivating picture of their union (*sañyoga*) thus :-

*bhāvanuraktau girinirjharasthau
tau kinnarīkimpuruṣāvivobhau,
cikrīdatuścābhivirejatuśca
rūpaśriyānyonyamivākṣipantau. (IV : 10)*

Nanda and Sundarī were besotted with each other like a Kinnara and Kinnarī (celestial beings). Enamoured of each other's physical beauty, they spent their entire time in love sport (*cikrīdatu*). (Own translation)

These excerpts from *Saundarananda* clearly demonstrate the tradition of both *vipralambha* (separation) and *sañyoga* (union) aspects of love portrayed to accomplish *Rasas*.

In any discussion of the *Rasavādins* among Kālidāsa's close contemporaries, it is necessary to pause to examine Kumāradāsa's poetry. The following verse of Kumāradāsa is memorable for its depiction of the sad night of autumn, pining for the summer, and the worn out day of the hot summer :-

*prāleyakālapriyaviprayoga
glānevarātriḥ kṣayamāsasāda,
jagāma mandam divasovasanta-
krūrātapaśrānta iva krameṇa .*

(*Jānakīharṇa* : III : 13)

Thus the preceding and contemporary poets of Kālidāsa have been regarded as *Rasavādins* i.e. they subscribed to the school of *Rasa* in poetry. Although Ācārya (preceptor) Viśvanātha articulated his dictum "VĀKYAM RASĀTMAKAM KĀVYAM" (*Rasa* is the soul of poetry) in his *Sāhityadarpaṇa* much later, *Rasa* was accepted as the fundamental element of poetry long before him. And although Bharatamuni spoke of various aspects of *Rasaniṣpatti* (accomplishment of *Rasa*) in his *Nāṭyaśāstra* before Kālidāsa, the Vedic Ṛṣis (holy seers) had even before Bharatamuni recognised *Rasa* as the supreme element (of poetry) in the *Mantra Samhitās* and particularly in the *Upaniṣads*. The seer of the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* describes the Supreme Itself as *Rasa*. He asserts that the Supreme is the essence of *Rasa*, therefore, wherever humans find *Rasa*, they become immersed in it, experiencing bliss. (1973 : 2)

raso vai saḥ, rasam hyevāyam labdhvānandī bhavāti

(*Taittirīyopaniṣad* : II.7.1)

Kālidāsa was thoroughly acquainted with the *Vedic* or *Śrauta* tradition. It is clear from the numerous allusions to be found in his works that he had made a penetrating study of Vedic literature. It therefore seems reasonable to believe that he had refined his concept of the lofty position of the element of *Rasa* on the basis of Vedic literature. This view of *Rasa* was considerably strengthened by the writer of the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, Bharatamuni, who had also accepted the Vedas as the *upajīvyā* (source/object) of Drama. Of the four most important elements of Drama, he looked to the *Ṛgveda* for Dialogue (*samvād*), for Song he scanned the *Sāmaveda*; for Action (*abhinaya*) he examined the *Yajurveda* while he made the *Atharvaveda* the basis for *Rasa* :

*evam sañkalpya bhagavān sarvavedānanusmaran,
nāṭyavedam tataścakre caturvedāṅgasambhavam.
jagrāha pāṭhyamṛgvedāt sāmamyo gītameva ca,
yajurvedādabhinayān rasānātharvaṇādapi.*

(*Nāṭyaśāstra* : I.16-17)

This statement of Bharatamuni is appropriate for the reason, that, in the *Atharvaveda* where *Kāma* (9-2,19-52), *Kāmasya iṣuḥ* (3.25), *Kāminīyano'bhimukhīkaraṇam* (2.30) *Sapatni nāśanam* (6.35) *Kevalaḥ patiḥ* (6.38) and similar *sūktas* indicate the prominence of *Śṛṅgāra Rasa*; the following *sūktas* indicate *Vīra Rasa* :- *Śatrunāśanam* (2.12; 18.34; 3.6; 4.3); *Senānirīkṣaṇam* (4.31); *Śatru-sena-sammohanam* (3.1); *Senasāñyojanam* (4.32); *Saṅgrāmajayaḥ* (6.99). Flowing from this Vedic tradition, *Śṛṅgāra* and *Vīra Rasa* are found as the predominant (*aṅgīrasa*) sentiments in Sanskrit Drama.

Mahākavi Kālidāsa's orientation in *Rasa* evolved from the Vedic tradition and through the following *śloka* of the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa :-

*rasaiḥ śṛṅgāraakarṇahāsyavīrabhayānakaiḥ,
raudrādibhīśca sañyuktam kāvyametadgāyatām*

The two (boys) recited the poem that was characterized by the (nine) sentiments of love, pathos, mirth, heroism, terror and wrath etc.(including disgust, wonder and serenity.)

(*Rāmāyaṇa* : I.4.9)

In addition to the *Vedic* and *Upaniṣadic* traditions, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra*, Kālidāsa's views on *Rasa* also received inspiration from Maharṣi Vātsyāyana's *Kāmasūtra*, which depicts *Rasa* as synonymous with passion (*rati*), love(*prīti*) and pleasure (*ānānda*):

raso ratiḥ prītirbhāvo rāgo vegaḥ samāptiriti ratiparyāyaḥ.
(*Kāmasūtra* : II.1.65)

Kālidāsa's description of Śiva and Pārvatī's union (*sañyogavarṇana*) in "*Kumārasambhavam*" points to his knowledge of the *Kāmasūtra* of Vātsyāyana. This confirms that Kālidāsa did indeed draw upon the *Kāmasūtra* in the formulation of his views on *Rasa*. Kālidāsa did not have the benefit of the various commentaries of the following *Rasa sūtra* - "*vibhāvānubhāva vyabhicārisanyogadrasaniṣpattiḥ*" of Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra* which we now find compiled in "*Abhinavabhāratī*" (See Chapter Two). However, those portions of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* were certainly available, in which *Rasa* is accorded a place of honour. Kālidāsa had the entire Sixth Chapter of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* before him, wherein *Rasa* is given the first place among the elements of drama :-

rasābhāva hyabhinayā dharmī vṛittipravṛittayaḥ ,
siddhiḥ svarāstathātodyam gānam raṅgaśca saṅgrahaḥ.
(*Nāṭyaśāstra* : I.6.10)

Sentiment, emotion, acting, devotion, vocation, inclination, accomplishments, voice, instrument, song and colour-these are the eleven themes of the *Nāṭyaśāstra*

(*Abhinavabhāratī* : VI-10)

In the same chapter all the *Rasas* are mentioned by name. These will be explained in Chapter Two.

*śṛṅgārahāsyakarūṇā raudravīrabhayānakāḥ,
bibhatsādbhutasañjau cetyaṣṭau nātyerasāḥ smṛtāḥ.*

Love, laughter, pathos, wrath, valour, terror, disgust and wonder are the eight *rasas* (sentiments) mentioned by name that are accepted in drama.

(*Nāṭyaśāstra* : I.6.15 : own translation)

Thereafter the *sthāyibhāvas* (permanent/dominant emotions) of the various *Rasas* and the thirty three *vyabhicāribhāvas* (transient/fleeting emotions) have been described.

In Bharatamuni's view nothing in drama is attained (*pravṛtta*) without *Rasa* :-

nahi rasādṛte kaścīdarthaḥ pravartate.

(*Nāṭyaśāstra* : I.6.32)

He also outlined the process of the accomplishment of *Rasa* (*rasaniṣpatti*):-

*yathā hi nānā vyañjanauśadhidravvyasañyogād rasaniṣpattiḥ
tathā nānābhāvopagamād rasaniṣpattiḥ.
yathā hi guṇādibhirdravyañjanairauśadhibhiśca śāḍavādayo
rasā nirvartyante tathā nānābhāvopagatā api sthāyino bhāvā
rasatvamāpnuvantī.*

(*Nāṭyaśāstra* : 1.6 : P.285)

The purport of the foregoing is that just as spices and herbs (plants) together enhance the taste of food, likewise *Bhāvas* (emotions) and *Rasas* embellish each other. More on this will follow later.

Bharata highlighted the *āsvāda*/relish of *Rasa* in his discussion of *Rasaniṣpatti*.

This relish or taste can be understood thus : When food, garnished with herbs and spices, is eaten, people experience pleasure and delight. In the same way the *sahṛdaya* (with a receptive heart) audience relish the *sthāyibhāvas* expressed through the enactment of drama :-

*yathā hi nānā vyañjanasanskṛtamannam bhuñjānā
rasānāsvādayanti sumanasah puruṣā harṣādīñścādhigacchanti
tathā nānābhāvābhinayavyañjitān vāgaṅgasattvopetān
sthāyibhāvānāsvādayantisumanasah prekṣakāḥ
harṣādīñścādhigacchanti*

(*Nāṭyaśāstra* : I.6)

The *Rasas* and *Bhāvas* have a deep mutual relationship. A *Bhāva* cannot be devoid of *Rasa* nor can *Rasa* be divorced from *Bhāva*. Their bond is akin to that of the seed and fruit, which is seen as in the development of the tree :-

*na bhāvahīno'sti raso na bhāvo rasavarjitaḥ ,
parasparakṛtā sidhistayorabhinaye bhaveta.(1.6.36)
yathā bījād bhaved vṛkṣo vṛkṣātpuṣpam phalam yathā,
tathā mūlam rasāḥ sarve tebhyo bhāvā vyavasthitāḥ.*

(*Nāṭyaśāstra* : I.6.38)

In Chapters Six and Seven respectively of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* all the *Rasas* and *Bhāvas* are discussed. This description will be analysed in Chapter Two. At this juncture an attempt is being made to outline the tradition which was available to Kālidāsa in the form of *Rasa*, and on the basis of which Kālidāsa found his orientation regarding *Rasa*.

KĀLIDĀSA'S CONCEPT OF RASA

Drama to Kālidāsa is a *cākṣuṣa yajjña* - a visible offering to the Divine. It is spiritual or metaphysical activity wherein exist a number of *Rasas*.

*devānāmidamāmananti munayaḥ śāntam kṛatum cākṣuṣam
rudreṇedamumākṛtavvyatikare svāṅge vibhaktam dvidhā.
traiguṇyodbhavamatra lokacaritam nānārasam dṛśyate
nāṭyam bhinnarucerjanasya bahudhāpyekam samārādhnam.*

The sages describe this as a soothing visual feast of the gods; Rudra has retained it divided in two parts in his own person blended with that of Umā; herein can be seen the conduct of people arising out of three primal qualities reflected in diverse sentiments; dramatic art is the common recreation of people of different tastes. (translation - Shekhar 1977 : 49)

(*Mālavikāgnimitram* : 1-4)

In *Mālavikāgnimitram* Kālidāsa talking of dance, makes mention of "tension" (*tanmayatvam*) - of the *rasas*.

*aṅgairantanimhita vacanaiḥ sūcitaḥ samyagarthaḥ
pādanyāso layamanugatastanmayatvam raseṣu,
śākhāyonirmṛdurabhinayastadvikalpānuvṛttau
bhāvo bhāvam nudati viṣayād rāgabandhaḥ sa eva*

The meaning was well suggested by her limbs that were eloquently expressive; the movement of the feet was in perfect time, and she was perfectly absorbed in the (various) sentiments; the acting was delicate - of which the instrument of expression was the branch-like hand; and while in the successive exhibition of its various shades one fleeting emotion seemed to drive away another from the field, yet the main sentiment (of love) remained the same throughout.

(*Mālavikāgnimitram* : II : 8.)

In the fourth act of this play Kālidāsa has expressed his view on *Rasa* in the context of the fruit of the actions of the drama.

Kuryāt klāntam manāsijatarur mām rasajñam phalasya."

(*Mālavikāgnimitram* IV : 1)

In the introduction of "*Vikramorvaśīyam*", he expresses his deep appreciation of compositions (*prabandhā*) that are replete with *Rasa*.

Māriṣa ! pariṣadeṣā pūrveṣām kavīnām dṛṣṭarasa prabandhā.

All the foregoing extracts demonstrate that Kālidāsa had a particular inclination towards *Rasa*. His poetry and drama are examples of the ideals of *rasaniṣpatti* (accomplishment of *Rasa*) and *bhāvaparipāka* (the coming to fulness of the *Bhāvas* - emotions). In view of this the evaluation of Kālidāsa's works in the light of the *Rasa* tradition is indispensable to a thorough appreciation of Kālidāsa's works.

Mahākavi Kālidāsa and his fellow (*rasavādin*) poets developed *Rasa* in poetry to such heights that it was impossible for succeeding poets to emulate them. Hence, Sanskrit poets after Kālidāsa chose another mode of ensuring their identity. Bhāravi, Māgha, Śriharṣa, Ratnākara, Bhaṭṭi, Kavirāja and other post-Kālidāsa era poets, emphasised the linguistic or artistic aspects of poetry rather than the emotive or *Rasa* aspects : This resulted in the birth of the picturesque poetry in Sanskrit. Poetry was now written not to give emotive delight, but create an experience of wonderment (*camatkāra*). Poets began to compete with one another in attempting to exhibit their intellectual genius and talent. *Bandhas* (arrangement of a stanza in a particular shape) such as *muraja*, *paṇava*, *kamala*, *nāga ḍamaruka*, *khaḍga*, *gomūtrikā* and

poetic styles such as *anuloma*, *ekākṣara*, *ekasvara*, *bhāṣāsama* and a host of others were developed. Critics had named the poetry of the pre-Kālidāsa and Kālidāsa era as the "tender" (*sukumāra*) style; but they conferred the epithet of "ornate" (*alaṅkāraśailī*) style on the poetry of the post-Kālidāsa era. This stream of poetry flourished in Sanskrit for several centuries. These "ornate" poets exhibited a tendency for ornateness beyond necessity. Bhāravi in his epic "*Kirātārjunīya*", wrote an entire canto (Canto 15) to demonstrate his ability at writing picturesque/ornate poetry (*citrakāvya*). He used *sarvotbhad*, *yamaka*, *śleṣa*, *viloma* and many other devices. One *śloka* is made up of just one consonant "na".

*na nonanunno nunnono nānā nānānanā nanu.
nunno'nunno nanunneno nānenā nunnanunna.*

A man who is wounded by a lowly being is not a man. Nor is that man qualified to be regarded a man, who wounds a lowly human being. If the master is not subjected to any loss (*kṣati*) then the wounded man is indeed intact (*akṣata*). One who kills a gravely wounded human being is in reality not a criminal.

(*Kirātārjunīya* : 15 : 14)

This kind of ornamentation by Bhāravi has made his poetry very difficult to comprehend; obstructing the experience of *Rasa* (*rasānubhūti*). Bhaṭṭi's poetry is even more contrived and replete with play of words. He has infused so many grammatical formations into it that those ignorant of grammar cannot fathom its meaning. Even Māgha's poetry is excessively pedantic. Poet Kavirāja's "*Rāghavapāṇḍavīya*" is a unique example of the use of *śleṣa* (pun). In a single *śloka* he has highlighted the main themes of the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* through the use of words with double meanings :-

An example of this follows :-

*nṛpeṇa kanyām janaketa ditsitāmayonijām lambhāyitum svayamvare,
dvijaprakarṣeṇasa dharmanandanaḥ sahānujastām bhuvamapyanīyata.*

(*Rāghavapāṇḍavīya* : II : 1)

Read in the context of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, it will translate :-

Rāma, who brought delight to Dharma, was brought with his brothers by Ṛṣi Viśvāmitra to the place of the bridal contest, so that he (Rāma) could obtain King Janaka's marriageable daughter *ayonijā* Sītā (not born of woman).

In the context of the *Mahābhārata* the translation reads :

The son of Dharma (Yudhiṣṭhira) instructed by the great sage (Vedavyāsa), went to the place of the bridal contest (*Pāñcāl*) with his brothers so that he could obtain the king and father, Drupada's *ayonijā* daughter, Draupadi (not born of woman,).

A great many poets imitated the ornate style of the *Rāghavapāṇḍavīya*. Haradattasūri's "*Rāghavanaiṣadhīya*" depicts Rāma and Nala in the corresponding roles. Chidambara's poem "*Rāghavapāṇḍavayādavīya*" has not two but three stories woven into one text: the *Rāmāyaṇa*, *Mahābhārata* and *Śrimadbhāgavatam*. Likewise, Vidyāmādhava's *Pārvatī-Rukminiya* portrays the marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī and Kṛṣṇa and Rukmini in a single text translated differently.

The work that engenders greatest curiosity is Venkatādhvari's *Yādavarāghavīya*. This story is written in verses which when read normally relate the story of Rāma, and read backwards relate that of Kṛṣṇa. This genre of poetry writing in Sanskrit had but one objective: impressing the reader by exhibition of erudition and writing skills. The skill of poetry was

used to weave riddle-like verses, giving a variety of meanings which did not necessarily lead to the experience of *Rasa*. Thus poetry writing became an art of jugglery with the poets performing intricate antics with the various figures of speech.

This type of ornate poetry was taken up again in Hindi and the other languages in the *Riti-kāla*. Keśava became known as the demon of difficult poetry (*Kaṭhin kāvya kā Preta*) on account of this.

While there may be intellectual effort in such creative writing, resulting in some wonderment, it is inconceivable that ornate writing with demonstration of skill as the main or only goal could be of much value. Not only would it be excluded from the category of *Kāvya* (poetry) for not being *Rasātmakam* (with sentiment) but would be justifiably rejected by modern writers as mere display of conceit. Seen against the background of such intellectual productions of poetry, the *Rasavādins* seem to be the real poets of the soul and emotions, which are directly related to the human needs and predicament.

CONTEMPORARY ANTI-RASA SCHOOL

Various dissenting voices have been heard against the concept of *Rasa* in poetry. Foremost amongst these is the voice of the Marxist critics. They are proponents/supporters of Social Realism. Their basic principle is Dialectical Materialism - which claims that material is the only reality in the world.

According to the Marxist view the intellect, consciousness etc. also have their existence in material, like the other sense organs. This material or matter is not inert or inactive, but is in constant motion: the forces behind this motion

or activity are the two opposing inner forces to be found in matter, the one leading to constructive development, and the other, destruction. The dialectical method, which arises from the tension between these two opposing forces, must be studied in order to arrive at an accurate assessment of life. The conscious mind, comprehending this fact, supports progressive forces, and resolutely destroys the negative, destructive forces. In the Marxist world view, the only truth/reality of the world is the material condition of life, represented by society: Wealth and the system of the production of wealth constitute the basis of society. Art and literature are the products of society. Social conditions and its basic economic systems control the origin and development of art and literature. Hence, in his 1844 'Paris Manuscripts' Marx argues that the capitalist system of labour "destroyed an earlier phase of human history in which artistic and spiritual life were inseparable from the process of material existence." Marx continued that the capitalist system separated mental and manual work, thereby workers had no joy of creativity in their labours. (Selden & Widdowson 1993 : 74).

Art and literature derive their meaningfulness from their contribution to society and to the class struggle which gives it life. The Marxist believes that true literature is that which is written for the proletariat - the masses. Its focus must be on struggle. Its aim must be the eradication of the power of imperialism and the bourgeois, and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Marxist literature must instil human sensitivity, consciousness of action/duty and a rational intellect in the people. It must have its basis not in pleasure-producing values, but in those moral values which raise the consciousness of the people. Modern Indian literature has adapted these values in the Progressive School of literature. Writers such as the novelist Premchand adopted this view as a reaction to the idealism in Indian

literature which did not seem to deliver the freedom of India from British rule.

However, this view of literature based on pure rationalism, did not receive universal acceptance, because man is not just "body". He cannot live by bread alone. Together with the nurturing of the body, man needs the sustenance of the soul as well.

Such sustenance (in the literary sense) can be found in the *Rasa* Theory. In the west, too, reaction against Marxist materialism was expressed through *Ātmavād* (Spiritualism) or Idealism. The symbolist critics also presented strong opposition to it. Although the seeds of symbolism are to be found in the philosophy of Plotinus and Plato, it developed as the *Ātmavādi* (Spiritual) philosophy during the literary revolution in France towards the end of the 18th century. Its leading promoters in France were Baudelaire and Mallarme, and Keats represented the movement in England. It is in fact an aesthetic philosophy. Expounding on this Professor C.M. Bowra in his *The Heritage of Symbolism Ch.1* states that the essence of Symbolism is a leaning (attraction) towards a world of ideal or spiritual beauty. This is found through the medium of art. The practitioner finds a kind of bliss through his austerities; the devotee through his love for God and the poet attains the same bliss through his artistic endeavours. This is so because the concentration and timeless self-delusion of the devotee is not different from the aesthetic experience, in which all distinctions of time, space, self, non-self, pleasure and pain dissolve. Such poetry can only be expressed through symbolic language. It is in reality the Western version of the Indian Theory of *Rasa*, because *Rasa Siddhānta* too, is based on spiritual bliss rather than sensual bliss.

Amongst modern Hindi poets, some who were part of the poetic revolution in the New Poetry, established the intellectual or rational element rather than *Rasa* as the *raison d'etre* of poetry, describing their era as the age of the ultimate (*ātyāntika*). Intellectually they tried to relegate feelings or emotions to the background. One finds in their approach a critical attitude replacing emotion, and objectivity and satiricism the prevailing spirit. This movement did not stand the test of time, and Hindi poetry is looking back at *Rasa Siddhānta* for its sustenance.

There is an increasing emphasis on the re-establishment of the elements of *Rasa* and emotions in the mainstreams of Western as well as Eastern poetry. Poets are finding themselves oppressed by their excessive intellectuality/rationality. Thus I.A. Richards found on analysing T.S. Eliot's poetry that its ultimate basis was emotion/passion. Richards in his *Principles of Literary Criticism* (1924 : 13) "attempted to articulate the special character of literary language, differentiating the 'emotive' language of poetry from the 'referential' language of non-literary discourse." These views lend support to the return of *Rasa* in poetry. Pound and Eliot were in the forefront of the New Poetry in the West. In the New Poetry movement in Hindi literature Hīrānanda Sacchidānānda Vātsyāyana "*Agneya*", supported the element of human experience and passion. Girijākumār Mathur also supported the element of passion in poetry.

From the foregoing it would become apparent that once again the concept of *Rasa* (or emotion in poetry) is gaining recognition in the west and east. It is emerging that the accomplishment of *Rasa* (*rasaniṣpatti*) is that universal theory of poetry on the basis of which a thorough evaluation of the creative literature of any country and any period becomes possible. The hub of the *Rasa* theory is the basic tendency of human consciousness -

feelings/emotions/passion, which can never be absent or lacking. The basis of *Rasa* is the total human being and the inherent instincts of love and hate, attraction and repulsion. Recognising this total human as the ultimate truth, the *Rasa* Theory continues on its path of development. As long as 'man' and his basic instincts/tendencies exist, the existence of the *Rasa* Theory too, is inevitable. The need for a re-evaluation of the literature of Mahākavi Kālidāsa on the basis of the *Rasa* Theory in new contexts thus becomes self-evident.

METHODOLOGY

From the foregoing it becomes clear that an analysis of the works of Mahākavi Kālidāsa, who was the leading poet of the *Rasa* tradition, on the basis of the *Rasa* theory, is in the present time not only relevant but also necessary. The question arises as to what methodology ought to be employed for a study of this nature ? The greatest problem confronting scholars of Kālidāsa is that the great poet did not record anything about his poetry. The other difficulty is that others have written so much on Kālidāsa that it is virtually impossible to recognise the real Kālidāsa in them. In these circumstances the researcher has undertaken to look for the truth through the works of Kālidāsa. In order to limit the scope of this study to manageable proportions, the principle of "*Sthalipulākanyāya*" has been applied - the examination of a small portion of the works of Kālidāsa would enable one to judge the entire *corpus* of his writing.

Thus Kālidāsa's supreme dramatic creation *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* has been chosen. But prior to applying the text of the *Rasa* Theory to *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*, it would be necessary to cast a glance to the origin and development of the *Rasa* Theory. Therefore the second chapter of this

thesis will deal concisely with the various limits, processes and aspects of *Rasa*. In the third chapter, an examination of Kālidāsa's personality and works has been carried out, so that a better understanding of his approach to *Rasa* becomes possible.

The fourth chapter constitutes the crux of this thesis. A sympathetic yet critical uncovering of the accomplishment of the various *Rasas* (*rasaniṣpattī*) in *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* constitutes the body of this chapter. The final chapter contains the conclusions of this project.

With the *Rasa* theory as a central point, a detailed study of *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* is the objective of the research. Whereas internal evidence of the literature will provide the essence of this study, relevant literature on the subject will also be examined.

CHAPTER TWO

THE RASA THEORY

INTRODUCTION

Mahākavi Kālidāsa was an ardent follower of *rasavāda* (school which believes that *Rasa*, or sentiment, is the soul of poetry), which has given him an exalted place in the world's literary heritage. Before looking at Kālidāsa's deployment of the *Rasas* which give his works their spectacular appeal, it would be appropriate and needful to gain some insight into *Rasa Siddhanta* (Theory of *Rasa*). This will also demonstrate why Kālidāsa's *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* is probably the greatest work of dramatic literary art in the world, adored and enacted throughout the centuries. This may also lend substance to the view that aesthetic experience, called *rasānubhūti* by the Indian savants, is transcendental, living beyond experience of material sense objects, living beyond time and space. Vālmīki who, in his *Rāmāyaṇa* evoked *Karuṇa Rasa* (pathos) as the basic sentiment of his work, does so through his *śoka-śloka* (couplets of grief) combination and immortalises the story of Rāma as a result of *Rasa*.

Whilst philosophers and literary critics have been engaging in defining the nature and function of poetry (and art in general) in the material world, some have devoted greater attention to the actual impact or effect of a literary or dramatic work on the individual. This entails an analysis of the mental/ psychological processes set in motion on hearing a poem or witnessing a play on the stage. This process of examining the aesthetic experience through the principal feelings (*sthāyibhāvas*) of human nature (such as love, anger, pity) is a commendable contribution of the Indian

philosophers to the discourse on the literary heritage of humanity. Western psychology of art which is an integral part of western aesthetics gives greater emphasis to Behaviourism and externally observable phenomena. The West ignored the inner world of subjective experience, placing greater emphasis on the work of art itself, rather than the impact it has on readers. The following gives an insight into the main trend in literary criticism in the 20th century. Commenting on T.S. Eliot's dictum on depersonalisation of poetry and escape from emotion, Selden and Widdowson (1993 : 12) state :-

The poet becomes a kind of impersonal catalyst of experience, a 'medium' not of his or her 'consciousness' but of that which in the end makes up the 'medium' itself - the poem - and our sole object of interest.

However, Aristotle's definition of tragedy in his *Poetica* speaks of catharsis of emotions which are evoked by a tragedy performed on stage. This is what he has to say :-

Tragedy, then, is an imitation of some action that is important, entire, and of a proper magnitude - by language, embellished and rendered pleasurable, but by different means in different parts - in the way, not of narration, but of action - effecting through pity and terror the correction and refinement of such passions . (Davis 1965 : 62)

This process was seen as a paradox and this debate is continued in the *Rasa* theory where it is questioned how the depiction or invocation of pathos can finally lead to a state of aesthetic pleasure or bliss (*ānanda*). More will be said of this later.

Aristotle's aforesaid definition points to the deliberate artistic effort in the process of bringing about catharsis or purging of the emotions. This view

stood the test of time and was adopted by Sigmund Freud who substituted the dream play for the stage play to achieve the catharsis of emotions. In more recent times, since the definition of tragedy was formulated to serve as the *raison d'etre* of poetry, thinkers in the West touched on other aspects which were an integral part of the *Rasa* theory, e.g. George Santayana (who believed in the hedonistic or pleasure theory) discussed eroticism in the aesthetic field, asserting that sex is not the only element involved in the erotic experience. *Rasa siddhānta* categorises the erotic element, *Śṛṅgāra*, to include passions and emotions encompassing *Vātsalya* (love for offspring), as well as devotion to God. This could be regarded as a natural progression to the mystical content of the aesthetic experience: The Indian view is that the poetic experience is ultimately transcendental, the *Kavyānubhūti* or *Rasānubhūti* is *Brahmāsvāda Sahodara* or *Brahmānanda Sahodara* (akin to divine or *Brahmic* bliss). Schopenhauer, the German philosopher, was a mystic and this could explain his love of Indian philosophy and literature. His statement on the solace he experienced from reading the *Upaniṣads* is known to all students of philosophy.

The foregoing draws attention to the fact that up to the 20th century western thinkers have paid attention to the subjective, emotional aspects of the aesthetic experience, except when rejected and obfuscated by modern Marxists (as well as ancient materialistic *Cārvakas* in India). For Indian literature in Sanskrit, as well as the modern Indian languages, the *Rasa* Theory has been a guiding light to the poetic creativity. Only in the 1960's with the impact of newly developed Western literary theories did the tendency develop to shift away from the *Rasa* theory.

The dilemma of the New Poetry in India is expressed thus by Pushpa Agrawal (Ed: Rajmal Bora 1983 : 250) :-

The environment in which New Poetry arose, and its present situation differ. Where New Poetry creates a dilemma in the individual, it also proves the validity of poetry by bringing about reconciliation. For this purpose a change in the traditional interpretation of *Rasānubhūti* is necessary.

While Agrawal points to the problem, she affirms the role of *Rasa*, suggesting a new approach to interpreting the experience of *Rasa*.

The probable cause of the above aversion to the *Rasa* Theory may be found in its insistence on the transcendental nature of *rasānubhūti* (the poetic experience). The Indian poets and philosophers engaged in the enquiry : What is the soul of poetry ? i.e. what is it that makes it worth pursuing ? Six schools of thought arose, each trying to answer the question, "What is the soul of poetry ?" These were *Rasa* (sentiment), *Dhvani* (sense of word), *Alaṅkāra* (decorative or figurative language), *Riti* (style, diction), *Vakrokti* (indirect), and *Aucitya* (decorum). Of these only the *Rasa* principle encountered the psychological aspects of feelings/emotions (*bhāva*) and their transformation into *Rasa* (sentiments, flavour, taste) through the poetic experience.

Maurice Winternitz, one of the first western scholars to give an objective account of Indian literature wrote in his book *A History of Indian Literature Vol III : Part I* (1963 : 12)

In this doctrine of sentiments (*rasa*) is no doubt to be found a remarkable system of Aesthetics, in the same way as a valuable piece of psychology is contained in its doctrine of mental disposition (*bhāva*).

Winternitz continues that the word "*Rasa*" possibly means taste - in the general sense that is understood in the *ṣaḍ* (six) *rasas* of Indian culture.

These six *rasas* are : *kaṭu* (pungent); *amla* (sour); *madhura* (sweet); *lavaṇa* (salty); *tikta* (bitter); and *kaṣāya* (astringent). In the poetic sense, however, these become translated into the effects of the activation of the principal or dominant emotions (*sthāyibhāvas*). Winternitz lists the *Rasas* as *Śṛṅgāra* (love); *Hāsyā* (humour); *Karuṇa* (pity); *Raudra* (terror); *Vīra* (heroism); *Bhayānaka* (fear); *Bibhatsa* (aversion) and *Adbhūta* (astonishment).

Just as Aristotle's definition of tragedy enjoyed respect in western literary theory, so does Bharata's aphorism on *Rasa* in the Indian context :-

vibhāva-anubhāva-vyābhicāri-saṅyogād rasa-niṣpattiḥ

out of the combination (*saṅyoga*) of determinants (*vibhāvas*), ensuants (*anubhāvas*) and transitories (*vyābhicāribhāvas*) the basic emotion known as *rasa* is manifested (*niṣpatti*). (*Nāṭyāśāstra* : I.6.32)

This *sūtra* of Bharata which will be analysed in detail below explains the accomplishment of *Rasa*, or the transformation of the feelings or emotions through the poetic art into poetic sentiment.

While Bharata formulated the process of the accomplishment of *Rasa* (*rasa niṣpatti*) he was not the first to think of the concept. Mention has already been made of Vālmīki. His utterance made in anger, caused by pity, made him realize that he had out of his emotions uttered a verse of poetry. The effect of pity (pathos) on the human mind is indeed powerful. This could have led to the conclusion that of the 8-10 *Rasas* accepted by various *ācāryas* (thinkers), *Karuṇa Rasa* (pity) is the **only** or **most** significant *Rasa*.

G.K.Bhat (1984 : 19), a modern Indian scholar, explains *Rasa* thus :

Rasa denotes the emotional content, the potential of aesthetic experience: for a reader or spectator, *rasa* is relish of the emotional experience presented through the art-data.

We find the use of the word *Rasa* in many sources. The origination of the word *Rasa* is found in the *Ṛgveda* as well as the *Ayurveda*. It is also found in the *Upaniṣads*, in a sense of the "essence" or "savour". Finally it is found in the Epics eg. *Rāmāyaṇa*. We can further trace how *Rasa* develops in the *Atharvaveda* where it is found in the sense that we use it today.

Sankaran (1973 : 1) states :-

The History of the meaning of '*Rasa*' during the Vedic Period affords an explanation and prepares the ground for its use by writers of Literary Criticism from Bharata downward to signify the 'aesthetic pleasure' or the thrill invariably accompanied by joy that the audience experiences while witnessing the skilful enactment of a play rendered highly appealing to it through excellent poetry, music and action.

The history of '*Rasa*' is, in fact, traced from the *Ṛgveda* where it is generally used in the sense of the "juice" or sap of the soma plant e.g. *dadhānanaḥ kalaśe rasam* (IX. 63.13), *yasya te madyam rasam* (IX. 65. 15). In (III. 48. 1) it denotes water and in (VII. 72. 13.) it refers to milk e.g. *rasa dadhīta vṛṣabham* (apply heat to milk) and flavour e.g. *bharaddhenu rasavacchitriye payaḥ* (*Rgveda* : V.44.13.).

In the *Atharvaveda* the usage is extended to the sap of grain, *āhārṣam dhānyam rasam* and *Rasa* is also found here in the sense of "savour" or "taste", *tīvro raso madhuprcāmarāṅgam* (III.13.15). Sankaran continues :-

During the Upaniṣadic period its sense of the 'essential element' in plants or grain loses its particular character and changes into the 'essential element' or the 'essence' alone e.g. *prāṇo hi vā aṅgānām rasaḥ*, Life breath or the vital air is the essence of the limbs (of the body).

(Bṛhadāraṇyaka : I.3.13) (1973 : 2)

In the *Chāṇḍogya Upaniṣad* I.1.2 and IV.7.4 'Rasa' is used in the sense of "savour" or "taste" e.g. *jihvyā hi rasān vijānāti* - knows the taste by the tongue. (1973 : 2). The *Upaniṣads* thus provided both types of meaning to *Rasa*, relating to "essence" and "taste".

It is noteworthy that in two places e.g.(i) in the *Taittirīyopaniṣad* (II.7.1) *raso vai saḥ, rasam hyevāyam labdhānandi bhavati* and (ii) in the *Maitreyi Upaniṣad* (V.2) *etadvai sattvasya rūpam, tatsattvameveritam rasaḥ, sa samprāsraṇata* ...there is combination of both its senses, and it refers to 'essence' *par excellence* and to the highest Taste or Experience accompanied by a sense of joy.

(Sankaran 1973 : 2)

Hence *Rasa* implies the Supreme Reality and Eternal Bliss which was the Upaniṣadic seer's goal. The early thinkers of literary criticism seized this concept of *Rasa* and gave the aesthetic pleasure of literature the same status as the Supreme Bliss. Thus the *sahṛdaya* or spectator with a receptive, responsive heart experiences the same bliss when watching a play enacted by skilled actors.

The origin of the *Rasa* Theory dates back to the '*Ādikavi*' or 'first poet', Vālmīki who is the father of classical Sanskrit poetry. An incident that occurred in his life, thousands of years ago on the banks of the Tamasa river in Uttar Pradesh, profoundly influenced not only Vālmīki but through his work, the whole corpus of Sanskrit literature. The incident is related in the

second canto of the *Bālakāṇḍa* of the famous epic, the *Rāmāyaṇa*, and this explains the origin of the *śloka* as used in the *Rāmāyaṇa* and subsequent classical works in Sanskrit and reveals the earliest germs of the conception of 'Rasa' according to the later writers.

The incident which influenced Vālmīki so deeply is as follows :-

When sage Vālmīki, who lived in a hermitage, went out into the forest in search of wood and grass for the sacrificial fire he came upon a pair of *krauñca* birds (cranes). While the birds were ecstatically chirping and cooing in love sport on the branch of a tree the male bird was suddenly shot down and killed by a hunter. Sensing the loss of her mate, the female began to grieve in a heart-rending manner. Feeling that the act of the fowler was indeed sinful, especially since the birds were sporting as a pair, "his heart was touched with a deep feeling of pity for her grief; and the intense pathos of the situation that filled his heart flowed out to find expression in the shape of that exquisite and melodious *śloka*" (Sankaran 1973 : 6).

*mā niṣāda pratiṣṭhām tvamagamaḥ śāśvatīḥ samā,
yat krauñcamithunādekamavadhīḥ kāmamohitam.*

may you not have peace of mind for endless years, O fowler! since you killed one of the pair of cranes, infatuated with passion.

(*Rāmāyaṇa : Bālakāṇḍa II-15*)

When the sage realised that the words of imprecation that emerged from his lips were in metrical form he exclaimed :-

śokārtasya pravṛto me śloko bhavatu nānyathā"

Let this utterance made by me while I was stricken with grief be accepted as poetry and nothing else

(*Rāmāyaṇa : Bālakāṇḍa II-18*)

This event led to the composition of the *Rāmāyaṇa* by Vālmīki which was blessed thus :-

*yāvat sthāsyanti girayaḥ saritaśca mahītale
tāvad rāmāyaṇakathā lokeṣu pracariṣyati*

The theme of the *Rāmāyaṇa* will continue to be popular in all the three worlds so long as the mountain and rivers will remain on the surface of the earth.

(*Rāmāyaṇa* : *Bālakāṇḍa* II : 36-37)

Vālmīki was in this instance overpowered by pathos. Although Vālmīki enjoys the title of Ādikavi because of his work being the forerunner of Sanskrit Classical "*Kāvya*", the concept of *Rasa* is not unknown to the earlier period.

Tracing the history of the meaning of '*Rasa*' during the Vedic period (supra) we find that it denotes "aesthetic pleasure". It is the thrill or joy experienced by an audience while witnessing the skilful enactment of a play.

DEVELOPMENT OF RASA IN SANSKRIT DRAMA AND POETRY

The sage Bharata is regarded as the first *Ācārya* (teacher, scholar) of the *Rasa Sampradāya* - that school of Indian aesthetics which accorded *Rasa* the status of the Soul of Poetry. Even if Rajaśekhara's assertion that Nandikeśvara was the first expounder of *Rasa* is accepted (*Kāvya-mīmāṃsā* Ch.I) it was Bharata who formulated the *Rasa Siddhānta* (theory) in a definite form. This does not detract from the fact that there were thinkers prior to Bharata who knew and discussed *Rasa*. Bharata himself in the sixth and seventh chapters of his *Nāṭyaśāstra* cited the maxims of his predecessors

in his discussion of *Rasas* (sentiments) and *Bhāvas* (emotions). Bharata's delicate and sensitive delineation of *Rasa* in the context of drama makes his contribution entirely original and engaging. It is his view that *Rasa* is so vital to the act of dramatic creativity that no meaning can proceed from it in its absence. Bharata believed that the transforming or causal elements of *Rasa* were made up of the following components, as made famous in the following *sūtra* (aphorism):-

*nahi rasādṛte kaścīdarthaḥ pravartate
tatra vibhāvānubhāva vyabhicārisaṅyogād rasaniṣpattiḥ*

No meaning can be derived without *rasa*, and for the accomplishment of *rasa*, the *vibhāvas*, *anubhāvas* and *vyabhicāribhāvas* unite.

