



**ARDHANARISVARA**

Cola stone image in  
Nagesvarasvami

Temple  
Kumbhakonam

10<sup>th</sup> Century

Courtesy:  
C.T.Nachiappan,  
Kalakshetra, Adyar

# **The Indian Institute of World Culture**

Basavangudi, Bangalore 4

**TRANSACTION No. 22**

**LOVE IN THE POEMS AND PLAYS OF KALIDASA**

By

**V. RAGHAVAN, M.A., Ph.D.**

Professor and Head of the Department of  
Sanskrit University of Madras

With a Foreword by  
**MR. ROY WALKER**

2nd impression **1967**

**Rs. 2.00**

## PREFACE

These lectures on " Love in the Poems and Plays of Kalidasa," India's poet and dramatist of unchallenged supremacy from the ancient times in which he lived down to the present day, were delivered at the Indian Institute of World Culture on June 28th and 29th, 1954. The lecturer, Dr. V. Raghavan, had given them eight months previously at this Institute's London Branch (62, Queen's Gardens, W. 2).

Dr. Raghavan, who heads the Sanskrit Department in the University of Madras, is not only an editor and critic of recognized standing in the field of Sanskrit scholarship but is also himself a poet and dramatist in that venerable living language. He made a fruitful tour of Europe in 1953-4, to locate Sanskrit manuscripts in the libraries and universities of a number of countries, in connection with the *New Catalogus Catalogorum* on which he is working.

Two earlier lectures by Dr. Raghavan at the Institute in Bangalore have been published as its Transactions Nos. 10 and 11: *Yantras or Mechanical Contrivances in Ancient India* and *The Social Play in Sanskrit*, respectively. These have aroused considerable interest.

## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

This study was prepared at the instance of Miss Beswick, the Secretary of the London Branch of the Indian Institute of World Culture, where the writer delivered it as three lecturers on October 22nd, 23rd and 24th, 1953; Dr. A. L. Basham and Prof. C. W. Rylands, both of the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London, presided on the first and second nights, respectively, and the Shakespearean writer, dramatic critic and friend of India Mr. Roy Walker presided over the last meeting.

The exposition takes along with it an account of the themes of the poet's works and this was called for by the nature of the audience.

With only slight revision, and a few additional notes, these lectures were redelivered at the Headquarters of the Indian Institute of World Culture at Bangalore on the writer's return to this country, on June 28th and 29th, 1954, with Messrs. M. P. L. Sastry and R. Balasubramanyam in the chair, on the respective days.

To Mr. Roy Walker, the writer's special thanks are due for his kind contribution of a Foreword to this study.

The writer wishes to record here his deep appreciation of the sustained work on behalf of Indian culture which this Institute is doing both at its Indian Headquarters and at its London Branch.

Madras University  
Vyasa purnima,  
15th July 1954.

}  
}

V. Raghavan

## FOREWORD

Western civilization has been more ready to teach' than to learn from other, and indeed older, cultures. Now that the balance of material power in the world has changed, there are signs of a less superior attitude. Professor Arnold Toynbee has shown the West to itself as the world has seen it, thereby administering a salutary shock to the complacent. His attitude to the higher religions and their future role in world affairs is, as he recognizes, now very much what that of the cultivated Hindu has always been. In the field of literature, one of the significant phenomena of our time has been the development of Aldous Huxley, and writers associated with him, to a position where the full value of Eastern as well as Western mystical traditions has begun to be realized. And the growth of insight and understanding between East and West has also owed much to such eminent Indian as the late Ananda K. Coomaraswamy and Sir Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan.

Yet in the field of the arts and in the performing arts in particular, progress has been slow. Mr. Norman Marshall has recently written of the enthusiasm with which performances of Shakespeare have been received by Indian audiences. No comparable impact of Indian art on Western audiences can be reported. It is true that several distinguished Indian dancers, with their companies, making greater or less concessions to the entertainment standard of the West, have enjoyed a considerable and prolonged popularity in the fashionable theatres of the Western world. In one sense the language of dance is universal; something of its aesthetic quality can be appreciated by audiences who are quite ignorant of the language that the Indian dancers themselves speak. Much of the metaphysical meaning of this art, of course, escapes Western audiences, though there have been some acceptable attempts at elementary explanation in the programmes of Uday Shankar, Mrinalini Sarabhai and Ram Gopal. But of classical or even modern Indian drama it is not too much to say that we in the West know virtually nothing. In my own experience of theatre-going in London over more than 20 years, first as a private playgoer and more recently as a dramatic critic, I have only had the opportunity of seeing one or two of Tagore's plays, rather indifferently performed in small club theaters or by amateurs.

At the time when Dr. V. Raghavan visited London last year I was not, however, totally ignorant of the works of Kalidasa in translation. In a smaller way I had, like the famous men I have already mentioned, arrived at some appreciation of the great contribution of Indian Culture to the life of the world, at first through the inspiring example of Mahatma Gandhi, whose life and work I studied during World War II, and subsequently through my interest in the civilization of which that great man was one personification. And in this way I had come upon the *Sakuntala*, and other works of Kalidasa, in the translation by Arthur W. Ryder. *Sakuntala* had, of course, been translated previously by Sir William Jones, and by others. And the London theatrical record shows that the play had been produced in the Botanic Gardens by the Elizabethan Stage Society, in 1889. Indeed, *Sakuntala* had something of a vogue earlier in the 19th century, when the prevailing mood of English literature was that of the Romantic poets. As Professor Allardyce Nicoll has said:

Since in structure the play bears a close resemblance to the forms assumed by the Western drama (even being composed in the five-act pattern favored by the Sanskrit critics), and since its spirit is prevailingly romantic, there need be no wonder that when Sir William Jones issued his translation in 1789 it was eagerly seized upon by those young talents who, in love with everything opposed to classical precision, were searching for new objects of admiration.