(*Nāṭyaśāstra* : I : 6-32)

Although Bharata commented on the above *sūtra*, he did not impart sufficient clarity to the concepts *saṅyogāt* (combination, union) and *niṣpatti* (accomplishment, transformation). This state of ambiguity produced a vast array of theories with regard to the key concepts. Bharata himself explains the idea thus :-

*yathā hi nānā vyañjanauṣadhidravyasaṅyogāt rasaniṣpattiḥ
tathā nānābhāvopagamād rasaniṣpattiḥ,*

Just as the mixing of jaggery and other ingredients produces a potable substance (drink), in the same way the principal or dominant emotions, (*sthāyibhāvas*) nurtured by the various (transitory) emotions are transformed into *Rasa*.

(*Nāṭyaśāstra* : Vol.I : 6)

It is named *Rasa* because it is tasted (*Āsvādyamānatvāt*). To the question how is (poetic) *rasa* tasted? Bharata's response is that just as in the physical

world a person enjoys the taste (of the *Rasas*) in expertly prepared foods, experiencing pleasure, likewise the receptive (*sahṛdaya*) spectator tastes and enjoys the *sthāyibhāvas* (emotions) experienced through a multiplicity of *bhāvas* and *abhinayas* (acting, gestures). (*Nāṭyaśāstra* : I : 6)

V.N.Mishra (1992 : 27) also describes *Rasa* as the emotional/passionate transformation of heard poetry (*kāvyaśrvana kī rāgātmak pariṇati*).

KĀVYARASA (RASA IN POETRY)

It is believed that the concept of *Rasa* was applied exclusively to drama; and that theoretical discussion of *Rasa* in poetry came much later. The *Agni Purāṇa* is said to be the first *locus* for the discussion of *Kāvya Rasa*. The *Agni Purāṇa* says :-

vāgvaidagdhya pradhāne rasa evatra jīvitam (Agni Purāṇa 1/33)

Although poetry consists in the felicitous use of words ; *rasa* is called the soul of poetry,

Viśvanātha cited this in his *Sāhityadarpaṇa*. The *Agni Purāṇa* has provided an important contribution to *Rasa Siddhānta*. An interesting insight in the *Agni Purāṇa* is the concept that *Śṛṅgāra* is not the highlighting of lust or passion but an absolute, transcendental kind of love engendered by self-knowledge born in the aesthetic process which delivers the self to a spiritual peak (*śṛṅga*). The *Agnipurāṇa* hence provides valuable bases for both dramatic and poetic *rasa-siddhānta*. Following the *Agnipurāṇa*, Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta recognised the significance of *Rasa* founded in poetry.

However, *Ānandavardhana* did not accord *Rasa* the status of "soul of poetry". *Abhinavagupta* extended greater status to *Rasa*, stating that *Rasa* is the life of poetry (*rasanaiva sarvam jīvati kāvyam*) and that poetry devoid of *Rasa* is nothing (*nahi tacchūnyam kāvyam kimcidasti*) (*Dhvanvyaloka Locana Abhinavagupta 2.2*)

The author of *Sāhityadarpaṇa*, *Viśvanātha Mahāpātra*, who enunciated the phrase "*vākyam rasātmakam kāvyam*" (an expression that has *Rasa* is poetry - hence *Rasa* is the soul of poetry) placed *Rasa* on its ultimate high pedestal by describing it as capable of being experienced by the *sahṛdaya* (receptive heart), and as the transcendental or other-worldly element of the poetic creation

RASANIṢPATTI (ACCOMPLISHMENT OF RASA)

The standard formula regarding the accomplishment of *Rasa* (*Rasaniṣpatti*) is Bharata's famous *sūtra* :-

vibhāva-anubhāva-vyābhicāri-sañyogād rasa-niṣpattiḥ

out of the combination (*sañyoga*) of determinants (*vibhāvas*), ensuants (*anubhāvas*) and transitories (*vyābhicāribhāvas*) the basic emotion known as *rasa* is manifested (*niṣpatti*).

The terms *Sañyogād* and *Rasaniṣpatti* have generated much debate and commentary. As a result four major theories were propounded by *Bhaṭṭa Lollaṭa*, *Śaṅkuka*, *Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka* and *Abhinavagupta*; all of whom expounded Bharata's *sūtra*.

BHAṬṬALOLLAṬA

The original works of Bhaṭṭalollaṭa, Śaṅkuka, and Bhaṭṭanāyaka are not extant. The gist of their views is provided by Abhinavagupta in his *Abhinavabhāratī* and Mammaṭa in his *Kāvya prakāśa*. Bhaṭṭalollaṭa's theory is described as *Utpattivāda* (origination), Śaṅkuka's as *Anumitivāda* (inference), Bhaṭṭanāyaka's as *Bhuktivāda* (enjoyment) and Abhinavagupta's as *Abhivyaktivāda* (expression). The *Agnipurāṇa* refers to another tradition in which *Rasa* is analysed from the point of view of fine and plastic arts. Even in this tradition there is consideration of *vibhāva* and other aspects of the aesthetic transformation. These theories are analysed later in the chapter. At this juncture it would be useful to examine a few other related concepts.

THE BLISS (ĀNANDA) THEORY OF RASA

Nandikeśvara, the authoritative propounder of *Rasa*, proposed the original viewpoint that *Rasa* is blissful in nature. Listening to music or watching dance or drama produces a kind of pleasure or bliss which is other worldly (*Alaukika*) i.e. transcendental. While other sources described *Rasas* as *Brahmāsvāda Sahodara* (akin to the *Brahmic* Bliss), Nandikeśvara places poetic *Rasa* above the bliss of the *Brahmic* experience. The tasting of *Rasa* is this bliss (*ānanda*). The very same bliss is experienced in all circumstances, whether the plot of the drama conveys pathos (*Karuṇa*) or passion (*Śṛṅgāra*). Drama, dance and song are all *Rasa*; and this *Rasa* is bliss (*ānanda*). Nandikeśvara perhaps had not anticipated questions that would arise - as to how the depiction of pathos, or something odious could produce bliss. But in the same way as Aristotle's tragedy was supposed to effect a purging of the emotions, thereby leaving the mind in a state of equanimity

which could be interpreted as bliss, the Indian scholars also accepted this theory of catharsis (*virecana*). The *rasavādins* differed in the sense that the process of accomplishment of *Rasa* (*rasaniṣpatti*) could be caused by more factors than just pity and terror; and further that there was no "purging" of emotions but transformation in a subtle, imperceptible way, where there does not seem to be a dividing line or point of departure between the activation of a particular type of emotion and the evocation of the *Rasa* which leads to bliss. This could be attributed to the fact that the emotions (*sthāyibhāvas*) are always present, in dormant form. Human emotions are evoked in various ways; thus the transformation of emotions into sentiments (*Rasas*) occurs constantly.

Nandikeśvara further provided a very enlightened and insightful view about the social aspects of *Rasa* - enjoyment. He said that the contribution of music with dance (*nṛtya*) induces the accomplishment of *Rasa* at a swifter pace, than in drama or poetry. Thus dance, drama and music were accessible to all, irrespective of profession, educational level or socio-economic standing. These arts provided the same ineffable (*anirvacanīya*) joy to all. Kālidāsa also said, "*bhinnarucerjanasya bahudhāpyakam samāradhanam*" - that people of different tastes (artistic inclination) can derive the same pleasure from drama. The democratic nature of the artistic life and the aesthetic experience thus seems to have been understood and established early in the history of Indian literature and aesthetics. As stated earlier, the only qualification required for *Rasānbhūti* (aesthetic experience of the accomplishment of *Rasa*) is for the audience to have a receptive heart (*sahṛdaya*). (See Mammaṭa's discourse on *Rasa* below).

THE NUMBER OF RASAS

Amongst the various aspects of *Rasa* that need to be understood before an analysis of the process of *rasaniṣpatti* can be undertaken, the question of the number of *Rasas* is important.

Bharata and Dhanañjaya recognise eight *Rasas*. Mammaṭa also takes this view, saying in his *Kāvya prakāśa* :-

Aṣṭau nāṭya rasāḥ smṛtāḥ

eight *rasas* are mentioned in drama

(*Kāvya prakāśa* : 4-29)

But he goes on to say

kāvya tu śānto'pi navamo rasa

OR

A ninth *rasa* called *Śānta* is also present in poetry.

nirvedasthāyibhāvākhyāḥ śānto'pi navamo rasāḥ

Quietism also is the ninth *rasa* with Detachment as its basic emotion.

(*Kāvya prakāśa* : 4.35ab)

The *Agnipurāṇa* recognises nine *Rasas*, and Abhinavagupta also proposes that there are nine *Rasas* including *Śānta* in drama and that the *sūtra* :-

aṣṭau nāṭya rasāḥ smṛtāḥ

is merely a sub-characteristic (*upalakṣaṇa*). Abhinavagupta's and Mammaṭa's views support the existence of a ninth (*śānta*) *Rasa* in poetry and drama. Rudraṭa postulates a tenth *Rasa* called *Preyān* (Pleasure).

(*Kāvya lāṅkāra* : 12.3)

Rūpagosvāmi strongly propounded the view that the principal *Rasa* is the *Bhakti Rasa* (devotional) called *Madhura Rasa* (*Madhurakhyo bhaktirasah*)
(*Bhaktirasāmṛtsindhu* 1.5-6)

Ācārya Viśvanātha in his *Sāhityadarpaṇa* (3.251) postulated a tenth *Rasa* called *Vātsalya* (love for child). This has now become subsumed under *Śṛṅgāra* (*Vātsalya Śṛṅgāra*). The acāryas have determined that *Sneha*, *Bhakti* and *Vātsalya* are aspects of *Rati* (love) - the *sthāyi bhāva* or principal emotion which transforms into *Śṛṅgāra Rasa*. It is their view that the love and affection of equals is characterised as *sneha*; the love of a younger or junior for an elder/senior is *Bhakti* and that of an older for a younger is *Vātsalya*.

Bhoja has a separate view with regard to *Rasa*. He propounds the view that in addition to the nine *Rasas* mentioned in the *Agnipurāṇa*, three further *Rasas* exist viz. *preyāna* (pleasureable), *udātta* (sublime) and *uddhata* (haughty). The *Śānta*, *Preyāna*, *Udātta* and *Uddhata Rasas* have been conceived on the basis of the different categories of the hero (*nāyaka*). The *Dhīra-śānta* hero (grave and pacific hero) has *Śānta Rasa*, the *Dhīra-lalita* (grave and artistic), has *Preyāna Rasa*, the *Dhīrodātta* (grave and sublime), has *Udātta Rasa* and *Dhīroddhata* (grave and haughty) has *Uddhata Rasa*. Indeed, Bhoja believed in an infinity of *Rasas*, naming many additional *Rasas* in his *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa* (619-723).

A later Ācārya, Bhanudatta mentioned *Māyārasa* in his *Rasatarāṅgini*. Another Jaina Ācārya also counts *Vrīḍanaka Rasa* (*sthāyibhāva lajjā-modesty*). Thus there has been a tradition of infinite *Rasas* being enumerated in Indian poetics. The highly reputed Paṇḍitrāja Jagannātha deprecated this tendency, and, in his *Rasagaṅgadhara* (167) he says that

admitting *Rasas* such as *Bhakti* will disturb the tradition set by Bharata; and it is in the interest of Indian poetics to follow the old tradition. In view of the possible confusion arising out of a proliferation of *Rasas*, the *ācāryas* determined that eight or nine *Rasas* should be regarded as standard, with all the *Rasas* suggested by others integrated or assimilated within these eight or nine *Rasas* and *sthāyibhāvas*.

THE UNITY OF RASA (EKARASAVĀDA)

Rasa is effectively ONE, and is consciousness, considered beyond description. That consciousness (*caitanya*) or awareness is *Rasa* which manifests itself in multifarious ways according to the different emotions (*bhāvas*). The *Agnipurāṇa* describes the expression of the natural (*sahaja*) bliss of the Supreme Being or *Parabrahma* as consciousness, or *Rasa*. The first experience of this state of bliss or *Rasa* is *ahaṅkāra* (egoism). This *ahaṅkāra* is also called *Śṛṅgāra* because it conveys one to the *śṛṅga* or peak. The *Agnipurāṇa* postulates that this *Śṛṅgāra* is the principal or only *Rasa* which is perceived in different forms such as *Vīra*, *Hāsya* etc. depending on the particular *sthāyibhāvas* (principal emotions). (*Agnipurāṇa* 4/27). Bhoja followed the *Agnipurāṇa* entirely.

Abhinavagupta, on the other hand, claims that *Śānta Rasa* (quietude) is the basic *Rasa*, and other *Rasas* such as *Śṛṅgāra* are its corrupted forms (*vikṛti*). The principal *Rasa* of the *Mahābhārata* is *Śānta Rasa*.

Bhavabhūti sees *Karuṇa Rasa* (pathos) as the basic *Rasa*, and other *Rasas* are its reflection (*vivarta*). Bhavabhūti compares the situation of the *Rasas* with water : Just as the basic substance water is sometimes seen as a whirlpool,

sometimes as bubbles and at others as waves, likewise *Śṛṅgāra* and other *Rasas* derive from the root, *Karuṇa Rasa*.

In the *Uttararāmcarita* Bhavabhūti states the above in these words : -

*Eko rasaḥ karuṇa eva nimittabhedād
Bhinnaḥ pṛthak pṛthagiva śrayate vivartān,
Āvartta budbudataraṅgamayān vikarān
Ambho tatha salilameva hi tatsamastam*

(*Uttararāmcarita* III-47)

The commentator Vīrarāghava's approval of Bhavabhūti's standpoint is based on the argument that it is *Karuṇa Rasa* alone which can be experienced or tasted by the passionate as well as the ascetic (*rāgī-virāgī*). This is not possible with for example *Śṛṅgāra Rasa* : the passionate can relish *Śṛṅgāra Rasa*, but to the ascetic this would be an alien experience. This was the reason for categorizing *Karuṇa Rasa* as the (universal or omnipresent) all pervasive principal *Rasa*.

The principal *Rasa* of the *Rāmāyaṇa* is *Karuṇa*. Ānandavardhana described *Karuṇa* as the soul or essence of poetry :

*Kāvyaśyātma sa evārthastathā cādikaveḥ purā,
Krauñcadvandva viyogotthaḥ śokaḥ ślokatvamāgataḥ
(Dhvanyāloka I-5)*

The Mahākavi, Vālmīki observed the incident of the pair of cranes, one of which was shot by a hunter. Pity welled up in his heart, and poetry flowed out of it in the form of pathos (*karuṇa*). That pathos or *karuṇa* is the essence or soul (*ātma*) of poetry (*kāvya*). It is this *karuṇa* which assumes different tastes as determined by the particular emotions (*sthāyibhāvas*) that are evoked.

It is noteworthy that the two foremost works of the literature of India viz. the *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata* employed *Karuṇa* and *Śānta Rasa* respectively as the vehicle of their message. This becomes important if one considers the state of human society, especially in the present age. While the two Indian epics portrayed heroic wars and acts of passion and violence, their underlying message has been of compassion and peace. Indeed, it is this quality in these works that have ensured their eternal popularity. Brahma's boon for the perpetuation of the *Rāmāyaṇa* (supra) presupposed a stable world order and the continuity of the natural order.

Rūpagosvāmi and other Vaiśnava *ācāryas* have propounded the theory that *Bhakti Rasa* is the king (*Rasa-Rāja*) of *Rasas*, other *Rasas* being corrupted forms.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF RASA

The emotional experiences an individual undergoes in particular situations led the *ācāryas* to enumerate eight types of emotions (*sthāyibhāvas*)

The *Kāvya prakāśa* of Mammaṭa (451) mentions

1. *Rati* (love, lust)
2. *Hāsa* (laughter)
3. *Śoka* (sorrow)
4. *Krodha* (anger, wrath)
5. *Utsāha* (action)
6. *Bhaya* (fear)
7. *Jugupsa* (revulsion, disgust)
8. *Vismaya* (wonder).

The *Kāvya prakāśa* also mentions *nirveda* (quiescence), a ninth *sthāyibhāva*, thus making for 9 *Rasas* as follows :-

<i>STHĀYIBHĀVA</i> (Emotion)	<i>RASA</i> (Emotion transformed into Sentiment, Taste.)
1. <i>Rati</i>	<i>Śṛṅgāra</i>
2. <i>Hāsa</i>	<i>Hāsyā</i>
3. <i>Śoka</i>	<i>Karuṇā</i>
4. <i>Krodha</i>	<i>Raudra</i>
5. <i>Utsāha</i>	<i>Vīra</i>
6. <i>Bhaya</i>	<i>Bhayānaka</i>
7. <i>Jugupsa (ghṛṇā)</i>	<i>Bībhatsa</i>
8. <i>Vismaya</i>	<i>Adbhuta</i>
9. <i>Nirveda (Śama)</i>	<i>Śānta</i>

THE *STHĀYIBHĀVAS* AND PSYCHOLOGY

The *sthāyibhāvas* have been described on the basis of psychology in literary science. Only the method of describing them differs between the old literary science and modern psychological science. What psychology calls "emotions" was known as *sthāyibhāva* to the *ācāryas*.

The psychologist Mc Dougall accepted fourteen types of basic instincts and fourteen corresponding emotions. Ten of these instincts and emotions correspond to the ten *Rasas* and *sthāyibhāvas* respectively, if *Śānta* and *Vātsalya* are accepted as the ninth and tenth *Rasas*. This provides adequate evidence of the scientific validity of the *Rasa* theory. The remaining four of Mc Dougall's basic instincts viz. i) quest for food; ii) hoarding (collecting); iii) herding (or living in groups); and iv) creativity do not resort under *Rasa*,

and their classification as emotions is also questionable. The ancient Indian thinkers accepted nine types of emotions and their corresponding *Rasas* based on ancient psychological knowledge - (*Vātsalya* was subsumed under *Śṛṅgāra*) (table supra).

BHARATA'S SŪTRA ON RASANIṢPATTI AND THE VARIOUS COMPONENTS OF THE PROCESS

Bharata's *sūtra* :-

vibhāva-anubhāva-vyābhicāri-sañyogād rasa-niṣpattiḥ

describes three elements that combine in order to accomplish *rasa*; these are *vibhāva*, *anubhāva* and *vyābhicāri* or *sañcāri bhāvas*. This means that these three elements act together to "trigger off" or evoke the *sthāyibhāvas* or emotions which are dormant in all persons.

1. VIBHĀVA

The *vibhāvas* constitute the external cause of the experience of *Rasa*. Two categories of *vibhāvas* may be classified : The *ālambana vibhāva* and the *uddīpana vibhāva*. The *ālambana* or object of one's attention is the proximate cause of the accomplishment of *Rasa*. When Duṣyanta beholds Śakuntalā, and she looks at him, both experience attraction or love. The spectator experiences the same *Rasa* on beholding the two on the stage.

The *uddīpana* (highlighting) *vibhāva* intensifies the passions or emotions arising in the *ālambanas*. The *uddīpana* is in the surroundings eg. moonlight, a beautiful park and solitude which aid the accomplishment of *Śṛṅgāra* or love in Duṣyanta and Śakuntalā. Similarly forbidding

surroundings, roaring of dangerous animals etc. could be the *uddīpana* for the *Rasa* of fear - *Bhayānaka*. The different *Rasas* have their own *vibhāvas* (*ālambanas* and *uddīpanas*).

2. ANUBHĀVA

Whereas the *vibhāvas* are the external causal factors in the accomplishment of *Rasa*, the *anubhāvas* have their origin internally, in the characters. The *anubhāvas* arise from the inner experience of emotions, and are manifested as the mental and physical expression of that inner process. Bharata in his *Nāṭyaśāstra* described *anubhāvas* thus :-

*vāgaṅgābhīnayeṇa yatastvartho'nubhāvīyate,
śākhāṅgopāṅgasañyuktastvanubhāvastataḥ smṛtaḥ.*

anubhāva is that which makes one experience the internal *sthāyibhāvas* eg. 'rati' in an outward or external sense by means of acting, in words and gestures). (*Nāṭyaśāstra* : VII-5)

According to the foregoing the *anubhāvas* serve a valid purpose only in drama or acting. The *anubhāvas* also, like the *vibhāvas*, differ in the various *Rasas*. The *anubhāva* "smīta" (smiling) may be appropriate in *Śṛṅgāra*; whereas for *Bhayānaka* (fear) we may find the acts of trembling or horripilation more apt.

3. VYABHICĀRIBHĀVA

The *sthāyibhāvas* (permanent or principal emotions) are aroused or evoked by specific circumstances or convergence of occurrences. The *sthāyibhāvas* which are always present in the individual are heightened or fortified by the *vyabhicāribhāvas* or *sañcāribhāvas* (transitory emotions). There are approximately thirty three *vyabhicāribhāvas* now accepted by the scholars

and specific *vyabhicāribhāvas* are associated with certain *sthāyibhāvas*. Love, Laughter, Sorrow, Anger, Action, Fear, Disgust, and Wonder are the 8 enumerated principal emotions. Some of the thirty three transitory emotions are :-

(1) Detachment (or Despair) (2) Weakness (3) Joy (4) Envy (5) Fright and Excitement.

STHĀYIBHĀVA
(Permanent Emotion)

1. Love
2. Laughter
3. Anger
4. Fear
5. Wonder

VYABHICĀRIBHĀVA
(Transitory Emotion)

- Detachment
- Joy
- Envy
- Fright
- Excitement

MAMMAṬA'S DISCOURSE ON RASA

Mammaṭa in his *Kāvya prakāśa* (sūtras 27, 28) explains the transformation of emotions into *Rasa* in the following way :-

In the material world, the cause, effect and auxiliary (*sahakāri*-collaborator) elements of the principal emotions (*sthāyibhāvas*), when applied to drama or poetry, are named *vibhāva*, *anubhāva* and *vyabhicāribhāva*, and that *sthāyibhāva* which is expressed/evoked by the *vibhāvas* etc. is called *rasa*.

Mammaṭa's commentary on the *vibhāvas*, *anubhāvas* and *vyabhicāribhāvas* is essentially the same as above. He described the *sthāyibhāvas* in detail, and it is apt to consider his views at this stage.

The *sthāyibhāvas* (emotion) are mental or emotional productions of the human personality; and their seat is traditionally the heart (*hṛdaya*). Hence the process of *rasaniṣpatti* is possible in the *sa-hṛdaya*, one with a (receptive) heart.

These emotions lie dormant in the heart in an instinctual form. They are aroused at certain opportune times with the convergence of appropriate factors. These are permanently established in the heart - hence the epithet *sthāyi* (permanent) for these *bhāvas* (emotions). Mammaṭa mentions the eight *sthāyibhāvas* accepted by Bharata, and also acknowledges *Nirveda* as the *sthāyibhāva* of *Śānta Rasa* mentioned in the *Agnipurāṇa*. The *sthāyibhāvas* find expression through the *vibhāvas*, *anubhāvas* and *vyabhicāribhāvas*. The process of these *vibhāvas* etc. are as described above.

BHARAṬA'S SŪTRA AND ITS COMMENTATORS

The key to the theory of *Rasa* and its impact on Indian poetry and drama is Bharata's *sūtra* from his *Nāṭyaśāstra* :-

vibhāva-anubhāva-vyābhicāri-saṅyogād rasa-niṣpattiḥ

out of the combination (saṅyoga) of determinants (*vibhāvas*), ensuants (*anubhāvas*) and transitorics (*vyabhicāribhāvas*) the basic emotion known as *rasa* is manifested (*niṣpatti*).

The preceding paragraphs have explained the concepts of *vibhāva*, *anubhāva* and *vyabhicāribhāvas*. Four leading commentators on Bharata's *sūtra* shall be discussed below, in order to assess their contribution to the development of the theory of *Rasa*.

1. BHAṬṬALOLLAṬA AND HIS THEORY OF UTPATTIVĀDA (Origination / Causation).

Bhaṭṭalollaṭa's contribution to the *Rasa* theory is in the context of two words in Bharata's *sūtra* i.e. *sañyoga* and *niṣpatti* .

1) *SAN̄YOGA* : Bhaṭṭalollaṭa assigned three definitions to the term

Sañyoga :-

- a) *utpādyā- utpādaka bhāva* (production/causation)
- b) *gamyā - gamaka bhāva* (combination/union)
- c) *poṣyā - poṣaka bhāva* (nurture/fortification)

1) *NIṢPATTI* : Even the Concept of *Niṣpatti* has been assigned three meanings :

- a) *utpatti* (origin,causation)
- b) *pratīti* (semblance)
- c) *upaciti* (nurture/fortification)

Bhaṭṭalollaṭa uses all three definitions of the two terms, in different combinations, explaining the different "phases" or aspects of the process of *rasaniṣpatti* (accomplishment of *Rasa* or the transformation of the *sthāyibhāva* into *Rasa*). It would be profitable to examine these stages in order to grasp the essence of the *Rasa* theory.

The *sañyoga* (union) of the *vibhāva* (surroundings) with the *sthāyibhāva* (permanent emotion) occurs in the *utpādyā-utpādaka* relationship where the *Rasa* is *utpādyā* (product) and the surroundings the *utpādaka* (producer). Hence the *sañyoga* here produces *Rasa* in the *utpatti* mode

(causation/origination). The terms *utpādyā-utpādaka* and *utpatti* qualify the specific relationships between *bhāvas* and *sthāyibhāvas*.

When the *anubhāvas* and the *sthāyibhāvas* combine (in one and the same process with *vibhāvas* and *vyabhicāribhāvas*) to produce *Rasa*, the *sañyoga* is described as *gamyā-gamaka bhāva*; and the *Rasa* is produced on the *pratīti* (semblance) mode.

When the *vyabhicāribhāvas* combine with the *sthāyibhāvas*, these *vyabhicāribhāvas* are in a *poṣya/poṣaka* (nurture) relationship or role; and the accomplishment of *Rasa* is described as *upaciti* (nurture, fortification) because the *vyabhicāribhāvas* serve to heighten or strengthen the *sthāyibhāvas* during the experience of a particular *Rasa*.

The foregoing has combined *sañyoga* and *niṣpatti* in three different sets of circumstances. These refer to one single but complex process wherein various elements combine (*sañyoga*) producing a particular type of effect (*Rasa*). The single action and result are, however, as described in Bharata's *sūtra*. Bhaṭṭalollaṭa's theory of *utpattivāda* says that the *sthāyibhāvas* residing in the human heart are transformed into *Rasa* (*Rasa* is born or caused, originated). In this process the *vibhāvas* are the cause, the *anubhāvas* are the effect and the *vyabhicāris* are the collaborators (auxiliary). Bhaṭṭalollaṭa's theory follows Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta philosophy.

2. ŚAṆKUKA'S ANUMITIVĀDA (Inference)

Śaṅkuka's *Anumitivāda* (inference) theory of *Rasa* follows the Nyāya School of Indian Philosophy. According to this theory *Rasa* is that which is inferred

(*Anumeyā*), *niṣpatti* is *anumiti* (the process of inference), the *vibhāvas* are the means or instruments of the *anumiti* process. According to Śaṅkuka the spectator (*sahṛdaya*) is the *anumitikartā* - the one who infers. The *sthāyibhāvas* e.g. *rati* (love) reside in Duṣyanta (or any other hero). This *sthāyibhāva* is converted through the inferential process (*anumiti*) by the *vibhāvas* and assumes the form of *Rasa*.

An important contribution of Śaṅkuka through his "*Anumitivāda*" interpretation of the process of *Rasa* is the analogy of the horse in the painting - *citraturaganyāya* : when one sees a horse painted in a picture, one says "This is a horse." But this knowledge or acknowledgement of the horse in the painting is beyond the normal categories of knowledge. Thus the impression or semblance of Duṣyanta in the actor is unique and different from everyday knowledge. It is knowledge derived from *anukṛiti* (imitation, acting). This *anukṛiti* is the first stage in the process of *anumiti*. Abhinavabhāratī recorded this view of Śaṅkuka in his *Kāvya prakāśa* .

Śaṅkuka has been criticised for his theory of *anumitivāda* as the root of *Rasa* experience. Śaṅkuka's *vibhāvas* (in the spectator and the actor) are false or artificial : *Rasa* cannot be accomplished on the basis of false *vibhāva*, *anubhāva* and *vyabhicāribhāvas*. Moreover, he maintained that the basis of the *Rasa*-experience is **inference**. Knowledge or experience derived inferentially is indirect, not direct. The quality of *Rasa* (experience) possible through direct perception cannot be equalled or approximated by indirect experience. His concept of *citraturaganyāya* is also similarly decried by critics, because the animal in the painting is only a likeness, not a real animal, irrespective of what the observer considers it to be.

3. BHAṬṬANĀYAKA'S BHUKTIVĀDA (Enjoyment)

Bhaṭṭanāyaka's theory of the accomplishment of *Rasa* is named *Bhuktivāda* (from *Bhoga* - enjoyment, experience). Bhaṭṭanāyaka's philosophical affiliation is to the Sāṅkhyā School of Indian Philosophy. Hence his theory on *Rasa* is based on the Sāṅkhyā philosophy. Bhaṭṭanāyaka defines Bharata's concept of *Sañyoga* as *Bhojya - bhojakabhāva sambandha* i.e. the relationship of the object and the experiencer/enjoyer (*bhojaka*) of the *rasa niṣpatti* process. *Rasa* is evoked (accomplished) through the aforesaid relationship, by means of the *vibhāva*, *anubhāva* and *vyābhicāribhāva*. This *rasaniṣpatti* is called *bhukti* - the tasting/enjoying or experiencing of *Rasa*. The spectator or audience tastes the *Rasa* evoked by the process. In asserting his view, Bhaṭṭanāyaka condemned the theories of his predecessors, postulating that *Rasa* is neither experienced, nor does it arise nor is it expressed. It is enjoyed/tasted through the process of *bhoga*, which is sublime, joyous and tranquil.

Bhaṭṭanāyaka analysed Bhaṭṭalolaṭṭa's *utpattivāda*, rejecting it for the following reasons : He claims that Bhaṭṭalolaṭṭa erred in his conclusion that the origin and experience of *Rasa* occur in primarily the character (*anukārya*) e.g. Duṣyanta and secondarily in the actor on the stage. Both these persons (Duṣyanta and the actor) are neutral in the dramatic production. If Bhaṭṭalolaṭṭa's view is correct, then the question arises as to how the spectator experiences *Rasa*. He thus concludes that *rasaniṣpatti* through the process of *bhoga* occurs only in the spectator. Śaṅkuka acknowledges inference of *Rasa* in the neutral actor; but inferred knowledge is indirect; and therefore *rasaniṣpatti* cannot occur in the actor through indirect means, since *rasaniṣpatti* is a direct or first-hand experience.

Bhaṭṭanāyaka also does not concur with Abhinavagupta's view that the expression (*abhivyakti*) of *Rasa* occurs not in Duṣyanta or the actor, but in the spectator. He believed that the experience or manifestation of the *sthāyibhāva* (dormant permanent emotion) in the form of *Rasa* is possible neither in the actor nor in the spectator. According to Bhaṭṭanāyaka expression or manifestation of only that which is present is possible. An object exists before and after it is expressed/manifested; but *Rasa* is purely an experiential element, existing only while it is being experienced; having no existence prior to or following the experience thereof. How then can it be expressed ? Bhaṭṭanāyaka thus established his theory of *bhuktivāda* after condemning *utpattivāda*, *anumitivāda* and *abhivyaktivāda*.

Bhaṭṭanāyaka postulated three processes in the poetic experience. In order to prove the validity of his *bhuktivāda* he accepted *abhidhā* (literal meaning) and two novel concepts of *bhāvakatva* (feeling) and *bhojakatva* (enjoying). The *abhidhā* (meaning) assists in understanding the emotions of the characters (hero, heroine). The *bhāvakatva* process refines the literal meaning, de-linking it from the specific persons (hero, heroine) and universalizes it. This universalization is called *sādhāraṇīkaraṇa* in *Rasa* Theory. By means of this process the spectator becomes connected with the emotions of the characters. Through this *bhāvakatva* process the *vibhāva* (the hero etc.) become universalized in the heart of the spectator. Bhaṭṭanāyaka believed that there was *vilakṣaṇa* (an extraordinary power) beyond *abhidhā* (literal meaning) and *lakṣaṇa* (figurative meaning) - this is the *bhāvakatva* process. The process of universalization induced by the *bhāvakatva* process, which universalizes the *vibhāva*, *anubhāva* and *vyabhicāribhāva* proceeds further to universalize the *sthāyibhāva* which resides in the heart. The *sthāyibhāvas* thereafter appear before the spectator not as the emotions of Duṣyanta, but as a universalized emotion.

After this universalization, the *bhojakatva* process (enjoyment) causes the spectator to experience the *sthāyibhāvas* (permanent emotions) in the transformed form of *Rasa*. In this process the emotions e.g. *Rati* (love, passion) overcome the *rajas* (passionate) and *tamas* (dark, violent) aspects of their constitution in a surge (*udreka*) of *sattva* (sublimity). The *Rasa* tasting is thus sublime, luminous and tranquil. *Bhojakatva* is the vehicle for the tasting (*āsvādana*) of *Rasa*. An ineffable state of delight and bliss is characteristic of this experience of *Rasa*. This blissful experience is superior to all ordinary categories of pleasure. It is called "akin to the spiritual Brahmic Bliss (*Brahmānanda Sahodara*)."

Bhaṭṭanāyaka's theory may be summarised as follows : By hearing poetry or watching drama, one first understands the meaning. Then the process of *bhāvakatva* brings the spectator/audience to feel the emotions. Finally with the subjugation of the qualities of passion (*rajas*) and darkness (*tamas*) the supreme bliss of *rasaniṣpatti* is experienced.

Bhaṭṭanāyaka's theory developed simultaneously with the rejection of the other theories propounded by *ācāryas* in various ways. However, he may be viewed as having given new names to the same old processes. His concept of *Bhāvakatva* is no different from *vyañjanā* (expression) on which Abhinavagupta's theory of *Abhivyaktivāda* is built. Although he may have elaborated on the concepts and processes involved in the *rasaniṣpatti*, he did not propound an altogether new theory.

4. ABHINAVAGUPTA AND HIS ABHIVYAKTIVĀDA (Expression)

Abhinavagupta's *Abhivyaktivāda* applies concepts of Rhetorics to classify its position. Abhinavagupta explains Bharata's "*Sañyoga*" as *vyāṅgya - vyañjaka* (mode of expression and expresser). He explains *niṣpatti* as *abhivyakti* (expression). The emotions are expressed in the form of *Rasa* through the operation of the *vyāṅgya- vyañjaka* relationship. Abhinavagupta found inspiration from Bhaṭṭanāyaka's *Bhuktivāda* to develop his own theory of *Abhivyaktivāda*. He opines that the process of *vyañjana* produces the state of enjoyment or taste (*bhoga*) which is pure, undiluted joy, or *Rasa*.

Abhinavagupta discussed *Rasa* with the spectator in mind. The permanent emotions eg. *Rati* (passion) are located in the heart. These emotions are evoked in the heart of the spectator. Just as in life *rati* (passions and emotions) are evoked by the appearance of an attractive woman, in drama and poetry the hearts of the receptive spectators or audience are filled with the same emotions. In poetry or drama the attractive woman etc. are designated as *vibhāva*, *anubhāva* and *vyabharibhāva*, to correspond with the cause, effect and collaborator (transitory emotions). These *vibhāvas* or emotions located in the spectators' hearts, evoked by the *vyāṅgya -vyañjaka* relationship, find expression (*abhivyakti*) as *Śṛṅgāra Rasa* etc. (depending on the *sthāyibhāva* evoked). This is *rasābhivyakti*. The spectator is so deeply immersed in the experience of *Rasa* that he is unable to distinguish the link between the *vibhāvas* etc. and the different individuals associated with the spectators eg. (spectator, the enemy - the neutral person). Thus an arbitrary ownership of the *vibhāvas* etc. is assigned - e.g.- these are *Śakuntala's* ! This ascription to a third person prevents the dilemma of the spectator wanting to protect for example his modesty if the *vibhāvas* are *his*,

or the rising of hostility, if it is the **enemy's**. This would inhibit the development or accomplishment of *Rasa*. If the neutral or absent is conceived as the subject of *vibhāvas* etc., then too, *Rasa* cannot arise because his absence will hinder the process. *Rasa* is an experience of the direct kind.

Abhinavagupta's concept of *Rasa* is therefore, that the *sthāyibhāvas* reside in the human heart in the form of emotions. These emotional tendencies are universalized when the perception of identities disappear, and the human heart is freed from the parameters of the individual. *Rasa* in the form of the pure transcendental bliss is the final result; akin to the Brahmic bliss.

This brief discussion of the various elements that contribute to *rasaniṣpatti* (transformation of emotions) and the nature of this experience, i.e. its other-worldly or transcendental quality provides an insight into the Indian poetic mind. Poets such as Kālidāsa affirmed life and accorded validity to the human condition. The *Rasavādin* Kālidāsa is therefore described as the poet of fullness (repleteness). He is not a poet of superficial beauty, but the poet of fulsome beauty and charm, where ornaments are the flowers and plants, not gold or precious stones. This living beauty is transformed into the quintessential beauty by the poet's genius, conveyed through the process of *rasaniṣpatti*. It is thus, ultimately, *Rasa* which makes credible as well as appealing the tenderness and trust between the black deer and his doe :-

kāryā saikatalīnahansamithunā srotovahā mālinī
pādāstāmbhito niṣaṅṅahariṇā gaurīguroḥ pāvanāḥ.
śākhāmbitavalkalasya ca tarornirmātumicchāmyadhaḥ
śṛṅge kṛṣṇamṛgasya vāmanayanam kaṇḍūyamānām mṛgīm .

The stream of Mālinī ought to be drawn with a pair of swans resting on its sands; and on both its sides must appear the sacred hills at the base of the Himālayan ranges, where the deer are squatting; and I wish to draw, underneath a tree that bears some bark-garments

suspended from its boughs, a doe that rubs her left eye on the horn of a black antelope.

(*Abj.* VI-17)

This shows humanity the auspicious aspect of passion which helps to transcend the gross and personal, emphasizing the welfare of the world, not of the self. (Mishra 1992 : 81) The chapters that follow will discuss these elements as seen in Kālidāsa's play *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*. The divine hopes, aspirations and feelings of the play resulting in various *Rasas* viz. *Śṛṅgāra* (love), *Vīra* (valour), *Karuṇa* (pathos) which produce one single positive effect - one of transcendental bliss in the receptive (*sahṛdaya*) audience. It is certainly this which makes Kālidāsa's *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* increasingly appealing, providing solace and aesthetic stimulation to so many over the ages.

CHAPTER THREE

LIFE AND WORKS OF KĀLIDĀSA

Kālidāsa is renowned as a poet of beauty, harmony and perfection. He is described by Sir Monier Williams as the Shakespeare of India and ranks foremost among the best dramatists of the world. (Gopal 1984 : xi)

The following appraisal of Kālidāsa will best illuminate the qualities of Kālidāsa as a poet and his place in the literary world :-

Kālidāsa is a universal poet who occupies a unique place in the literary and academic communities of the world. He was not the usual poet of the Royal Court, so common in olden times, whose poetry was tailored to the purpose of sycophancy of kings and nobles. He belonged to the entire country and loved its limitless landscape, the hills and dales dotting every part. He gave vivid pen-pictures of the social life of his contemporary India. His forte lay in dealing with the sentiment of love - love that sublimates. He also highlighted the great values inherited from Vedic times. Kālidāsa's poetry is beyond the confines of time or situation; it is eternal and all-pervasive. It gives the reader new inspiration every time he reads it. (Rao 1986 : Foreword)

A. B. Keith (1993 : vii) says :-

It is in the great writers of Kāvya alone, headed by Kālidāsa, that we find depth of feeling for life and nature matched with perfection of expression and rhythm.