And, as Dr. Raghavan also remarks, the play made a deep impression on Goethe, who wrote a poem in its praise, and imitated its prologue.

Yet it may perhaps be doubted whether the real character of *Sakuntala* was then much

better understood than was the real significance of Omar Khayyam, the Persian mystical poet whose work achieved an enormous popularity in the mid-nineteenth century in the highly inaccurate version of Edward Fitzgerald. As Arthur Ryder said, in introducing his translations from Kalidasa,

Kalidasa understood in the fifth century what Europe did not learn until the nineteenth, and even now comprehends only imperfectly: that the world was not made for man, that man reaches his full stature only as he realises the dignity and worth of life that is not human.

Even that comment is not entirely free of the romantic aura. But it is on the right path. Europe perhaps had at some time had its insight into the unity of all life. Orpheus and his lute are, as it were, another expression of the harmonies of which Krishna and his flute are the Indian image. And in later Western times there have been such significant figures as the saintly Francis of Assisi and the compassionate master-artist Leonardo da Vinci. Indeed the unity of life has, as I have tried to show elsewhere, been a dream that has always haunted the imaginations of the greatest poets of the West.

Yet all this still seems a sort of meteorological freak in the general cultural climate of the West, and for the great urban populations of the modern world, who can hardly be said to live in a natural environment at all, this is a paradise almost lost. To quote Ryder again:

Fully to appreciate Kalidasa's poetry one must have spent some weeks at least among wild mountains and forest untouched by man; there the conviction grows that trees and flowers are indeed individuals, fully conscious of a personal life and happy in that life. The return to urban surroundings makes the vision fade; yet the memory remains, like a great love or a glimpse of mystic insight, as an intuitive conviction of a higher truth.

Those weeks on the natural heights are just what our "high standard of living" denies to most of us nowadays. To help us understand the poets who speak out of that consciousness we are therefore in need not only of translators but of interpreters. Few men nowadays can be better qualified in insight and erudition to help us to a fuller understanding of the poetry of Kalidasa than Dr. V. Raghavan, and it was fortunate that his survey of Ideological studies in the West and work on a world catalogue of Sanskrit manuscripts brought him to England. I was glad then to have the opportunity of introducing him in person to one of his London audiences and by listening to him to deepen my previously slight appreciation of Kalidasa. And now that his lectures are to be printed, I am glad to respond to his invitation to introduce him to the wider audience which will, I am sure, find him a valuable guide, philosopher and friend in the ascent of the Gold Peak from which they may gain a panoramic view of a wider and more beautiful world.

London  
October 1954

ROY WALKER



## INTRODUCTORY

Kalidasa, the pre-eminent poet of India, lived according to the majority of research scholars in the fourth century of the Christian era, and according to some others, mostly Indian, in the first century B.C. The historical point at which a genius like him flourished hardly matters to the Indian mind which has its own way of assimilating the contributions of the makers and enriches of its cultural inheritance, like our poet. At any rate, we are not less conscious of his presence in and permeation of our literature and imagination for our not having been able to preserve his date of birth or a lock of his hair. Regarding the historical facts about his personality, we are not very much worse off than, for instance, in the case of one with whom he has sometimes been compared, Shakespeare, who lived very much later but about whom there are so many controversies.

If we are not able to pin Kalidasa to a point in time, equally futile have been the efforts to pin him to a geographical point. An ingenious attempt has been made to show that he hailed from Kashmir; indeed his love and knowledge of a part of that country is clear; equally attached is he to Ujjain where he must have stayed in its palmy days. Really, as we see from his descriptions, such as those of the campaigns of King Raghu, his knowledge of the geography and peculiarities, including the economic products, of all parts of the country from the Himalayas to the Tamraparni in the South and from Assam to Persia was complete and correct.

The only historical figure he actually handles in his works is King Agnimitra of the Sunga dynasty of the pre-Christian times, who is the hero of his play *Malavikagnimitra*. Agnimitra was not a celebrated monarch with a mythological halo and there is no reason why, if the poet had actually lived in the 4th century A.D., he should or could have taken up a small romantic episode, such as it is, in the life of a king like Agnimitra. In his lyrical minor poem, the *Meghasandesa*, the poet describes Vidisa as a celebrated capital of a king, which again would refer to Agnimitra's time, and not to those of the Guptas.

It is again from this poem, the influence of whose fascinating theme has had a trans-Indian range, that we can draw more evidence on the poet's time. It is well known that Indo-Chinese contacts began from the 2nd century B.C. and, as these relations developed, they took on an essentially cultural character. Now, the Chinese poet Hsu Kan of the 2nd century of the Christian era has the following lines in which the echo of the *Meghasandesa* cannot be missed:—

O floating clouds that swim in the heaven above  
Bear on your wings these words to him I love.

In his works Kalidasa's personality is revealed as that of one learned in all branches of knowledge. His erudition in the sacred and secular lores is manifest on every page of his writings. He may be truly deemed to embody all that is best and highest in Indian thought and culture. For convenience, we may adopt the Indian classification of the primary human interests into four: *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama* and *Moksha*—religious duty and virtuous conduct; material values on which the carrying on of mundane life depends; things which beautify life and enrich its enjoyment; and spiritual endeavour and salvation. In the branches of literature pertaining to each of these, we find the poet's knowledge accurate, extensive and reflective of the true ideology of each. This can be shown by detailed textual study and I have shown it in separate papers in respect of Kalidasa's mastery of the *Arthashastra* and of the arts of music and dance. It has been sometimes held —Sri Aurobindo expounded such a view-point — that the cultural development of India could be analyzed into the successive ages of

intuition, intellect, emotion and metaphysics, and that these were marked by Valmiki, Vyasa, Kalidasa and Sankara respectively. In this exposition, the age of Kalidasa is taken as the predominantly aesthetic one, as the age of the senses and the sensuous. Popular imagination in India too thinks of Kalidasa as inseparably bound with love. No doubt, he is the master in the portrayal of this predominant emotion; he is undoubtedly the greatest apostle of beauty; but it will not be doing him justice if we stop with this. Kalidasa is an authentic voice of Indian culture, which, in its true form, is a harmonious synthesis of the values of life and a further synthesis of these values of life here with those in the hereafter. This is the key which will afford the most complete understanding of Kalidasa. In poetry and drama whatever there was before him was thrown into oblivion by him and whatever came after him is mostly modeled on him. This is indeed a great tribute to his supreme position in *belles-lettres*. But what is more significant of the respect he commanded as a true exponent of all that was best and highest in every department of Hindu culture is that he is quoted by philosophers like Kumarila and some of the Puranas, too, freely draw upon him.

The aim of art and poetry in India is to reinforce spiritual truth and to help to its realization; and the purely artistic end of aesthetic bliss was one of two ends, the other being the cultural refinement of man. Thus to adopt Indian scholastic terminology, there is to be 'eka-vakyata' between Sastra and Kavya, i.e., the ultimate suggestions of poetry and drama should be in harmony with the findings of philosophy. Only the method of inculcation and the group of people who would profit more easily by that method differ. You will therefore find that Kalidasa too, in his *Mahakavya* or *Nataka*, strengthens only the cause of *Dharma* to which *Artha* and *Kama* are subordinated; Man is by nature prone to be preoccupied with material objects and desires. What is needed is to chasten these and give them a proper direction, so as to make them a help rather than a hindrance in the higher spiritual evolution, as an opportunity to work out which life has been granted to him. In describing his first king in the *Raghuvamsa*, Kalidasa says that the king's *Artha* and *Kama* were centred in *Dharma*:  
अप्यर्थकामौ तस्यास्तां धर्म एव मनीषिणः! I. 25.

The Hindu ideal is not the starvation or emaciation of life but the synthesizing of its different components and making it rich, whole and truly proportionate. In the *Bhagavad-Gita* the Lord says that He represents Desire too, but only such as is not opposed to righteousness and propriety. It is this ideal that Kalidasa embodies in his works. In his creations, it is this process of sublimating the raw material of life that he interprets. Hermitages, sages and epic kings who upheld the institutes of *Dharma*—these it is that hold sway over his mind and which he brings before us again and again. When he takes leave of us in the last lines of the *Sakuntala* which may justifiably be taken as his testament, he, true Hindu that he is, pray: for the *summum bonum*: "As for me, may the omnipotent God terminate this cycle of birth and death."

This is the philosophy that Kalidasa expounds. Keith thinks the poet had no philosophy, or if he had, that it was only the prevailing Brahmanical philosophy. What else could it be? Indian tradition, as I have indicated above, does not believe in each artist erecting a new philosophy of his own; it is the perennial philosophy that they reinforce but each through his own material and technique, his gifts of imagination and fancy, varying the method and aspect of emphasis and illumination.

Kalidasa has left us six works, three poems and three plays. A further short poem on the

---

<sup>1</sup> See H. A. GILES, A History of Chinese Literature, Cambridge,

six seasons, the *Ritu-samhara*, is also ascribed to him. It has many phrases and turns of expression peculiar to the poet and in its six sections, gives cameos of summer, the Rains, autumn, winter and spring. Its underlying theme also is love, which is seen in the culmination in the spring season, as also in the pictures drawn by the poet of how each season, its sights and sounds, and the changes in Nature that occur in the cycle of time—all contribute to the variation and promotion of the joys of lovers. Some historians and critics consider that this poem might well have been an early work of Kalidasa, and Sri Aurobindo, who has brought out a study of the *Ritusamhara* as a work of Kalidasa, asks us to compare it with Thomson's work, *The Seasons*, really to appreciate in how far Kalidasa has succeeded where the latter failed. In Indian literary history a common phenomenon is the growth of apocrypha round a name that has attained celebrity. Many such works are of course fathered on Kalidasa also.<sup>2</sup>

The genuine or undisputed productions of Kalidasa are the short lyric, the *meghasandesa*, two epic poems, the shorter *Kumarasambhava* and the longer *Raghuvamsa*, and three plays, *Malavikagnimitra*, *Vikramorvasiya* and *Abhijnana Sakuntala*. We may study them from different angles, even when we approach from a purely literary and artistic interest. Thus we may study Kalidasa's expression ; the characteristic features of his phrasing; his economy or suggestiveness ; the similes for which he is justly famous ; the wealth of his ideas and his theme-material; the motifs and reshaping of his sources ; the social *milieu*; his learning and his depiction of the arts ; his treatment of Nature, which is different from and is probably a higher reach of the pure Wordsworthian Nature-mysticism; and his delineation of the great sentiment of love, with which his name is so closely linked. It is to the last mentioned subject that I shall be addressing myself in this and the subsequent talk.<sup>3</sup>