Mahākavi Kālidāsa was regarded by the Hindus as the greatest of Sanskrit poets who enjoyed great popularity during his life. The title of *Kavi-Kula Guru* or Mentor of the Family of Poets was accorded to him. On trying to

reconstruct the life of the poet one has to rely on legends and such available data that can be gathered from the writings of the poet or his contemporaries. In this case the task becomes very difficult since Kālidāsa hardly mentions anything about himself. Information on his life may be gathered from his writings. Ryder's remarks in this context, as well as his observation on Kālidāsa's modesty are noteworthy :-

He mentions his own name only in the prologues to his three plays, and here with a modesty that is charming indeed, yet tantalising. He speaks in the first person only once in the verses introductory to his epic poem *Raghuvāṅśam* (The Dynasty of Raghu) :

How great is Raghu's solar line!
How feebly small are powers mine!
As if upon the ocean's swell
I launched a puny cockle-shell.

The fool who seeks a poet's fame
Must look for ridicule and blame.
Like tiptoe dwarf who fain would try
To pluck the fruits for giants high.

Yet I may enter through the door
That mightier poets pierced of yore
A thread may pierce a jewel, but
Must follow where the diamond cut.

(Ryder 1959 : 123-124)

Here also we feel his modesty, and here once more we are balked of details as to his life. (Ryder 1959 : x)

According to Ryder (1959 vii-viii) one of the legends runs thus :- Kālidāsa was a Brahmin child who was orphaned at the age of six months and was adopted by an ox-driver. He grew up into a handsome and graceful young man who had no formal education. He was inveigled into marrying a

beautiful princess who thought that Kālidāsa was extremely wise. When the princess realised that Kālidāsa was uneducated she was furious but later relented and encouraged Kālidāsa to pray to the goddess Kālī for knowledge and the gift of poetry. This prayer was granted for knowledge and poetical power descended miraculously upon the young ox-driver.

In another legend Kālidāsa is shown with two other famous writers, Bhavabhūti and Dandin, going on a pilgrimage to the shrine of Viṣṇu in Southern India. Yet another legend pictures Bhavabhūti as a contemporary of Kālidāsa. It seems that these accounts must be untrue for it is common knowledge that these three authors were not contemporaries.

(Ryder 1959 : viii-ix)

From the evidences, scarce though they may be, in Kālidāsa's works, it is more reasonable to look upon Kālidāsa as a contemporary of King Vikramāditya. King Vikrama, who was a renowned patron of learning and of poetry, ruled in the city of Ujjain, in West-central India. During his reign Ujjain was the most beautiful and illustrious capital in the world.

Ryder (1959: ix) views the magnificence of Ujjain thus :-

Ujjain in the days of Vikramāditya stands worthily besides Athens, Rome, Florence and London in their great centuries.

From Kālidāsa's writings we learn that at least a part of his life was spent in the city of Ujjain. He mentions Ujjain more than once in his works and in a manner which is possible only for a person who knows and loves the city. In his poem *Meghadūtam* (The Cloud Messenger), he writes at length about the charm of Ujjain :-

Oh, fine Ujjain! Gem to Avanti given,
Where village ancients tell their tales of mirth
And old romance! Oh, radiant bit of heaven,
Home of a blest celestial band whose worth
Sufficed, though fallen from heaven, to bring down
heaven on earth. (Ryder 1959 : 191)

Kālidāsa travelled widely in India. He describes a tour of the whole of India in the fourth canto of the epic *Raghuvañśam*, The Dynasty of the Raghus. In *Meghadūtam*, The Cloud Messenger, he describes long journeys over India. From his writings we find that the mountains impressed him as his works are "full of the Himalayas." (Ryder 1959 : x)

From the above it may be concluded that he was a man of sound education and wide knowledge. The Sanskrit language in all its intricacies was the eloquent medium of his poetic outpourings.

No authentic biographical data are preserved about the poet, Kālidāsa. There are, among the several theories current about the date of Kālidāsa, some more credible versions that enjoy academic merit. He is said to have been a poet in the court of Vikramāditya (one of his nine jewels) from whose date, the Indian calendar (known as Vikrama Samvat) takes its origin. It is also suggested that he was a contemporary of King Vikramāditya of Ujjain who was a patron of learning and the arts. Many Indian scholars are of the view that Kālidāsa lived in the first century BCE. This makes him a contemporary and protege of King Vikramāditya, the founder of the Samvat era which is 57 BCE. (Devadhar 1981 : ii)

Most European scholars point out that Vikramāditya was really the Gupta king, Candragupta II, who assumed the title of Vikramāditya when he

succeeded his father Skandagupta in 375 AC and made Ujjain his capital. Devadhar notes that Vincent Smith in his "*Early History of India*" (P304, footnote) is of the opinion that Kālidāsa composed his earlier works before 413 AC during the rule of Candragupta while his later works were written under Kumāragupta I (413 AC to 455 AC). (Devadhar 1981: i)

Kālidāsa's date will always remain a contentious issue. It is not the aim of this thesis to ascertain his probable date or make judgements on the theories offered, however, some of the main theories will be listed. Singh (1977 : 7-8) lists these theories which span more than a millennium.

On the basis of the assumption that he was a contemporary of Agnivarṇa, Hippolyte Fauche places Kālidāsa in the 8th century BCE.

Dr C. Kunhan Raja states that on the basis of the Bharatavākya of *Mālavikāgnimitram*, Kālidāsa was a contemporary of King Agnimitra of the Śunga dynasty, and this places him in the 2nd. century BCE. This view is also supported by B. C. Sāradaranjana Roy and Kumudaranjana Roy (Introduction to Śakuntalā and Evolution of Gītā). Professors Lassen and Weber agree with this assumption.

William Jones, S.P. Pandit, M.K. Kale and other scholars accept the date of 100 BCE. This view is also supported by Har Prasad Shastri and Gauri Shankar Hirachand Ojha. This date is also favoured by the Paṇḍits who assume that Kālidāsa was the court-poet of King Vikramāditya of Ujjayinī who lived in 100 BCE. Other scholars associate Kālidāsa with King Vikramāditya of Ujjayinī who established an era called Vikrama Samvatsara after defeating the Śakas in 57 BCE. King Vikramāditya was a learned scholar and lover of art who patronised his contemporary, Kālidāsa. This

view is also supported by Rajbali Pandey in his *Proceedings and Transactions of the All India Oriental Conference, Twelfth Session, B.H.U. 1943-44, Vol. III* (Singh 1977: 7).

While A.B. Keith believes that Kālidāsa flourished during the reign of Candragupta II of Ujjayinī (380-413 AC.), Dr. Fergusson places Kālidāsa in 600 AC. The Gupta Age is considered the "golden age" of Indian History when people lived a life of luxury and were able to indulge in their artistic and literary pursuits because of social and economic prosperity. Since the reign of Candragupta II exhibits such a flourishing of the arts, a number of scholars have placed Kālidāsa in this age and Keith is of the view that Kālidāsa be placed in the period of the reign of Candragupta II with Kālidāsa then producing his literary works around 400 AC.

A comparative study of the styles used by literary figures can also produce interesting speculation; hence Devadhar (1981 : ii) offers the following view :

Already in the days of Kaniṣka (78 A.C.) Aśvaghōṣa wrote his *Buddhacarita* in the artificial style and called it a *Mahākāvya*.....In connection with this writer it is interesting to observe that there is a striking resemblance between his poetry and the poetry of Kālidāsa. Not only is there a close parallelism between a few isolated passages and descriptions, but between ideas and expressions fairly distributed over the poem. As Prof. R. N. Apte has observed, these close resemblances warrant the conclusion that " one of the poets is using the other."

On the basis of this theory Singh (1977 : 10) concludes that :-

We see the impact of Aśvaghōṣa on Kālidāsa. Aśvaghōṣa, the Buddhist poet, had prepared the ground for Kālidāsa by his

compositions in the field of poetry and drama. Kālidāsa took the cue from this great poet and presented his own poetry and drama in polished and refined style. The date of Aśvaghoṣa is definite. He enjoyed the patronage of Kuṣāna king Kaniṣka who ruled in 78 A.D. Therefore, Kālidāsa flourished after Aśvaghoṣa.

One may conclude that Kālidāsa lived and produced his masterpieces during the reign of either the first Vikramāditya of Ujjain (100 BCE) or the second Vikramāditya who lent his name to the new Hindu era (Vikrama Samvat). To bring him into the period AC would remove him too far from the glorious Ujjain as well as poets such as Aśvaghoṣa.

Classical Sanskrit spans a period of more than a millennium and in order to place Kālidāsa and his works in proper perspective, it becomes necessary to briefly scan the period of Kālidāsa and the poets, predecessors, as well successors, who comprise the landscape of Classical Sanskrit chronology.

1. PREDECESSORS OF KĀLIDĀSA

AŚVAGHOṢA

It is almost impossible to establish with certainty the date of Aśvaghoṣa, the famous poet and philosopher. Traditionally Aśvaghoṣa is regarded as a protege of King Kaniṣka, although this tradition becomes confused by Aśvaghoṣa's reference to Kaniṣka's rule in the past tense, in the *Sūtrālaṅkāra*.

Assuming the validity of the tradition, Aśvaghoṣa is placed c. 100 AC. This is still merely an estimate. Aśvaghoṣa was originally a Brahmin who at first adhered to the Sarvāstivāda school of Buddhism. He later embraced the

doctrine of the saving grace of faith in the Buddha. He became one of the founders of the Mahāyāna school.

The *Sūtrālaṅkāra* also mentions a *Buddhacarita*, considered to be Aśvaghoṣa's work. It is possible that this epic was later than Aśvaghoṣa's *Saundarananda* (Haraprasād Śāstri, BI.1910). At the end of *Saundarananda* Aśvaghoṣa intimates the aim for his adopting the Kāvya form. As he makes no mention of any earlier poem it is reasonable to assume that the *Saundarananda* was his first work. The theme of the poem is the legend of the conversion of the reluctant Nanda, his half-brother, by the Buddha. (Keith 1993 : 57)

The *Buddhacarita* deals with the life of the Buddha. The poem contains only seventeen Cantos and of these only the first thirteen are accepted as authentic, the remainder being an addition made a century ago by Amṛtānanda who states that he did so "because he could not find a manuscript of the rest of the text." (Keith 1993: 58)

AŚVAGHOṢA'S STYLE AND LANGUAGE

Daṇḍin (*Kāvyaḍarśa*, i.40 ff.) draws a clear distinction between the two literary styles used in his day, the Gauḍa and the Vaidarbha, eastern and southern. The Gauḍa is characterised by the love of long compounds not merely in prose, where they were used even by the Vaidarbha, but in verse as well. It also has a preference for alliteration and harsh sound effects.

Aśvaghoṣa, in his work displays ample proof of the early features of the Vaidarbha; his style is certainly of the Vaidarbha type. This style aims at sense rather than mere ornamentation; it is the poet's goal to narrate and

propagate the philosophy of renunciation of desires and promote benevolence and altruism.

Prof. M. M. Ghose considers the 1st Century BCE the most probable date of the *Nāṭyaśāstra*. Thus we can safely deduce that Aśvaghōṣa, a poet in King Kaniṣka's court was conversant with the rules laid down by Bharata in his *Nāṭyaśāstra*. It is not obligatory to have a manual (*Śāstra*) while composing a drama. There seems to be a considerable degree of compliance with these rules in the works of Aśvaghōṣa.

The complex problem of chronology apart, one must appraise the intrinsic merits of Aśvaghōṣa's drama. Aśvaghōṣa stands alone in his use of *Śānta Rasa* in a '*Prakaraṇa*' and the appeal of his style would have made his drama very popular. Aśvaghōṣa thus contributed to the religious and secular literature of India.

BHĀSA

Bhāsa's dramatic works appeared under the editorship of T.Ganapati Sastri in 1912. Kālidāsa in his first drama, the *Mālavikāgnimitram*, refers to Bhāsa, Saumilla and Kaviputra as his predecessors in literature. This reference makes Bhāsa without doubt, a predecessor of Kālidāsa.

As with Kālidāsa and others it is difficult to determine Bhāsa's date. Kālidāsa knew Bhāsa's fame to be firmly established. Bhāsa is definitely later than Aśvaghōṣa, whose *Buddhacarita* is considered the source of a verse in *Pratijñāyugandharāyaṇa*. The Prākṛit language in this work is older in character. Keith accepts that Aśvaghōṣa preceded both Kālidāsa and Bhāsa :

It is useless to seek to estimate by the evidence of the Prakrit whether Bhāsa is more closely allied in date to Kālidāsa than to Aśvaghoṣa.....The most that can be said is that it may be held without improbability that Bhāsa is nearer to Kālidāsa's period than to Aśvaghoṣa's. (1992 : 94)

All thirteen plays attributed to Bhāsa are important for their dramatic technique. The reference to Bhāsa in the works of Kālidāsa is testimony to his wide popularity among dramatists. Amongst many others Kauṭilya, the politician and author of the *Arthaśāstra* and Rājaśekhara, the literary critic, have referred to Bhāsa in their works. Thus Kālidāsa had some illustrious predecessors, which give greater status to his own works with regard to technique, subject matter and general knowledge of that time.

SUCCESSORS OF KĀLIDĀSA

HARṢA

Three plays and some minor poetry survive under the name of Harṣa, the king of Sthāṇvīśvara and Kānyakubja. He reigned from about AC 606 to 648 (M. Ettinghausen, *Harṣa Vardhana*, 1905). He was the patron of Bāṇa who commemorates him in the *Harṣacarita*. Furthermore, the Chinese pilgrim Hiuan-Tsang, a most valuable source of information on Harṣa, was also patronised by him. Harṣa is credited with the authorship of three works, the *Priyadarśika* and *Nāgānanda*, as well as *Ratnāvalī*. It would seem that Kālidāsa overshadows Harṣa whose works cannot be compared with those of the former. Nonetheless Harṣa wrote plays which were of praiseworthy standard. The similarity of style and tone in the three works compels one to accept Harṣa's authorship. (Keith 1992 : 170)

BHAVABHŪTI

The poet/dramatist Bhavabhūti came from a family of Udumbara Brahmins of Padmapura in Vidarbha. Bhavabhūti was skilled in grammar, rhetoric and logic and probably Mīmāṃsā, if it is accepted that he was a pupil of Kumārila. He had knowledge of the Vedas, the Upaniṣads, Sāṅkhya and Yoga.

The *Mahāvīracarita* is considered his earliest work which is followed by *Mālatīmādhava*. Bhavabhūti's more famous work *Uttararāmacarita* is based on the last book of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. The Vālmīki *Rāmāyaṇa* makes Kuśa and Lava recite the story of the *Rāmāyaṇa* to their father Śri Rāma at a sacrifice. They are recognized by their father at this sacrifice. Bhavabhūti creates an ethereal drama with goddesses as role players. Sītā and Rāma are most inspiringly portrayed; Rāma in his greatness of power and loftiness of spirit, and Sītā as the supramundane spiritual essence.

Bhavabhūti's grand poetic temperament imparts an inspiring quality to the *Uttararāmacarita*. The play blends the heroics of Rāma and his valorous sons and the pathos of the deserted Sītā. The forests, the mountains and the rivers are used ingeniously in depicting the harsh as well as the delicate elements of nature.

Bhavabhūti created his characters of Rāma and Sītā on a monumental scale; with their majesty and gravity which derived from a long tradition of *maryādā* (decorum). Kālidāsa on the other hand, was able to portray Duṣyanta and Śakuntalā as two people who were frequently drawn to each other by passionate attraction, and who sealed their relationship with a *gāndharva vivāha* (love marriage).

Bhavabhūti's Rāma is ready to forsake all feelings, even his beloved Sītā, in order to keep his subjects happy. This love of the people transcends love for personal satisfaction. In this respect Keith's following comment on Śri Rāma's character is apposite :-

Friendship is to him sacred; to guard a friend's interests at the cost of one's own, to avoid in dealings with him all malice and guile, and to strive for his weal as if for one's own life is the essential mark of true friendship. (1992 : 195-196)

Bhavabhūti's Rāma's love remains constant in joy and sorrow unaffected by time and circumstances. Keith describes this love as a "supreme blessing attained only by those that are fortunate and after long toil." (1992 : 194-196)

WORKS OF KĀLIDĀSA

It appears that the *Nāṭyaśāstra* was in the same form as it is today even at the time of Kālidāsa and the lexicographer Amarasimha. Kālidāsa's awareness of the contents of the first seven chapters of the present *Nāṭyaśāstra* is reflected in a verse in the play *Mālavikāgnimitra* (I.4) which runs as follows:

(*Nāṭyaśāstra* 1994 : Vol I : 15)

*devānāmidamāmananti munayaḥ śāntam kratum cākṣuṣam
Rudreṇedam Umākṛtavyatikare svāṅgevibhaktam dvidhā,
traiguṇyodbhavamatra lokacaritam nānārasam dṛśyate
nāṭyam bhinnarucerjanasya bahudhāpyekam samārāadhanam.*

The sages describe this as a soothing visual feast of the gods; Rudra has retained it divided in two parts in his own person blended with that of Umā; herein can be seen the conduct of people arising out of three primal qualities reflected in diverse

sentiments; dramatic art is the common recreation of people of different tastes. (translation : Shekhar 1977 : 49)

K.S. Rama Swami Sastri who edited the second revised Baroda edition of the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, believes that Kālidāsa incorporates the first chapter of the available *Nāṭyaśāstra* in the first line of the above verse which says that Brahma created the *Nāṭya* as a pleasing ritual for the visual and mental enjoyment of the Devas. The second line of the verse deals with the subject matter of the fourth chapter of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* which says that the art of dancing was added to *Nāṭya* at the instance of Rudra and Umā. The third and fourth lines relate to the sixth and seventh chapters of Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra* viz. *Rasas* and *Bhāvas*. The similarity of the text on *Śṛṅgāra* in Amarasimha's *Kośa* and Bharata's extant text justifies the assumption that the *Nāṭyaśāstra* was known to Amarsimha. This is reflected in his *Kośa* where he enumerates the synonyms of *Śṛṅgāra*. Bharata's work had gained scholarly acceptance at an early stage. Rama Swami Sastri rightly says :-

Moreover the whole of the *Nāṭyavarga* of the *Amarkośa* and the interpretations found in the *Kośa* for words *Sāttvika*, *Āṅgika*, *Anubhāva*, *Bharata*, *Nṛtya*, *Nāṭya* etc. clearly indicate that they are closely connected with and traced to the text of Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra* as available to us today. (Preface, second revised Baroda edition)

While it is commonly believed that Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra* predated Kālidāsa, it is also noteworthy that Kālidāsa applies Bharata's rules of dramatic writing.

Kālidāsa's timeless gift to Sanskrit and World Literature consists of two lyrics, two epics and three dramas. He achieved pinnacles of excellence in these creations. His genius elevated Sanskrit poetry to the highest elegance and refinement, on account of which *Kāvya* reached its apex in his works.

Continuous artistic efforts freed his works from imperfections. Singh makes the relevant point that :-

His outstanding genius justifies a great deal of critical and comparative study with his predecessors. (Singh 1977 : 4-5)

Such a study would demonstrate not only Kalidāsa's superior ability, but also throw light on the development of the theory and practice of drama. This will also determine his sources of inspiration, his influence on contemporaries as well as his original genius.

Scholars have differing views on the chronology of Kālidāsa's works but the popular consensus is that the works were written in the following order :-

- i) *Ṛtusañhāram* - a lyrical poem
- ii) *Mālavikāgnimitram* - drama
- iii) *Kumārasambhavam* - epic poem
- iv) *Vikramorvaśīyam* - drama
- v) *Meghadūtam* - lyrical poem
- vi) *Raghuvañśam* - epic poem
- vii) *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* - drama

Note : The term *Kāvya* in Sanskrit literature covers both Poetry and Drama. Poetry known as *Śravya* (heard) *Kāvya* has *Gadya*, *Padya* and *Campu* which are further divided into *Mahākāvya* and *Khāṇḍakāvya*. Drama or *Dṛśya* (seen) *Kāvya* is divided into *Rūpaka* and *Uparūpaka*. The *Nāṭaka* (play) is a category of *Rūpaka*.

1) THE ṚTUSAÑHĀRAM

In 1792 Sir William Jones translated Kālidāsa's *Ṛtusañhāram* into English. The *Ṛtusañhāram* is the work of the youthful Kālidāsa. It belongs to the Vindhya region according to Chandra Bali Pandey who has divided Kālidāsa's works on the basis of geographical landmarks. The *Ṛtusañhāram* is a lyrical poem consisting of six short Cantos describing the six Indian seasons (*ṣaḍṛtu*) of the year which are Summer-*Grīṣma*; Rainy season-*Varṣā*; Autumn-*Sarada*; Cool season-*Hemanta*; Winter-*Śiśira*; and Spring-*Vasanta*.

Kālidāsa's pioneering contribution is acknowledged thus :-

In the history of Indian Literature, prior to Kālidāsa, the serial depiction of seasons had been a rarity. In the *Ṛgveda*, the earliest specimen of our literature, we have magnificent songs in the glorification of Nature, couched in simple thoughts. The hymns to Uṣas represent the highest achievement of the Vedic seers in the portrayal of natural scenes.

(Singh 1977 : 17)

While Kālidāsa may have introduced the seasons in classical literature, the description of the love pangs of bereft heroines on the basis of the six seasons has become a popular trend in Indian literature.

The *Ṛgveda* (II,36) is the earliest source for the names of the six seasons. Each one is linked with a particular *devatā*. Indra is related to the *Madhu* and *Nabha*. The other *Samhitas* and their *Brāhmaṇas* record the division of a *Samvatsara* (year) into twelve months and six seasons (VS. Kāṇva XIV.2.11 etc) Each season is spread over two months. The spring is made up of *Madhu* and *Mādhava*; summer of *Śukra* and *Śuci*; the rainy season, *Nabha* and *Nabhasya*; the autumn has *Iṣa* and *Ūrja*; the dewy (cool) season

of *Saha* and *Sahasya* and the winter of *Tapa* and *Tapasya*. In this inventory, the seasons are presented in the order in which they actually appear. (Singh 1977 : 19)

The first delineation of the seasons occurs in the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Vālmīki, the *Ādikavi* paints a charming canvas of the seasons in his epic. The association of seasons with various moods adds to the loveliness and impact of particular situations. Descriptions of the seasons heighten the love sentiment. *Vasantotsava*, the celebration of spring (*vasanta*) became synonymous with the meeting of young lovers and Sanskrit poetry depicts this relationship as an integral part of life in classical India. The emphasis on love also attracted the name of *madanotsava* (festival of Cupid).

Vālmīki presents the alluring picture of the seasons, the colorful transitions in nature and their effects on human nature. Vālmīki deals with four seasons only; the rainy season, autumn, the dewy and spring seasons.

(Singh 1977 : 20)

The first picture of the rainy season is found in the *Atharvaveda*. We see a vivid picture of the rainy season where the verses describe the thunder of clouds, the flash of lightning and the feelings they evoke in humans, animals and other creatures as well as plants and herbs (AV : IV : 15.9).

The *Mahābhārata* (III 153.1-18) picturesquely describes the rainy and autumn seasons thus :-

cakre caturviṅśatiparvayoge ṣaḍ vai kumārāḥ parivartayanti

This line makes reference to six seasons, while the *Rāmāyaṇa* describes four seasons only. The *Purāṇas* also speak of six seasons but they describe the rainy, autumn and vernal seasons in particular. The *Brahma Purāṇa* (Ch.36) contains an appealing picture of all the seasons. On the auspicious occasion of Lord Śiva's marriage, the seasons appear simultaneously to propitiate Lord Śiva. The *Agni Purāṇa* (280.22-24) presents the six seasons as depicted in the *Āyurveda* (medical system). The works of Bhāsa and Aśvaghoṣa touch on the beauty of seasons without giving details of their number. *Ṛtusañhāra* reveals Kālidāsa's love for nature and it may be called a Lover's Calendar as it describes the emotions evoked by each season in young lovers. (Ryder 1959 : 211)

Kālidāsa's contribution lies in the portrayal of the seasons not only in the effects they produce on living beings and plants; but especially in the celebration of the joys of the seasons, and the fact that these descriptions are made through the eyes of a lover. A greater poignancy is experienced when the love-pangs of a hero and heroine are experienced through the associations with the six seasons.

Some scholars doubt the authenticity of the *Ṛtusañhāra* as Kālidāsa's work. They say that it is inferior to his other works in poetic merit, and that it has not been commented upon by Mallinātha who has written commentaries on Kalidāsa's other three poems (1984:43). Since there are no convincing arguments on this matter and since this poem does not really add to or detract from Kālidāsa's reputation there has not been much interest in this controversy. (Ryder 1959 : 211)

The *Ṛtusañhāra* begins with an account of summer and ends with the first season of the year, Spring. It seems that Kālidāsa deliberately ended his

poem with a description of Spring so as to make the last Canto of his poem most delightful and charming (Gopal 1984 : 44). Before Kālidāsa, the summer was a season rarely depicted in Sanskrit Literature.

The poet describes in the first Canto both the oppressive and enchanting aspects of summer and the following verse describes how animals that are normally hostile to each other live in harmony :

The sunbeams like the fires are hot
That on the altar wake;
The enmity is quite forgot
Of peacock and of snake;
The peacock spares his ancient foe,
For pluck and hunger fail;
He hides his burning head below
The shadow of his tail. (Ryder 1959 : 211-212)

The poet also describes how the unkind sun vexes everybody but the moon makes up for this by its cool and pleasant appearance. Similarly the heat of the summer is softened for the lover when he is in the company of his beloved.(I.4 d)

In summer the deer run from forest to forest in search of water as their palates become dry from the blazing sun (1.5). Due to the tormenting thirst the lion has lost his urge to kill the elephants (1.8). As the fire consumes the forest the frightened animals forget their instinctive antipathy and together find shelter on the moist banks of a river (1.9). Within the confines of these few verses of his First Canto, Kālidāsa is able to present a vivid picture of the scorching season of summer and its effects on nature. (Singh 1977 : 24)

There are some very descriptive accounts of the rainy season in Sanskrit Classical Literature. For example, in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, King Daśaratha paints a fascinating picture of the rains. He tells of clouds laden with water drenching the earth, of streams gushing down like serpents from the mountain peaks and of frogs, peacocks and deer rejoicing in the rains. In another incident in the *Rāmāyaṇa* we find Rāma on the Mālyavān mountain pining for his beloved Sītā. The approaching rains intensify his loneliness and he compares the earth to Sītā. To him the vapour emitted "from the heated earth resembles warm tears from her eyes in unbearable grief for her husband."

The season is pleasant indeed but for the love smitten Rāma it affords no pleasure; on the other hand it heightens his suffering. The alluring beauty of the season awakens his dormant feelings of love for the separated beloved. (Singh 1977 : 25-26)

In the *Mahābhārata* (III.153.1) we find a description of how the rainy season follows the summer while Yudhiṣṭhira passes the days of exile together with his brothers in the Dvaita forest. The sky becomes overcast with thundering clouds. It seemed as if darkness had besmeared all. In (III.153.2) we see the incessant rains last for days and nights and in (III.153.8) we see the peacocks, cuckoos and frogs enjoy the rain and sing cheerfully. Here again it is shown that though charming, the rains intensify the sorrow of Yudhiṣṭhira who is in exile. The poet uses the description of the season to heighten Yudhiṣṭhira's grief. (Singh 1977 : 26)

An attractive picture of the rainy season is painted in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (X.20.3). *Bhāgavata* X.20.4 shows how the sky is covered with dark rain clouds. There are flashes of lightning followed by loud thunder. In the

Purāṇa a pleasing picture of the rainy season portrays it as being desirable to lovers in union.

In the second Canto of his *Ṛtusañhāram*, Kālidāsa describes the rainy season which is enjoyed by everybody and is also pleasant and beneficial to all living beings. He describes how the natural scenes of the rainy season evoke the emotion of love in the hearts of lovers and torment the minds of separated lovers. In writing about the rainy season, the poet likens the dark cloud to an elephant, thunder to a drum and lightning to a banner.

The rain advances like a king
In awful majesty;
Hear, dearest, how his thunders ring
Like royal drums, and see
His lightning-banners wave; a cloud
For elephant he rides,
And finds his welcome from the crowd
Of lovers and of brides.(Ryder 1959 : 212)

A fine description of the autumn season, which comes after the rains, is given in the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Rāma describes to Lakṣmaṇa the beauty and the effects of autumn as he observes it on the R̥ṣyamūka mountain. He is reminded of his beloved Sītā as he sees the bright moon and stars in the cloudless sky. The memory of Sītā is overbearing and he faints. (*Rāmāyaṇa* : .IV : 30.3). In autumn the atmosphere is pure and gentle. The blue lotuses colour the directions. The night is like a young maiden clad in the white milky moonlight with stars for eyes and the moon for her lovely face. The gentle breeze blows, heightening the beauty of the season. (Singh 1977 : 29)

In the *Mahābhārata* the autumn is accompanied by *krauñca* birds (cranes), *kāśa* grass, white flowers and sparkling rivers and streams. The blue sky

studded with stars looks glorious. In the month of Kārttika, on the full moon day, the season appears fascinating and auspicious. The Pāṇḍavas experience comfort and solace in the Dvaita forest in their exile (Singh 1977 : 29).

The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* also deals with the autumn season. Kṛṣṇa dallies with the Gopīs on the bank of the Yamunā. The poet presents a captivating scene of the heavens and waters as in the *Mahābhārata*. In autumn sweet and fragrant breezes blow. The moon neutralizes the heat, bringing happiness to all creatures. The cloudless, star-studded night sky appears charming and delightful. Kṛṣṇa, his amorous nature enhanced by the night, charms the young maidens of Vraja. (Singh 1977 : 29)

Following literary convention Kālidāsa uses similes for the maiden's face, eyes, body, teeth, voice and garments. Everything from the earth to the *kāśa* flowers, from the swans to the rivers have been bathed white by the light of the soft moon. In the *Meghadūta* also the city of Alakā is bathed in the moonlight from the crescent moon on the head of Śiva whose statue stands at the entrance of the city. The night of the season seems to grow like a young maiden (*Ṛtusañhāra* : III.7). While the glittering stars are her ornaments the moon without the veil of clouds is her lovely face and she is attired by the pure bright moonlight.

The seasons have a curious effect on human beings. The moon exhilarates the lovers in union but the very same rays in separation become scorching and unbearable. Pairs of cackling swans swim in the ponds and blossoming lotuses have stirred up ripples. All this fills the hearts of lovers with the grandeur of nature (*Ṛtu* III.11). The moon-lily cools the breeze (III.22) and the patches of clouds have vanished. The sky variegated with the brilliance of moon and stars is putting forth its natural glory with the brilliance of moon

and stars. Here, once again, the poet compares the autumn with a young maiden. Her lovely face is a full-bloomed lotus whilst the blossoming moon-lilies are her eyes. The new blossoms of the white *kāśa* flowers are her attire giving her the delicate graceful form of the moon-lily.

The dewy or cool season which follows autumn is beautifully described in the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Rāma, Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa go to the Godā river for a bath where Lakṣmaṇa is struck by the beauty of the season. Further descriptions reveal that the mid-day is pleasant for walks and the sun is charming. We also find the lotuses being destroyed by frost. Gardens and forests are also covered with frost.

In the *Ṛtusañhāra* the season of *Hemanta* is described in the fourth Canto. The lotuses have faded, the earth is covered with frost in the morning and the maidens have discarded their fine silken garments, bracelets, girdles and anklets and anointed their bodies with a paste of fragrant wood (*Kālīyaka*).

The canto describing winter is very short. People keep the windows of their houses closed and enjoy the fire, sunshine and pleasures of youth. Such a depiction of winter is rare in pre-Kālidāsa poetry. Kālidāsa noted the passions this season kindled and described them fully. Fire, sunshine and warm clothes are the other joys of this season. The union of lovers in this season provides extreme happiness. That which is pleasant for the united lovers, becomes unbearable for the separated ones. Kālidāsa was the first poet to describe the human passions associated with winter and summer in such an inimitable style. (Singh 1977 : 32)

The description of spring comes at the end of the poem *Ṛtusañhāra*. Spring (*vasanta*) enjoys a crucial role in Indian Literature. It has an enormously

exciting effect upon living beings. Even animals and plants do not remain untouched. Inanimate objects too appear charged with love. Spring is marked with new sprouts, foliage and fragrant flowers. The blossom of passion in the human heart is aroused by the sweet notes of the cuckoo. The bereaved Rāma loses his equanimity and laments (*Rāmāyaṇa*. IV. 1,1) bitterly for Sītā. Rāma narrates to Lakṣmaṇa the effect of this season on forest dwellers. The pangs of separation from Sītā are impossible to endure. Things that gave joy in the company of Sītā cause pain in her absence. The poet presents an emotionally-charged description of the spring season to intensify Rāma's love and pining for Sītā. (*Rāmāyaṇa*. IV. 1.33)

In the last Canto of *Rtusanhāra* the poet metaphorically describes Spring as a warrior armed with sharp arrows made of mango blossoms. His bow-string is a row of black bees depicting the charming glances of the black eyes of the maidens, which pierces the hearts of lovers. In spring, plants are draped with flowers, lotuses fill the lakes, maidens are agitated by cheerful passion. The different parts of the day are all extremely agreeable. Thus everything is delightful in Spring :

Their blossom-burden weights the trees;
The winds in fragrance move;
The lakes are bright with lotuses,
The women bright with love;
The days are soft, the evenings clear
And charming; everything
That moves and lives and blossoms, dear,
Is sweeter in the spring.

(Ryder 1959 : 216)

Seasons such as Autumn and the rainy season are vividly described in the *Rāmāyaṇa* and we find that Kālidāsa was greatly influenced by Vālmīki's

description of the rainy season. However, Kālidāsa's idea of describing the seasons from the viewpoint of evoking human passion is entirely original.

The poet concludes with the benediction that happiness be bestowed on all by the world-conquering god Cupid who is accompanied by Spring. Kālidāsa's lyric *Ṛtusañhāra* (Descent of the Seasons) by its very title, implies the description of all the Seasons of the Indian year. His success in welding nature with living emotions created a poetic style that has become a well received tradition emulated by Indian literary figures. It created among poets a more heightened sensitivity to the environment and its impact on the emotions. Kālidāsa's works are therefore a supreme example of the integral nature of the processes of nature and the experiences of man. Kālidāsa provided an exhaustive picture of the seasons in *Ṛtusañhāra*.

There is a greater refinement in Kālidāsa's artistry from the *Mālvikāgnimitram* and the *Vikramorvaśīyam* to the *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*. The *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* shows a seasoned maturity of Kālidāsa's art in its various aspects - ingenuity of plot, imagination, inimitable portrayal of human feelings and characters, elegance and simplicity of expression, fusion of sound and sense, sympathetic description of Nature, and a remarkable blend of earthly and supramundane elements. The delineation of the sympathy of Nature towards human feelings attempted by him in his *Raghuvañśam* (XIV.69) is vastly improved. In the drama the creepers shedding their pale leaves is depicted as imagery of tears caused by Śakuntalā's departure. In the *Raghuvañśam* trees shed flowers in sympathy with the distraught Sītā. The pale leaves in *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* are metaphorically more appropriate in the depiction of sorrow and sympathy (Gopal 1984 : 69). Nevertheless, his earlier plays, too, exhibit much merit and demonstrate the maturing of the poet-dramatist Kālidāsa.

2. *The Mālavikāgnimitram.*

The *Mālavikāgnimitram* is the first of Kālidāsa's three dramas and the second creation of the poet. It relates in five acts the story of the love of Śuṅga king, Agnimitra, of Vidiśā and Mālavikā a Vaidharbha princess who in the guise of a maidservant serves Agnimitra's chief queen, Dhāriṇī. This historical episode has been woven into a complex plot by Kālidāsa. (Gopal 1984 : 70)

From the conversation between the two maid-servants it becomes known that Agnimitra has seen a painted portrait of Mālavikā and enquires from the queen about the identity of the person in the portrait. The queen hesitates to disclose the identity but the child princess, Vasumatī blurts out to the king that it is Mālavikā. The king falls in love with Mālavikā but is kept apart from her by his two jealous queens, Dhāriṇī and Irāvati. They conceal Mālavikā from the sight of the king and create obstacles to prevent their meeting. However, the love between the king and the princess grows in secrecy. The king does not wish to offend his queens and even prostrates before Irāvati to beg her forgiveness when she discovers that the king has feelings for Mālavikā. With the help of the court jester the maid who has served queen Dhāriṇī faithfully, is set free. After Mālavikā causes the Aśoka tree to bloom by touching it she is allowed by Dhāriṇī to marry Agnimitra. Mālavikā's true identity reveals her royal descent, which facilitates her marriage to the king.

In his portrayal of the marriage of Mālavikā and Agnimitra Kālidāsa turns a former passionate secretive love into the joy of normal conjugal life. The hostility between Gaṇadāsa and Haradatta; Mālavikā's dancing prowess; the introduction of the Vidūṣaka and his efforts to help the king secure the love

of *Mālavikā*, are all evidences of the poetic ingenuity of Kālidāsa. He maintains this creative skill throughout the plot of the play. Thus *Mālavikāgnimitram* is proof of Kālidāsa's budding genius which matures in the *Vikramorvaśīyam* and becomes fully ripened in the *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*. (Singh 1977: 37)

3. *The Meghadūtam*

The *Meghadūtam* or Cloud Messenger is Kālidāsa's third literary work. This poem is a product of the poet's imaginative genius which captures hearts of readers millennia after it was written mainly because this is the first poetic composition that imparts into an inanimate element of nature, the cloud, the feelings of the animate. Prior to Kālidāsa there had been no such endeavour in Sanskrit literature. In the *Ṛgveda* (X.108) Indra sends a bitch with a message to the Paṇis. In the *Rāmāyaṇa* (IV.44) too, Rāma sends Hanumāna to Sītā. In the *Mahābhārata* (III.45) a royal swan conveys the love-message between Nala and Damayanti. While the *Rāmāyaṇa* employs a monkey as the messenger, the *Mahābhārata* uses a bird for the same purpose. Kālidāsa changes the medium. He introduces an inanimate object, the cloud, in the *Meghadūtam*, for conveying a message, a task meant to be done by living beings trained for the purpose.

The poet expresses this innovation reflecting the Yakṣa's state of mind thus in *Meghadūtam* :-

*dhūmajyotiḥ salilamarutām sannipātaḥ kva meghaḥ
sāndeśārthāḥ kva paṭukaraṇaiḥ prāṇibhiḥ prāpaṇīyāḥ*

How can a cloud which is but a mixture of mist, light, moisture and air become a suitable bearer of a lover's message, which should rightly be conveyed by an able-bodied, sentient being .

(*Meghadūtam* I-5-own translation)

Meghadūta's (and Kālidāsa's) debt to his predecessors is characterised thus:

Thus for the idea and expression, this poem owes to the Rāmāyaṇa. The idea of the cloud as a messenger has the parallelism in the Great Epic where Rāma sends Hanumat from Kiṣkindhā to Laṅkā with a message to Sītā. The poet acknowledges indebtedness to the Rāmāyaṇa in this context. (Singh 1977 : 77-78)

The *Meghadūtam* has 110 stanzas. The poem is composed in the *Mandākrāntā* metre, four lines of seventeen syllables each, and displays Kālidāsa's poetic art at its best. The poem is also divided into two parts, the first called *Pūrvamegha* and the second, *Uttaramegha* which may be translated as either the First and Second parts or the Easterly (*Pūrva*) and Northerly (*Uttara*) sojourn of the cloud.