**CONTENTS**

## THE THREE POEMS

### THE MEGHASANDESA

Along with the *Gitagovinda* of Jayadeva, the *Megha-sandesa* enjoys the distinction of being the most widely imitated poem in Sanskrit; in fact, its imitations in Sanskrit and the regional languages, are the most numerous. They extend even to the field of Sanskrit drama and European literature. That it is inspired by the *Ramayana* is clear and the poet does not hide the fact. The creation of a self-contained lyrical masterpiece out of that idea is however unique and is bound to capture anybody's imagination.<sup>4</sup> In this short poem of about 120 verses we have the outpourings of a forlorn lover banished from the side of his beloved by a curse of his master which was occasioned by a neglect of duty on the lover's part. The Yakshas, to whose world the lover belongs, are a class of beings very much given to the idyllic enjoyment of life and the Yaksha of the poem was so engrossed in the company of his beloved that he became *negligent* of his work. Kubera, his master, cursed him to live a year in exile. The two who had clung together so close were thrown far apart, the beloved at Alaka on the Himalayas and the lover at Ramagiri Hill, south of the Vindhyas, There is nothing there for him to console himself with, except the wind that blows from the North; the

<sup>2</sup> *Proceedings*, All-India Oriental Conference, Nagpur, 1946, pp. 102-8.

<sup>3</sup> *In Tamil in The Journal of the Madras Music Academy, Vol. 24, pp. 137-150.*

<sup>4</sup> See his *Kalidasa*, Calcutta, 1929.

Yaksha embraces it, imagining that, coming from the North, it might have been embraced also by his beloved..

आलिङ्ग्यन्ते गुणवति मया ते तुषाराद्रिवाताः  
पूर्वस्पर्ष्टं यदि किल भवेदङ्गमेभिस्तवेति!

A year of suffering for a pair who had not known a moment of separation was indeed too much. Further, the very air of the place where the Yaksha underwent his banishment was charmed; pleasant memories are cruel in times of suffering, and Ramagiri, surcharged with the memories of the happy time the great couple, Rama and Sita, spent there heightened for the Yaksha the poignance of the separation. The Rains were now approaching; the Yaksha had already grown so thin that his golden armlet had slipped down his wrist; as the first cloud swelled, moved and clasped the summit of the hill in front, the Yaksha began to sigh and grow almost mad. In his frenzy, he addressed the cloud and requested it to carry a message of love, hope and reunion to his beloved in Alaka.<sup>5</sup>

The separation served to strengthen and increase their love and revealed to them much more dearly how much each meant to the other. For the greater enjoyment of love itself Kalidasa says, separation is necessary. In the *Megha-sandesa* the poet says that during separation, the unspent love accumulates and in his play, the *Vikramorvasiya*, he adds that the pleasure following suffering is doubly delectable, even as the shade of a tree is to one scorched by the Sun.

स्नेहानाहुः किमपि विरहे हासिनस्ते ह्यभोगाद्  
इष्टे वस्तुन्युपचितरसाः प्रेमराशीभवन्ति!  
यदेवोपनतं दुःखात्सुखं तद्रसवत्तरम्!  
निर्वाणाय तरुच्छाया तप्तस्य हि विशेषतः!!

Separation had made them more precious to each other and steadied and rendered firmer the foundations of their mutual attachment. Particularly significant are the pictures that the Yaksha draws of how his virtuous beloved would be spending her time, the long days and the longer nights of the separation. These may be contrasted, for instance, with the pictures of the beloved drawn in a lyric like the *Caurapancasika* where the whole thing is carnal. The Yaksha has only one verse on his beloved's physical beauty and that too may be taken as an aid to the cloud to identify her. The rest are pictures of the devotion which she bore to the Yaksha, of how she would be counting the days and of how she would be observing the austerity of the devoted wife in separation. She would take the Vina on her lap and start singing a song composed by herself in honour of her lover; suddenly tears would stream and drench the strings of the instrument and render them out of tune. Then she would wipe off the strings and try to start again but she would have forgotten where she broke off in the melody. Suffering itself is joy, for, though fate kept them apart, the knowledge that there was mutual single-hearted yearning was really equal to enjoyment. It is in his drama, the *Sakuntala*, that Kalidasa says this: "Even in the absence of actual fulfilment the mutual yearning gives all the joy that love is":

<sup>5</sup> Of this sentiment, which really goes back to Valmiki's Ramayana (VI. 4.6), you have this striking echo in Hardy's *Jude the obscure*. Jude turns towards the city of his School-master, gazes wistfully and, drawing in the wind from the direction of that city as if it were a sweet liquor, addresses the breeze caressingly: "You were in Christminster City between one and two hours ago, floating along the streets, touching Mr. Phillotson's face, being breathed by him; and now you are here, breathed by me-you, the very same."

## THE RAGHUVAMSA

The *Raghuvamsa* is a long epic which takes us from Manu to Manava. It depicts man before and after the fall, the saint running his godly race and the rake slaking his thirst at the bosom of recklessness and lust. The *Raghuvamsa* alone contains a veritable panorama of types of love. The epic begins and ends significantly, begins in sublimity and ends in vice. Its first canto shows the heights of virtue, the last the depths of degradation. Between Dilipa, the hero of the opening cantos, the King who lived the highest ideal of family life in truth, and Agnivarna, who was a prey first to passion and then to consumption, we have different types of love depicted. The poem is simply the history of love through the ages, of the passage from the age of harmony, the *Kritayuga*, to the age of strife and lack of harmony, *Kali*. We have here Dilipa and his Queen Sudakshina, King Raghu, Aja and his beloved Indumati, Dasaratha and his three Queens, Rama and Sita, then many other kings and finally Agnivarna and his harem full of courtezans.