The opening stanza of the *Meghadūtam* introduces the sad plight of a *Yakṣa* (a celestial being) who is being punished by his master, *Kubera*, for neglecting his duties. The *Yakṣa* has been banished for a period of twelve months and has made his temporary abode at a hermitage on the *Rāmagiri* mountain. The waters here were sanctified by Sītā, the epitome of conjugal loyalty, having bathed in this place. After eight months had elapsed, on the first day of the month of *Āṣāḍha*, the *Yakṣa* saw a dark cloud looking like an elephant on the peak of a mountain. He felt the pangs of separation from his wife and being worried about her well being, especially since the agony of separation would be intensified by the approaching rainy season, he decided to send her a message about his welfare. After greeting the cloud

with flowers and flattering words he begs it to go to his home-city *Alakā* and convey his message to his beloved wife. He says to the cloud that his anxious wife would be engrossed in counting the remaining days of their separation.

While plotting the route for the Cloud Messenger (*Meghadūta*) on its northward journey to the *Yakṣa's* home, the poet displays his knowledge of important regions, rivers, mountains and cities of northern India. He also paints a vivid picture of the landscape covered by the Cloud-messenger during its journey. Kālidāsa also imparts a touch of alluring feminine beauty to the natural scenery on the route from Mount *Rāmagiri* to *Alakā*. The *Yakṣa* implores the Cloud-messenger saying that even if the Cloud were to make a detour from its northward route he should not miss *Ujjayinī*, with its magnificent palaces and beautiful damsels. His concern for his wife's comfort is seen in this passage :-

The Cloud is requested by the *Yakṣa* to approach his house gently without disturbing his wife's happy dream of union with him and to convey his message to her when she is awake. (Gopal 1984 : 49)

The *Yakṣa* conveys in his message his unwavering love for his beloved wife and while reassuring her about his own state of health expresses certainty of their happy reunion after the remaining four months.

The plot and characters of the *Meghadūtam* corroborate the view that Kālidāsa has drawn inspiration from the *Rāmāyaṇa*. In this poem Kālidāsa has represented the natural scenery of the route in vivid detail, and infused in them human feelings, especially with the erotic sentiment or *Śṅgāra*. The merits of this poem are enumerated thus:-

The poet's keen observation of Nature, extraordinary power of imagination, penetrating insight into the human mind, maturity of thought, and choice of apt expression are fully illustrated in the Meghadūta which is undoubtedly his masterpiece. (Gopal 1984 : 50).

Scholars surmise that Kālidāsa's own experience of suffering in separation from his beloved is reflected in the poem. But his superb poetic art alone has created this lyrical gem of Sanskrit literature.

4) *The Kumārasambhavam*

The *Kumārasambhavam* is one of five important *Mahākāvya*s (epic poems) of Sanskrit. They are the *Raghuvañśam*, the *Kumārasambhavam*, the *Kirātārjunīyam*, the *Śiśupālavadhā*m and the *Naiṣadhacaritam*. Modern scholars date the *Kumārasambhavam* earlier than the *Raghuvañśam*. Although the extant *Kumārasambhavam* contains seventeen Cantos, only the first eight are commented on by Mallinātha and Arunagirinātha and are considered to be authentic. The other nine cantos are regarded later additions to bring the story of the epic to a finale with the destruction of the demon Tāraka by the god *Kumāra* whose birth (*sambhava*) forms the theme of the poem.

The *Kumārasambhavam* is a popular legend pertaining to the birth of the god *Kumāra* (*Kārttikeya*). This poem has been skilfully adapted by Kālidāsa to form the theme of his *Mahākāvya*m.

Kālidāsa describes the marriage of Himālaya with Menā and the birth of their son Mainaka and daughter Pārvatī or Umā. He describes the development of Pārvatī from an adorable child into a lovely maiden. When Nārada visits Himālaya he sees Pārvatī with her father and makes the

prophecy that she will marry Śiva. Himālaya therefore reluctantly asks Pārvatī to serve Śiva who is meditating on a mountain peak. Pārvatī complies, approaches Śiva and beseeches his permission to serve him. Śiva kindly accepts Pārvatī's service.

The second Canto outlines the anguish of the gods who are harassed by Tāraka. They approach the Creator (Brahmā) to save them from this oppressive and mighty demon. Brahmā voices his inability to help them, but advises them to direct Śiva's ascetic mind to Umā's beauty. A son born of the union of Śiva and Umā alone could destroy Tāraka and save the gods. Indra therefore enlisted the help of Kāma (Cupid) to achieve the desired object.

Kālidāsa then describes Kāma's efforts at arousing in Śiva's mind, passion for Pārvatī. When Śiva becoming uneasy in his emotions spots Kāma ready to discharge his arrow at him there issues forth from Śiva's third eye a dazzling fire with high flames which reduces Kāma to ashes. Kāma's wife, Rati swoons at Kāma's destruction. A touching scene ensues in the fourth Canto depicting Rati's sorrowful lamentation over the death of her husband. She begs her husband's friend, *Vasanta* (Spring) to prepare a funeral pyre for her so that she may be united with her incinerated husband. As Rati is about to end her life she is dissuaded by a heavenly voice which assures her that she will be reunited with her husband when Śiva marries Pārvatī.

Realising that she is unable to win Śiva with her physical charm, Pārvatī finally succeeds through her austerities and devotion. Śiva approaches Pārvatī's father, Himālaya, and formally asks for Pārvatī's hand in marriage. The poet gives a detailed account of the nuptials performed according to Vedic rites and local customs.

Śiva and Pārvatī's Marriage

Kalidāsa's mastery of the art of delineation of nature and human emotions gives him his exalted place amongst poets. His poetic genius is seen in the depiction of similar sentiments amongst celestials (*apsaras, gandharvas* etc) and the gods. His description of the union of Śiva and Parvatī is most exalted, and also one which is often condemned by the traditionalist scholars and critics. Hindu tradition forbade the use of *Śṛṅgāra* in the description of (exalted) divine figures such as the Divine Mother and Father of the Universe (Pārvatī and Śiva). Kālidāsa is said to have suffered for his transgression of this norm by including the amorous love sport of Śiva and Pārvatī in *Kumārasambhavam*. It is said Pārvatī cursed him, and he expiated by dedicating the invocation in *Raghuvañśam* to Śiva and Pārvatī. Vidya Niwas Mishra, also from a traditionalist background, but a scholar of uncommon depth and understanding of Kālidāsa's holistic approach to the auspiciousness, seriousness and purposefulness of life, and therefore reverence for it, analyses Kālidāsa's union of Śiva and Pārvatī in *Kumārasambhavam* differently.

Mishra shows in his *Kālidāsa se Sākṣātkāra* (1992) that *tapas* (penance, austerities) characterises all of Kālidāsa's works; that this *tapas* is aimed at attaining the greater good of all. Hence perceiving Kālidāsa's portrayal of *Śṛṅgāra* in the context of this higher goal, Kālidāsa, in Mishra's view, invests his poetic genius and his moral/ethical values in the direction of *tapas*.

While Pārvatī performs penance to gain Śiva's love, Śiva by burning Kāma with his third eye, absorbs the power of Kāma (love or the creative energy), within himself. (Mishra 1992 : 92). "Thus Kāma is reborn in Śiva's body." Proceeding to the union of Śiva and Pārvatī, he says that people generally

avoid reading this section (Canto viii) to avoid the forbidden scene of Śiva and Pārvatī's union. Reading this passage out of context could also lead to notions of indecency. Indeed Mishra (1992 : 95) says that "Kālidāsa's restraint is such as not seen anywhere. His words are as restrained as Śiva's *tapas* which represents the desire for fulfilment in all living beings."

The union of Śiva and Pārvatī was for the procreation of " the saviour of the defeated gods" (Mishra 1992 : 20). Mishra (1992 : 20) continues "that the totality of nature's creations had to be centred in this union, hence the description is of such sublime quality. This view of Kālidāsa's description of the union of Śiva and Pārvatī neutralizes/resolves the *paṇḍitas'* objections regarding the transgression of decorum (*maryādā*) in this episode." The foregoing viewpoint indicates that a thorough re-reading of all of Sanskrit literature in terms of how the Indian poets have viewed sexuality may yield insights into the poets' minds.

5) *The Raghuvāṅśam*

The *Raghuvāṅśam* is another epic poem of Kālidāsa and is ranked among the five famous *Mahākāvya*s of Sanskrit literature. "It is regarded as the best specimen of a *Mahākāvya*m according to the Sanskrit rhetoricians."(Gopal 1984 : 57).

Scholars are of the opinion that the *Raghuvāṅśam* was composed by Kālidāsa when he was of greater maturity, as it refers to Yoga philosophy, uses grammatical similes, and reflects a greater maturity of his style and ideas. There is marked difference between the *Kumārasambhavam* and the *Raghuvāṅśam* in respect of descriptions and narratives. In the *Kumārasambhavam* the long descriptions of nature and sensuous beauty overshadow the narrative while the *Raghuvāṅśam* balances narrative and description. However, Kalidāsa's *Raghuvāṅśam* reflects no lesser poetic

genius with its compelling similes, graphic descriptions of human sentiments, apposite expressions and ideal characters.

Gopal (1984 : 57) states :-

Although the *Raghuvamśa* amply illustrates Kālidāsa's maturity of thought and style, it cannot match the *Kumārasambhava* in the imaginative and fascinating description of Nature and youthful beauty.

This may be a reason to concur with Mishra (1992 : 61) that perhaps the *Raghuvamśam* preceded the *Kumārasambhavam*, hence the question of Pārvatī's curse and Kālidāsa's expiation falls away. Miśra (1992 : 61) says, "*Kumārasambhavam* is the fulfilment of the wish in *Raghuvamśam*." Mishra cites Baṅkīmacandra Caṭṭopādhyāya who had claimed that *Raghuvamśam* is the poem of youth; *Kumārasambhavam* is a poem of transformed circumstances, where spring is futile, so are summer or the rainy season. Only autumn (*śarada*) of heat, of coolness, of moonlight is supreme. This season of fulness portends the possibility of the procreation of Kumāra; there is no mention of his actual birth. (Mishra 1992 : 61). Thus while each of the epic poems has its merits, making a choice of the better work becomes difficult. Note has to be taken of the above views of Mishra and Caṭṭopādhyāya.

The *Raghuvamśam* is an epic poem of nineteen cantos. Its 1564 stanzas have about 6000 lines of poetry. It deals with that great line of kings who traced their origin to the sun, the famous "solar line" or "*Sūryavamśa*" of Indian history. The shining star of this dynasty is Rāma, the unblemished hero and ideal man, righteous king and warrior. Rāma's story was sung before Kālidāsa's time in the *Rāmāyaṇa* of Vālmīki. As an epic poem the *Rāmāyaṇa* is really incomparable for its widespread influence persists in the world. In the *Raghuvamśam*, Rāma is still the central character although there are many detailed descriptions of the other princes of the solar dynasty

of Raghu in Kālidāsa's poem. The poem is divided into three sizeable parts: the first part deals with the four immediate ancestors of Rāma (cantos 1-9), the second with Rāma (cantos 10-15), and the third, some descendants of Rāma (cantos 16-19). (Ryder 1959 : 123)

Kālidāsa gives a vivid description of the solar dynasty from king Dilīpa to Agnivarṇa. The epic is based mainly on the Vālmīki *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Purāṇas*. At the very outset Kālidāsa reverentially acknowledges his indebtedness to Vālmīki. Kālidāsa has arranged the material in an expressive style and although much is taken from other sources they are moulded in a style unique to Kālidāsa. In *Raghuvaṅśam* I.5-9 Kālidāsa describes the lofty virtues of the Raghu race. The kings in this dynasty were sovereign monarchs, friends of gods who performed sacrifices according to Vedic rites. They were truthful and god fearing; they upheld the laws of Dharma and were custodians of moral and ethical codes. The history of this family is also found in the *Rāmāyaṇa* (I.70.44) where Vālmīki sings about the glorious achievements of the Ikṣvāku rulers. There is a marked similarity between the two epics. Dilīpa is respected by his subjects for his just and efficient rule. In (*Raghuvaṅśam* I.16) he is portrayed as a brave and invincible king feared by his enemies. Rāma, too, receives the affection of his subjects (*Rāmāyaṇa*. II.I.33-34). As a result of his unimpeachable qualities and endeavours, he is annointed the universal sovereign. There is a close parallel in the portraits of Dilīpa and Sudakṣiṇā (*Raghuvaṅśam* I.46) and Rāma and Sītā, the leading couples of the epics. Dilīpa visits the hermitage of sage Vasiṣṭha and Rāma lives a part of his life in Pañcavaṭī. Dilīpa and Rāma are compared with the moon and Sudakṣiṇā and Sītā with Citrā. Dilīpa and Sudakṣiṇā "appear as charming and noble in the *Raghuvaṅśam* as Rāma and Sītā appear in the *Rāmāyaṇa*."

(Singh 1977 : 120-121)

Kālidāsa's works all show pain of separation and the pining for a reunion : they illustrate desire a for completeness of ones being, optimism in their yearnings and, most important of all, extremely rigorous penance, *tapas*, as seen in Pārvatī (*Kumārasambhavam*) or Duṣyanta and Śakuntalā in the *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*. The ascetic characters and environs of the hermitage all emphasize the superiority of the life of non-attachment while carrying out one's mundane duties.

6) *The Vikramorvaśīyam*

"*Vikramorvaśīyam*", literally means "a play in which *Urvaśī* is won by valour". Kālidāsa has based this five acts play on the ancient legend of the love between king Purūravas and the celestial nymph, *Urvaśī*. The Ṛgvedic Hymn (X,95) contains the dialogue between *Urvaśī* and Purūravas; various versions of the story are also found in the later compilations eg. the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, the *Baudhāyana Śrautasūtra* as well as the *Matsya-Purāṇa* and the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. (Gopal:1984 : 78). Ryder (1959 : 118) makes an important observation regarding the survival of the story of *Urvaśī* and Purūravas :-

It is thus one of the few tales that so caught the Hindu imagination as to survive the profound change which came over Indian thinking in the passage from Vedic to classical times.

While not rejecting love, the Indian tradition shows that the marriage of heaven and earth is not to be dismissed lightly and that tremendous discipline is required to withstand the fickle favours of fortune.

Kālidāsa adapted some of the important features of the versions of the legend to construct the plot of the play. The poet seems to have chosen this legend in order to dramatize the close relationship between mortals and heavenly beings, and also show their differences.

The *Vikramorvaśīyam* appears to be written before the *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* and shares some important similarities with the latter. The plots of both plays are based on mythological legends; the heroine of one play is the nymph Urvaśī, while Śakuntalā, the heroine of the other play is the daughter of the nymph Menakā. The heroes and heroines in both the plays fall in love at first sight. The scenes of the plot in both plays move between heaven and earth and very much in the mould of a myth or legend the intrigue of the story revolves around interactions between the earthly mortals and the heavenly gods. The lovers are separated by a curse in each case, but are later reunited by means of a magical token, a jewel in the *Vikramorvaśīyam* and a ring in the *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*. In both the plays the heroes evince the paternal instinct without knowing the relationship. Kālidāsa believed in the innate and ultimate goodness of humanity and he thus shows the human body as the instrument of attaining *dharma* (*sarīram khalu dharma-sādhanam*).

In the *Vikramorvaśīyam*, King Purūavas, while returning after his daily sun-worship, hears the cries for help from a number of heavenly nymphs and rushes to their aid. The king rescues Urvaśī together with her maid. When the unconscious Urvaśī recovers and sees her saviour she immediately falls in love with him. The king is also attracted to the beautiful nymph. Soon afterwards the Gandharva king, Chitraratha arrives and takes Urvaśī back to heaven.

In the *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*, Duṣyanta confides in the Jester (*Viduṣaka*) about his love for the hermit maiden, Śakuntalā. In the *Vikramorvaśīyam*, Purūravas reveals to the Jester his love for Urvaśī but asks him to keep it a secret. Queen Auśīnarī's maid learns of the cause of the king's distracted state of mind and reports it to the Queen. While the King and the Jester are plotting a way for the King to meet Urvaśī, Urvaśī herself arrives unseen and on hearing of the King's feelings for her, lets fall a letter which she wrote to him. Thereafter, Urvaśī appears before the King and speaks to him briefly before returning to heaven. When the King looks for the letter which he had entrusted to the Jester, they discover, to the dismay of the king, that it is lost.

The Queen's maid finds the letter and reads it to the Queen who is greatly angered by the King's new found amour. The Queen expresses her displeasure to the King who then begs her forgiveness. But the Queen is unrelenting and walks away in anger. After some time Urvaśī is allowed to dwell on earth with her lover only on the condition that the King does not see the face of the offspring born of her. When Queen Auśīnarī agrees to accept as co-wife any woman the King loves, both Urvaśī and the King are overjoyed.

One day when the King and Urvaśī were on Mount Kailāsa Urvaśī became angry with the King whom she suspected of looking lustfully at a Vidyādhara girl. In anger Urvaśī entered the god Kārttikeya's penance grove which was out of bounds to women and she was immediately turned into a creeper. The King searched for her in vain and became insane with grief.

During his wandering he finds a red gem (*Sanḡamanīya*) but throws it away. He is then advised by a celestial voice, supposed to be that of Lord Śiva, to

take back the *Saṅgamanīya* gem. This gem was supposed to bring about his reunion with Urvaśī. The king once again picks up the gem and inadvertently embraces a flowerless creeper which immediately turns into Urvaśī. Overjoyed at their reunion the couple return to the Capital where the King rules justly and well over his subjects. The King is happy except for the lack of an offspring. (Gopal 1984 : 82)

One day a vulture, taking the *Saṅgamanīya* gem to be a piece of meat, snatches it from a maid's hand and flies off with it. The king and his companions lament the gem's loss. Then the chamberlain enters, bringing the snatched gem and an arrow with which the offending bird had been shot. On the arrow was written a verse declaring it the property of Ayus, son of Purūravas and Urvaśī. A hermit-woman then comes forward with a lad in tow. She explains that when the boy was born he had been entrusted to her care by Urvaśī, and that it was he who had just shot the bird and recovered the gem. When Urvaśī is asked to explain the reason for keeping the child's birth a secret she reminds the king of the heavenly decree that should Purūravas see their child she would return to heaven. She had sacrificed her maternal love for marital love. Upon hearing this Purūrava's happiness gives way to gloom. He decides to give up his kingdom and spend the rest of his life as a hermit in the forest. But this drastic move is averted when a messenger arrives from the gods, bringing the good news that Urvaśī could live with Purūravas until his death. Thereafter Ayus is installed as crown prince. (Ryder:1959:118)

7) The *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*

Sir William Jones published the first English translation of "*Abhijñānaśākuntalam*" in the year 1789. Forster was so inspired by its success that he translated it from English to German in 1791.

Goethe, the greatest poet of the day, the saint and seer of the German nation, the last word in all matters of intellectual culture, hailed the entry of *Śākuntalam* on the German soil, with a complimentary verse, which combined in a single flash of insight, the feelings of the German nation with his own perceptive judgement on the Sanskrit classic. (Chaturvedi 1991 : iv-v)

Goethe praised the *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* so effusively that studies and research on Kālidāsa began to capture the minds of all scholars. Goethe's eulogy on *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* reads as follows :-

"Willst du die Blute des fruhen,
die Fruchte des sparteren Jahres,
Willst du, was reizt and entzuckt,
Willst du was sattigt und nahrht,
Willst du den Himmel, die Erde,
mit Einem Namen begreifen
Nenn' ich, Sakuntala, Dich, und so ist Alles gesagt.
Goethe (Ryder:1959 :1)¹

Goethe further expressed his marvel at the unprecedented beauty of *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* thus :-

Kālidāsa! you have filled in your *Śakuntalā* the entire treasures of the earth and the sky. It has the blossoms of spring, the satisfaction of the sky in winter and the entire beauty of the pangs of separation.
(Khar 1982 : 1)

1. The English translation of this verse appears on Page 1 of Chapter 1

What is the quality in this drama that has led to its translation into almost every major language of the world ? This inexplicable fascination with the play has been the subject of enquiry of scholars and researchers since the introduction of Sanskrit to Europe in the nineteenth century. Although they have offered several views the discussion is far from exhausted. Every new scholar throws fresh light on its unique aspects giving it and Kālidāsa new perspectives, thereby perpetuating his glory.

The majority of scholars believe that Kālidāsa obtained the idea for his drama, *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*, from the *Mahābhārata* and embellished it with his dramatic genius and literary skill. Khār (1992:2) cites Dr Haridatta Sharma and M. Winternitz who are of the view that Kālidāsa did not take the story from the *Mahābhārata* but from the *svarga-khaṇḍa* (section on paradise) of the *Padma-Purāṇa*. No researcher has looked beyond the *Mahābhārata* or *Padma-Purāṇa* for the source of Kālidāsa's *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*.

Sources and Variations of the Story

i) *Ṛgveda*

The *Ṛgveda* is considered the world's oldest extant literature. In the 6th maṇḍala : 16 sūkta : 2, anuvāk (6.16.II) : (Devatā Agni, Ṛṣi Bharadvāja, Chanda Gāyatri Anuṣṭup) it is said :

" O Agni! Bharata, the son of Duṣyanta, and priests offering oblations for the purpose of happiness, salute you. You grant favours and ward off calamities. After the salutations we offer oblations of which you are worthy."(R.V.6:16:2). Although Bharata is mentioned in the above chanda

as "Duṣyanta putra/tanaya" (Son of Duṣyanta), it is obvious that he was famous in his own right, thus occupying a place in the *Ṛgveda*.

(Khar 1982 : 2)

ii) *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*

Bharata's birth and duties are mentioned widely in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*. In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* Śakuntalā has been described as a nymph and according to it Bharata's birth took place on the banks of the "nāḍapita" river. (Khar 1982 : 2)

iii) *Aitereya Brāhmaṇa*

As in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, Bharata has been also mentioned in the *Aitereya Brāhmaṇa*. Here they speak of installation of the crown prince. "Mamatā's son Dīrghatamā installed Bharata, son of Duṣyanta, as crown prince through Indra's *Mahābhiṣeka* through which Bharata traversed the entire earth and performed the *Aśvamedha* sacrifice."(39:9:23). In this *Brāhmaṇa* version Bharata's generosity has been recorded in 5 ślokas.

(Khar 1982 : 3)

iv) *Brahmapurāṇa*

The *Brahmapurāṇa* in its description of Duṣyanta, Śakuntalā and Bharata mentions the Puru Dynasty. The Śakuntalā story mentioned therein is not the one that prevails today, however, there is strong evidence that Duṣyanta, Śakuntalā and Bharata were historical figures. In the *Brahmapurāṇa*'s description of the Puru Dynasty, the son of Duṣyanta and Śakuntalā, Bharata, is mentioned thus : "This son of Duṣyanta, a great hero named Bharata after

whom this country was named. That Bharata was "Sarvadamana-tamer of all", firm and immovable as ten thousand mountains. Out of Duṣyanta's greatness and from Śakuntalā's womb this Cakravarti (Emperor), Bharata, was born after whom India was named (*Brahmapurāṇa* : 10 : 56-57).

We also find the story of Duṣyanta and Bharata in the *Viṣṇu, Vāyu, Matsya* and *Śrimadbhāgavata Purāṇas*.

v) Story from the *Mahābhārata*.

It is popularly believed that Kālidāsa found the story of *Śakuntalā* in the vast epic "*Mahābhārata*". The story has a natural place in the epic since Śakuntalā's son, Bharata, was the ancestor of the warriors of the *Mahābhārata*.

It would be appropriate to examine the epic tale in order to determine similarities and changes that poet Kālidāsa introduced in his *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*. The *Mahābhārata* describes the *Śakuntalā* story in about 300 verses.

In the Puru dynasty there was a valorous king, Duṣyanta, who was renowned in Āryavarta. One day the king closely pursuing a deer, entered a wood with his troops and chariots. The king was astonished to find on the banks of the river Mālinī a beautiful hermitage inhabited by the great sage Kaṇva and other sages. The king decided to pay his respects to Kaṇva Rṣi. The king therefore entered the hermitage without his entourage or his royal insignia. The hermitage was deserted and, being unable to see the sage or any other person, he cried out for attention. On hearing his cry a lovely young maiden bade the king welcome in a sweet voice. She informed Duṣyanta that her

father had proceeded from the hermitage to gather fruits and enquired about the king's identity. She then asked the king to await her father's return. The king was astounded by the beauty of this ascetic maiden and his heart became restless. He could not understand how such a beautiful young woman could be an inmate of a hermitage; and if she were the daughter of a *Brāhmaṇa* how could he, *Kṣatriya* of the Puru dynasty, be enchanted by her. For, a true *Kṣatriya* could only be attracted by another *Kṣatriya*. Duṣyanta, therefore, asks her :-

"Who are you ? Whose are you lovely maiden ? Why did you come to the forest ? Whence are you, sweet girl, so lovely and so good ? Your beauty stole my heart at the very first glance. I wish to know you better. Answer me, sweet maid." Laughingly the young maid replied, "O Duṣyanta, I am known as blessed Kaṇva's daughter, and he is austere, steadfast, wise and a lofty soul." (Ryder:1959: 98)

Duṣyanta was intrigued that a chaste and holy sage such as Kaṇva could be a father. The maiden then explains to the king the story of her birth. She reveals she is the offspring of the sage Viśvāmitra and the nymph Menakā. Menakā abandoned her at birth and she was nurtured by birds known as śakuntas. The sage Kaṇva found and reared her and named her Śakuntalā (after the birds that cared for her).

Declaring that she is clearly the daughter of a king (Viśvāmitra was formerly a king), and having fallen deeply in love with Śakuntalā, Duṣyanta asks her to marry him. He promises his entire kingdom to her. Śakuntalā silently accepts this proposal but asks Duṣyanta to wait for her father's return. Kaṇva would give his blessing in the appropriate manner. Duṣyanta, overcome by passion, could not wait for the return of Kaṇva Rṣi. Śakuntalā is made to believe that it is acceptable for them to have a *gāndharva marriage*

(voluntary, spontaneous marriage). After extracting the promise that her son would become the heir to the king's empire Śakuntalā yields to his importunities. Duṣyanta accepts her conditions forthwith and takes Śakuntalā as his wife. After assuaging his passion and fearing Kaṇva's return, the king returns to his capital, undertaking to send his entire army to fetch her to the palace. Soon after the king's departure sage Kaṇva returned to the hermitage. Śakuntalā was acutely conscious of what she had done and felt uneasy facing her father. Being prescient Kaṇva knew full well what had taken place, and to her surprise blessed her. He reassured her that it was not sinful for a man and woman who loved each other to marry without the prescribed ceremony since the *gāndharva* marriage was also an accepted form of marriage. He further foretells that she will give birth to a noble and powerful son.

Śakuntalā waits in vain for Duṣyanta and gives birth to a son three years later according to the story in the *Mahābhārata*. On this occasion Indra himself appears and prophesies that this jewel of the Puru dynasty will perform a hundred horse sacrifice (*Aśvamedha*) and give gifts to innumerable *brāhmaṇas*. Śakuntalā's son possessed great skill and prowess and at the age of six was able to ride lions, tigers and boars and was given the name *Sarvadamana* - All-tamer.

Twelve years passed thus, and Kaṇva decided that it was time for Śakuntalā to leave her parental home and go to the palace of her husband as it was the duty of every wife to serve her husband. Since Duṣyanta did not fetch her of his own accord Kaṇva sends Śakuntalā to Duṣyanta. When Śakuntalā presented herself in the court of her lord, he, though remembering her, refused to accept her and her son as his wife and child. Śakuntalā, having no means to corroborate her story, succumbed to grief and anger and wondered

why her husband was rejecting her. She told Duṣyanta that although he rejected them, her son would still rule "this foursquare earth". As Śakuntalā was about to leave a voice from heaven said to Duṣyanta : "Care for your son Duṣyanta. Do not despise Śakuntalā. You are the boy's father. Śakuntalā tells the truth." (Ryder 1959 : 100)

On hearing these words King Duṣyanta joyfully announces to his court that if he had accepted Śakuntalā and his son on Śakuntalā's words alone, people would have levelled suspicion at his son since his marriage to Śakuntalā was one without a witness. He had refused to accept his wife and son in order to protect Śakuntalā's reputation. He then pardons Śakuntalā's words of deprecation, uttered in anger of rejection, names his son Bharata and has him anointed as crown prince.

vi) Story of Śakuntalā from the *Padma-Purāṇa*.

The first six chapters of the Bengālī edition of the *Padma-Purāṇa* give another version of the Duṣyanta-Śakuntalā episode. Some parts of this story bear a close similarity to that of the *Mahābhārata* but other aspects resemble that of Kālidāsa's *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*. By mixing both versions an attempt has been made to present an original story. (Khār : 1982 : 18)

The heroic descendant of the Puru dynasty, Duṣyanta, was the emperor of Āryāvarta with his capital at Hastināpura. One day while hunting deer he reached the Mālinī river, on whose banks stood the hermitage of Kaṇva Ṛṣi. As he was about to shoot the deer he heard the voices of students from the hermitage imploring him to refrain from killing the *āśrama's* deer. The king asked his weary men to rest and, laying down his armour and his weapons, he enters the *āśrama* to meet Kaṇva Ṛṣi. There he sees Śakuntalā and her

friends watering the *āśrama* plants. Duṣyanta is at once attracted by Śakuntalā's beauty and hides behind a tree, listening to the conversation of the maidens. The king's curiosity heightens and he steps out of hiding and introduces himself. As Śakuntalā fumbles and moves aside, Duṣyanta asks the other young girls about her. They tell him that she is the daughter of the royal sage Viśvāmitra and the celestial nymph Menakā, and that she was the adopted daughter of sage Kaṇva. Duṣyanta is told that according to his daily custom Kaṇva has stepped out of the *āśrama* to collect fruit. The curious king enters the hermitage and is offered the usual, gracious hospitality by Śakuntalā. Finding an opportune time the king declares his love for Śakuntala. Having herself fallen in love with the king, Śakuntalā succumbs to his entreaties and agrees to a *gāndharva* marriage. After consummating the marriage the king departs for his capital, promising to send for her and leaving with her a ring as a token of remembrance.

Kaṇva Rṣi returns to the hermitage soon afterwards and through his divine intuition becomes aware of all that has taken place at the *āśrama* and blesses his daughter.

The love-lorn Śakuntalā waits impatiently for the arrival of the king. Unfortunately, neither the king nor his people arrive to take her to the palace. One day, as was his custom, Kaṇva had gone out of the hermitage to collect fruit and Śakuntalā was sitting all alone in the *āśrama* when the great sage Durvāsā appeared calling for Kaṇva. Lost in her sorrow, Śakuntalā did not hear the sage. The sage was so enraged at being disregarded that he cursed Śakuntalā saying that since she had neglected to welcome a visitor and failed to accord him the due respect, the person on whom her mind was fixed would forget her. Śakuntalā's friends and fellow inmates were deeply shocked by the gravity of this curse and appealed to the Rṣi to recall it. He

told them that a curse once pronounced could not be recalled, however, he agreed to mitigate it, pronouncing that a token of their love would change the king's oblivion into remembrance.

Since seven months had elapsed and Śakuntalā was heavy with child, Kaṇva sent her, together with Śāraṅgrava, Śāradvata, Gautamī and Priyamvadā, to the palace of her husband. On the way all decided to bathe in the river Sarasvatī. Śakuntalā gave her ring to Priyamvadā for safekeeping but unfortunately the ring was washed away in the waves and Priyamvadā did not have the courage to tell Śakuntalā that the ring was lost.

Śakuntalā entered the royal court with confidence and introduced herself. On account of Durvāsā's curse the king was unable to recall any of the events that were recounted to him by Śakuntalā. Śakuntalā became angry at the king's response and reproached him harshly. She then turned to Priyamvadā for the ring but on hearing that the ring was lost Śakuntalā fainted. Śakuntalā was made to feel like an inveterate liar. She tried to rekindle the king's memory by recounting details of things that had taken place at the hermitage but the king was not moved. The disgraced Śakuntalā left the palace and not wishing to return to the *āśrama* of Kaṇva Rṣi she went to the *āśrama* of an unknown Rṣi called Mārīca. Śakuntalā's mother, Menakā had an indirect hand in this plot. (Khar 1982 : 20)

Some time later a fisherman came across the lost ring in the belly of a fish he had caught. Realizing that the ring was valuable he set out to sell it at the palace of king Duṣyanta. The fisherman was apprehended by the police and taken to the king who on seeing the ring, as was portended by Durvāṣā Rṣi, was immediately released from the curse and remembered Śakuntalā. The king was full of remorse but was unable find to Śakuntalā anywhere.

One day Duṣyanta was asked by Indra to help the gods in a war against the demons. After defeating the enemy Duṣyanta was returning from heaven. On the way back Indra contrived as reward for the favour that Duṣyanta stop at the *āśrama* of Mārīca. At the *āśrama* he came across his son Sarvadamana. Kaṇva Ṛṣi was also present there and he reunited Duṣyanta and Śakuntalā.

vii) *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* of Kālidāsa

The distinguishing feature of Kālidāsa's play is expressed by the title "*Abhijñānaśākuntalam*". This means the heroine Śakuntalā is recognized and remembered through a token, in this case the ring. The title also marks Kālidāsa's creative genius and fertile imagination in transforming a simple Epic tale into an unsurpassed classic work of art. Kālidāsa's ingenuity and artistry are skilfully woven into the changes which make *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* unique. He also introduced several new situations and incidents into the main plot for dramatic effect as much as for social and political commentary.

Of the many versions of Kālidāsa's *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* found over the years scholars have found four versions which approximate the original. These are in Baṅgalī, Devanāgarī, Dakṣaṇī and Kāśmīrī. There is not much difference in the subject matter of the four versions. However, all four differ greatly in form and shape. The Devanāgarī or Bombay edition is accepted as the authentic version by the majority of scholars. (Khar 1982 : 22)

This is how the story develops according to the Devanagari /Bombay edition:

In *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*, after the Prologue in which obeisance is paid to Lord Śiva in the opening stanza, King Duṣyanta, of the Puru dynasty and emperor of Āryavarta is shown pursuing a deer. The deer is running so swiftly that its legs barely seem to touch the ground. Turning its neck around in fear to see how far behind his pursuer is, the deer drops half-chewed blades of *darbha* grass from his open mouth. Just as Duṣyanta was about to release the arrow at the deer he heard loud voices appealing to him to desist from hurting the tender deer that belonged to the hermitage.

King Duṣyanta complies with this request and puts away his weapon. He pays his respects to the hermits who in turn bless him with the birth of a sovereign son. The hermits invite him to the hermitage of Kaṇva Ṛṣi which is situated on the bank of the Mālinī river. Duṣyanta is informed that Kaṇva has gone to Somatīrtha in order to procure a joyous future for Śakuntalā.

Not wishing to disturb the inhabitants of the sacred grove the king asks that the chariot be stopped outside the hermitage. Setting aside his bejewelled armour and weapons, the king, in humble attire, enters the hermitage alone and comes across three young maidens, one of whom is Śakuntalā, carrying pitchers to water plants. Although she is dressed in simple bark-garments Duṣyanta is immediately struck by Śakuntalā's ravishing beauty. The king exclaims that such beauty cannot be found even within the precincts of a palace and expresses surprise that Kaṇva could allot the task of watering plants to one who is of such tender limbs and delicate beauty.

When Śakuntalā complains that Priyamvadā has tied her bark garment too tightly, Duṣyanta observes (to himself) that although the bark-garment is ill suited to her figure it nevertheless adds a charm to her beauty. Concealing himself behind some shrubs the king listens to the lighthearted conversation

of the young maidens and hears them tease Śakuntalā about a suitable husband being sought for her. Duṣyanta expresses a curiosity about Śakuntalā being the daughter of a *Brāhmaṇa* or a *Kṣatriya* since he, being a *Kṣatriya* has become attracted to her. He resolves to ascertain the truth about her. At that moment a bee buzzes around Śakuntalā and the king seizes this opportunity to approach the girls on the pretext of rescuing Śakuntalā from the bee. The girls are taken aback and Śakuntalā is overcome by shyness when she sees the king.

Her friends Priyamvadā and Anasūya advise Śakuntalā that they ought to offer the traditional hospitality to the king and request Śakuntalā to bring fruits while they offer him water to wash his feet. In the meantime Śakuntalā is struggling with the emotions rising within her, as she believes that these emotions are not becoming for one who lives in a hermitage. On enquiring about Śakuntalā's parents Duṣyanta learns from her friends that Śakuntalā is the adopted daughter of Kaṇva Ṛṣi and that her real parents are a nymph called Menakā and the royal sage Viśvāmitra. Hence she is a *Kṣatriya* maiden. Duṣyanta, when questioned about his own identity, tells them that he is an official of the court of the king. During their conversation Duṣyanta and Śakuntalā find they are mutually attracted. Soon afterwards Duṣyanta is called away to perform some duties and the girls return to the hermitage.

King Duṣyanta's mind is tormented. On the one hand he has to return to the palace to perform his royal duties and on the other hand he has to protect the inhabitants of the *āśrama* from demons. Seizing upon the need for protection of the hermits as an excuse to remain at the *āśrama* near Śakuntalā, Duṣyanta decides to tarry for a few days. Within the *āśrama* Śakuntalā is languishing in her love for Duṣyanta, regretting that their love has not been consummated. Priyamvadā and Anasūya surmise the reason for Śakuntalā's

unhappiness and deteriorating physical condition. They deliberate and decide on a plan to send a message to the king. They ask Śakuntalā to write a love-letter to Duṣyanta on a lotus leaf which they would take to him.

In the meantime, Duṣyanta, who is, as yet unaware of Śakuntalā's feelings towards him sees Śakuntalā in her lovelorn state. He conceals himself behind some trees and overhears the girls' discussion. He is overjoyed to hear that Śakuntalā is just as desperate to be with him as he is to be with her. Once again, seizing an appropriate opportunity, Duṣyanta presents himself. Priyamvadā and Anasūya hurriedly leave the arbour on the pretext of completing some chores. Duṣyanta explains to Śakuntalā about *gāndharva* marriage and tells her that he loves her. However, Śakuntalā hesitates to surrender herself to him. While Duṣyanta is attempting to convince Śakuntalā about the validity of the *gāndharva* marriage they are disturbed by Gautamī and therefore their desires remain unfulfilled till later.

A few days after consummating the marriage Duṣyanta returns to his capital, leaving his signet ring with Śakuntalā as a token of remembrance and promising to send for her as soon as possible. After Duṣyanta's departure Śakuntalā is perpetually forelorn, lost in her thoughts of Duṣyanta. One day a sage called Durvāsā comes to the hermitage. Śakuntala does not perform the requisite courtesies because of her affliction. Durvāsā Ṛṣi takes this oversight as an insult and, in great wrath curses Śakuntalā saying that the person in whose thoughts she is engrossed would forget her. Śakuntalā is so immersed in her thoughts that she does not even hear this curse; but her friends do and they run up to Durvāsā Ṛṣi and woo and beg him to retract the curse. Durvāsā finally relents saying that he cannot retract the curse completely but if Śakuntalā were to produce at the required time, a token of remembrance to Duṣyanta he would recognise her once again.

After some time Kaṇva Rṣi returns to the hermitage and on seeing a shy and withdrawn Śakuntalā he perceives through his yogic powers the events that had taken place at the *āśrama* during his absence. He tells Śakuntalā that he is pleased with her choice of husband and blesses her. Kaṇva Rṣi advises his disciples to send Śakuntalā to the home of her husband as soon as possible. The inhabitants (hermits) of the *āśrama*, and even the plants, animals and birds are saddened by Śakuntalā's imminent departure. Kaṇva Rṣi attempts to contain his emotions while bidding his foster daughter farewell. After taking leave of her friends Śakuntalā proceeds together with Śāraṅgarava, Gautamī and Śāradvata to Hastināpura, the capital of King Duṣyanta.