### i. DILIPA:

Dilipa is the first king with whose description Kalidasa opens his account of the solar race. The poet describes a length the righteous rule of the King: the timely showers, the absence of fear of thief or pestilence, and a full spa of life:

पुरुषायुषजीविन्यो निरातंका निरीतयः I. 63

Dilipa was so attentive to the all-round welfare of the people that by reason of his educating them, protecting them and providing for their livelihood, he proved to be their real father, the responsibility of the actual parents ceasing with their birth ;<sup>6</sup>

प्रजाना विनयाधानाद् रक्षणाद् भरणादपि  
स पिता पितरस्तासां केवलं जन्महेतवः I. 24

He took taxes from the people only to shower them back, like the Sun, with thousand fold benefits:

प्रजानामेव भूत्यर्थं स ताभ्यो बलिमग्रहीतू  
सहस्रगुणमुत्सृष्टुमादत्ते हि रसं रविः I. 18

The ideal of a welfare state cannot be better presented than in these lines of Kalidasa. The sole monarch and one who had the satisfaction of seeing his subjects pleased with his rule, Dilipa had one sorrow, that of not having a son who could perpetuate his race. The Veda says that man is born on earth with three debts and that he should, before quitting life, discharge all of them: the debt to the gods, to be paid in acts of worship, the debt to the sages or the makers of one's culture, to be paid by making oneself learned in that cultural inheritance and passing it on to the next generation, and the debt to one's ancestors, which is cleared through one's progeny. The discharge of the debt to the sages is the aim of the first stage of one's life when one is a student, Brahmacharin. Dilipa had paid this, having become ripe in knowledge while yet young; without yet a wrinkle or gray hair, he had become an elder in wisdom:

<sup>6</sup> See Manu XI.III-113; YAJNAVALKYA V. 263. Kalidasa's verses on the austerity are close to the words of the texts of the above tow Smriti authorities.

अनाकृष्टस्य विषयैर्विध्यनां पारध्वनः!  
तस्य धर्मरतेरासीद् वृद्धत्वं जरसा विना!!

By piety and sacrifices, he had purified himself and thereby cleared himself before the gods: सोहमिज्याविशुद्धात्मा I. 68. But his days were passing without the cheer of a son. He told his teacher, the Sage Vasishtha, that he was like the mythical *Lokaloka* mountain, half bright and half immersed in darkness. The teacher enlightened the monarch on the cause of this sterility. One day, Dilipa, in his anxiety to join his wife, was hastening home overlooking the venerable divine cow, Kamadhenu, on the way, and failing to pay her his respects; it was that transgression that was now proving an impediment to Dilipa's happiness. As expiation, Dilipa, the teacher said, should, along with his Queen, attend upon Kamadhenu's daughter, Nandini, for twenty- one days. Dilipa and Sudakshina lived in the hermitage, and keeping themselves pure in mind and body, observing austerities, worshipped the cow Nandini. The worship took the form of an expiatory austerity enjoined by the Smritis according to which one who had committed an offence against a cow tended a cow and attended upon it for a period, closely following it, stopping when it stopped, moving when it moved, drinking water only when it did and protecting it from all difficulties and dangers. The austerity, Dilipa observed for twenty-one days. Then, on day, Nandini suddenly tested the King's sense of duty anxiety to protect her, heroism and respect for his teacher. The divine cow created an illusory lion by her side threatening to devour her. The lion revealed itself as being divine and defied the King's strength, benumbed his hands, met his arguments, tried to dissuade him from his effort to save the cow and tested the King's greatness in man' ways. When the noble King was ready to lay down hi life for the cow, the lion called him a fool for renouncing; the pleasures of kingly life for a cow, thousands of which he could present to his teacher :<sup>7</sup>

एकातपत्रं जगतः प्रभुत्वं नवं वयः कान्तमिदं वपुश्च!  
अल्पस्य हेतोः बहु हातुमिच्छन् विचारमूढः प्रतिभासि मे त्वम्!!

II. 47.

Dilipa replied that as an obedient pupil, first, he should protect the teacher's cow, and as a Kshatriya. His fair name was in danger if he could not protect a poor animal entrusted to his attention. Resolute in buying the life of the cow with his own he told the lion "If you care for me, think of my unsullied fame, not this perishing body," and laid down his body. But lo ! the illusion was withdrawn and before him the King saw no lion, but only the divine cow looking verily like his mother:

ददर्श राजा जननीमिव स्वां गामग्रतः प्रस्त्रविणौ न सिंहम्!!

I. 61.

The divine cow blessed him and the King and Queen returned to the capital. Queen Sudakshina appeared to Dilipa wonderful with the intimations of the child in her womb. The great son was born under the most auspicious stare and Nature herself was enraptured at his appearance; for the birth of one such is for the weal of the world:

<sup>7</sup> Abhinavabharati on the Natya Sastra, Gaekwad Edition. Vol. I.p.308.

अत एव सुकविना वाक्यमेदेनापि मरणं नाख्यातम् ! \*\*\* विभावानुभावसंधानं दर्शितम् ! \*\*\* पुनर्ग्रहणेन स एवार्थः सुतरां द्योतितः !!

दिशः प्रसेदुः मरुतो ववुः सुखाः प्रदक्षिणार्चिः हविरग्निराददे!  
बभूव सर्वं शुभशंसि तत्क्षणं भवो हि लोकाभ्युदयाय तादृशाम्!!

III.14.

Kalidasa has described the birth and childhood of Raghu inimitably. As the King drank in with steady gaze the charming face of the son, joy billowed forth and he could not contain himself:

निवातपद्मस्तिमितेन चक्षुषा नृपस्य पिबतः सुताननम्!  
महोदधेः पूर इवेन्दुदर्शनात् गुरुः प्रहर्षः प्रबभूव नात्मनि!!

As he took the child on his lap, and at the child's touch his eyes closed, he felt as if the ambrosia of joy was being poured into him, and after a long time, he realized what bliss there was in touching one's son.

तदङ्गमारोप्य शरीरयोगजैः सुखैर्निषिञ्चन्तमिवामृतं त्वचि!  
उपान्तसंमीलितलोचनो नृपः चिरात्सुतस्पर्शरसज्ञतां ययौ!!

Now Dilipa's heart was at rest; he could entrust his kingdom to his son and retire to the forest to cultivate peace of soul. Raghu was then installed as Yuvaraj. The heroic son helped his father to perform great sacrifices and when Dilipa had become old, in keeping with the practice of the race and of the sacred injunctions, content and clear of all worldly attachment, Dilipa handed over the kingly duty to Raghu and retired to the forest. Thus his life reached the ideal described in the Smritis, of true love and married life finding its fulfilment in the joy of the son who is the love of the hearts of the husband and wife reincarnate in flesh and blood. Says the Veda "By the child it is that man becomes complete and full: प्रजया हि मनुष्यः पूर्णः

## II. RAGHU:

Raghu was perhaps, next to Rama, the greatest figure of this race. If we analyze the names by which Rama is known in the epic of Valmiki, we find that, next to the sweet name Rama, the most frequent appellation is 'Raghava', 'one descended from Raghu.' By naming his epic *Raghuvamsa* after this hero, Kalidasa underlines the importance he attaches to Raghu's personality in the history of the solar race.

As a boy Raghu had fought and conquered Indra himself. As a King he conquered the then known world and again gave away as gifts everything he had conquered. Of the private life of this hero, we hear little. There is a single verse in Canto III referring to his marriage but his life and its principal events were public. When the third canto ends and the fourth begins, we hear of the glorious rule of Raghu and of his great prowess which brought under his rule the whole country from the Himalayas to Tamraparni and from Assam to Persia. The great King went out on his expeditions for fame and not to deprive any ruler of his kingdom:<sup>8</sup> श्रियं महेन्द्रनाथस्थ जहार न तु मेदिनीम् at the very outset, the poet says this about his heroes that they conquered only for fame: यशसे विजिगीषूणाम्! I. 7-

At the end of his conquests, Raghu performed the sacrifice Visvajit or "the world-conquest," in which the King was to give away everything that he possessed and demonstrate his heart being completely free from avarice or possessiveness. Setting forth the ideals of the heroes of his epic, Kalidasa says at the opening of this poem that his heroes

<sup>8</sup> I have brought out this inner meaning of the *Kumarasambhava* in an one-Act Sanskrit play of mine entitled *Kama-suddhi*.

gathered riches to give them away त्यागाय संभृतार्थनाम्! D.7. and when describing Raghu himself, the poet says: Like the clouds the great ones take, only to give back:

आदानं हि विसर्गाय सतां वारिमुचामिव

This, Raghu did and when he had nothing more than a mud vessel, his munificence was tried by a Sage who wanted Raghu to give him a large sum of money to be paid as fees to his teacher. Seeing Raghu offer him water in a mud pot, the visitor, Kautsa, wanted to go away to another King, but Raghu said: 'Let not that calumny touch me for the first time that an eminent scholar came to Raghu in search of great riches, could not attain his desire and had to go to another donor.'

गुर्वर्थमर्थि श्रुतपारछश्वा रघोः सकाशादनवाप्य कामम्

गतो वदान्यान्तरमित्ययं मे मा भुत्परीवादनवावतारः

V. 27.

I Would like to draw your attention to the overtones of this verse of Kalidasa in which by the double-meanings of some of the expressions, the poet is telling us what high value he attaches to this poem of his. In Indian studies, the *Raghuvamsa* was a classic for beginners as well as those ripe in knowledge. Kalidasa seems to say in this verse : Let not that insult come upon me for the first time that an eminent scholar came to my poem *Raghuvamsa* with the object of getting great ideas, and ungratified, had to resort to some one else more eloquent.<sup>9</sup>

Raghu therefore insisted that the Brahman supplicant Kautsa should wait and take the money from him alone. Raghu thought of Kubera but ere he had any need of using force, Kubera had showered riches in the palace of Raghu. Raghu called Kautsa and asked him to take away all that wealth; Kautsa, mark this, replied: I want only fourteen crores to be paid for the fourteen branches of learning have imbibed from my teacher; I want not a penny more of this. Who was the greater greedless of these two, the King who would not have anything of that wealth which had been called forth for the Brahman's sake or th Brahman who would have nothing more than just what needed to pay off his teacher? The wonderful pair o donor and donee were, for a time, a sight for the entire city:

जनस्य साकेतनिवासिनस्तौ द्वावप्यभूतामभिनन्द्यसत्त्वौ

गुरुप्रदेयाधिकनिस्पृहोर्था नृपोर्थिकामादधिकप्रदश्च

Kautsa blessed Raghu that a worthy son should b< born to him and took leave of him; and soon Aja was born, one more flame lit by the same Solar fire: प्रवर्धितो दीप इव प्रदीपात्!