The royal court is in progress when the arrival of Kaṇva's disciples is announced to King Duṣyanta. He welcomes the visitors in the traditional manner. The king is astonished when Śāraṅgarava delivers Śakuntalā together with Kaṇva's message to him because Duṣyanta cannot remember or recognise Śakuntalā. Gautamī advises Śakuntalā to remove her veil but Duṣyanta still does not recognise her. As a last resort Śakuntalā decides to show Duṣyanta the ring that he had given her as a token of remembrance but when Śakuntalā attempts to do so, she is unable to find the ring. Gautamī suggests that the ring must have fallen into the river where they had stopped to bathe. The king becomes greatly angered by what he considers an attempt to deceive him and dismissing the effort as the wily ways of women to ensnare men he resolves that he is by no means going to accept a strange pregnant woman as his wife. The entourage from Kaṇva Rṣi's *āśrama* is left bewildered by this statement.

Śakuntalā pleads with Duṣyanta and reminds him of the many happy events that had taken place at the *āśrama* of Kaṇva Rṣi but Duṣyanta can remember nothing and he once again dismisses her efforts as a trick by a guileful

woman to entrap him into marriage. Seeing no other way out of the situation the hermits from Kaṇva's *āśrama* decide to leave, with a bitterly weeping Śakuntalā following them. However, after chiding her and asking her to remain at the palace, they return to the *āśrama* in the forest.

When Duṣyanta's priest sees what has just taken place he decides to shelter Śakuntalā and her unborn child. As the lamenting Śakuntalā follows the priest she is swooped into the sky by her mother Menakā's attendant, Sānumati.

Meanwhile a fisherman is arrested attempting to sell a royal signet-ring. On questioning the fisherman about how he came to be in possession of the ring the police ascertain that he found it in the belly of a fish he caught. The episode seemed so incredible that it was necessary to take the fisherman before the king. On seeing the ring the king is immediately released from sage Durvāsā's curse. He remembers Śakuntalā, the meeting at the *āśrama* and all that had transpired thereafter. Duṣyanta, forgetting his royal responsibilities and duties, begins pining for Śakuntalā and becomes toemented with grief. A search for Śakuntalā proves fruitless and the king constantly pines for her.

Some time later King Duṣyanta is summoned by Lord Indra to help the gods fight some demons. After accomplishing his task Duṣyanta is deliberately set on a course where he has to pass the *āśrama* of the sage Mārīca. Duṣyanta feels inclined to visit the *āśrama* and pay obeisance to the Rṣi. Admiring the serenity of the *āśrama* the king makes his way to the sage when he comes across a little boy trying to open the mouth of a lion's cub to count its teeth. With the little boy are two female ascetics trying to dissuade him from playing with the cub. When the boy sees Duṣyanta he stops while Duṣyanta,

too, feels the urge to gather the adorable child in his arms. At that moment an amulet tied around the child's arm falls to the ground. Duṣyanta picks up the band. The female ascetics are astounded that the protective band does not turn into a snake and bite the stranger as it is supposed to. When Duṣyanta learns of the child's identity he is overjoyed that it is his son, an heir who would perpetuate the Puru dynasty; something he had been yearning for. The women hastily summon Śakuntalā who becomes reunited with her husband after many years. Together they go to Mārīca Ṛṣi's *āśrama* where the holy sage blesses them and explains to Śakuntalā the events that arose out of Durvāsā's curse. The sage asks Śakuntalā to abandon any anger or hatred she may have for Duṣyanta as he is really quite blameless in the whole episode of her rejection. Both Śakuntalā and Duṣyanta are joyously reunited and they return to Hastināpur with their son.

The following view by G.L.Anderson on *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* cited by A.W.Ryder (1959 : xxxi) puts into proper perspective the eastern and western view on literature and Kālidāsa. Keith's just admiration for Kālidāsa's artistic mastery is also noteworthy :-

That love or erotic *rasa* is an important part of Kālidāsa's work may make him seem inferior to Western dramatists and poets who take themes like death, madness, treason, valor. But we must remind ourselves that love and hate, or to put it more mildly, the attraction and repulsion both physical and psychological which exist between every human being are much more a part of our daily lives, fortunately, than death, exile, or bloodshed. To descend to modern psychological jargon, Kālidāsa is the poet of interpersonal relations. He sees the love of a man for a maid at one end of the emotional spectrum that has at the other end the love of an ascetic for God. Eros is part of Agape and Agape part of Eros in this system. The reader must seek out the precise emotional nuance in each passage of the poet's work to appreciate the variety and depth of Kālidāsa's

reading of human experience. It is not the end but the moment, that counts. That Kālidāsa is different from Shakespeare is more important than whether he is superior or inferior. The ' finest master of Indian poetic style', as Keith calls him, has much to say to the Western reader.

Reference has already been briefly made to the fact that in Kālidāsa's plays, especially *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*, the hermitage, ascetism and penance (*tapas*) are set in the midst of other everyday scenes. Mishra (1992 : 29) explains why Western critics could not strike at the core of Kālidāsa's artistic relevance and the greatness of his contribution. Interpreting the apparently superficial "erotic" aspects of Kālidāsa's poetry, they labelled him a romantic or court poet. Mishra claims that Kālidāsa is actually superior to Shakespeare, Euripides and Sophocles, suggesting at p.73 that Sir William Jones's translation of *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*, during the European Romantic era may have given birth to the idea. Indeed, *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* is a drama of pain, of penance, of love forged in the fires of separation and yearning. This yearning over prolonged periods soon becomes sublimated. The body and its erotic connotations become submerged. This is not to deny the material world: the Indian poets, including Kālidāsa, have always depicted this world as the crucible of love just as the human body is the means of salvation (*śarīram khalu dharma sādhanam*). Mishra (1992 : 69) says in this regard :-

Those who find merely, or only eroticism or indulgence in Kālidāsa's vision of the physical and emotional bond between woman and man do so out of their moralistic outlook acquired abroad. Their intelligence deserves pity.

He continues :-

The mind which perceives only indulgence (of the senses) is either frustrated or depraved; else it could not look upon Kālidāsa's love as

erotic or a matter of physical indulgence alone. He can see it as a perception of wholeness, or totality. But a different kind of eyes are needed for this.

Mishra cites Abhinavagupta's observation in the *śloka* (Abj. V-2) :-

*ramyāṇi vīkṣya madhurāñśca niśamya śabdān
paryutsukībhavati yatsukhito'pi jantuḥ .
taccetasā smarati nūnamabodhapūrvam
bhāvasthirāṇi jananāntarasauhṛdāni*

When even a happy being is filled with wistful longings on seeing beautiful forms and listening to sweet sounds, then surely without being conscious of it, he remembers in his mind the friendships of a former birth deeply-rooted there in the form of impressions.

to explain the anguished longing or *Paryutsukībhāva* which originates in the material conditions surrounding the character(s) but transcends that, passing into the ethereal world. (1992 :13)

Duṣyanta is reminded of Śakuntalā by a bee taking honey from a lotus flower. In spite of Duṣyanta's rationalization of his situation, even of the fact that he is the father of an illegitimate son, he is increasingly more and more restless (*Paryutsuka*) . This burning desire to be united, not union itself, is the true meaning of life. Mishra states at page 15 :-

In all created life, one part is eager to be united with the other. One part of consciousness is eager to be joined with the other consciousness. The meaningfulness of life consists in this urgent desire; not in the actual attainment of union.

The foregoing elucidates some of the views mentioned by Anderson above. Kālidāsa's total view of life, his wholesome attitude towards the divinely inspired attraction between man and maid (exemplified by his approval of

the *gāndharva* marriage) and the sweetness of the pangs of separation, have found full expression in *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*. Perhaps without realizing it, perhaps inspite of their different views, even Western scholars become submerged in the *rasa* of *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*, which transports them into the realm of the higher consciousness where even pain is pleasant, and penance, peace-producing.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE VARIOUS RASAS IN "ABHIJÑĀNSĀKUNTALAM"

Kālidāsa's drama *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* is celebrated most for its expression of the *Rasas*. The Mahākavi's famous dictum on drama "*Nānārasam dṛśyate*" (various *Rasas* seen at play) is fully explored in this work. The predominant *Rasa* in *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* is *Śṛṅgāra* which is divided into two aspects and both of these are depicted in the play. The intoxicating joys of *Sañyoga Śṛṅgāra* (union of lover and beloved) and the heartrending pangs of *Viyoga* or *Vipralambha Śṛṅgāra* (separation) have been portrayed with supreme artistry. The receptive (*sahṛdaya*) spectator or reader never tires of being immersed in the depths of these emotions portrayed by the poet. The other *Rasas*, too, feature in the play and serve to constitute this ocean of *Rasa* that is *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*. Some of these are mentioned below :-

Vīra Rasa (valour) is evoked at appropriate times by Kālidāsa, carrying the spectator to the heights of bliss and determination to act valorously. The utterances of the *vidūṣaka* (jester) provide cascades of *Hāsya Rasa* (laughter). *Adbhuta Rasa* (wonder) is also part of the range of *Rasas* evoked in *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*. In Act IV and at the end of the play the depiction of *Vātsalya Rasa* (love towards the offspring) in states of both separation and union has attained the status of encapsulating the essence of this *Rasa*. The young *Rṣis* experience *Bibhatsa Rasa* - revulsion (perhaps on account of the difference between their environment and that of Duṣyanta) at the palace. *Bhayānaka Rasa* (fear) too, is masterfully described in Act I wherein the deer seeks protection from the hunter's arrow. The havoc wrought by the elephant at the end of Act I also creates fear.

Act V evokes *Karuṇa Rasa* (pathos) in the spectator when he sees the bereft Śakuntalā, rejected by her husband. At the end of the play, after subjecting the spectator to the entire gamut of *Rasas*, the Mahākavi introduces *Śānta Rasa* leading to quietude (peace) in the *Bharatavākya* (epilogue). The poet prays to Lord Śiva to grant him release from the circle of birth and death in these words :-

*mamāpi ca kṣapayata nīllohitaḥ
punarbhavam parigataśaktirātmabhūḥ .*

May the self-existent Śiva whose energy is immanent in all things put an end to my rebirth.

(*Abj.* VII-35) ²

"*Abhijñānaśākuntalam*" is an apt, unified and powerful vehicle for the captivating accomplishment of the various *Rasas* of poetry and drama, which in turn have made it immortal in the world of literature.

ŚRĠGĀRA RASA (LOVE OR THE EROTIC SENTIMENT)

A Practical Hindi English Dictionary defines *Śrīḡāra Rasa* thus :-

One of the nine *rasas* - according to Indian Poetics, this is one of the most comprehensive and extensive and is known as *Rasarāja* (the king of *Rasas*.)

The principal or dominant emotion (*sthāyibhāva*) of *Śrīḡāra Rasa* is love (*rati*). Rudraṭa's definition of *Śrīḡāra Rasa* is most appropriate to the *Śrīḡāra*

² The text used for this Study is C.R. Devadhar's "ABHIJÑĀNA-SĀKUNTALAM OF KĀLIDĀSA" - Dehli, Motilal Banarsidass, 1981.

Devadhar's English translation is used, except for occasional deviations. Citation will be e.g. for *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* Act. I. Scene 3 :- (*Abj.* I-3).

portrayed in *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*. According to Rudraṭa the passionate conduct of a mutually attracted man and woman constitutes *Śṛṅgāra* :-

*vyavahāraḥ punnāryoranyonyam raktayo ratiprakṛtiḥ,
śṛṅgāraḥ sa dvedhā sambhogo vipralambha.*

The passionate conduct of two people mutually enraptured with each other constitutes *śṛṅgāra* whose two aspects are *sambhoga* (union) and *vipralambha* (separation).

(*Kāvyaḷaṅkāra* : 12-5. own translation)

In the second half of the couplet he goes on to explain that *Śṛṅgāra* has two forms - *Sambhoga* and *Vipralambha*. In union lovers experience *sambhoga* (joy) and *Vipralambha* (anguish) in separation.

Abhijñānaśākuntalam portrays the *Śṛṅgāra Rasa* evoked by the mutual attraction of the hero or protagonist Duṣyanta, and the heroine Śakuntalā, and their subsequent amorous conduct.

SAÑYOGA /SAMBHOGA ŚRṅGĀRA

Saṅyoga (conjunction or union) and *Sambhoga* (enjoyment or union) describe *Śṛṅgāra* when the lover and beloved are together. *Śṛṅgāra Rasa* being predominant in *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*, appears early in the drama when there is love at first sight between Duṣyanta and Śakuntalā. In Act I Duṣyanta beholds Śakuntalā as she waters the plants and converses with her friends. He is struck by love for Śakuntalā and says :-

*aho! madhuramāsām darśanam,
śuddhāntadurlabhamidam vapurāśramavāsino yadi janasya,
dūrīkṛtāḥ khalu guṇairudyānalatā vanalatābhiḥ.*

How lovely they look!

If such the beauty of maids, who dwell in woodland retreats, the like of which is not easily to be found in the recesses of a palace, then indeed are the garden plants well surpassed in merit by the woodland creepers.

(Abj. I-17)

In classical terms, this is "Darśanānurāga" (love at first sight) which is defined thus in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* :-

*śravaṇād darśanād rūpād aṅgalīlāviceṣṭitaiḥ ,
madhuraiśca samālāpaiḥ kāmaḥ samupajāyate.*

Passion is aroused through hearing of the beloved, by beholding her form or by her gestures, as well her sweet speech.

(*Nāṭyaśāstra* III : 22-158)

Duṣyanta is stricken with love for Śakuntalā the moment he sets eyes on her. He mentally contemplates on her wondrous beauty :-

*idam kilāvyājamanoharam vapu-
stapaḥkṣamam sādhayitum ya icchati.
dhruvam sa nīlotpalapatradhārayā
śamīlatām chettumṣirvyavasyati.*

The sage who would make this artlessly-charming form capable of enduring penance would attempt, I suppose, to cleave the Śamī tree with the edge of the blue lotus-leaf.

(Abj. I-18)

*idamupahitasūkṣmagranthinā skandhadeśe,
stanayugapariṇāhācchādinā valkalena.
vapurabhinavamasyāḥ puṣyati svām na śobhām
kusumamiva pinaddham pāṇḍupatrodareṇa.*

This her youthful body, by reason of the bark garment tied with delicate knots upon the shoulder, and covering the expanse of her

twin breasts, does not exhibit its own charms, like a flower enfolded by a pale leaf.

(Abj. I-19)

*sarasijamanuviddham śaivalenāpi ramyam
malinamapi himāñśorlakṣma lakṣmīm tanoti.
iyamadhikamanojñā valkalenāpi tanvī
kimiva hi madhurāṇām maṇḍanam nākṛtīnām.*

The lotus, though moss may overlay it, is, nevertheless, beautiful; the spot on the moon, for all its darkness, heightens the charm of the moon; this slender (maiden) is more lovely even in her dress of bark: for what indeed is not an embellishment of sweet forms ?

(Abj. I-20)

At this juncture Śakuntalā's "Adhikamanojñatā" - her extreme captivating beauty - gets rooted in Duṣyanta's heart. Priyamvadā's statement relating to Śakuntalā -

*yāvat tvayopa gatayā latāsanātha ivāyam
kesaravṛkṣakaḥ pratibhāti.*

For, with you standing near it, the *kesara* appears as though possessed of a creeper.

(Abj. I-Priyamvadā)

further reinforces Duṣyanta's attraction to Śakuntalā as he takes note of the similarity between Śakuntalā and the creeper mentioned in these words :-

*adharaḥ kisalayarāgaḥ komalaviṭapānukāriṇau bāhu
kusumamiva lobhanīyam yauvanamaṅgeṣu sannaddham.*

Truly her lower lip glows like a tender leaf, her arms resemble flexible stalks. And youth, bewitching like a blossom, shines in all her lineaments.

(Abj. I-21)

The expert commentator on *Śṛṅgāra*, Bhoja, categorised these situations respectively as *Bhāva* (emotion) and *Bhāvajanma* (birth of emotion), which

progress towards the situations of *Bhāvānubandha* (emotional commitment) and *Bhāvaprakarṣa* (exhaltation of emotion respectively). These describe the gradual deepening of attraction starting from the *tapas* aspect to the physical, and thereafter the natural surroundings which impact on the emotions.

While Priyamvadā stares at Śakuntalā, who is absorbed in looking at the Vanajyotsnā creeper, she assumes that this is what Śakuntalā must be thinking :-

*yathā vanajyotsnānurūpeṇa pādapeṇa saṅgatā
api nāmaivamahamapyātmano'nurūpam varam labheyeti.*

"As the Vanajyotsnā is united to a suitable tree, thus, may I, too, hope for a bridegroom of my choice."

(Abj. I-Priyamvadā)

Duṣyanta, hearing this, is seized with a desire to possess Śakuntalā. Learning about Śakuntalā's life, and assessing that she is a *Kṣatriya* maiden, he becomes eager to marry her. Like a faithful lover, he begins to treat his feelings as proof of his love in this context, and speculates :-

*asañśayam kṣatraparigrahakṣamā
yadāryamasyāmabhilāṣi me manaḥ,
satām hi sandehapadeṣu vastuṣu
pramāṇamantaḥkaraṇapravṛttayaḥ*

Surely, she cannot but be fit to be wedded to a *Kṣatriya*, since my noble soul has longing towards her: for in matters beset with doubts, the promptings of the heart are to the good an authoritative guide.

(Abj. I-22)

However, Duṣyanta is a hero of the category of *Dhīrodātta Nāyaka* - serious and lofty minded. Such a hero does not deal lightly with the rousing of his emotions but engages in deep reflection concerning it :-

tathāpi tattvata enāmupalapsye

Nevertheless, I will ascertain the truth about her.

(Abj. I-Duṣyanta)

Following upon the birth of love (*Śṛṅgāra*) as a result of sight (of the beloved) the next stage of love is meeting face to face. For this event Kālidāsa has skilfully woven the scene of the *Bhramara Vṛttānta yojanā* - (scheme of the bee episode). It is contrary to *maryādā* (decorum) for an unknown young man to approach a maiden without sound reason. This *Bhramara Vṛttānta* affords Duṣyanta the excuse to approach Śakuntalā. Duṣyanta sees Śakuntalā terrified by the bee, and sometimes longs for her, and sometimes, treating the bee as a rival, compares himself with the bee and expresses envy for it.

Because the bee buzzes around her face Śakuntalā trembles in trepidation. In this process her eyebrows become arched, enkindling the dormant *ratibhāva* (love) in Duṣyanta's heart. Duṣyanta engages in the following monologue, praising the good fortune of the bee and decrying his own lack of success :-

*calāpāṅgām dṛṣṭim spṛśasi bahuśo vepathumatīm
rahasyākhyāyīva svanasi mṛdu kaṁāntikacarah,
karau vyādhunvatyāḥ pibasi ratisarvasvamadharam
vayam tattvānveṣānmadhukara hatāstvam khalu kṛtī.*

Frequently dost thou touch her throbbing eye with its outer corner trembling; approaching her ear, thou murmurest softly, as if thou wert whispering a secret of love; and while she waves her hands, thou sippest her lower lip which contains all the treasure of delight; whilst we, O bee, through search after truth are disappointed, thou hast gained thy wish.

(Abj. I-24)

Whatever a stricken lover addresses to his new-found love; whatever gestures he makes, are described in the above verse using the bee as a medium. The repeated eager glances of the beloved, the whispering of delectable words in her ears, kissing her hands while shaking (wringing) them; are all expressed through the bee's proximity to Śakuntalā. It is therefore not surprising that Duṣyanta is stricken with jealousy. This condition is a sign of the growing love in his heart for Śakuntalā. According to the notion of love in the *Bhāvaprakāśan* we find :-

sneho yatra bhayantatra yatreṣyā madanastataḥ.

where there is love, there is jealousy too; and the emotion of *Kāma* is present.

(*Bhāvaprakāśan* : VI-139)

Duṣyanta employs the excuse of protecting Śakuntalā from the bee, and presents himself before her. Seeing him, Śakuntalā, who is a chaste maiden from the holy *āśrama*, is seized with love for him. Being totally unaware of this feeling of love hitherto, Śakuntalā naturally considers it an aberration from the kind of life she associates with the forest hermitage :-

*kim nu khalvimam prekṣya tapovanavirodhino
vikārasya gamanīyāsmi samvṛttā.*

How is it, that at the sight of this person, I feel an emotion scarce consistent with a grove devoted to piety?

(*Abj. I-Śakuntalā*)

According to some scholars, it was Kālidāsa's intention to demonstrate the arising of love in Śakuntalā first, in accordance with the dictum of the *Sāhityadarpaṇa* :-

ādau vācyah striyā rāgaḥ punsaḥ paścāttadīngitaiḥ

(*Sāhityadarpaṇa* : III : after 194)

The first signs of passion are expressed in the female; it is thereafter indicated in the male. Thus one should not impute prior love to Duṣyanta; i.e. the pangs of love should not arise first in the man. This view is based on the medieval attitude towards women which considers women inferior to man. Moreover, this view is inappropriate because it is contrary to the position adopted by Kālidāsa, who is inclined to place woman and man on the same plane in matters of love.

Thereafter, learning that the head of the *āśrama*, Kaṇva, is determined to have Śakuntalā married (*guroḥ punarasyā anurūpavarapradāne saṅkalpaḥ*- it is the father's intention to give her to a suitable bridegroom) Duṣyanta's desire to win Śakuntalā assumes a concrete form :-

*bhava hr̥daya sābhilāṣam samprati sandehanirṇayo jātaḥ,
āśaṅkase yadagnim tadidam sparśakṣamam ratnam.*

My heart, be hopeful; for now all doubt is done; what you dreaded as fire, the same is a gem capable of being touched.

(*Abj.* I-28)

Gradually Duṣyanta begins to believe that Śakuntalā too has begun to love him in her heart. He expresses this belief thus :-

*yathā vayamasyāmevamiyamapyasmānprati syāt,
athavā labdhāvakaśā me prārthanā. kutaḥ.*

Is it possible that she feels towards me as I do towards her ?
Or rather there is ground for hope. For :-

*vācam na miśrayati yadyapi madvacobhiḥ
kaṇam dadātyabhimukham mayi bhāṣamāṇe.*

*kāmam na tiṣṭhati madānanasammukhīyam
bhūyiṣṭhamanyaviṣayā na tu dṛṣṭirasyāḥ.*

Although she mingles not her speech with mine, yet when I speak she turns her ear directly opposite to me. Granted that she does not stand with her face turned towards mine, nevertheless, her eyes for the most part are not turned to any other object.

(Abj. I-31)

Śakuntalā is an inexperienced, pious heroine who does not have the knowledge of worldly ways. She thus expresses the first kindling of love in her heart in a furtive manner. These are the ways in which *Ratibhāva* is evoked to produce *Śṛṅgāra Rasa*.

By the end of the First Act, Duṣyanta's passion for Śakuntalā becomes so fierce that he is incapable of separating himself from the hermitage. He feels no desire to return to his capital city :-

*Mandautsukyo'smi nagaragamanam prati. na khalu śaknomi
Śakuntalāvyāpārādātmānam nivartayitum.
Gacchati puraḥ śarīram dhāvati paścādasanstutam cetaḥ
cīnāñśukamiva ketoḥ prativātam nīyamānasya.*

I am not very eager now to return to the city. I cannot, in truth, divert my mind from occupying itself with (thoughts about) Śakuntalā for, ..my body moves onward, but my heart, (as if) unrelated (with the former) runs back, like the silken cloth of a banner borne against the wind

(Abj. I-34)

The jester's statement at the beginning of Act II conveys Duṣyanta's mental turbulence after he became bound by the "rope" of his love for Śakuntalā.

*hyaḥ kilā tāpasakanyakā darśitā. Sāmpratam
nagaragamanasya manaḥ kathamapi na karoti.*

Adyāpi tasya tāmeva cintayato'kṣnoḥ prabhātamāsīt.

For, indeed, yesterday a hermit's daughter was presented to his view. And now he has not even thought of going back to his city. Even today, while he was thinking only of her, the (light of) dawn broke upon his eyes.

(Abj. II-40)

In Act III when Duṣyanta, overcome with pangs of separation, enters the bower (*latāmaṇḍapa*) for mental digression, he sees Śakuntalā submerged in the pangs of separation and hears her words :-

*yathaḥ prabhṛti mama darśanapathamāgataḥ
sa tapovanarakṣitā rājarsiḥ.*

From the very instant the pious king who guards our hallowed forest met my eye.....

she continues after being urged by her friends :-

tataḥ ārabhya tadgatenābhilāṣeṇaitadavasthāsmi samvṛttā

...From that instant, my love for him has reduced me to this plight.

(Abj. III-Śakuntalā)

He then becomes assured of his own love. He expresses his feelings in the form of *śrutam śrotavyam*, [(with joy) I have heard what is worth hearing] and the feelings of passion become his only hope of relief :-

*smara eva tāpaheturnirvāpayitā sa eva me jātaḥ,
divasa ivābhraśyāmastapātyaye jīvalokasya.*

It was, indeed, love that caused my fever, and it is love alone that (now) allays it; as, at the end of summer, a day, grown black with

clouds, relieves the living world from the heat which itself had caused.

(Abj. III-11)

Beholding Śakuntalā writing a love letter (*madanalekha*) on a lotus leaf he becomes absorbed in the belief that love is indeed demonstrated in such ways:

*unnamitaikabhrūlatamānanamasyāḥ padāni racayantyāḥ
kaṇṭakitena prathayati mayyanurāgam kapolena.*

As she is composing words (for her song), her face, with one creeper-like eye-brow lifted, reveals her passion for me by her thrilling cheeks.

(Abj. III-14)

It is indeed a fortuitous turn of events that Duṣyanta should arrive on the scene when the love letter indited by Śakuntalā, with her nails, is being read aloud. He overhears Priyamvadā's proposal to protect her friend Śakuntalā's life and he stamps the words of acceptance - "*Sādhāraṇo'yam Praṇayaḥ Sarvathā'nugrihito'smi* - our passion is reciprocal. I feel favoured in every way" - on it. In the same episode Duṣyanta displays a strong commitment to marrying Śakuntalā, referring to her as the pride of his dynasty (lineage). Duṣyanta again and again pledges his total dedication (*ananyaparāyaṇatā*) and service of every kind, to the extent of caressing her feet. *Śṛṅgāra Rasa* oozes from these lines :-

*kim śītalaiḥ klamavinodibhirādravātān
sañcārayāmi nalinīdalatālavṛntaiḥ
aṅke nidhāya karabhoru yathāsukham te
samvāhayāmi caraṇāvuta padmatāmrau.*

Shall I set in motion moist breezes by means of fans of cool lotus-leaves to dissipate your langour, or shall I, O round-thighed (maiden),

lay those feet red as lotuses in my lap and press them so as to relieve your pain ?

(*Abj.* III-20)

Duṣyanta enlists the aid of tradition in proposing to marry Śakuntalā according to the rites of *Gāndharva Vivāha* (Secret marriage following love at first sight.) Duṣyanta is indeed eager to seal this proposal to Śakuntalā with a kiss.

In this vein *Sambhoga/Saṅgyoga Śṛṅgāra* flows unimpeded into the Third Act. The other *Rasas* that are evoked in the flow of the story serve to heighten the predominant *Rasa*, *Śṛṅgāra*.

Śṛṅgāra in its wide sense includes all feelings and emotions evoked towards a person to whom one is attracted or attached. Śakuntalā is a prime example of a pure and innocent maiden undergoing the natural process of the human mind and body. Duṣyanta is the catalyst which brings this about. Hence *Śṛṅgāra* or *Ratibhāva* is not something secretive, shameful, prurient or offensive. Kālidāsa therefore depicts this *Śṛṅgāra* without reserve, and it must be comprehended in its context of life-affirmation. The *Śṛṅgāra* of Śiva and Pārvatī in *Kumārasambhavam* must accordingly also be appreciated in its context. The *Rasas* are subservient to the larger purpose or goal of the poet or his characters; and their ultimate effect is transcendental bliss, not preoccupation with physical matters.

The Seventh Act also sees the expression of this *Sambhoga Śṛṅgāra*, when Duṣyanta and Śakuntalā are reunited after a prolonged separation. Seeing Śakuntalā enwrapped in untidy garments, Duṣyanta deeply regrets his earlier cruelty. Duṣyanta's reunification with his beloved, after his transformation into tenderness and love through the redeeming power of penance, immerses

the audience in a deep experience of *Sanyoga Śṛṅgāra* (union of lovers).
The following outpouring of Duṣyanta is noteworthy :-

*priye, krauryamapi me tvayi prayuktamanukūlapariṇāmam
samvṛttam. yadāhamidānīm tvayā pratyabhijñātamātmānam
paśyāmi.*

Oh my beloved, even the cruelty I showed to you has come to have a
happy conclusion, since I find that you have recognized me.

(Abj. VII-Duṣyanta)

This union has been compared with the re-union of the Moon and Rohini
after an eclipse :-

*smṛtibhinnamohatamaso diṣṭyā pramukhe sthitāsi me sumukhi,
uparāgānte śaśinaḥ samupagatā rohiṇī yogam*

By the kindness of heaven, O lovely faced one, thou standest again
before me, the darkness of whose delusion has been dispelled by
recollection. The star Rohiṇī at the end of an eclipse rejoins her
(beloved) Moon.

(Abj. VII-22)

The foregoing two excerpts are also important for one other reason : the
secret of the prefix "ABHIJÑĀNA" in the title of the play,
ABHIJÑĀŚĀKUNTALAM - is hidden in these. Śakuntalā and Duṣyanta's
union is in reality their mutual finding/discovering of each other. This is
elaborated in a verse in this episode. The words are uttered by Duṣyanta as
he clasps Śakuntalā's feet in remorse:

*sutanu hṛdayātpatyādeśavyalīkamapaitu te
kimapi manasaḥ sammoho me tadā balavānabhūt,
prabalatamasāmevam prāyāḥ śubheṣu pravṛttayaḥ
srajamapi śirasandhaḥ kṣiptām dhunotyahiśaṅkyā.*

O fair one let the unpleasantness caused by my desertion of thee depart from thy heart; for at that time a violent frenzy somehow overpowered my soul. Such, for the most part, is the attitude towards good of those in whose minds the darkness of illusion prevails. A blind man shakes off even a wreath of flowers thrown over his head, mistaking it for a snake.

(Abj. VII-24)

Śakuntalā's feelings expressed at this ecstatic moment of union with the beloved is symbolic of the sublime sentiments of the Indian heroine (beloved) towards the husband (lover).

*uttiṣṭhatvāryaputraḥ. nūnam me sucaritapratibandhakam
purākṛtam teṣu divaseṣu pariṇāmamukhamāsīdyena sānu-
krośo'pyāryaputro mayi virasaḥ samvṛttaḥ.*

Rise, my husband; surely some (evil) deed of mine in a former existence coming in the way (of the action) of my virtue, was in those days approaching fruition; since my husband, who is so kind at heart became unfeeling towards me.

(Abj. VII-Śakuntalā)

The sublime heights of the moment of union come when Śakuntalā's tears, which have trickled from her eyes accumulate on her lips, and Duṣyanta is anxious to wipe them away. He says :-

*mohānmayā sutanu pūrvamupekṣitaste
yo bāṣpabinduradharam paribādhamānaḥ,
tam tāvadākuṭilapakṣmavilagnamadya
bāṣpam pramṛjya vigatānuśayo bhaveyam.*

Fair one, the anguish of my heart shall cease by wiping off the tears that now cling to thy slightly curved eye-lashes - the tears which formerly paining thy under-lip were neglected by me through mental delusion.

(Abj. VII-25)

This reunion is seen in its completeness or *grande finale* when Śakuntalā, Duṣyanta and Prince Sarvadamana appear together. Kālidāsa has introduced the character of Mārīcamuni to express the poignancy and tenderness of this moment, through an imagery of piety (*śraddhā*), wealth (*vitta*) and law or destiny (*vidhī*).

*diṣṭyā śakuntalā sādhvī sadapatyamidam bhavān,
śraddhā vittam vidhiśceti tritayam tatsamāgatam.*

The virtuous Śakuntala, her noble child and your Honour-here
fortunately are combined faith, fortune, and action. (*Abj. VII-29*)

This couplet reveals much about Mahākavi Kālidāsa's attitude towards *Sambhoga Śṛṅgāra*. The accomplishment of *Śṛṅgāra Rasa* in the foregoing excerpts, through the morally tempered depiction of Duṣyanta's and Śakuntalā's love, is largely within the bounds of decorum (*maryādā*). Whenever there seems to be a slipping away from this decorum, on the part of Duṣyanta, Kālidāsa has tried to draw in the reins and return to *maryādā* with the words of caution : *Paurava, Rakṣa vinayam* - O! son of Puruva, be mindful of your conduct! This is in accordance with the ethical precept of *indriya nigraha* or sense-control.

The Sixth Act presents a golden example of the poet's approach to the portrayal of *Śṛṅgāra* - passion of the opposite sexes. Here we see Duṣyanta, overcome with pain from being separated from Śakuntalā, indulging in picture painting to divert himself. He is intent on painting the banks of the Mālinī River in order to portray a pair of swans cavorting happily; and a black deer (*kṛṣṇa mṛga*) with the doe (*mṛgī*) trying to rub her eyes for relief on the horn of the male :-

*kāryā saikatalīnahansamithunā srotovahā mālinī
pādāstāmbhito niṣaṇṇahariṇā gaurīguroḥ pāvanāḥ,
śākhāmbitavalkalasya ca taronirmātumicchāmyadhah
śṛṅge kṛṣṇamṛgasya vāmanayanam kaṇḍūyamānām mṛgīm*

The stream of Mālinī ought to be drawn with a pair of swans resting on its sands; and on both its sides must appear the sacred hills at the base of the Himālayan ranges, where the deer are squatting; and I wish to draw, underneath a tree that bears some bark-garments suspended from its boughs, a doe that rubs her left eye on the horn of a black antelope.

(*Abj.* VI-17)

The underlying sentiment of Mahākavi Kālidāsa in his portrayal of *Saṅyoga Śṛṅgāra* is the joyousness and sweetness (*mādhurya*) and mutual trust of conjugal life. This leads to strong relationships which withstand all internal as well as external assaults, making for a happy family and stable society. Hence Kālidāsa, even in his *Śṛṅgāra* description, is ever mindful of social cohesion and mutual trust.

The above scene also evokes the first passion of Duṣyanta for Śakuntalā. He cherishes the meeting with Śakuntalā at the *āśrama* on the banks of the Mālini river, and his thoughts return to it.

VIPRALAMBHA ŚṚṄĀRA (SEPARATION)

It becomes apparent that in *Abhijñānaśākuntalam Vipralambha Śṛṅgāra* has been portrayed to a far greater extent than *Sambhoga (Saṅyoga)*. While the purpose of this is the reinforcement of *Sambhoga Śṛṅgāra* thus giving a supra-physical dimension even to *Sambhoga* - the approach of poetics to this question developed on the basis that *Sambhoga Śṛṅgāra* cannot be *puṣṭa*

(complete) without *Vipralambha* (pangs of separation) - (*na vina vipralambhena sambhogah puṣṭimarhati.*)

It follows that in *Śṛṅgāra* or love poetry and dramas, detailed depictions of *Vipralambha* are to be found. An important consideration to be noted is that just like in later Hindi poetry, where *Vipralambha* or *Viyoga Śṛṅgāra*, with its depictions of *viraha vedanā* (pangs of separation) was dominant, in Sanskrit poetry, too, there is greater sweetness and appeal in the depiction of *Vipralambha*. In poetry of most cultures separation has always been depicted as an enhancement of romance as it lends to the feeling of love and through separation the strength of love is depicted. It is perhaps easier to identify with pain and suffering than with someone else's joys and merrymaking. There is certainly greater scope for portrayal of the separation aspect of love.

SAMBHOGA ŚRṅGĀRA (UNION)

Sambhoga Śṛṅgāra has a shorter duration with meeting, attraction, and passion ending with *Sambhoga*. The concluding parts of this process, "*Sambhoga*", are not even described in detail because of tradition (*paramparā*) which has rules of decorum (*maryādā*) and refinement (*ślīla/aślīla*). Sūradāsa, therefore, in his depiction of Rādha-Krishna and the *Gopis*, ignored the *sañyoga* aspect and engaged in *viraha varṇana* (description of pangs of separation). The duration of *Vipralambha* is not a few minutes or hours, like in *Sambhoga*, but days, months and years (eg. In the *Rāmāyaṇa*, Urmillā, being separated from her husband, Lakṣmaṇa, endured *viraha* for fourteen years.) There is a greater scope for description of *Vipralambha* (separation) and the *virahī* or *virahiṇī's* pain (*virahavedanā*). This process of suffering is divided into various stages and

categories according to the *Kāvyaśāstra*. There can be death of the afflicted person as the ultimate stage of *viraha* whereas it is not common in *Sambhoga*. In *Viyoga or Vipralambha Śṛṅgāra* there are many possible descriptions of emotions and emotional experiences.

Vipralambha is shown from the Second Act in *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*, and is developed in the beginning of Act III and the entire Sixth Act. Other *Rasas* (beside *Śṛṅgāra*) also come into play to fortify *Vipralambha Śṛṅgāra*.

In Act II Duṣyanta, acknowledging that it was not easy to gain the hand of Śakuntalā, expresses his disappointment thus :

*kāmam priyā na sulabhā manastu tadbhāvadarśanāśvāsi,
akṛtārthe'pi manasi je ratimubhayaprārthanā kurute .*

True, my darling is not easily attainable; yet my heart assumes confidence from observing the manner in which she seems affected. Even though our love not hitherto prospered, yet our mutual longing causes delight.

(*Abj. II-1*)

According to Shivram Tripathi, in his *Rasaratnahāra*, this is the *Ādyānurāga* stage (love in the very beginning) in which the hero and heroine, by merely beholding each other, become attached. Passion (*kāma bhāvanā*) overcomes them, although the desire for union (*sambhoga*) is not satisfied.

*navāvalokād dampatyoh kāmavardhitarāgayoh,
pūrvānurāgo vijñeyo hyapūrṇasprhayordaśā*

The hero and heroine on first beholding each other become enraptured. Passion arises in them but fulfilment is not possible.

(*Rasaratnahāra* : 55 : own translation)

Passion denied fulfilment, causes Duṣyanta's dejection, and he recalls all Śakuntalā's movements and gestures. Like an impassioned man he considers them overtures of love directed at him and consoles himself believing that Śakuntalā reciprocates his love :

*snigdham vīkṣitamanyato'pi nayane yatprerayantyā tayā
yātam yacca nitambayorgurutayā mandam vilāsādiva,
mā gā ityuparuddhayā yadapi sā sasūyamuktā sakhī
sarvam tatkila matparāyaṇamaho kāmī swatām paśyati*

The tender look she cast, even while she directed her eyes elsewhere; her slow movement caused by the heaviness of her hips, as if for grace's sake; the angry word she spoke to her friend who detained her saying ' Do not go;'- all this was, no doubt , on my account! Ah! how does a lover discover his own (everywhere) !

(Abj. II-2)

While in solitude, with only the Vidūṣaka (jester) for company, Duṣyanta describes Śakuntalā's ethereal (*alaukika*) beauty, purity and delicateness in lines such as :-

citre niveśya parikalpitasattvayogā

Was she delineated in a picture and then endowed with life ?