V. 37. Raghu got Aja married to Indumati and soon installed him on the throne to enable himself to retire to the forests. But Aja wanted very much that his father should remain in the city. Raghu solved the problem by remaining in a place of seclusion on the outskirts of the city where he lived a Yogin's life, conquered his senses concentrated his mind and attained that which is beyond darkness.

अथ वीक्ष्य रघुः प्रतिष्ठितं प्रकृतिस्वात्मजमात्मवत्तया!

विषयेषु विनाशधर्मसु त्रिदिवस्थेष्वपि निस्पृहोभवत्!! १० !!

रघुरश्रुमुखस्य तस्य तत् कृतवानीप्सितमात्मजप्रियः!

<sup>9</sup> See also my study, "Women Characters in Kalidasa's Dramas." In the Annals of Oriental Research, University of Madras, Vol. IV, Part 2.

न तु सर्प इव त्वंच पुनः प्रतिपेदे अयपवर्जितां श्रियम्!! !!१३!!  
तमसः परमापदव्ययं पुरुषं योगसमाधिना रघु!!

iii. AJA-INDUMATI:

The life of Aja and Indumati is, if we may say so, a romance. They were married by *Svayamvara* or the free choice by the lady of a suitable husband from an assemblage of suitors. Indumati, the Vidarbha Princess, chose Aja of the great solar line as her lord, but the other princes, assembled at the *Svayamvara*, waylaid Aja. Aja fulfilled the hopes of Indumati and acquitted himself well before her by defeating the combined forces of them all. As a ruler, Aja kept up the high traditions of his race; so that people really thought Raghu was still amidst them: VIII. 5. The poet says that the King's attention was so individual that every one among the citizens considered that he was a personal friend of the King:

अहमेव मतो महीपतेरिति सर्वः प्रकृतिष्वचिन्तयत् !

उदधेरिव निम्नगाशतेष्वभवन्नास्य विमानना कचित्!!

VIII. 8.

—an ideal that the modern successors to power, the political leaders, might well cherish in their relationship with their constituencies and voters!

Soon Indumati gave birth to Dasaratha. One day in the pleasure garden, while Aja and Indumati were together, a flower garland fell from above upon Indumati, and strangely, the Queen at once closed her eyes in eternal sleep. Aja was shocked by this sudden calamity and it proved the wreck of his life. From his wailings over the lifeless body of his beloved, we see that Aja was an ardent lover and that the two were completely attached to each other. Indumati was to him more than a wife; she was everything to Aja, filling his time and mind, and serving him in all his activities, public and private, a housewife, a counsellor, a friend, a confidante, and a beloved pupil learning the fine arts :<sup>10</sup>

गृहिणी सचिवः सखी मिथः प्रियशिष्या ललिते कलाविधौ!

VIII.67

And when cruel death took her, his life became completely empty:

करुणाविमुखेन मृत्युना हरता त्वां वद किं न मे हृतम् !

VIII. 67

He was a broken man from this point on and the philosophical message that his teacher sent him failed to get home to his heart heavy with sorrow. The mental break down was followed by a physical breakdown. He placed on the throne his son, Dasaratha, whose victorious chariot had rolled unimpeded in all the ten quarters, and, following a time-honored sacred means of giving up the life on was surfeited with, Aja fell into the holy waters at the confluence of the Ganges and the Sarayu. Here is seen the art of Kalidasa, which makes Aja's life, not a tragedy but a reascent and endless romance in the heavens with his own beloved Indumati, who was a celestial damsel of great beauty, born by a curse as the Vidarbha Princess.

Abhinavagupta, the eminent critic; notes this closing verse of the story of Aja and how, with the same stroke the poet recreates the love over which death has no power.<sup>1</sup> There is no tragedy in the creations of the Sanskrit love poets; the philosophical belief in the immortality

<sup>10</sup> In ancient Indian palace architecture we had pavilions in the midst of water where the King spent the hot part of the day; they were called Samudra-Grihas. Similarly there was the Krida parvata, an artificial hill in the park.

of the Soul and reincarnation gave them the scope and means to show how great love, despite temporary impediments, fulfils itself. The poet Bana works out the idea in his prose romance *Kadambari*, killing his heroes and heroines many times, with a vengeance so to say, and making them united through all their different bodily migrations. Magha sums up the same idea when he says in his poem: One's steady nature, like one's beloved, comes to one in all the births one takes:

सतीव योषित् प्रकृतिः सुनिश्चला पुमांसमभ्येति भवान्तरेष्वपि !

*Sisupalavadha I. 72.*

**iv. DASARATHA :**

We may notice as we pass from Dilipa and Raghu to Aja, a move from the superhuman royal saint or Raja-rsi to the more human type. From Aja to Dasaratha again is a further swing in this direction. Three queens attain prominence in the case of Dasaratha and we are given, for the first time, the play of the feeling of jealousy. We have seen hitherto how Kalidasa emphasizes the idea of the son as the fulfilment of love; and in the story of Dasaratha we see this emphasis receiving a unique predominance, giving us a theme of paternal love unparalleled in the whole field of literature—that of a father dying broken-hearted at separation from his beloved son. Literature has many Ajas, but few Dasarathas.