(Abj. II-9)

and

anāghrātam puṣpam kisalayamalūnam kararukai

This immaculate beauty is like a flower not yet smelt,
a delicate shoot not torn by nails;

(Abj. II-10)

and expresses his deep yearning to obtain her in these words. :

na jāne bhoktāram kamiha samupasthāsyati vidhiḥ

I do not know whom destiny will desire to be the one who will enjoy her beauty.

(Abj. II-10)

Up to this stage *Pūrvarāga* (prior love) is described as outlined by *Ācarya Viśvanātha*, the author of the *Sāhityadarpaṇa* :-

*śravaṇād darśanādvāpi mithaḥ sanrūḍharāgayoḥ
daśāviśeṣo yo'prāpto pūrvarāgaḥ sa ucyate.*

The state of mind of the hero and heroine who become mutually attracted by hearing about and seeing each other's beauty etc. preceding their union is called *pūrvarāga* or prior love.

(*Sāhityadarpaṇa* : III-188 : own translation)

Mahākavi Kālidāsa describes the same stage in *Śakuntalā* with the appellation *Dr̥ṣṭirāga* (love at first sight). *Duṣyanta* describes to the jester *Śakuntalā*'s love at first sight for him in the following two ślokaḥ :-

*abhimukhe mayi sanḥṛtamīkṣitam
hasitamanyanimittakṛtodayam
vinayavāritavṛttiratastayā
na vivṛto madano na ca samvṛtaḥ.*

She averted her eyes when I stood facing her and she smiled (as it were) from some other cause (than love); hence love, whose course was checked by modesty was neither fully displayed (by her) nor yet wholly concealed.

and, how she further stops to behold *Duṣyanta*, as well as intimate her own interest in him :-

*darbhāṅkureṇa caraṇaḥ kṣata ityakāṇḍe
tanvī sthitā katicitdeva padāni gatvā,
āsīdvivṛttavadanā ca vimocayantī
śākhāsu valkalamasaktamapi drumāṇām.*

For when the slim (girl) had proceeded but a few steps, she stopped all of a sudden, saying, "My foot is hurt by the points of the *Kuśa* grass;" and then she turned her face (towards me) whilst (pretending to be occupied with) disentangling her bark-dress from the branches of the shrubs in which it had not really been caught.

(*Abj.* II-11,12)

While the foregoing indicate the beginning of love's anguish in Duṣyanta and Śakuntalā in Act III, the first intimation of Śakuntalā's grief is given by the *Viṣkambha* (prelude) :-

ātapalaṅghanādvavadasvathā Śakuntalā.

That Śakuntalā is extremely disordered from injury caused by the Sun's heat

This reads both literally as direct exposure to the sun in absent-minded pining. and the *ātapa* or heat of the fire of separation (*virahāgnī*)

This is followed by King Duṣyanta's love sick (*kāma pīḍita*) state, in which he conjures up numerous ways to win Śakuntalā's love. But concluding that he cannot succeed by any means, he becomes dejected and aggrieved. Duṣyanta is in the dilemma wherein he can neither retreat nor advance. The only course open to him is to heave sighs to express his misery :-

*jāne tapaso vīryam sā bālā paravatīti me viditam,
na ca nimnādiva salilam nivartate me tato hṛdayam*

I know the power of penance: and I am further aware that the maiden is not her own mistress ; and yet my heart can no more turn back from her, than water can from a slope.

(*Abj.* III-2)

After this we see in Duṣyanta all the states and stages, excluding death, of the pining or afflicted lover which the scholars have enumerated :-

*abhilāṣaścintāsmṛtiguṇakathanodvegasampralāpāśca,
unmādo'tha vyādhirjaḍatā mṛtiriti daśātrakāmadaśāḥ*

There are ten stages of *Kāmadaśā* of *vipralabmbha śṛṅgāra* : these are desire; anxiety; remembrance; recounting virtues of the desired person; (restlessness) overwhelming emotion; prattling; insanity; malady; inertia; and finally death.

(*Sāhityadarpaṇa* : III-190 : own translation)

[*abhilāṣa* (desire); *guṇakathā* (singing of praises); *unmāda* (mental derangement); *cintā* (being lost in thought); *udvega* (frenzy); *vyādhi* (physical illness); *jaḍatā* (stilling of the senses); *smṛti* (indulging in sweet memories of the beloved); *sampralāpa* (excess conversation); *mṛtyu* (death).]

The love wracked King Duṣyanta sees the moon even in broad daylight, which is imagined as raining fiery rays at him through its frosty moonbeams. The floral arrows of Cupid (*Kāmadeva*) become thunderbolts to him :

*tava kusumaśaratvam śītaraśmitvamindor-
dvayamidamayathārtham dṛśyate madvidheṣu,
visṛjati himagarbhairagnimindurmayūkhais-
tvamapi kusumabāṇānvajrasārikaroṣi.*

Your having flowery shafts and the Moon's having cool beams-both these are observed to be untrue for those such as me. For the moon sheds fire (on them) with her dewy rays; and you make your flowery-darts hard as adamant.

(*Abj.* III-3)

Sleeplessness in thinking of Śakuntalā has emaciated Duṣyanta. *Priyamvadā* describes him thus :-

*nanu sa rājarṣiretasyām snigdhadrṣṭyā sūcitābhilāṣa
etān divasān prajāgarakṛśo lakṣyate.*

Why, the good king who has shown himself to be enamoured of her by his tender glances has been observed, during these days, to be wasting away through sleeplessness.

(Abj. III-Priyamvadā)

Constant weeping has caused king Duṣyanta to continuously adjust his golden bracelet and he is aware of this :-

*idamaśīśirairantastāpādvivarnamaṇīkṛtam
niśi niśi bhujanyastāpāṅgaprasāribhiraśrubhiḥ,
anabhilulitajyāghātāṅkam muhurmaṇibandhanāt-
kanakavalayam srastam srastam mayā pratisāryate.*

This golden bracelet, which has its gems sullied by tears which are hot from internal pain, and nightly flow from the corner of my eye that rests upon my arm, slipping every now and then from the wrist without touching the scars made by the friction of the bow-string, is constantly being pushed back by me.

(Abj. III-12)

Śakuntalā, too, is deeply anguished by her love for Duṣyanta. Her companions lay her down on a bed of flowers and fan her with a lotus leaf. They also apply the paste of the *uśīra* or *khasa* grass to cool her.

Duṣyanta also, standing behind the trees, attempts to ascertain the pangs of separation being endured by Śakuntalā. He believes that :-

*stananyastośīram śīhilitamṛṇālaikavalayam
priyāyāḥ sābādham kimapi kamanīyam vapuridam,
samastāpaḥ kāmam manasijanidāghaprasarayor-
na tu grīṣmasyaivam subhagamaparāddham yuvatiṣu*

The *Uśīra* salve has been applied to her bosom, and her only bracelet of lotus-stalks is hanging loose; thus this form of my beloved (thus) disordered is yet exquisitely beautiful. True it is that love and the influence of summer inflame (us) equally : still the disorder brought about by the hot weather does not affect maidens in such a charming manner.

(*Abj.* III-8)

Here we see that the distress and discomfiture of the summer heat has had no adverse effect on Śakuntala's charm and beauty. It has, rather, intensified them.

Duṣyanta continues :-

*kṣāmakṣāmakapolamānanamuraḥ kāṭhinyamuktastanam
madhyaḥ klāntataraḥ prakāmvinatāvansau chaviḥ pāṇḍurā,
śocyā ca priyadarśanā ca madanakliṣṭeyamālakṣyate
patrāṇāmiva śoṣaṇena marutā sprṣṭā latā mādhavī.*

Her face has its cheeks excessively emaciated, her bosom has lost the firmness of its breasts; her waist is more slender (than before); her shoulders are very much drooping; her complexion is wan; thus tormented by love, she appears both deplorable and charming, like the Mādhavī creeper when touched by the wind that dries up its leaves.

(*Abj.* III-9)

Pressed by the solicitude of her companions who are engrossed in diagnosing her affliction, Śakuntalā tells them :-

*yathāḥ prabhṛti mamadarśanapathamāgataḥ.
sa tapovanarakṣitā rājarṣiḥ...tata ārabhya
tadgatenābhilāṣeṇaitadavasthāsmi samvṛttā.*

From the very first instant the pious king who guards our hallowed

forest met my eye...from that instant, my love for him has reduced me to this plight.

(*Abj. III-Śakuntalā*)

Her companions endorse Śakuntalā's desires with the words "*yuktamasyā abhilāso'bhinanditum*" (it, is, therefore, proper that her love finds our approval.) They strongly urge her to write a letter (*madanalekha*), expressing her love. Śakuntalā complies and addresses Duṣyanta thus :-

*tava na jāne hṛdayam mama punaḥ kāmo divāpi rātrāvapi
nirghṛṇa tapati balīyastvayi vṛttamanorathānyaṅgāni*

Thy heart I know not : but Love, O cruel one, fiercely inflames both by day and by night my limbs, whose desires are centred on thee.

(*Abj. III-15*)

Hearing this "letter" which was read aloud by Śakuntalā, whose heart is fluttering with the fear of being despised (*avahīraṇābhīru*), King Duṣyanta approaches thinking :-

*ayam sa te tiṣṭhati saṅgamotsuko
viśaṅkase bhīru yato'vadhīraṇām.*

Here stands the man eager for union with you from whom, O timid one, you are apprehensive of a refusal.

(*Abj. III-13*)

and, saying, "*tapati tanugātri*" (passionately burning, slender body : 3.16) he embraces Śakuntalā. After consummating their love through the process of *Gāndharva Vivāha* Śakuntalā departs. Duṣyanta expresses his exasperation and disappointment on being unable to kiss Śakuntalā on their parting with these words :-

muhuraṅgulisamvṛtādharoṣṭham
pratiṣedhākṣaraviklavābhirāmam.
mukhamansavivarti pakṣmalākṣyāḥ
kathamapyunnamitam na cumbitam tu..

For the face of that (maiden) with soft eyelashes, which had the lower lip repeatedly covered by her fingers, which looked beautiful as it stammered words of denial and which was turned on one side, was somehow raised by me but not kissed.

(Abj. III-24)

This memory (*smṛti*) heightens his passion as well as his pangs of separation (*viraha vedanā*). In this state of emotional turmoil Duṣyanta spends time in the thicket of reeds, gazing at the crushed flowers on Śakuntalā's bed of flowers, and the lotus stalk wristband (bangle) which has slipped out of Śakuntalā's wrist.

The foregoing examples of *Vipralambha Śṛṅgāra* (pangs of separation) often use hyperbole, portraying minutes or hours as days or years and exaggerating the negative effects of frustrated love. This is done for poetic effect.

In Act V there is an appealing song of complaint (*upālambha gītī*), sung by Queen Hansapadikā who is, for the time being, totally forgotten by her husband Duṣyanta. This song is a tender expression of pangs of separation, addressed in the third person (using the metaphor of a bee flitting to another flower) :-

abhinavamadhulolupastvam tathā paricumbya cūtamañjarīm,
kamalavasatimātranirvṛto madhukara vismṛto'syenām katham.

O bee, how comes it that you who eagerly longs for fresh honey, after having kissed the mango-blossom in that way, should have forgotten it, being now satisfied with mere dwelling in the lotus!

(Abj. V-1)

The *āmramañjari* or mango blossom is one of Kāmadeva's five arrows; and occupies an important place in love poetry in Indian languages. The mango blossom is also a symbol of life and fecundity, producing the delicious fruit. Queen Hansapadikā is the fecund mango blossom, whereas Śakuntalā is likened to the lotus, which has beauty and fragrance but no fruit. Nevertheless it is also a symbol of purity. Also, Śakuntalā becomes with child in her first union with Duṣyanta.

In Act V King Duṣyanta appears before the audience over-wrought with emotion and restlessness (*paryutsukī bhāva*). This is an unprecedented state of mental anguish: Nothing appears to be amiss at a superficial level; yet some unknown prior memories torment him. Even a normal happy person can be afflicted by this kind of unease on recollections of previous relationships :-

*ramyaṇi vīkṣya madhurāñśca niśamya śabdān-
paryutsukībhavati yatsukhito'pi jantuh,
taccetasā smarati nūnamabodhapūrvam
bhāvasthirāṇi janāntarasauhṛdāni*

When even a happy being is filled with wistful longings on seeing beautiful forms and listening to sweet sounds, then surely without being conscious of it, he remembers in his mind the friendships of a former birth deeply-rooted there in the form of impressions

(*Abj. V-2*)

The above is an example of *smṛti* amongst the *Kāmadaśās*.

In Act VI when Duṣyanta finds the ring and his memory of Śakuntalā is restored, his deep remorse and restlessness are conveyed through these words of the Chamberlain (*kañcukī*) :-

*yadaiva khalu svāṅgulīyakadarśanādanusmṛtam
devena satyamūdhapūrvā me tatrabhavatī rahasi śakuntalā
mohātpratyādiṣṭeti tadāprabhṛtyeva paścāttāpamupagato
devaḥ . tathāhi -*

When at the sight of his own ring the king remembered that he had indeed secretly married the lady Śakuntalā, and had rejected her under a delusion, from that time the king was struck with remorse. Thus :-

*ramyam dveṣṭi yathā purā prakṛtibhirna pratyaham sevyate
śayyāprāntavivartanairvigamayatyunnidra eva kṣapāḥ,
dākṣiṇyena dadāti vācamucitāmantaḥ purebhyo yadā
gotreṣu skhalitastadā bhavati ca vrīḍāvilakṣaściram.*

He abhors everything pleasureable; he is not daily waited upon by his ministers as in former times; spends sleepless nights in tossing about on the edge of his bed and when by courtesy he addresses suitable words to the ladies of his palace, he blunders in their names and becomes for a long while abashed with shame.

(Abj. VI-5)

Afflicted by this turmoil of his soul characterised in the *Kāmadaśās* as *udvega*, Duṣyanta makes a proclamation banning the traditional celebration of the spring festival (*vasantotsava*) so popular with lovers. His mental distraction attains its highest point of anguish. The *kañcukī* or chamberlain further describes this condition of Duṣyanta :-

*pratyādiṣṭaviśeṣamaṇḍanavidhirvāmaprakoṣṭhārpitam
bibhratkāñcanamekameva valayam śvāsoparaktādharāḥ.
cintājāgaraṇapratāmrāyanastejoguṇādātmanaḥ
sanskārollikhito mahāmaṇiriva kṣiṇo'pi nālakṣyate.*

Rejecting special modes of decoration, he wears but one golden bracelet fastened on the left fore-arm; his lip is faded by sighs; his eyes are very red from sleeplessness caused by thought (of

Śakuntalā). Yet through the excellence of his own lustre, though he has grown emaciate he is scarcely observed to be so, even like a magnificent diamond ground away on the polishing-stone.

(Abj. VI-6)

Duṣyanta's penance for having rejected Śakuntalā in the presence of all his courtiers continues to grow :-

*prathamam sāraṅgākṣyā priyayā pratibodhyamānamapi suptam,
anuśayaduḥkhāyedam hatahṛdayam samprati vibuddham.*

This my blighted heart which previously slept even when it was wakened from sleep by my fawn-eyed beloved is now broad awake to feel the anguish of remorse.

(Abj. VI-7)

The above combination of *smṛti* (indulging in sweet memories of the beloved), *guṇakathā* (singing of praises) etc. serve to intensify Duṣyanta's pangs of separation, the basis of *Vipralambha Śṛṅgāra*. The accomplishment of *Śṛṅgāra Rasa* is thus enhanced in this scene.

Duṣyanta may have indeed forbidden the celebration of the spring festival; however, he cannot prevent the onset of spring. Like one calamity heaped upon another (*randhropanipātī anartha*) spring has come. At the constant sight of the mango-blossoms his anguish caused by pangs of separation and remorse is exacerbated. He tells the jester :-

*munisutā praṇayasṁtirodhinā
mama ca muktamidam tamasā manaḥ.
manasijena sakhe prahariṣyatā
dhanuṣi cūtaśaraśca niveśitaḥ.*

No sooner does the darkness that clouded the remembrance of my love for the sage's daughter, lift from my mind, than the God of love, preparing to strike, puts the shaft of mango blossom to his bow.

(Abj. VI-8)

Duṣyanta's pangs of remorse are deepened by remembering that Śakuntalā was the chaste daughter of a sage. The thought of her purity and innocence intensify his desire and Kāmadeva's arrow strikes swiftly.

The agony caused by his rejection (and consequent loss) of Śakuntalā torment him like an arrow dipped in poison, ceaselessly scorching his soul:

*itaḥ pratyādeśātsvajanamanagerantam vyavasitā
muhustiṣṭhetyuccairvadati guruśiṣye gurusame.
punardrṣṭimbāṣpaprasarakaluṣāmarpitavatī
mayi krūre yattatsaviṣamiva śalyam dahati mām.*

When I rejected her from here, she made an attempt to follow her kinsfolk; and when her father's pupil, revered as her father himself, repeatedly cried "stay" in a loud voice, then once more she fixed on me, who had become inexorable, a glance bedimmed with gushing tears; (the idea of) it all burns me like an envenomed shaft.

(Abj. VI-9)

This condition of turmoil and restlessness drives him towards derangement. According to the *ācāryas* (scholars) *unmāda* (mental derangement - one of the *Kāmadaśās*) is characterised thus :-

*autsukyasantāpādikāritamanoviparyāsyā
samuttha priyāśritavṛthā vyāpārah .*

As a result of restlessness and remorse all manner of confused thoughts assail the mind. The lover begins to utter words full of doubts and misgivings with regard to the beloved.

(Own translation)

Duṣyanta's state of mind is approaching *unmāda* because of his love, remorse and despair. Even on being consoled and reassured by the jester Duṣyanta does not regain any confidence that he would be reunited with Śakuntalā. He sometimes thinks that his former union with Śakuntalā is a mere dream; sometimes he considers it an illusion, and otherwise thinks it is a figment of his imagination :-

*svapno nu māyā nu matibhramo nu
kliṣṭam nu tāvatphalameva puṇyam,
asannivṛtṭyai tadatītamava
manorathā nāma taṭaprapātāḥ.*

Was it a dream ? or an illusion ? or the infatuation of my mind ? Or was it that my merit (*puṇyam*) having borne me that much fruit, was exhausted ? It is gone, never to return: these my hopes are like falls from a precipice.

(Abj. VI-10)

Great heights of (*vipralambha*) *śṛṅgāra rasa* are attained in these words of Duṣyanta :-

*akāraṇaparityakte anuśayataptahṛdayastāvadanukampyatāmayaṃ
janaḥ punardarśanena.*

O (My darling) abandoned without reason, let me, whose heart is stung with remorse, be once more blessed with a sight of thee!

(Abj. VI-Duṣyanta)

Caturikā places a picture of Śakuntalā before Duṣyanta. Finding some shortcomings in this picture, Duṣyanta wishes to paint a new picture. Having done this, Duṣyanta begins to believe the picture is Śakuntalā in reality. When he desires to find some solace by looking at a reflection of Śakuntalā, his eyes fill with tears. Now unable to behold, owing to the tears in his eyes, even the picture of Śakuntalā, Duṣyanta is immersed in pain :

*kathamevamaviśrāntaduḥkhamanubhavāmi.
prajāgarātkhilībhūtastasyāḥ svapne samāgamaḥ,
bāṣpastu na dadātyenām draṣṭum citragatāmapī.*

Why do I thus experience unremitting grief ?
Union with her is prevented by my sleeplessness; and my tears will
not suffer me to view her even in this picture.

(*Abj.* VI-22)

In this context the picture of Śakuntalā, the anger towards the black bee, as well as the anger directed at the ring (*upālambha* towards the ring) indicate the acuteness of his irrationality caused by *viraha* (pangs of separation), caused by *kāma* or love.

Mahākavi Kālidāsa has painted an engrossing picture of Duṣyanta's disappointed love and his pangs of separation in Act VI. This portrait conveys a touching, delicate and comprehensive picture of the pangs of separation of the lover from the beloved. The above depiction of *Śṛṅgāra Rasa* in the state of *Viyoga* or *Vipralambha* (separation), which affords the poetic genius maximum opportunities to probe and describe the human emotions, generally concerns itself with the hero and heroine, lover and beloved.

Pangs of separation (*vipralambha*) caused by separation of parent and child etc. are described below as they appear in *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*. These also indicate that the emotion of *Rati*, whose corresponding *Rasa* is *Śṛṅgāra*, embraces all emotional relationships.

KARUṆA OR VĀTSALYA VIPRALAMBHA:

Expression of pangs of separation (pathos) from offspring.

Viraha or *Vipralambha* describes the pangs of separation from a loved one, under the general heading of *Śṛṅgāra* (love). In depicting the pangs of the hero or heroine poets/dramatists use *Viyoga Śṛṅgāra* or *Viyoga Vipralambha*. However, separation from the loved ones, eg. parent from child, also forms the subject of poetry. In *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*, Mahākavi Kālidāsa has presented an immortal picture of this in Act IV where he describes the parting of Śakuntalā from her father, Kaṇva, her friends and the *āśrama* environment. This is a scene filled with pathos. It is also occasioned by the affection for a child. Hence *Karuṇa* or *Vātsalya Vipralambha* is used to portray these scenes. The poignancy of these scenes, amongst supposedly stoical people of a hermitage, and the outpourings of love, solicitude and tenderness for an adopted foundling, show up the shortcomings of A.B. Keith's view (1992 : 280-281) that Kālidāsa left no legacy for mankind :-

For the deeper questions of human life Kālidāsa has no message for us; they raised, so far as we can see, no question in his own mind; the whole Brahmanical system, as restored to glory under the Guptas, seems to have satisfied him, and to have left him at peace with the universe. Fascinating and exquisite as is the *Śakuntalā*, it moves in a narrow world, removed from the cruelty of real life, and it neither seeks to answer, nor does it solve, the riddles of life.

It must be remembered that a drama like *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* is no less a tragedy because it ultimately ends in a joyous reunion. The delicate pathos of the wrenched emotions in *Vipralambha* and *Vātsalya Śṛṅgāra* transforms the sufferers for ever, albeit often for the better. But it does not leave the characters unscathed.

To the delicate and receptive hearted audience the Fourth Act of *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* is best of all works of poetry, and in the fourth act the four *ślokas* (verses) are specifically indicated :-

*kāvyeṣu nāṭakam ramyam nāṭakeṣu Śakuntalā
Tatrāpi ca caturtho'aṅkastatra ślokacatuṣṭyam.*

(source unknown)

Amongst those four verses the tender scenes of Śakuntalā's taking leave of Kaṇva's *āśrama* bring out this superior quality. Scholars have generally characterised the emotion evoked here as *Karuṇa Rasa* (pathos), pointing out the predominance of pathos in the act. There are other scholars who, moving away from Bhavabhūti's dictum :-

*Eko rasaḥ karuṇa eva nimittabhedād
bhinnāḥ prithak prithagiva śrayate vivartān.*

prefer to describe the sentiment of pathos in this act as *Vātsalya Vipralambha*. They argue that it is not appropriate to call the *Rasa* in this episode *Karuṇa* in its common sense, because the *sthāyibhāva* (permanent emotion) of *Karuṇa* is *Śoka* (sorrow) which is not evident here. Śakuntalā is on her way to her marital home; plans are being made for the rituals and customary activities for her departure. Śakuntalā has had her auspicious ritual bath (*samālabhāna*) and is being adorned as a bride by the females of Kaṇva's *āśrama*. All pronounce blessings that she become the mother of a great hero, the senior queen and most beloved of her husband (*bharturbahumatā*). When Śakuntalā weeps during her departure she is astonished to hear: "*na ta ucitam mangalkāle roditum* - it is not becoming to weep at this auspicious moment." In order to mitigate the pain of separation being felt by every member of Kaṇva's *āśrama*, Maharṣi Kaṇva prophesies her return visit to the *āśrama* :-

śānte kariṣyasipadam punarāśrame'smin

thou shalt again set foot in this peaceful *āśrama*.

(Abj. IV-19)

Taken in context, she will only return, together with her husband, when she has fulfilled all the obligations of married life. She will set foot again in the *āśrama* only with him.

The underlying sentiment in this scene is joy for Śakuntalā's happy reunion with her beloved, for her joyous future as mother and wife. The tears that are shed, though real, are those of joy. The pathos too, is real; a beloved creature like Śakuntalā would wrench the hearts of all, including plants and trees, whom she is leaving behind. But their gifts and blessings are tokens of joy and good wishes. Thus rather than the sorrow-laden *Karuṇa Rasa*, *Vātsalya Vipralambha* (pangs of separation) from a dear child is the most apt characterisation of the emotions of this act.

The poet's depiction of this *Vātsalya Vipralambha* is heart-rendering and unparalleled. It is a unique demonstration of Kālidāsa's poetic genius. Ordinarily, in pangs of separation from an offspring, the tormented hearts of the child's father and mother are described. In this scene it is not only the (adoptive) father Kaṇva and (adoptive) mother, Gautamī and Śakuntalā's friends (sisters) who are shown weeping, but also the whole of nature - beasts and birds, trees and creepers - feel robbed of a precious friend or child. Together with Śakuntalā's friends the creepers of the forest shed tears and the trees weep profusely. The whole forest hermitage feeling as one in their love for Śakuntalā, undergo the pain caused by her imminent departure. The use of metaphor (trees shedding tears) is most felicitous and effective. The news

of Śakuntalā's impending departure to her husband's palace, causes her dear friend Anasūyā's hands and feet to become leaden and she says :-

na ma uciteṣvapi nijakāryeṣu hastapādam prasarati.

My hands and feet move not readily to the usual occupations of the morning.

(Abj. IV-Anasūyā)

At the parting of his fostered daughter Maharṣi Kaṇva experiences the same degree of anguish as an ordinary householder who says farewell for the first time to his daughter leaving for her nuptial home. In spite of being a detached ascetic, sage and forest dweller, and Śakuntalā not even being his own offspring - he has merely nurtured this abandoned child - his heart fills with sadness on thinking of her going away, his eyes well with tears and a lump rises in his throat. His eyes become motionless :

*yāsyatyadya śakuntaleti hṛdayam sansprṣtamutkaṇṭhayā
kaṇṭhaḥ stambhitabāṣpavṛttkaluṣaścintājaḍam darśanam.
vaiklavyam mama tāvadīdṛśamapi snehadaraṇyaukasah
pīḍyante gr̥hīṇaḥ katham na tanayāviśleṣaduhkhairnavaiḥ.*

This day will Śakuntalā depart : at such (a thought) my heart is smitten with anguish; my voice is choked by suppressing the flow of tears; and my senses paralysed by anxious thought. If such, through affection, is the affliction even of me, a hermit, O with what pangs must they who are fathers of families be afflicted at the first parting with their daughters ?

(Abj. IV-5)

This pain of losing a daughter is too much for Kaṇva to endure alone : he invites the trees of the hermitage to join in his anguish. Kālidāsa believes that suffering is lightened if shared amongst dear ones -

snigdhajana samvibhaktam hi duḥkham sahyavedanam bhavati.

(Abj. IV-Kaṇva)

In keeping with this approach Kaṇva addresses the trees with a heart full of emotion :-

*pātum na prathamam vyavasyati jalam yuṣmāsvapīteṣu yā
nādatte priyamaṇḍanāpi bhavatām snehena yā pallavam,
ādye vaḥ kusumaprasūtisamaye yasyā bhavatyutsavaḥ
seyam yāti śakuntalā patigrham sarvairanujñāyatām.*

She who would not drink water first, before you were watered; she who cropped not through affection for you one of your fresh leaves, though she is so fond of ornaments: she whose chief delight was in the season of the first appearance of your bloom; even that same Śakuntalā is going to the palace of her wedded lord. Let all give their consent.

(Abj. IV-8)

The trees cannot disregard or ignore this heart-breaking appeal of Kaṇva. They too, have experienced the sibling affection of Śakuntalā during her sojourn in the forest. In this moment of parting they offer her gifts of adornment and through the voice of the *koyal* (lark) the entire forest pronounces its blessings. Kālidāsa uses the cooing of the lark as the answer from the trees. The "dumb" trees express their "*rasa*"/emotions through the pleasant sounds of the bird.

*anumatagamanā śakuntalā
tarubhiriyam vanavāsabandhubhiḥ,
parabhṛtavirutam kalam yathā
prativacanīkṛtamebhirīdrśam.*

Śakuntalā is given leave to depart by the trees, the companions of her forest-life; since a song to this effect, a sweet Koyal-song was employed as an answer by them.

(Abj. IV-9)

The departing Śakuntalā is herself overwhelmed with emotion and the prospect of being separated from her makes the entire forest writhe in pain. Priyamvadā says :-

*na kevalam tapovanavirahakātarā sakhyeva
tvayopasthita viyogasya tapovanasyāpi
tāvat samavasthā dṛśyate*

My friend is not the only one to feel distressed at this separation from the pious grove. One may observe the same condition even of the grove now when the time of your departure approaches.

(Abj. IV-Priyamvadā)

Kālidāsa portends the future of the *āśrama* without Śakuntalā as having a devastating effect on all. The deer regurgitate the partly chewed and swallowed *kuśa* grass; the peacocks have ceased their colourful dancing; the vines and creepers, by way of shedding their withered leaves, pour out their tears. The following "incidents" or "signs of bad-luck" are omens that in the Indian tradition do not bode well for the future. This is somewhat akin to the Western "Dramatic Irony" :-

*udgalitadarbhakavalā mṛgyaḥ parityaktanartana mayūrāḥ,
apasṛtapāṇḍupatrā muñcantyaśrūṇīva latāḥ.*

The deer let fall the morsels of *Darbha*-grass, the peacocks stop their dancing, and the creepers, whose pale leaves fall (to the ground), appear to shed tears.

(Abj. IV-11)

Here again Mahākavi Kālidāsa excels as a poet with the imagery of the animals and trees expressing their sadness at Śakuntalā's departure. On her way out of the hermitage precincts, Śakuntalā takes tender leave of her favourite plant the *vanajyotsnā* creeper. Embracing it she says:

*vanajyotsne, cūtasāṅgatāpi mām pratyāliṅgetogatābhiḥ
śākhāvāhābhiḥ, adyaprabhṛti dūraparivartinī te khalu bhaviṣyāmi.*

O Vanajyotsnā, although wedded to the mango-tree, yet embrace me, too, with your arms, these branches, which are turned in this direction. I shall be far away from you after this day.

(Abj. IV-Śakuntalā)

Śakuntalā is not reassured that in her absence the *vanajyotsnā* which enjoys a symbiotic relationship with the mango tree will receive the same loving care provided by herself, she therefore charges her friends :-

halā, eṣā dvayoryuvayorhaste nikṣepaḥ

Friends, this (creeper) is a deposit in your hands.

(Abj. IV-Śakuntalā)

There is poignancy in this ironic situation: Śakuntalā is entrusting the plants and the doe's future offspring to her friends, whereas there is no certainty for her own future and the child she is carrying.

The friends ruefully question Śakuntalā :-

ayam janaḥ kasya haste samarpitaḥ ?

to whose care are you entrusting us ?

(Abj. V-Friends)

At this juncture Maharṣi Kaṇva himself offers solace to the young ladies of the hermitage, forbidding their weeping :-

*Anasūye, alam ruditvā. nanubhavatibhyāmeva
sthirīkartavyā Śakuntalā.*

Anasūya, enough of weeping! It is you surely, who must cheer Śakuntalā.

(Abj. IV-Kaṇva)

Kaṇva Rṣi has scarcely completed his gentle admonition to the ladies when a young fawn takes the border of Śakuntalā's garment in its mouth, tugging it, in an attempt to prevent her going away. Śakuntalā inquires as to the source of this intervention:-

*ko nu khalveṣa nivasane me sajjate ?
Ah! who is it that clings to my dress ?*

Kaṇva explains that this is the selfsame fawn whose wounded mouth she had treated with the *ingudī* oil until healed and nurtured, feeding it handfuls of the *Śyāmaka* grain :-

*yasya tvayā vraṇaviropaṇamiṅgudīnām
tailam nyaṣicyata mukhe kuśasūcividdhe.
śyāmākamuṣṭiparivardhitako jahāti
so'yam na putrakṛtakaḥ padavīm mṛgaste.*

It is thy adopted child, the (little) fawn whose mouth, when the sharp points of *kuśa* grass wounded it, was sprinkled by thee with the healing oil of *Ingudī*, who has been tenderly reared by thee with handfuls of *Śyāmaka* grains; and who now will not leave thy footsteps.

(Abj. IV-13)

Śakuntalā turns around, seeing the fawn. She fondles it, and, with a view to explaining the situation to this dear animal she says :-

*vatsa, kim sahavāsaparityāginīm māmanusarasi
aciraprasūtayā jananyā vinā vardhita eva. idānīmapi
maya virahitam tvām tātaścintayiṣyati. nivartasva tāvat.*

My child, why should you follow me who must leave your company ?
You were indeed brought up by me when you became bereft of your
mother shortly after she delivered you; now also, when separated
from me, will father attend you with anxious care; go back then.

(Abj. IV-Śakuntalā)

Śakuntalā's love for the fawn shows *Vātsalya Bhāva* in the spirit of the Indian world view that all living things are united through the Supreme. In the *Rāmāyāṇa* fellowship of humans, monkeys, bears and even vultures is depicted to emphasise the unity of life and a common moral purpose.

With regard to the fawn, Śakuntalā as a mother leaving behind her offspring, shows concern for the future well-being of the young one. A mother's concern and caring extend to all creatures and in all circumstances.

Śakuntalā salutes the fairies inhabiting the trees and plants of the hermitage, and, sobbing, tells Priyamvadā softly in her ear :-

*āryaputradarśanotsukāyā apyāśramapadam parityajantyā
duḥkhena me caraṇau purataḥ pravartete.*

Eager as I may be to see my husband, yet in leaving this hermitage,
my feet can hardly move forward.

(Abj. IV-Śakuntalā)

Again the use of the fairies is a technique employed by Kālidāsa to lend expression to the mute trees. This makes the "insentient" trees the vehicles of this flow of *Rasa* of affection.

She forcefully attempts to suppress her tears, but the tears well up from the heart and fill her eyes. She thus finds difficulty in seeing the path she has to follow. Kaṇva with his fatherly solicitude apprises her of the danger of treading with tears in her eyes.

*utpakṣmaṇornayanayoruparuddhavṛttim
bāṣpam kuru sthiratayā viratānubandham.*

Be firm and check the rising tears, that obstruct the free action of thy eyes, with their upturned eyelashes.

(*Abj. IV-14*)

This shows the father's concern that his daughter may trip and fall if her steps are uneven. Śakuntalā's efforts to suppress her tears makes the emotion even greater lending poignancy to the *Rasa*.

Śakuntalā wraps herself around Kaṇva and says :-

*Kathamidānīm tātasyāṅkātparibhraṣṭā malayataṇmūlitā
candalateva deśāntare jīvitam dhārayiṣye.*

Removed from the lap of my father, like a young sandal tree, rent from the slopes of the Malaya, how shall I exist in a strange soil ?

(*Abj. IV-Śakuntalā*)

The act of the embrace and the imagery of tearing asunder the plant from its native soil portray the severance of the relationship. This plays an integral part in the depiction of *Vātsalya*.

Whereupon Kaṇva asks her "*kimevam kātarāsi-* why should thou be so anxious ?" and recounting the joys of the conjugal, householder's life, comforts her. But seeing father Kaṇva distracted by grief at her parting, Śakuntalā once more puts her arms around Kaṇva, saying :-

*tapaścaraṇapīditam tātaśarīram. tanmātimātram mama
kṛta utkaṇṭhitum*

Father's body is already worn out by his ascetic practices. Do not, therefore, grieve for me beyond measure.

(Abj. IV-Śakuntalā)

Once again the act of crying on the part of the two members involved depicts *Vātsalya bhāva* . The one is crying but asks the other to desist out of concern for the anguish that is being generated.

Kaṇva merely heaves a sigh, uttering :-

*śamameṣyati mama śokaḥ katham nu vatse tvayā racitapūrvam,
uṭajadvāravirūḍham nīvārabalim vilokayataḥ.*

How, my child will my grief cease, as I look at the hallowed paddy-grains formerly offered by thee, germinating at the door of my cottage ?

(Abj. IV-20)

The foregoing examples of *Karuṇa* or *Vātsalya Rasa* showing the sorrow of Kaṇva and the other human and non-human denizens of the hermitage, as well as that of Śakuntalā's, indeed touch on the most precious of qualities in creation : love, compassion and solicitious caring. Śakuntalā's observation regarding Kaṇva Rṣi's body, emaciated through austerities, and her loving concern for his comfort and happiness while separated from her, approaches

Bhakti (devotion). Whereas *Vātsalya* is described as love of an older for a younger, the affection and respect of a younger for an older is appropriately classified as *Bhakti* under *Śṛṅgāra Rasa*. The stark irony of Śakuntalā's impending greater sorrow of rejection by Duṣyanta becomes clear when one considers the strong paternal love of the humble ascetic Kaṇva for Śakuntalā, whom he nurtured since her birth. The treatment she receives from the mighty hero and king, Duṣyanta, to whom she had so trustingly surrendered her body and soul which were so painstakingly nurtured by Kaṇva Ṛṣi in his hermitage for so many years is devastating. The *Rasa* becomes even more heightened when one considers how vulnerable all daughters are, after marriage and their consequent departure to their marital home.

Pandey (1979 : vol.10 : 105) states :-

We may have doubts about Mahākavi Kālidāsa's notions with regard to *Vātsalya* or *Vatsalarasa* from a theoretical point of view : what is certain is that he had deep interest in depicting the sentiment of *vātsalya*. With the exception of *Meghadūtam* and *Ṛtusañhāram*, all his works contain superb experiences of *Vātsalya*. In *Raghuvañśam*, *Kumārasambhavam* and *Vikramorvaśīyam* the central problem is connected with offspring. Kālidāsa's predilection for *Vātsalya* is a natural outcome of his poetic heart.

Kālidāsa portrays Duṣyanta's rejection of Śakuntalā and his recourse to his family's dignity and high moral principles, in a convincing manner. Such rejection or abandonment rings true to life in the sense that men have seduced innocent women under false pretexts and abandoned them. Śakuntalā's angry reactions indicate that she feels this way about Duṣyanta - that he had merely used her. The fact that Duṣyanta is a king, and that his amnesia is due to a curse, are features not pertinent to the issue. However,

Duṣyanta as an individual is exonerated because he was subject to the curse, although this brings a sense of revulsion in Śakuntalā and the spectator.

After Śakuntalā departs, and fades into the forest along the narrow footpaths, Kaṇva Ṛṣi controls his own grief and exhorts Priyamvadā and Anasūyā to do likewise, and follow him back to the āśrama. They do so with heavy hearts and feet. The Indian tradition of accompanying departing friends and relatives to a certain point has been fulfilled. The finality of separation has been attained and *Karuṇa Rasa* therefore, finds full expression here.

nigṛhya śokamanugacchatam mām prasthitam

Check your grief and follow me who am leaving.

(Abj. IV-Kaṇva)

Priyamvadā's and Anasūyā's feet, however, refuse to advance in the homeward direction. How could they return to an āśrama from which Śakuntalā has gone away? What is there to draw them back? They say :-

tāta ! Śakuntalāviraḥitam sūnyamiva tapovanam katham praviśāvaḥ

Father, how shall we enter the pious grove which without Śakuntalā seems a perfect vacuity?

(Abj. IV-Śakuntalā)

This *Vātsalya Vipralambha* (pangs of separation from a child) is unparalleled in Sanskrit literature. It is for this reason that Act IV is considered the very life and soul of this play.

Were this context to be described as universal in *Karuṇa Rasa* (pāthos) rather than *Vātsalya Vipralambha* even then it is very different from Bhavabhūti's *Uttararāmacarita*. *Abhijñānaśakuntalam* does not contain mere

words of sorrow or wailing, here there is real, poignant experience of pangs of parting.

THE SAÑYOGA ASPECT OF VĀTSALYA

The depiction of parent and child affection also occurs in Act VII of *Abhijñānaśakuntalam*. When Duṣyanta sees the child, Sarvadamana, he is seized with a longing to pick him up in his lap and shower his love upon him :

*spr̥hayāmi khalu durlalitāyāsmāi.
ālakṣyadantamukulānanimittahāsai-
ravyaktavarṇaramaṇīyavacaḥpravṛttīn.
aṅkāśrayapraṇayinastanayānvahanto
dhanyāstadaṅgarajasā malinībhavanti*

How my heart goes out to this unmanageable child!

Blessed are they who, carrying their sons that fondly seek their laps, with bud like teeth that slightly appear in their causeless smiles, lisping their charming inarticulate prattle, are soiled by the dust of their limbs.

(*Abj.* VII-17)

The sight of the child evokes emotions which are the first step of *Vātsalya Rasa*.

Duṣyanta's fascination with the child's spontaneous, innocent laughter and childish speech convey the sentiment of *Vātsalya*. This sentiment (*Rasa*) is described through the joy of Duṣyanta :

*anena kasyāpi kulāṅkureṇa
spr̥ṣṭasya gātreṣu sukham mamaivam.
kāmaṁ nirvṛtim cetasi tasya kuryā-*

dyasyāyamañkātṛtinaḥ prarūḍhaḥ.

If it gives me so much delight to touch the limbs of the child who is the scion of some stranger's family, what rapture will arise in the heart of that happy man from whose body he sprang ?

(*Abj.* VII-19)

HĀSYA RASA (LAUGHTER)

Abhijñānaśākuntalam has episodes that invoke the sentiment of *Hāsyā* (laughter, humour) of a dignified and subtle quality. Most of the humorous episodes are centred around the character Māḍhavya who is Duṣyanta's jester and friend. Māḍhavya is exhausted from a day long chase after deer in the forest and complains that he is deprived of both palatable food and potable water. Moreover, there is no provision for relaxation and entertainment. His body is sore after a day's chase behind Duṣyanta's horses. Sleep has become impossible. To add to his woes (like a pimple developing over a boil - *gaṇḍasyopri piṇḍakaḥ samvṛttaḥ*) Duṣyanta has discovered a maiden by the name of Śakuntalā . On her account Duṣyanta has forgotten completely about returning to his capital city. The idea of separation is still maintained but the comic technique introduces a light-hearted element in the scene with Māḍhavya.

*tāpasakanyakā Śakuntalā nāma mamādhanyatayā darśitā.
sāmpratam nagaragamanasya manaḥ kathamapi na karoti.*

A hermit's daughter named Śakuntalā was presented to his view. And now he does not even think of going back to the city.

(*Abj.* II-Māḍhavya)

Māḍhavya conceives a plan to remedy this situation :

*bhavatu aṅgabhaṅgavikala iva bhūtvā sthāsyāmi.
yadyevamapi nāma viśramam labheya.*

I will stand as if crippled by paralysis of my limbs, if even thus I may know (some) respite.

(*Abj.* II-Māḍhavya)

When Duṣyanta affords him an opportunity to rest, he also enlists his aid in a task which has arisen suddenly. Although the jester fully understands the king's intentions he still asks, "Do you want my help to eat 'laḍḍus' -sweets ? If so, I accept your proposal." This reaction of Māḍhavya would certainly cause much laughter amongst the audience.

When Duṣyanta's general invites the king once more to the hunt, Māḍhavya, the jester adds-you may go to the chase...

*atra bhavān prākṛtimāpanaḥ. tvam tāvadaṭavīto'tavīmāhiṅdamāno
naranāsikālolupasya jīṛṇaṅkṣasya kasyāpi mukhe patiṣyasi.*

Away you inciter. His Majesty has come to his senses; but you chasing from forest to forest, will surely fall into the jaws of some old bear greedy after a man's nose !

(*Abj.* -Māḍhavya)

When Duṣyanta praises Śakuntalā 's beauty to him, he says that "your desire (for Śakuntalā) is such that it compares with the desire for eating sour tamarind after filling the belly with sweet dates."

When Duṣyanta details to Māḍhavya Śakuntalā 's display of emotion and her gestures towards himself the jester questions Duṣyanta, "Do you think she should jump into your lap at the first sight of you ?"

nanu khalu dṛṣṭamātrasya tavāṅkamārohati ?

Surely you did not expect her to climb into your lap the moment she saw you ?

(Abj. II-Māḍhavya)

Another delightful instance of *Hāsya Rasa* is when Duṣyanta tries to convince the jester that Śakuntalā is in love with him, and the fact that she is a *Kṣatriya* princess (daughter of the *Kṣatriya* sage and former king, Viśvāmitra) and that he qualified to marry her. Māḍhavya advises him to expedite the nuptials, lest some shaven and oily-scalped hermit win her away from him. Here envy brings in the *Hāsya* element.

*tena hi laghu paritrāyatāmenām bhavān. mākasyāpi
tapasvina ingugudītailamiśracikkaṇaśīrṣasya haste patiṣyati.*

Let your Highness make haste, then, to rescue her, lest she should fall into the hands of some hermit whose head shines with the oil of *ingudi*

(Abj. II-Māḍhavya)

The foregoing elucidates the privileged position of Māḍhavya in Duṣyanta's circle. The position that the jester enjoys allows the poet to create a dialogue that makes light of the king's dilemma and introduces humour and wit.

After hearing Duṣyanta's love story, Māḍhavya tells him :-

kṛtam tvayopavanam tapovanamiti paśyāmi.

you have made a pleasure-garden of the penance grove, I find.

(Abj. II-Māḍhavya)

When Duṣyanta sets out to vanquish the demons at the request of the ṛṣis of the forest, he asks his jester whether he wished to see Śakuntalā. Māḍhavya

retorts that he first had a wish as deep as the ocean, but on hearing of the demons in the forest, it has shrunken and evaporated :-

*prathamam saparīvāhamāsīt idānīm
rākṣasavṛttāntena bindurapi nāvaśeṣitaḥ*

At first it was full to overflowing; but now by this talk of the demons, not even a drop is left.

(Abj. II-Māḍhavya)

Laughter raising scenes involving Māḍhavya with people other than Duṣyanta are to be found in Act V. In this act when Duṣyanta commissions Māḍhavya to explain the situation (or pacify) Queen Hansapadikā, the jester replies that she will grasp the tuft of hair on the top of his head and get her maids to beat him. He fears Hansapadikā will entangle him in feminine wiles and guiles in such a way that he will not be able to extricate himself from it :-

*bho vayasya, grhītasya tayā parakīyairhastaiḥ śikhaṇḍake
tāḍyamānasyāpsarasā vītarāgasyeva nāstīdanīm me mokṣaḥ.*

But now there will be no liberation for me when seized by her with the hands of others by the crest-lock and belaboured, any more than for a sage whose passions are spent, if seized by a nymph.

(Abj. V-Māḍhavya)

Another scene evoking laughter through the words of the jester is in Act VI. The love-lorn Duṣyanta tells him that Kāmadeva (God of love) has made an arrow from the mango blossoms and is aiming it at him (he is being tormented by love). Māḍhavya picks up a stick and tries to break the bow and arrow of Kāmadeva. More than the mere act of the jester, the futility of the attempt to defeat the God of love is responsible for the *Hāsyā Rasa* being accomplished here. The pain of Kāma's arrow is minimised by the comical element of Māḍhavya's speech.

Court jesters are universally depicted as gluttons. Their constant references to eating and drinking are the cause of much laughter. Duṣyanta pining for Śakuntalā speaks about her in a delirious fashion. Māḍhavya says (aside) that he is being consumed by pangs of hunger and Duṣyanta is going on about his emotional problems:

katham bubhukṣayā khāditavyo'smi

How ? must I be devoured by hunger ?

(Abj. VI-Māḍhavya)

In the same act when Duṣyanta tries to add to the incomplete picture of Śakuntalā by painting deer, a river etc, Māḍhavya's aside tickles the audience into laughter. He says that Duṣyanta will draw pictures of long-bearded hermits and mar this pretty painting :-

*yathāham paśyāmi pūritavyamanena citraphalakam
lambakūrcānām tāpasānām kadambaiḥ.*

As I imagine, he will fill up the picture with multitudes of long-bearded hermits.

(Abj. VI-Māḍhavya)

In Act VI again, Māḍhavya introduces an element of mirth in an otherwise serious situation. He is apprehended by Mātali, the charioteer of Indra, king of Gods. He describes his own discomfiture while in the firm grasp of Mātali thus : Oh! somebody is wrenching me or my neck backwards, breaking it into three pieces like a stick of sugar cane :-

*eṣa mām ko'pi paścādavanataśirodharamikṣumiva
tribhaṅgam karoti.*

(Abj. VI-Māḍhavya)

Māḍhavya makes light work of the *Vīra* element here by suggesting how easy it is to break his neck. Thus *Hāsya* supercedes *Vīra Rasa* here.

The jester expresses his dismay with the manner in which Duṣyanta welcomes Mātali, saying that Duṣyanta is cordially welcoming the very person who traumatised him (the jester) like a sacrificial beast.

*aham ye neṣṭipaśumāram māritaḥ so'nena
svāgatenābhinandyate.*

What, he by whom I was being butchered like a sacrificial animal, is greeted by him with a welcome !

(*Abj.* VI-Māḍhavya)

The role of a jester is more than merely producing laughter. Often the poet/dramatist has a satirical objective, that of making a social, moral, ethical or political comment. The jester's close proximity to the ruler and his indemnity or privilege allow for the use of biting sarcasm and satire to expose the whims and foibles of people as seen through the eyes of others.

Satirical episodes producing *Hāsya Rasa* are also found with other characters in *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*. In the scene in Act VI involving the fisherman, the police chief begins to trust the fisherman after the king has seen the ring. The fisherman exploits the opportunity of satirising the situation. He says : Well, Mr Police Chief! what do you now think of my occupation ? You earlier spoke very arrogantly to me; but as soon as the king treated me graciously you began to behave in a civil way towards me. The humorous atmosphere builds up as the police chief suggests that they should celebrate their new found friendship with cups of wine :

dhīvara, mahattarastvam priyavayasyaka idānīm me

*samvṛttaḥ. kādambarīsākṣikamasmākam prathamasa-
hṛdamiṣyate tacchaṇḍakāpaṇameva gacchāmaḥ.*

Fisherman, now you are the biggest and the best friend I have got. It is desirable that we pledge our first friendship over (some) wine. So let us get along to a wine shop.

(*Abj. VI-Śyāla*)

This scene of sycophancy would still evoke *Hāsyā Rasa*. The role-reversing effects of wine is one of the sources of *Hāsyā*. Not much has changed in the methods of people in power - whether they be the Indian police or bureaucrats anywhere. Kālidāsa's penetrating analysis of humanity gives him relevance today in more ways than one.

Love and humour (*Śṛṅgāra and Hāsyā*) fulfil a complementary role in *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*. Śakuntalā's discussions about love and her complaints against the God of love as well as the jester's asides with regard to the king, contribute to the accomplishment of the *Hāsyā Rasa*.

VĪRA RASA (VALOUR)

There is little scope for the accomplishment of the heroic *Vīra Rasa* in a drama dominated by love (*Śṛṅgāra*). However a few episodes showing *Vīra Rasa* are executed in a worthy fashion by Kālidāsa and play important roles in the drama.

The permanent emotion or *sthāyibhāva* of *Vīra Rasa* is *utsāha* (zeal). The characteristic of this *utsāha* is : *kāryarambheṣu samārambhaḥ stheyānutsāha ucyate* - the desire to initiate action, to get actively involved, is called *utsāha*.

Four categories of (*Vīra Rasa*) *utsāha* are enumerated by Ācārya Viśvanātha in his "*Sāhityadarpaṇa*".

*sa ca vīro dānavīro dharmavīro yuddhavīro
dayāvīraśceti caturvidhaḥ.*

There are four types of *vīras* : they are *dānavīra* (unflinchingly generous), *dharmavīra* (religious, righteous), *yuddhavīra* (heroic, warlike) and *dayāvīra* (compassionate, merciful).

(*Sāhityadarpaṇa* : III-234)

Thus valour or courageous conduct can be exhibited in various ways. The battlefield is one of four ways or avenues of expression of valour.

The *Dayāvīra* (compassionate) form of *Vīra* is encountered in the beginning when Vaikhānasa (a sage) raises his hand and appeals to Duṣyanta not to shoot the deer :-

*na khalu na khalu bāṇaḥ sannipātyo'yamasmin
mṛduni mṛgaśarīre puṣparāśāvivāgniḥ,
kva bata hariṇakānām jīvitam cātilolam
kva ca niśitanipātāḥ vajrasāraḥ śarāste.*

Not indeed, not indeed, must this arrow be allowed to fall on this tender body of the deer, like fire upon a heap of flowers. Compared with thy sharp-falling adamant shafts, how weak must be the very frail existence of fawns !

(*Abj. I-10*)

This scene brings to mind the episodes in Vālmiki's *Rāmāyaṇa*, where the accomplishment of *Karuṇa Rasa* through the dying *krauñca* (crane) gave birth to poetry. The *śoka* (sorrow) which is the *sthāyibhāva* of *Karuṇa* (pathos) gave rise to *śloka* (poetry). In both episodes compassion for life assumes heroic form which drives the subject of the emotion to initiate or achieve

something momentous. Moreover, heroism consists not only in action but also in restraint.

The *yuddhavīra* (heroic warrior) aspect of *Vīra Rasa* is evoked when the young hermit describes Duṣyanta's prowess in warfare in Act II.

*naitaccitram yadayamudadhiśyāmasīmām dharitrī
mekah kṛtsnām nagaraparighaprāñśubāhurbhunakti,
āśaṅsante surasamitayo baddhavairā hi daityai-
rasyādhijye dhanuṣi vijayam pauruhūte ca vajre.*

Is it not wonderful that he whose arm is long as the bar of a city (gate) alone protects the whole earth bounded by the dark (green) ocean. For the Gods, rooted in their enmity with the demons, rely for victory in battles on his braced bow and Indra's thunder-bolt.

(*Abj.* II-15)

Duṣyanta's fame is described as pervading even the kingdom of the gods, and he is compared with Indra. Duṣyanta's amazing valour is also mentioned in Act III by Kaṇva's disciple. His entrance into the precincts is in itself a sign of his victory.

*aho mahānubhāvaḥ pāṛthivo duṣyantaḥ. praviṣṭamātra evāśramam
tatrabhavati rājani nirupaplavāni naḥ karmāṇi samvṛttāni.
kā kathā bāṇasandhāne jyāśabdenaiva dūrataḥ,
huṅkāreṇeva dhanuṣaḥ sa hi vighnānapohati*

How great is the power of King Duṣyanta! Since his Highness had no sooner entered the hermitage than we could continue our holy rites undisturbed. Why talk of aiming the shaft? For by the mere sound of the bow-string from afar, as if by the angry murmur of his bow he disperses (at once) our obstacles.

(*Abj.* III-1)

Duṣyanta's hastening to protect Mādhavya when he cries out for help in Act VI is also indicative of his valour. Duṣyanta's readiness to go to the defence and rescue of people in distress is a sign of his special quality of courageousness and of upholding righteousness.

*eṣa tvāmabhinavakaṅṭhaśoṇitārthī
śārdūlaḥ paśumiva hanmi ceṣṭamānam,
ārtānām bhayamaṇetumāttadhanvā
duṣyantastava śaraṇam bhavatvidānīm*

Now, thirsting for the fresh blood from the neck, I will slay thee struggling as a tiger (slays) a beast. Let Duṣyanta now, who takes his bow to remove the fear of the oppressed, be thy protector.

(Abj. VI-27)

In this Act also, Indra's charioteer Mātali recounts Duṣyanta's valour in war with the following words :-

*kṛtāḥ śaravyam hariṇā tavāsurāḥ
śarāsanam teṣu vikṛṣyatāmidam,*

The demons are made by Indra thy mark; against them let thy bow be drawn.

(Abj. VI-29)

In *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* actual scenes of battle are not depicted. Only the outcome of the martial engagement is announced. Characters such as the eunuch (*Kaṅcukī*), Rṣikumāra, the young disciple hermit, Mātali and others eulogize Duṣyanta's heroic feats in the battlefield. Kālidāsa achieves this effect of incorporating the war in the plot by use of dialogue. The audience knows that the war has taken place.

Act VII shows the astounding courage of the infant prince, Sarvadamana, who as a mere child prides open the jaws of a lion's cub to count its teeth :

ṛmbhasva sinha, dantānste gaṇayiṣye.

Open thy mouth, lion, that I May count thy teeth.

(Abj. VII-Boy)

Seeing the young Prince dragging the cub by its mane in order to make it play with him, King Duṣyanta is filled with wonder and his observation is noteworthy for its evocation of Sarvadamana's leonine courage.

*ardhapītastanam māturāmardakliṣṭakesaram,
prakṛḍitum sinhaśiśum balātkāreṇa karṣati.*

He forcibly drags towards him, for sport, a lion's whelp that has but half- sucked its mother's dug, and has its mane ruffled by pulling.

(Abj. VII-14)

Dharmavīra Rasa is also of vital significance. This is first brought to the experience of the audience in Act II. The poet uses pun (*sleṣa*) to indicate that King Duṣyanta is also engaged in austerities like the hermits of the forest :-

*adyākrāntā vasatiramunāpyāśrame sarvabhogye
rakṣāyogādayamapi tapaḥ pratyaham sañcinoti,
asyāpi dyām sprśati vaśinaścāraṇadvandvagītaḥ
puṇyaḥ śabdo muniriti muhuḥ kevalam rājapūrvaḥ.*

He, too, now abides in that stage of life which is open to the enjoyment of everyone; and through his exertions for (our) safety he has been accumulating the merit of penance from day to day; and the sacred title of Muni preceded by the (word) *Rāja* of this king, too,

who has conquered his passions, frequently ascends to heaven, being chanted by pairs of bards.

(Abj. II-14)

Vīra Rasa is evoked through the *dharmavīra* qualities of Duṣyanta and Śārṅgarava in Act V. Duṣyanta and Śārṅgarava are poised confronting each other, each totally committed to righteousness and to defending his allotted duties, without fear of the other. When Śārṅgarava perceives that Duṣyanta is not inclined towards acknowledging Śakuntalā, he remonstrates with him :-

*kim kṛtakāryadveṣāddharmam prati vimukhatocitā rājñāḥ ?
mūrcchantyamī vikārāḥ prāyeṇaiśvaryamateṣu.*

Does it become a king to depart from the rules of justice, merely because of his aversion to a deed done ? Such fickleness of disposition mostly takes effect in those whom power intoxicates.

(Abj. V-18)

Śārṅgarava chides Duṣyanta with even harsher words when Duṣyanta does not show signs of relenting and accepting Śakuntalā as his queen. He describes Duṣyanta's conduct as the actions of a brigand. He continues that Duṣyanta is insulting the hermit who entrusted his property to an unworthy person. Śārṅgarava may not possess the physical might of Duṣyanta but he, in this case, has the might of truth, which makes him very strong :-

*kṛtābhimarśāmanumanyamānaḥ
sutām tvayā nāma munirvimānyaḥ,
muṣṭam pratigrāhayatā svamartham
pātrīkṛto dasyurivāsi yena.*

Would you insult the sage who approved his daughter who had been seduced by you; and who allowing his stolen property to be kept by you has deemed you worthy of the gift; as one would a robber by

allowing him to retain one's stolen goods ?

(Abj. V-20)

On his part, Duṣyanta, under the cloud of oblivion, and deeply apprehensive of sinning by laying his hands on another's wife, engages in verbal combat. His strict observance of righteousness is a source of *Dharmavīra Rasa*. The palace guard extols Duṣyanta's righteous valour thus :-

*aho dharmāpekṣitā bhartuḥ. īdṛśam nāma sukhopanatam
rūpam dṛṣtvā ko'nyo vicārayati.*

How greatly is virtue honoured by our lord! Would any other man hesitate when he saw such beauty presenting herself with ease ?

(Abj. V-Pratihāri)

Duṣyanta does not appropriate Śakuntalā (although not recognizing her; and despite her incomparable beauty), because he is governed by ethical and moral values :-

*vyapadeśamāvilayitum kimīhase janamimam ca pātayitum,
kūlañkaṣeva sindhuḥ prasannamambhastatarum ca.*

Why seek you to sully your family, and, drag me down, as a stream, that eats away the bank, sullies its clear water and drags down the trees on its banks ?

(Abj. V-Duṣyanta)

The adoration of Duṣyanta's moral rigor and brave resistance of temptation invokes the same *Vīra Rasa* as one would experience if he were depicted slaying dragons. The qualities of the *Yuddhavīra* and the *Dharmavīra* are ultimately the same - fighting evil.

Duṣyanta does not believe Śakuntalā even after she recounts the incidents that occurred in Duṣyanta's presence in the forest hermitage. He labels Śakuntalā an adventuress or temptress and describes himself as a *Dharmavīra*, a protector of righteousness. At this juncture the *Dharmavīra Rasa* is accomplished on the other side of the confrontational duo - Śārṅgarava is incensed at Duṣyanta's dishonouring of Śakuntalā. He is here at Duṣyanta's court representing Kaṇva Ṛṣi. Dharma-(righteousness) is violated by the use of debasing language towards the innocent and pure Śakuntalā. Śārṅgarava rises to the occasion to defend Śakuntalā and *dharma* in these condemnatory terms :-

*ā janmanah śāthyamaśikṣito yastasyāpramāṇam vacanam janasya,
parātisandhānamadhīyate yairvidyete te santu kilāptavācaḥ.*

The words of one who from birth has never learnt deceit are to receive no credit; while they, forsooth, who make the deception of others their study, calling it a science, are to be considered as worthy of trust !

(*Abj. V-25*)

Duṣyanta responds " Well, be it so. But why should I deal dishonestly with Śakuntalā ?" When Śārṅgarava ascribes this to depravity, Duṣyanta says that nobody will ever believe that scions of the Puru dynasty will ever tend towards depravity :-

*vinipātaḥ pauravaiḥ prārthyata
iti na śraddheyam.*

It is unthinkable that damnation would be sought by Puru's line.

(*Abj. V-Duṣyanta*)

Both antagonists Duṣyanta and Śārṅgarava are seen holding their own in the defence of righteousness. This episode presents an inspiring type of heroism,

where the object defended and the means of the defence are subtle and idealised through the use of words. Mahākavi Kālidāsa's genius is evident in his ability to invoke *Vīra Rasa* without swords, arrows or bloodshed.

RAUDRA RASA (WRATH)

The classical definition of *Raudra Rasa* (wrath,anger) is given thus :

*raudraḥ krodhātmako jñeyaḥ kopaḥ paraparābhavāt,
bhīṣmakriyo bhavedugra sāmāṣastatra nāyakaḥ.*

Raudra rasa is known by its extreme furious anger, leading to drastic action by the hero who is suffused with wrath.

(*Rasaratnahāra* : 95-own translation).

The *sthāyibhāva* (predominant emotion) of *Raudra Rasa* is *krodha* (anger) which is characterised thus :-

pratikūleṣu taikṣṇyasya pradoṣaḥ krodha ucyate

sharp and forceful reaction to wrongdoing is called *krodha*.

Śakuntalā's angry retort at Duṣyanta's demeaning allegations against her give rise to *Raudra Rasa* :-

*anārya, ātmano hṛdayānumānena paśyasi,
ka idānīmanyo dharmakañcukapraveśinastṛṇacchanna-
kūpopamasya tavānukṛtim pratipatsyate.*

Wicked man, you measure (all this) by your own heart. What other man would act like you, who wearing the garb of virtue, resemble a grass-concealed well.

(*Abj. V-Śakuntalā*)

The expression of righteous anger through the use of harsh words by the tender and gentle Śakuntalā makes the *Rasa* more poignant. Her humiliation and anger cause the audience to identify with her, and feel the same righteous indignation. Kālidāsa has indeed excelled in depicting this outburst from a gentle female character who fights for her dignity, her rights and the rights of her unborn child !

Some scholars also postulate the depiction of *Raudra Rasa* in Act IV where Durvāsa Ṛṣi comes onto the scene. He is angered by Śakuntalā's failure to welcome him on account of her emotional state. He knows this, yet pronounces an angry curse on her :-

*vicintayantī yamananyamānasā
tapodhanam vetsi na māmupasthitam,
smariṣyati tvām na sa bodhito'pi sankathām
pramattaḥ prathamam kṛtāmiva.*

He on whom you are meditating with a mind that is regardless of everything else, while thou perceivest not me, rich in penance, to have arrived, will not remember thee, though reminded, like a drunken man the words previously spoken.

(*Abj. IV-1*)

However, I believe that this episode cannot be construed as *Rasānubhūti* (experience of *Rasa*). The audience cannot conceivably identify with and experience Durvāsa's anger which is so uncalled for and consider this anger vent upon a young and tender Śakuntalā rather unbecoming. A mere semblance/shadow (*Rasābhāsa*) of *Raudrarasa* can be acknowledged here.

BHAYĀNAKA RASA (TERROR)

Fear is the *sthāyibhāva* (predominant sentiment) of *Bhayānaka Rasa* according to the *Sāhityadarpaṇa* of Viśvanātha.

bhayānako bhayasthāyibhāvah

The *sthāyibhāva* of *Bhayānaka* is *bhaya* (fear)
(*Sāhityadarpaṇa* III-235)

*yasmādupadyate bhītistadatrāmbanam matam,
ceṣṭā ghoratarāstasya bhaveduddīpanam punaḥ*

Where the *āmbana* (cause) produces fear, the *uddīpana* (suffering) is indicated by terror and/or fear.

(*Sāhityadarpaṇa* III-236)

This *Rasa* is especially apparent in three main instances in *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*. The very first occasion the audience is exposed to this *Rasa* is in the First Act where they see fear in the fleeing deer :-

*grīvābhaṅgābhirāmam muhuranupatati syandane baddhadṛṣṭiḥ
paścārdhena praviṣṭaḥ śrapatanabhayādbhūyasā pūrvakāyam,
darbhairardhāvalīḍhaiḥ śramavivṛtamukhabhrañśibhiḥ kīṛṇavartmā
paśyodagraplutatvādvīyati bahutaram stokamurvyām prayāti.*

Looking back gracefully by the bending of his neck, at the car which follows him; now, through fear of a descending shaft, by his haunches drawing himself mostly into the forepart of his body, strewing his track with grass, half-chewed, which drops from his mouth, kept open from exhaustion, mark, how by reason of his lofty boundings, he moves much more through the air, and but lightly skims the ground.

(*Abj.* I-7)

This picture of the flight of a terrified animal attests to Kālidāsa's observation and poetic skill. It does also incite pity for the deer which flees from the hunter.

In the fourth chapter of the *Kāvya prakāśa* (P.86-7), writer Mammaṭa has used the above four lines to describe *Bhayānaka Rasa* :-

According to Mammaṭa, the king's chariot is the *ālambana*, the flight of arrows is the *uddīpana* (both *vibhāvas* which constitute elements in the surroundings that aid the accomplishment of *Rasa*). The *anubhāva* (gestures of the subject) in this scene is the turning of the neck, and running of the deer. The exhaustion, terror etc. felt by the deer constitute the *sañcāribhāva* (fleeting emotions). The *sthāyibhāva* is the fear that grips the deer.

The end of the first act displays another example of *Bhayānaka Rasa*, in the terror experienced by the elephant at the sight of the chariots of King Duṣyanta and his retinue :

*tīvrāghātapratihatataruḥ skandhalagnaikadantaḥ
pādākṛṣṭavratativalayāsaṅgasañjātapāśaḥ,
mūrto vighnastapasa iva no bhinnasāraṅgayūtho
dharmāraṇyam praviśati gajaḥ syandanālokabhītaḥ*

An elephant, alarmed at the appearance of a car, enters the pious grove, scaring the herd of deer, with fetters formed by the clinging of Vratati coils dragged along by his feet; having one of his tusks fixed in a tree trunk, struck by a cruel blow, a very interruption incarnate of our penance.

(*Abj.* I-33)

The elephant is a denizen of the forest around the hermitage : it is the *āśraya* (subject) of the fear. Its crashing against trees, the tangling of branches in its trunk and tusks etc. are the *anubhāva*. The terror of a living

creature at the sight of strange contraptions and other animals in the company of fearless human beings is conveyed in the foregoing verse. It is easy for the audience to experience the terror which the elephant undergoes which is emphasised by the poet's use of the word "*bhīta*", rather than obstructed by the *doṣa* (defect) described as *vācya*; because the gestures and movement of the elephant lead to the accomplishment of *Bhayānaka Rasa*.

A third source of fear (*bhaya*) is found in the descent of the demons at the end of Act III. The *Rṣis* are preparing for the evening devotions around the *vedi*; horrifying, man-eating demons hover around the sacred spot in shadow-like forms.

*sāyantane savanakarmaṇī sampravṛtte
vedīm hutāśanavatīm paritaḥ prakīrṇāḥ,
chayāścaranti bahudhā bhayamādadhānāḥ
sandhyāpayodakapīśāḥ piśitāśanānām.*

As the evening sacrifice is commenced, the shadows of the flesh-eating demons, brown as evening clouds, and scattered around the blazing altar, are flitting around and creating terror in a variety of ways.

(*Abj.* III-26)

Demonic forces are depicted in Sanskrit Literature as antagonistic to the spiritual practices of the hermits. Their anti-religious activities and terror-inspiring forms are well known to the audience. Kālidāsa easily invokes *Bhayānaka Rasa* in this scene.

This scene also points to another interesting facet of the dynamics of *Rasa* and the way it is accomplished in poetry (including drama). A spiritual aura is created by the activities and presence of the hermits performing *yajña* (sacrifice): at the same time the intervention of the demons described as eaters

of human flesh strike fear in the hermits and the audience. A heroic figure, in this case King Duṣyanta, is approached to protect the hermits and their devotions. This variation of *Rasas* attests not only to Kālidāsa's versatility as a poet but also to his wide vision of life and the various roles individuals are expected to play.

BIBHATSA RASA (DISGUST)

Bharatamuni states that in *Bībhatsa Rasa* the *vibhāvas* are those that cause disgustful contraction. Śāradātanaya calls these *vibhāvas* the *ninditas*. He says that on their sight the eyes at once close and have no further desire to see them. Writers such as Mammaṭa say that in *Bībhatsa Rasa* the mind expands. Vamana Jhalkikara points out in his commentary "that because in the *Bībhatsa* the object is disgusting, the desire to give it up is intense (*Bībhatse Tu Jugupsitaviṣayetyantam Tyāgechchhā*)".

Act VI of *Ahijñānaśākuntalam* provides a particularly obnoxious example of this *Rasa*. The police officer says that the odour of raw flesh is emanating from the body of the fisherman (*dhīvara*); and this is proof that he eats iguanas. The combination of the profession of the suspect (fisherman- evoking smell of fish), the description of the smell of raw flesh and the suggestion that he eats iguanas easily turns one's stomach!

An example of a subtle type of *Bībhatsa Rasa* is found in the Fifth Act when Śāradvata, on entering Duṣyanta's palace senses an aura of impurity in the place and says with disgust :-

*abhyaktamiva snātaḥ śuciraśucimiva prabuddha iva suptam,
baddhamiva svairagatirjanamiha sukhasaṅginamavaimi.*

Look on these people here devoted to worldly joys as a man (just) bathed looks on a man smeared with oil, as the pure on the impure, as the waking on the sleeping, or as the free man on the captive.

(Abj. V-11)

He says that entering this place is like applying oil to one's body after cleansing oneself with a bath. Śāradvata has lived most if not all of his life in the sanctified spiritual environment of the forest hermitage. The air of worldliness in the city, and Duṣyanta's palace, is strange to him. It is therefore as offensive to his mind as is the smell of raw flesh on the fisherman to the more worldly police officer. The effect on the sensibilities of both is the same. Thus Kālidāsa has achieved a masterly stroke by this portrayal of the materialistic aspects of life, in the sensitive spiritually sanctified soul of an acolyte.

ADBHUTA RASA (WONDER)

The *sthāyībhāva* for this *Rasa* is surprise or astonishment. In the *Sāhityadarpaṇa* it is explained in the following manner :-

*adbhuto vismayasthāyībhāvo gandharvadaivataḥ,
pativarṇo vastu lokātigamālanam matam .*

The *sthāyībhāva* of *adbhuta rasa* is *vismaya* (astonishment/wonder), whereby celestial beings intervene to resolve issues.

(*Sāhityadarpaṇa* : III-242,243)

Woven into the plot of *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* we find a particular reference to *Adbhuta Rasa* in the fourth act when the audience hears a voice from the skies (*ākāśavāṇī*) announcing that Śakuntalā is with child - (the technique used in effecting this deep-voiced booming out from behind the stage is according to

the directions given in the play). Both Śakuntalā's friends, Anasūyā and Priyamvadā, are filled with utter bewilderment to hear this piece of news :-

*duṣyantēnāhitam tejo dadhānām bhūtaye bhuvah,
avehi tanayām brahmannagnigarbhām śamīmiva*

Know, Brāhmaṇa, that your daughter bears, for earth's prosperity, the glorious seed implanted by Duṣyanta, as the Śamī tree is pregnant with fire.

(Abj. IV-3)

While this device of *vox ex caelo* is a useful tool in the poet's craft to reconcile difficult issues, it also provides the audience with a change of "mood" in the middle of a story. It can also help to avert difficult, and perhaps embarrassing questions. Kaṇva Ṛṣi was informed by the *ākāśavāṇī* that Śakuntalā has united with a worthy man. Accepting this as the voice of Divine Providence, Kaṇva no more thinks about the marriage of Śakuntalā as a problem but joyously prepares for her journey to the palace. Indeed, this reaction of Kaṇva is in itself a source of *Adbhuta Rasa!*

Supernatural agents involved in the accomplishment of *Adbhūta Rasa* include spirits of the forest speaking and acting through the animals and plants around the hermitage. The gift of clothes and adornments to the departing Śakuntalā, produces *Adbhuta Rasa*.

Another amazing incident in this act is when the trees provide ornaments and other such necessities as are required by a bride when Śakuntalā is being dressed to be sent to the home of her husband, King Duṣyanta :-

*kṣaumam kenacidindupāṇḍu taruṇā māṅgalyamāviṣkṛtam
niṣṭhyūtaścaraṇopabhogasulabho lākṣārasaḥ kenacit,
anyebhyo vanadevatākaratalairāparvabhāgotthitair-
dattānyābharaṇāni tatkisalayodbhedapratidvandvibhiḥ.*

By a certain tree was exhibited an auspicious silken garment white as the moon; another distilled the lac-dye so excellent to stain her feet; and from others were presented ornaments by fairy-hands extending as far as the wrist that rivalled the first sproutings of delicate leaves of those trees.

(Abj. IV-4)

Probably the most engaging instance of *Adbhuta Rasa* is in the Fifth Act when Duṣyanta's royal priest conveys the news to him that an effusion of light in the shape of a woman carried away Śakuntalā who was in the precincts of *Apsarātīrtha*, bemoaning her unhappy fate. This is also an act which, born from the *sthāyībhāva vismaya* (astonishment), leads to *Adbhuta Rasa*.

*sā nindantī svāni bhāgyāni bālā
bāhūtkṣepam krandintum ca pravṛttā,
strīsansthānam cāpsarastīrthamārā-
dukṣipyainām jyotirekam jagāma.*

The young girl blaming her fortunes, threw up her arms and started weeping - When a body of light, in a female shape, snatched her up from afar, and went to *Apsaras-tīrtha*.

(Abj. V-30)

This mysterious, surprising scene does not stop at demon-like shadows or voices from the heavens, but shows the supernatural force actively intervening in human affairs by rescuing Śakuntalā.

Another feast of wonderment for the reader/audience is the description of Indra's charioteer, Mātali's journey in the chariot through the clouds :-

*ayamara vivarebhyaścātaikarniṣpatadbhir-
haribhiracirabhāsam tejasācānuliptaiḥ,
gatamupari ghanānām vārigarbhodarāṇām
piśunayati rathaste sīkaraklinnanemiḥ.*

This your chariot, with the rims of its wheels bedewed with spray indicates by the Cātakas flying through the interstices of its spokes, and by the horses lapped in lightning-flashes that we are now moving over clouds pregnant with showers

(Abj. VII-7)

Mahākavi Kālidāsa's poetic mind easily takes to travelling through the air. His imagination and descriptions fill one with awe. One can actually experience the movement of the chariot over the clouds because of the poet's descriptive skills. The alliterative "d", "r" and "g" sounds add to this "airy" effect.

ŚĀNTA RASA (QUIETUDE)

Some classical scholars have not accorded *Śānta Rasa* a place in drama. Their argument was that, being *Dṛśya Kāvya* (visual poetry), there seemed to be no prospect of *Śānta Rasa* having a good influence on the spectators. Nevertheless a detailed analysis of *Śānta Rasa* has been done in the sections dealing with *Rasa* in the books on dramatics. In his *Nāṭyaśāstra*, Bharatamuni states :-

*śṛṅgārahāsyakarūṇā raudravīrabhayānakāḥ,
bībhatsādbhutasāñjau cetyaṣṭau nāṭyerasāḥ smṛtāḥ*

Love, laughter, sorrow, anger, valour, fear, disgust and wonder are the eight *rasas* accepted by Bharatamuni (and *śānta* is not one of them.)

(*Nāṭyaśāstra* : VI-15)

However, the profound thinker, *ācārya* Mammaṭa, has said :

nirvedasthāyi bhāvo'sti śānto'pi navamo rasah

Quietism also is the ninth *rasa* with Detachment as its basic emotion.

(*Kāvya prakāśa* : IV -35ab)

Mammaṭa added the adverb *api* (also) to this couplet indicating that there was mere concession towards *Śānta Rasa*. He added *Śānta* to the eight *Rasas* already mentioned by Bharatamuni making nine *Rasas* in all.

Even Dhananjaya in his "*Daśarūpaka*", has recorded that the major works on *Rasa* do not give unqualified support to *Śānta Rasa*. He states :-

śamamapi kecitprāhumāṭyeṣu naitasya.

Śānta Rasa is not readily accepted as a *rasa* in drama.

There have been divergent views among earlier writers in accepting *Śānta* as the ninth *Rasa* in *kāvya* alone or with reference to *nāṭya* alone or with reference to both or rejecting the existence of *Śānta Rasa* altogether. Rudrabhaṭṭa has accepted *Śānta* as the ninth *Rasa* with reference to both *kāvya* and *nāṭya*. Some say that there is no *Rasa* which can be called *Śānta*. Some refuse to admit the existence of *Śānta Rasa* because Bharata did not mention its *bhāvas* etc. and because he did not define it. Others argue that *śama* is not allowed to be a *sthāyibhāva* in *nāṭya* etc. where acting is essential, since *śama* consists in the cessation of all activities (eg. love and hate) and that it is impossible to root out these emotions from the hearts of men.

Abhinavagupta advocates *Śānta* as a ninth *Rasa* pointing out *nirveda*, the first of *vyabhicāribhāvas* already mentioned by Bharata, as the *sthāyibhāva* of *Śānta*.

It was presumably this attitude towards *Śānta Rasa* which made Mahākavi Kālidāsa wary about showing the accomplishment of *śama* (from the root *śam-* to be quiet) or *Śānta Rasa* in *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*. This does not imply that he did not permit the natural development of *Śānta Rasa* where appropriate. In Act VII, *Śānta Rasa* is attained in the description of Mārīca *āśrama*. King Duṣyanta arrives at this hermitage and says :- " This place is more peaceful and satisfying than heaven. It seems that I am swimming in a pond of *amrita* (ambrosia)". *Śānta Rasa* is found in other parts of Act VII also.

In the epilogue (*bharata-vākya*) where the poet wishes that he will not be reborn (thus freed from the karmic cycle) *Śānta Rasa* is evoked.

pravartatām prakṛtihitāya pārthivaḥ
sarasvatī śrutamahatām mahīyatām
mamāpi ca kṣapayatanīlalohitaḥ
punarbhavam parigataśaktirātmabhūḥ.

May the king apply himself to the attainment of the happiness of his subjects. May the speech of those who stand high in their knowledge of the Veda be honoured, and may the self-existent Śiva whose energy is immanent in all things put an end to my rebirth.

(Abj. VII-35)

The words of Duṣyanta describing Mārīca's *āśrama* indicate one very significant fact regarding peace, quiescence and contentment and that is that even the heaven of Indra cannot provide it. It is for man to lose everything to find peace. One cannot have the world and its attractions and still hope for peace. The beginning and ending of *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* in an *āśrama* (forest hermitage) where worldly life is exchanged for peace, reinforces this view.

From a careful analysis of the foregoing discussion on the creation of *Rasa* in Kālidāsa's immortal work, it becomes evident that Kālidāsa took particular delight in the delineation of *Śṛṅgāra Rasa*. This does not detract from the delicacy or poignancy of his depiction of other *Rasas*.

The Vidūṣaka (jester) has been created in dramatic works for the purpose of laughter (*hāsyā*). Within the mainstream of *Śṛṅgāra*, an inner stream of *Vīra Rasa* has been flowing. Through his depiction of the brave, fearless Prince Sarvadamaṇa, he has hinted to a glorious future through his heroic exploits.

Mahākavi Kālidāsa has accommodated *Abhuta*, *Raudra*, *Bībhatsa* and *Śānta Rasa* where appropriate. He is however, a poet of the tender, delicate emotions of the human heart.

Almost all the nine *rasas* have been expressed in *Abhijñānaśakuntalam*; but all of them have served as mere limbs of the body in the form of *Sambhoga Śṛṅgāra*, enhancing it. As a poet of *Rasa par excellence*, he has not allowed the detraction of *Rasa* at any time. He has furthermore observed decorum very meticulously - had he failed in this aspect, the process of *rasaniṣṭatti* would have been impeded and *rasabhaṅga* would have occurred. Kālidāsa's commitment to decorum can itself form the subject of research, especially because of the misunderstanding pervading scholarship with regard to Kālidāsa's view on love in the context of episodes such as the marriage scene of Śiva and Pārvatī in *Kumārasambhava*.

In the above respects, Kālidāsa has fulfilled artistically and meticulously the objectives of *Nāna Rasam* (variety of *Rasas*) in *Abhijñānaśakuntalam*.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

A poet is often found to be a dreamer and an idealist. While no harm can ensue from their being such, poets as authors of great works have also projected a prophetic vision and through their skills of irony and satire, as well as their ability to touch the heart with tender feelings, have endeavoured to create impressions of how the present world can be marred as well as how the future made a better one.

Homer and Vyāsa wrote their great works probably in times of peace and plenitude, with the facility to indulge in contemplation of the human condition with its divergent and conflicting tendencies and proclivities. While their tales touched the heart, their message of the potential for good and bad challenged the minds of men and women. Hence one has to look beyond the discourses in literary criticism and modern literary theories which focus on the vessel of literature, and examine the substance contained therein. If a work of literature can touch the hearts of all people equally, and is available to all, then it is good, as in the words of Tulasidāsa, "like the Ganges, it benefits all."

It follows that a critical appraisal of a work of great poetry (including drama, prose or lyrical writing) must satisfy the stringent test of access to, and benefit of, all who may wish to delve into it :-

*devānāmidamāmananti munayaḥ śāntam kratum cākṣuṣam
Rudreṇedam Umākṛtavyatikare svāṅgevibhaktam dvidhā,
traiguṇyodbhavamatra lokacaritam nānārasam dṛśyate
nāṭyam bhinnarucerjanasya bahudhāpyekam samārāghanam.*

The sages describe this as a soothing visual feast of the gods;

Rudra has retained it divided in two parts in his own person blended with that of Umā; herein can be seen the conduct of people arising out of three primal qualities reflected in diverse sentiments; dramatic art is the common recreation of people of different tastes.

(*Mālavikāgnimitram* I-4 : translation Shekhar 1977 : 49)

The phrase "*nāṭyam bhinnarucerjanasya bahudhāpyekam samārāadhanam.*" (line 4 supra), conveys the sentiment that a literary work ought to be for all people. Its status as a literary work therefore depends to a great extent on its ability to provide enjoyment and some "gentle" counsel to a broad spectrum of the people. Critical need not be condemnatory, or fault-finding. The criterion must be whether a piece of literature satisfies the aims or purpose of a work of art. If Aristotle's tragedy could by pity and terror, purge these emotions by the process of catharsis, then the works of Kālidāsa and other Indian writers could equally bring about bliss through the transformation of emotions (*bhāvas*) which reside permanently in the heart through the process of *rasaniṣpatti* - or the accomplishment of *Rasa* (sentiment) into the blissful state of *rasānubhūti* (experience of *Rasa*). This is, it is submitted, a more positive outcome, contributing to the joy and well-being of the individual. The profound savant and literary scholar Jagannātha Mahāpātra who lived many centuries after Bharata who formulated the *Rasa-sūtra*, and also Kālidāsa, one of the adherents of *Rasa*, gave the stamp of approval to *Rasa* as the soul of poetry with the dictum "*vākyam rasātmakam kāvyam*". Hence any piece of writing devoid of *Rasa* (*rasavihīna*) or having elements that impede *rasaniṣpatti* (that which cause *rasabādhā* or *rasa bhāṅga*) cannot be poetry. It is on this basis of critical enquiry that the subject has been treated.

Mahākavi Kālidāsa was a poet not only of Sanskrit literary fame, but an elder statesman of world literature. His fame rests on his sensitivity and close appreciation of the world of nature and human emotions. His spiritual vision is

a holistic one, encompassing all forms of life, and focusing on the social and political activities of mankind as much as the quiet contemplation of the forest hermits. Kālidāsa had the capacity to influence and challenge the mind as well as the heart; attributing tender human feelings to plants and animals, whilst making the great Ṛṣi Durvāsa pronounce an inexorable and irrevocable curse. In the midst of these he places King Duṣyanta, a man of the world as well as scion of a noble lineage, who loved with the full blood of youth and forgot Śakuntalā following Durvāsa's curse. Kālidāsa is able to say so many things in a verse such as this :-

*kāryā saikatalīnahansamithunā srotovahā mālinī
pādāstāmbhito niṣaṇṇahariṇā gaurīguroḥ pāvanāḥ,
śākhālambitavalkalasya ca taromirmātummicchāmyadhah
śṛṅge kṛṣṇamṛgasya vāmanayanam kaṇḍūyamānām mṛgīm .*

The stream of Mālinī ought to be drawn with a pair of swans resting on its sands; and on both its sides must appear the sacred hills at the base of the Himālayan ranges, where the deer are squatting; and I wish to draw, underneath a tree that bears some bark-garments suspended from its boughs, a doe that rubs her left eye on the horn of a black antelope.

(*Abj.* VI-17)

In the above verse, first of all a serene scene of natural beauty is described. Duṣyanta remembers Śakuntalā and he wishes to express his feelings through painting pictures. His early, fulsome love for Śakuntalā has not diminished or evaporated as a result of the curse; rather it may have been strengthened. The use of the black deer and its doe shows not only the gentle and trusting relationship between animals, but also shows the emotions of Duṣyanta's heart being poured out. He, too, would like to take loving care of his doe-eyed Śakuntalā. Nature in her benevolent, tender aspects helps to heighten blissful human emotions. Such is the force of the poet's imagination and pen; such is

the grace of *Rasa* in the form of *Śṛṅgāra*, that words become a world of emotion with the poetic touch.

Kālidāsa's early engagement with nature, beginning with *Ṛtusañhāram*, and interspersed throughout his poems, epics and plays, made him the *Kavi-kulaguru* (preceptor of poets). He was thus held in high regard by his contemporaries and particularly his successors. *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* is the better known work of Kālidāsa for various reasons. Westerners may love it as romantic drama, which it is; but it is more. The ancient litterateurs considered *Rasa* the soul of poetry; and *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* is replete with *Rasa* as demonstrated in Chapter IV. The beatific joy (*brahmānanda*) produced through the process of accomplishment of *Rasa* nurtures the ears and eyes of the audience in the theatre; but more than this is accomplished by the poet. The fact that people wish to view presentations of *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*, or read portions of the play again and again, is testimony to the magnetic appeal of Kālidāsa's delineation of human feelings, love, sorrow and caring. The caring nature of plants, trees and animals in their bid to detain Śakuntalā, or to give her their best parting gifts, serves as an object lesson for humanity, to give true meaning to love and kindness. Śakuntalā's love for nature is demonstrated by her caring for them, putting their needs before her own; not picking flowers even to adorn herself. In this context the poet and the Ṛṣi who dwells in the forest, immersed in divine contemplation, become one.

Kālidāsa's evolution as a poet and his poetic creation are a consequence of his dedication to the art of poetry. *Rasa* was already known and Bharata had enunciated his famous *sūtra* on *Rasa* before Kālidāsa. But it was the specific responsibility of poets to apply the *Rasa* theory (i.e. give *Rasa* appropriate space in their works in order to enhance their theme and produce joy in the audience.) Indeed, it was the poet in Kālidāsa that was able to produce such

memorable works as *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*, and was able to capture the finest tenderest emotions and human relations in just a handful of verses while creating a magnificent dramatic production within the scope of the larger play *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*. Some unknown devotee of Kālidāsa's poetic genius said :-

*Kāvyeṣu nāṭakam ramyam nāṭakeṣu Śakuntalā
tatrāpi ca caturtho'aṅkastatra ślokacatuṣṭyam .*

Of all poetry, the drama is the most appealing; and amongst dramas "*Śakuntalam*" or *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* is foremost; and in "*Śakuntalam*" it is the fourth act; and in the fourth act four verses, which stand out as a living monument to Kālidāsa's poetic genius and human empathy.

A poet of Kālidāsa's stature, which was achieved particularly through his *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*, had begun his literary career observing nature (*R̥tusañhāram*) and describing the pangs of separation of the beloved (*Meghadūtam*). In his observation, the pangs of separation cover the entire creation of the Supreme, since plants and animals feel love and pain for Śakuntalā. It was this unified vision of creation that enabled Duṣyanta to see himself in the role of the black deer in *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* (VI-17); it was this holistic reverential vision that enabled him to describe the marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī in *Kumārasambhavam* contrary to tradition.

However, within human society people have created barriers between themselves through following different paths of life to attain God-realisation. Kaṇva R̥ṣi, the wise old sage of *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*, was a celibate hermit, unversed in the ways of the world, yet he became a father in stronger measure, one would think, than a biological father would have been. The instinct to love and nurture life, and receive and reciprocate love, is best experienced in

the parental relationship. Hence the four verses in Act IV, depicting Kaṇva's heavy heart at the impending departure of Śakuntalā, and his counsel to her to help her attain a happy life and honoured status, and ending in admonishment to Duṣyanta lest he treat Śakuntalā less nobly than she deserves, all speak of the parental solicitude for a daughter.

Kaṇva's words to Śakuntala, uttered with a lump in his throat and with his vision blurred by the tears welling up in his eyes, are truly evocative of pathos-*Karuṇa Rasa*. This *Karuṇa Rasa* envelops the entire forest and the hermitage with all its inhabitants. Far from being sentimental mishmash, this pathos of Act IV, together with the *Vātsalya Śṛṅgāra* or *Karuṇa Śṛṅgāra*, wherein love for offspring is expressed, provides a very important lesson for humanity. The *Rāmāyaṇa* was written with a profusion of *Karuṇa Rasa*; yet its theme is of noble, heroic and divine exploits. In *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* Kālidāsa brings the need to love and cherish the young and helpless into powerful focus with his tender touch.

It is of course necessary that the audience or spectator of a play must be of receptive heart (*sahṛdaya*). Once the poet's words touch the responsive heart, then the distinctions of categories such as realist, idealist, romantic or Marxist do not matter. Love motivates all living things and Kālidāsa succeeded in motivating even the terrible sage Durvāsa to mitigate his curse uttered upon the helpless Śakuntalā. On the other hand, Kaṇva Ṛṣi feels "orphaned" at the prospect of Śakuntalā's departure from his *āśrama*. Poetry achieves the strangest of results in the human psyche : the *Mahābhārata* seems to be an epic of great strife and warfare, yet the serene *Bhagavadgītā* is spoken in the midst of warring armies. Perhaps Indian sages/poets realise the importance of emphasizing the need for love, peace and reconciliation in order to counteract the instinctive tendencies of acquisitiveness, usurpation and even deceitful

appropriation. Hence the object lessons of the *Mahābhārata*; and also the fact that the predominant *Rasa* in this epic is the *Sānta* (peaceful) *Rasa*.

Kālidāsa's poetry depicts *Śṛṅgāra Rasa* to a great extent. *Śṛṅgāra* means love, lover's union and also points out to reaching a high peak (*śṛṅga*). Thus it follows that *Vātsalya* and *Bhakti* are subsumed under *Śṛṅgāra Rasa*, creating a unified vision of love amongst all living beings. *Śṛṅgāra* or love is the eternal spark that motivates all living beings towards realizing their fullness or wholeness. In the first instance this is achieved through *Sambhoga Śṛṅgāra* (physical love), then through *Vātsalya Śṛṅgāra* (love for child) and finally through *Bhakti* (reverence for elders and the search for the divine). Kālidāsa shows all this through the *gāndharva vivāha* of Duṣyanta and Śakuntalā; then the love of Kaṇva for Śakuntalā (and Duṣyanta's love for his son) and finally the spiritual domain, with the beginning and ending of the play in a holy hermitage. Kālidāsa has also been described as the poet of curses (*śāpa*) and penance (*tapas*). Durvāsa's curse in the *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* as well as Kubera's curse on the Yakṣa in the *Meghadūtam* are well known. The *tapas* or penance of Pārvatī for Śiva, of Śakuntalā for Duṣyanta in her separation are also experiences of this kind. *Tapas* is a period or process of spiritual burning or cleansing, which removes all traces of mire and malice, leaving a pure, whole individual. It is ironic that Viśvāmitra, father of Śakuntalā was also engaged in *tapas* when Śakuntalā was conceived. The result of that *tapas* was that Śakuntalā was abandoned, because her mother, the celestial nymph Menakā, had no desire to mother her. Viśvāmitra's *tapas*, however, endowed Śakuntalā with the capacity to love and serve Kaṇva Ṛṣi, and she survives separation from Duṣyanta. It is most noteworthy that Kaṇva Ṛṣi's *tapas* made him the gentle, understanding and tender foster-father of Śakuntalā, whose heart was heavy with thoughts of Śakuntalā's departure. This *tapas* also produced the most memorable *Vātsalya Bhāva* in Kaṇva's heart.

The central goal of Indian literature has been one of elevation of the human species. The tendency to give gentle guidance through delectable poetry can be seen in works such as Tulasidāsa's *Rāmacaritamānasa* and Sūradāsa's *Sūrasāgara*. The poems are always of selfless, unconditional love.

Sanskrit literature beginning with the *Vedas* and *Upaniṣadas* was invested with the ideals of *Satyam* (Truth) and *Ṛtam* (Natural order). *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* does show elements of these in the context of Duṣyanta's rejection of Śakuntalā; but for the curse, one tends to believe that Śakuntalā is being unjustly treated by Duṣyanta. The truth being expressed is the underlying potential for man to behave in a brutal and selfish manner towards woman. Moreover, the question of Kaṇva's loving solicitude for Śakuntalā's welfare has not been appraised in the light of our contemporary society's indulgence in child abuse of every conceivable manner. Had A.B. Keith realized what the world was going to look like a hundred years after his time, he would not have said that Kālidāsa did not address questions of his time. The threat of evil behaviour lurks inside every human being, and in all times and climes. It is becoming the scourge of humanity at the end of the 20th century; and one has to go back to the great scriptures and works of literature like *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* to learn how to foster and cherish our children; how to become protectors rather than predators of our own offspring!

One of the goals of literature in the Indian tradition is *Śivettara Kṣati* - the destruction of things inauspicious. For our present human society, and also for past generations one of the most inauspicious as well as reprehensible elements has been neglect and maltreatment of women and children. The poet's ability to portray these elements, and show in stark scenes how these cause pain and sorrow, help to achieve the goal of *Śivettara Kṣati*. The *Rasa* (*Karuṇa* as well as *Śṛṅgāra*) accomplished in Kālidāsa's depiction of Kaṇva's concern for his

foster daughter Śakuntalā, helps to create strong feelings of love and protectiveness for one's own child. Kaṇva's words in the *śloka* :-

*yāsyatyadya śakuntaleti hṛdayam samspr̥ṣtamutkaṇṭhayā
kaṇṭhaḥ stambhitavāṣpavṛttikaluṣaścintājaḍam darśanam,
vaiklavyam mama tāvadīdṛśamapi snehādarāṇyaukaṣaḥ
pīḍyante gṛhiṇaḥ katham na tanayāviśleṣaduḥkhairnavaiḥ.*

This day will Śakuntala depart : at such (a thought) my heart is smitten with anguish; my voice is choked by suppressing the flow of tears; and my senses paralysed by anxious thought. If such, through affection, is the affliction even of me a hermit, O with what pangs must they who are fathers of families be afflicted at the first parting with their daughters.

(Abj. IV-5)

emphasise the mental and emotional turbulence of Kaṇva and the fact that he, an ascetic, is so much afflicted by attachment to a child. Kaṇva cannot understand how ordinary householders, with their own children, can survive the sorrows of parting for the first time from their children; particularly daughters who are leaving their parental home after marriage.

This thesis has also pointed out that Kālidāsa was a poet of social and family solidarity. The *āśrama* environment has depicted a well-ordered community, working for the good of all, including those parts of creation constituting the "environment." Through his application of appropriate *Rasas*, Mahākavi Kālidāsa, dramatist *par excellence*, has elucidated the mutual dependence and interrelationship between humanity and nature. The harmonious and tranquil air surrounding the *āśrama* resulted from the attitude of love and benign charity between people, plants and animals. It is also shown that this tranquility can be shattered by the advent of people who want to kill - Duṣyanta is implored not to shoot the deer around the hermitage. The

elephant that goes on the rampage was also disturbed by the king's horses, trained to chase and terrify living beings. The *Bhayānaka Rasa* invoked in this scene is ominous in the sense that man is able to use even animals to strike terror in the hearts of living beings.

It is the candidate's submission that this thesis has demonstrated how Kālidāsa used "*nānā rasam*" (various *rasas*) to make his immortal play *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* as popular today in the world as it was in his own time. The discussion of Kālidāsa's life and works and broad outline of the *Rasa* Theory, with the views of some leading *ācāryas*, are intended to facilitate the understanding and enjoyment of *Rasas* in *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*. It is believed that an understanding and application of the *Rasa* Theory is an absolute essential for literary appreciation.

SUMMARY

CHAPTER ONE : The thesis begins with an introductory chapter discussing the need for the study. Goethe's eulogy of the play *Abhijñānaśakuntalam* introduces the spirit of this thesis - the "satisfaction and support" and the grasping of "the heaven and the earth" (P.1) which are the hallmarks of *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*. A list of works on Kālidāsa is followed by an investigation into the prevalence of *Rasa* in Kālidāsa's work, and that of his contemporaries. Kālidāsa's concept of *Rasa* and the anti-*rasa* school are the concluding portions of this chapter.

CHAPTER TWO : The *Rasa* Theory forms the substance of this chapter. An attempt is made to explain and understand the concept of *Rasa* and the process of *rasa-niṣpatti*, firstly, briefly, by comparing western views such as the catharsis of emotions (Aristotle on Tragedy) and the modern critical thinking in the west. An array of views on *Rasa* is examined, in order to establish the role and significance of *Rasa* in the field of Indian aesthetics and poetry. An interesting account of the origin of poetry and the deployment of *Karuṇa Rasa* by Vālmīki in the *Rāmāyaṇa* is followed by the outline of *Rasa* in Sanskrit poetry including drama.

The concept of *Rasa* as *Ānanda*, or bliss is also discussed together with the debate over the number *Rasas*, ranging between eight and ten, up to present times. The concept of *Ekarasavāda* (Unity of *Rasa*) is an interesting one, and is discussed in some detail. The Concept of *Rasa*, and the general characteristics of *Rasa* and the *Bhāvas* (emotions) which lead to the *Rasas* is analysed. A very important source for the study of *Rasa*, Bharata's *sūtra* on *Rasa* is next discussed. This leads to the views of a few major *ācāryas* who give their interpretations of Bharata's *sūtra*, especially with regard to the

"*sañyoga*" and "*niṣpatti*" in Bharata's *sūtra*. This section, dealing with Bhaṭṭalollaṭa's *Utpattivāda*, Śaṅkuka's *Anumitivāda*, Bhaṭṭanāyaka's *Bhuktivāda* and Abhinavagupta's *Abhivyaktivāda*, is very vital for the understanding of *Rasa Siddhānta*; and gives an insight into the advanced thinking of the Indian Scholars on matters of aesthetics.

CHAPTER THREE : This is an important chapter that attempts to place Kālidāsa within the context of his age and the literary environment of his period. His works are also discussed, in order to demonstrate his development as a poet and also the prevalence of certain characteristics in his poetic personality - the concept of *Rasa* being one such element.

While it is uncertain whether Kālidāsa lived in the first century BCE or the fifth century AC, his works when compared with that of his predecessors and contemporaries exhibit a quality of genuine literary or poetic genius and insight which promised greater things later. Hence while some of his fellow poets indulged in literary creations displaying technical skill or pedantic conceit, Kālidāsa plunged deep into the human mind and feelings, writing works such as *Meghadūtam* and *Mālavikāgnimitram* showing unrequited love or pangs of separation, and *Kumārasambhavam* and *Raghuvañśam*, dealing on an epic scale with subjects that involve the entire universe. Hence Kālidāsa's creation of *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* was the work of a finely tuned and "finished" poet, whose language and poetical skill were fully matured, and whose poetic vision had attained maximum expansion. The impact of the drama, as well the character of Śakuntalā, on minds of people even today, hints at the development of Kālidāsa as a *rasavādin* poet, as well as the poet of wholeness and social integrity.

CHAPTER FOUR : This chapter is the most important and interesting part of the enquiry : how does Kālidāsa accomplish *Rasa* in his *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* ? What is the effect of the *Rasa* on the audience/spectator, and on the general progress of the play's theme. It is therefore, a crucial portion of the thesis, and clearly illustrates Kālidāsa's supremacy as a *Rasavādin* and a Poet of Life.

The delineation of *Śṛṅgāra Rasa* in its various facets - *Sambhoga* (union), *Vipralambha* (separation) and *Vātsalya* (parental) are described in terms of excerpts from the play. A true poet does not deliberately set out to depict *Rasas* (or any other facets of poetry). His skill lies in the deployment of these *Rasas* in the normal course of the progress of the plot. Kālidāsa has achieved this objective with great success.

While *Śṛṅgāra* in all its manifestations forms the major portion of the analysis, other *Rasas*, too, are analysed wherever they heighten the pleasure of the spectator. Kālidāsa's "*nānā rasam*" concept is thus achieved. It is noteworthy that the accomplishment of *Rasa* in *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* is unimpeded (no *rasa bhaṅga*). This attests to Kālidāsa's maturity as a poet.

CHAPTER FIVE : This chapter contains the conclusions of this study.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

THE HEROINE'S PASSIONATE ACTIONS (*kāma-ceṣṭā*) AND THE *ALAṆKĀRAS* IN *ABHIJÑĀNASĀKUNTALAM*.

Many *ācāryas* (teachers) beginning with the sage Bharata have analysed the virtuous actions or *alaṅkāras* of heroines. These are based in youth. They attain fulness in the context of *śṛṅgāra rasa* (love, passion) in women. These *alaṅkāras* are 20 in number. Various *ācāryas* have commented as follows on these *alaṅkāras* :-

Śaradatanaya says :-

yauvane sattvajāḥ strīnāmalāṅkārastu viñśatiḥ

There are twenty *alaṅkāras* pertaining to women, born of *sattva* (virtue) and manifested in youth

(*Bhavaprakāśa* : 1.36-37)

The *Daśarūpaka* of Dhananjaya (2.30.33) repeats this verse. Hemacandra concurs with the above in *Kāvyanuśasana* (7.33). The poet Narasimha has designated these *alaṅkāras* numbering eighteen as *śṛṅgāra-ceṣṭā* actions of passion or indication of love through gestures :-

śṛṅgāraceṣṭā syuraṣṭādaśāvidhāḥ smṛthāḥ

There are eighteen types of *śṛṅgāraceṣṭās*

(*nañja rājayaśobhūṣaṇa vilāsa -P.50*)

Bhikṣu Padmaśrī described these *alaṅkāras* or *śṛṅgāraceṣṭās* as the "preface to union" (*sambhoga*). These are *helā*, *vicchiti*, *bibboka*, *kilakiñcit*, *vibhrama*, *līlā*, *vilāsa*, *hāva - bhāva*, *vikṣepa*, *vikṛta*, *mada*, *moṭṭāyita*, *kuṭamitta*, *mougdhyam* and *tapana*. (*Nagarasarvasva* 13. 3-4).

Bharata divided them into three groups, with a total of twenty types. *Hāva*, *bhāva* and *helā* are "aṅgaja" (bodily) *alaṅkāras* (*Nāṭyaśāstra*. 24.16-7). *Lilā*, *vilāsa*, *viccati*, *vibhrama*, *kilākiñcit*, *moṭṭāyita*, *kuṭṭmita*, *bibboka*, *lalita* and *vikṛta* are the ten natural *alaṅkāras* of the heroine. (*Nāṭyaśāstra* 24.12-3). *Śobhā*, (*svābhāvika*). *dīpti*, *kānti*, *mādhurya*, *dhairya*, *prāgalbhya* and *audārya* are seven *ayatnaja* (spontaneous) *alaṅkāras* (*Nāṭyaśāstra*.24.24), Dhananjaya (above) and Ramacandra-Gunacandra accepted these *in toto*. Viśvanātha Mahāpātra widened the list to 24, with *kuṭūhala*, *hasita*, *cakita* and *keli* as the additions. (*Sāhityadarpaṇa* 3.89-92. Bhojarāja further expands the list with the addition of *viśrambhabhuṣaṇa*, *cātu*, *premanusandhana*, *parihāsa* etc. (*sarasvatī kaṇṭhā bharam* 5-168-9).

These *alaṅkāras* or *śṛṅgāra-ceṣṭās* are of particular usefulness for the purpose of expressing *rasa*.

Below some examples of *śṛṅgāraceṣṭā* are given from *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*. in order to illustrate their nature and function.:

1) *Śobhā*

The following *śloka* uses the *śobhā alaṅkāra* depicting the grace and beauty of the maids :-

aho! madhuramāsām darśanam

*śuddhāntadurlabhamidam vapurāśramavāsino yadi janasya,
dūrīkṛtāḥ khalu gunairudyānalatā vanalatābhiḥ*

How lovely they look!

If such the beauty of maids, who dwell in woodland retreats, the like of which is not easily to be found in the recesses of a palace, then indeed are the garden-plants well surpassed in merit by the woodland creepers.

(*Abj. I-17*)

2) *Mādhurya*

This *śloka* depicts *mādhurya alaṅkāra* in the heroine.

*idamupahitasukṣmagranthinā skandhadeśe
stanayugapariṇāhācchādīnā valkalena
vapurabhinavamasyāḥ puṣyati svām na śobhām
kusumamiva pinaddham pāṇḍupatrodareṇa.*

This her youthful body, by reason of the bark garment tied with delicate knots upon her shoulder, and covering the expanse of her twin breasts, does not exhibit its own charms, like a flower enfolded by a pale leaf.

(*Abj. I-19*)

3) *Hāva*

The *alaṅkāra hāva* dealing with the dalliance of love is employed in the following *śloka* :-

*Śakuntalā - Sakhi. yathāḥ prabhṛti mama darśanapathamāgataḥ sa
tapovanarakṣitā rājarsih-----*

*(ityardhovate lajjām nāṭayati)----- tata ārabhya
tadgatenābhilāṣeṇaitadavasthāsmi samvṛttā*

Friend, from the very instant the pious king who guards our hallowed forest met my eye -----

(She breaks off and looks abashed)-----From that instant, my love for him has reduced me to this plight.

(*Abj. III-Sakuntalā*)

4) **Bhāva**

The following *bhāva alaṅkāra* depicts sincerity and devotion :-

Śakuntalā - (*ātmagatam*) :

*kim nu khalvimam prekṣya tapovanavirodhino vikārasya gamanīyāsmi
samvṛttā*

(to herself)

How is it, that at the sight of this person, I feel an emotion scarce
consistent with with a grove devoted to piety

(*Abj. I-Śakuntalā*)

APPENDIX II

THE ALAṆKĀRAS OF THE HERO IN ABHIJÑĀNASĀKUNTALAM.

The characteristics (*lakṣaṇa*) of *bhāva*, *hāva*, *helā*, etc. discussed in appendix one in the context of the heroine, are also found in the hero or protagonist according to the *ācāryas*. Viśvanātha wrote in his *Sāhityadarpaṇa* (3 : 93) in this regard :-

Bhavādi daśā punsām bhāvantyāpi

(Characteristics such as *bhāva* etc. also occur in the hero)

The hero Duṣyanta of the play *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* exhibits these traits in the following manner :-

1) *Bhāva*

King - *śāntamidamāśramapadam sphurati ca bāhuḥ kutaḥ phalamihāsyā
athavā bhavitavyānām dvārāṇi bhavanti sarvatra*

Tranquil is this hermitage, and yet my arm throbs; whence can there rise the fruit of this in such a place ? But yet the gates of predestined events are in all places open.

(*Abj. I-16*)

2) *Hāva*

King - *sakhe, na parihārye vastuni paura vāṇām manaḥ pravartate.
surayuvatisambhavam kila munerapatyam tadujjhitādhigatam
arkasyopari śithilam cyutamiva navamālikākusumam.*

Friend, the thoughts of Puru's descendants will never dwell on any forbidden object.

Sprung from a nymph of heaven, so it said, this sage's child was found by him when she deserted her; like a Navamālikā flower loosened and flung upon the Sun-plant.

(Abj. II-8)

3) *Helā*

King - *jāne tapaso vīryam sā bālā paravatīti me viditam,
na ca nimnādīva salilam nivartate me tato hṛdayam*

I know the power of penance : and I am further aware that the maiden is not her own mistress; and yet my heart can no more turn back from her, than water can from a slope.

(Abj. III-2)

4) *Audārya*

King - *idamananyaparāyaṇamanyathā
hṛdayasannihite hṛdayam mama,
yadi samarthayase madirekṣaṇe
madanabāṇahato'smi hataḥ punaḥ*

Thou with bewitching eyes, that art near my heart, if this heart of mine, which is devoted to no other, thou judgest to be otherwise, then I who was slain by Love's arrow, am slain once again!

(Abj. III-18)

APPENDIX III

THE HERO'S VIRTUOUS QUALITIES (SATTVIC GUṆA) IN ABHIJÑĀNAŚĀKUNTALAM.

Ancient writers have made reference to some noble or virtuous (sattvic) qualities of the dramatic hero. These qualities are necessary to the proper expression of the sentiments (*rasas*) and emotions (*bhāvas*) through horripilation (*romāñca*), tears etc. Bharata has enumerated eight of these *sattvic guṇas* :

*śobhā vilāso mādhyam sthairyam gāmbhīryameva ca
lalitaudārya tejansi sattvabhedāstu pauruṣāḥ*

(*Nāṭyaśāstra* : III : 22-33)

These eight qualities translate as follows :-

<i>śobhā</i>	: skill, valour, zeal, ambition
<i>vilāsa</i>	: enjoyment, luxury, amorous playfulness; lust
<i>mādhyam</i>	: equanimity and composed mind, even under stress
<i>sthairyam</i>	: unwavering in duty in the face of obstacles
<i>gāmbhīryam</i>	: decorum, gravity
<i>lālitya</i>	: speech and dress are sweet/appealing, appropriate for love
<i>audāryam</i>	: generosity, kind words and courtesy towards all
<i>tejas</i>	: brilliant, impressive, imposing

Ramcandra Gunacandra accepts the same eight attributes of the hero in his *Nāṭyadarpaṇa* (4.8). Śāradātanaya (*Bhāvaprakāśana* 1.63-64) also subscribes to eight attributes, naming these qualities "*Gātrārambhānubhāva*"

The following paragraphs analyse some of the above qualities as described in passages of *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*.

A. Śobhā

1)

King :-

*kaḥ paurave vasumatīm śāsati śāsitarī durvinītānām
ayamācaratyavinayam mugdhāsu tapasvikanyakāsu .*

While a descendent of Puru, a chastiser of the ill-behaved, governs the world, who is this that is so rude to these artless hermit girls ?

(Abj. I-25)

Commentary : King Duṣyanta, endowed with majesty and knowledge would hardly deign to punish a little insect or beetle. Nevertheless it is not in his nature to endure the misconduct of a malefactor. This quality of deprecating the misdeeds of wretches indicates the 'śobhā' guṇa.

2)

General : *dr̥ṣṭadoṣāpi svāmīni mṛgayya kevalam guṇa eva
samvṛttā, tathā hi devaḥ.*

*anavaratadhanurjyāsphālanakrūrāpūrvam
ravikiraṇasahiṣṇu kleśaleśairabhinnam,
apacitamāpi gātram vyāyatatvādalakṣyam
gīricara iva nāgaḥ prāṇasāram bibharti.*

Though reckoned a vice, hunting has proved only an advantage in our King. Thus his Majesty

Like a mountain-roving elephant possesses a body, whose forepart is hardened by the ceaseless friction of the bow-string, which is capable of enduring the sun's rays, and is not affected by the slightest fatigue; though reduced in bulk yet is not marked (as such) by reason of its muscular development, and is all life and vitality.

(Abj II-4)

Commentary : A monarch should have an imposing stature and powerful limbs. His personality ought to be attractive, in order to draw towards

himself people of pacific nature, and implant terror in the hearts of lascivious. The hero, King Duṣyanta is extremely able-bodied, youthful and valorous. These virile qualities illuminate the *sattvic guṇa*. (virtuous quality) of *śobhā*.

B. *Mādhurya*

King :- *Mātale, ataḥ khalu sabāhyāntaḥ karaṇo mamāntarātmā prasīdati.*

Mātali, that is why my inner self, with the internal and external senses, feels a pleasurable repose.

(Abj. VII-Duṣyanta)

Commentary : Having lost the priceless jewel, Śakuntalā, as a result of Durvāsa's curse Duṣyanta is tortured by remorse. In his condition of pining for his beloved, he does not find the vernal season appealing. He thus finds Indra's invitation to Heaven an appropriate way of passing/ biding time. Indra's charioteer Mātali describes the route of their journey. Even though he is agitated with his whole heart for Śakuntala, his journey through the clouds causes him elation. His elation in the midst of misery shows his (*mādhurya*) *guṇa*

C. *Sthairya*

First Bard :- *svasukhanirabhilāṣaḥ khidyase lokahetoḥ
pratidinamathavā te vṛttirevamvidhaiva,
anubhavati hi mūrdhanā pādapastīvramuṣṇam
śamyati paritāpam chāyayā sañśritānām*

Thou seekest not thy own happiness , but for the people thou dost toil from day to day. Or thus is thy very nature made. For the Tree bears on his head the fierce heat (of day) while his shade allays the fever of those who seek shelter under him.

(Abj. V-7)

Commentary : Sacrifice of personal comforts and happiness are living a life of endless struggle and effort characterise the life of a king who wishes to serve his subjects well. This passage describes these very qualities of a king, which are called '*sthairya*'.

D. *Lalita*

King :- [*stanokamantaram gatvā.*] *tapovanānivāsīnāmuparodho mā bhūt. atraiva ratham sthāpaya. yāvadaavatarāmi.*

Charioteer :- *ghritāḥ pragrahaḥ. avataratvāyuṣmān.*

King :- [*avatīrya*] *sūta, vinītaveṣeṇa praveṣatryāni tapovanāni nāma. idam tāvad gṛhyatām. [iti sūtsyābharaṇāni dhanuścopanīya]*

King : (Going a little way) Let the dwellers of the sacred grove be not disturbed. Stop the chariot just here, that I may descend.

Charioteer :- The reins are held in. Let the long lived descend. King : (having descended and looking at himself)

Charioteer, sacred groves must indeed be entered in humble habiliments; therefore take these. (Giving his ornaments and bow to the charioteer)

((*Abj. I-Duṣyanta*))

Commentary : The Manusmriti (8-2) says that a king should go on tour of inspection dressed in simple garments. Leaving his chariot and travelling on foot to the āśrama of Kaṇva in recognition of the convenience? and out of respect for the hermitage dwellers, point to the emperors courtesy and lack of arrogance. His simple non-martial dress also indicates the '*lalita*' *guṇa*.

E. *Audārya*

Both [with joy] :-

anukāriṇi pūrveṣām yuktarūpamidam tvayi,

āpannābhayasatreṣu dīkṣitāḥ khalu pauravāḥ.

This well becomes you, who emulate your ancestors; truly the descendants of Puru are the officiating priests in the sacrifices of delivering from fear the distressed.

(*Abj.* II-16)

Commentary : A king is the representative of God. The king's of the Puru dynasty (Duṣyanta's dynasty) accepted this responsibility of being God's viceroys on earth and presented the ideal of protection of those coming into their refuge. In the opinion of the young Ṛṣis the ever protective Duṣyanta, glorious in the 'tradition of his dynasty' revives memories of his venerable ancestors. It also makes them reverential towards Duṣyanta's conduct which is characterized by altruism and charity. This is '*audārya*' *guṇa* of Duṣyanta, which relates to his charity and generosity.

APPENDIX IV

UPAMĀ KĀLIDĀSASYA

Mahākavi Kālidāsa is renowned for his use of *upamā* (similes). The following verse is an excellent example of his artistic, sensitive use of similes to describe Śakuntalā's purity, delicacy, chastity, celibacy and spirituality. In Act II-10 Duṣyanta to the Jester Śakuntalā's youth and beauty by means of five different similes :-

*anāghrātam puṣpam kisalayamalūnam kararuhai-
ranāviddham ratnam madhu navamanāsvāditarasam,
akhaṇḍam puṇyāṇām phalamiva ca tadrūpamanagham
na jāne bhoktāram kamiha samupasthāsyati vidhiḥ*

This immaculate beauty is like a flower not yet smelt, a delicate shoot torn by the nails; an unperforated diamond; or fresh honey whose sweetness is yet untasted; or the full reward of meritorious deeds. I know not whom destiny will approach as the enjoyer here (of this form).

APPENDIX V

EULOGY OF KĀLIDĀSA

by

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Did you not have joy and sorrow,
Hope and despair , even like ourselves,
O immortal poet ? Were not there always
The intrigues of a royal court, the stabbing in the back ?
Did you never suffer humiliation,
Affront, distrust, injustice,
Want, hard and pitiless ? Did you never pass
A sleepless night of poignant agony ?
Yet above them all, unconcerned pure,
Has flowered your poem- a lotus of beauty
Opening to the sun of joy. Nowhere
Does it show any sign of sorrow, affliction, evil times.
Churning the sea of life you drank the poison,
The nectar that arose you gave away !

(from : Kālidāsa, His Art and Culture by Ram Gopal : 1984)

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