**v. RAMA AND SITA:**

With Dasaratha, Kalidasa treads on ground covered by his master, Valmiki; without lingering on the story, he touches it here and there, working up at some length only a few stray episodes as, for instance, Dasaratha's hunt during which, by mistake, the King deprives an old couple of their only son, as a result of which he himself faces a similar end, due to separation from his son. For the general background, therefore, of the love of Rama and Sita, we have to go to the picture depicted fully by Valmiki which we should take for granted when studying Kalidasa too. But Kalidasa's greatest canto in the story of Rama is the XIVth in the *Raghuvamsa*, describing Rama as the scrupulous ruler who in his extreme anxiety to please the world and avoid the criticism of the public could suppress his own personality and sacrifice his own pleasure. To silence the gossip of the city slums, which were making uncharitable references to the first lady of the kingdom and her captive life for a time in the city of Havana, Rama decides to abandon his beloved Sita and that at a time when she was in an advanced state of pregnancy. Bhava- bhuti who was obviously under the influence of this part of Kalidasa's poem when he dramatized the later story of Rama makes Rama say: "I would fain sacrifice attachment, compassion, happiness,<sup>11</sup> even my beloved Sita, for

---

<sup>11</sup> Two echoes or parallels of this verse of Kalidasa have been pointed out in English literature; one in Dickens's *Oliver Twist*, Chap. XXX:

"Thus a strain of gentle music, or rippling of water in a silent place, or the odour of a flower, or even the mention of a familiar word, will sometimes call up sudden dim remembrances of scenes that never were in this life, which vanish like a breath, which some brief memory of a happier existence, long gone by, would seem to have awakened—which no voluntary exertion of the mind can ever recall."

And another, less close, appears in Matthew Arnold's poem *The Buried Life*:

Yet still, from time to time, vague and forlorn.  
From the soul's subterranean depth upborne  
As from an infinitely distant land.  
Come airs, and floating echoes and convey  
A melancholy Into all *our* day.

propitiating the world, if it was necessary.” Rama alone could do it. When his stepmother wanted him to give up the kingdom, he did it without the slightest change of colour on his face; now for the sake of the world, he abandoned Sita: समुद्रनेमिं पितुराज्ञयेव ! XIV. 39.

Not that he was not deeply affected, for the gossip, *m* the poet says, fell on his heart like an iron hammer but the fair name of the Ikshvaku race was greater than his own feeling. He called his three brothers and, in a conclusive speech which raised all possible objections and ^ replied to them, he made them mutely receive his dire decision: न कश्चन भ्रातृषु तेषु शक्तो निषेद्धमासीदनुमोदितुं वा ! XIV. 43. One of the utterances here falling from the mouth of Rama may be specially noted, as herein, even as in the verse I referred to earlier in the episode of .Raghu and Kautsa, Kalidasa, with the overtones of the words, seems to appeal to the readers: "If you have hearts which. can melt in pity, do not set aside this canto of mine.”

तदेष सर्गः करुणार्द्रचित्तैः न मे भवद्भिः प्रतिषेधनीयः!

XIV. 42.

Rama chose Lakshmana, the man of tried service, the brother whom Rama had always entrusted with duties extremely delicate and trying. On the behest of his elder, Lakshmana took Sita and left her in the neighborhood of the hermitage of the Sage Valmiki where after a time were born not only the twin progeny of Sita, but also the great epic of the Sage.

Sita first fell unconscious when she heard Rama’s message. On recovering consciousness, she sent a spirited reply which soon assumed the true key of fortitude and resignation which, more than indignation, characterizes ideal Indian womanhood. Rama, on his part, had banished her only from the palace, not from his heart. When Lakshmana returned and reported, Rama could not stop the stream of his tears, and later, when he had to perform a sacrifice in which a wife’s presence was necessary, he went through it with a golden image of Sita by his side. At the hermitage in the forest, the Sage Valmlki, whose placid spirit had been stirred by the episode of Sita's banishment, brooded over the life of Rama and Sita and produced his epic poem on their great story. He taught it to the twin sons of Sita and asked them to go about singing the epic to the music of Vina. Rama heard of the sweet recital and. the moving narrative, called the boys, and through them, later, came Valmlki and Sita too. As Sita came, says the poet, clad in orange, her eyes rivetted on her feet, her very composed appearance proclaimed her purity kalidasa has then a highly suggestive verse: The people of the city, unable to lift their faces or turn their eyes towards her, stood with heads bent down, like crops laden with their fruits:

जनास्तदालोकपथात् प्रतिसंहृतचक्षुषः !

तस्थुस्तेऽवाङ्मुखास्सर्वे फ्रलिता इव शालयः !!

xv. 78.

In a single act of truth, Sita not only proved her chastity but removed herself into the bosom of Mother Earth. Like her mother, she too had been an embodiment of all-bearing endurance (*sarvamsaha*). Sita and Rama alike, incarnations of supreme Divinity as we believe, submitted themselves to this repeated suffering so that this harsh and cruel world might reform itself and become compassionate, considerate and humble. The greatest virtue according to Rama’s own teachings, says Sita herself in the *Ramayana*, is benevolence or *anrsamsya*, which, according to the *Bhagavata* also, constitutes the teaching of the *Ramayana*.

#### vi. THE OTHER KINGS:

The succeeding kings of the solar race are then described by Kalidasa, a few at some length, for example, Kusa and Atithi, Rama's immediate successors, and the rest in a rapid

sweep. Many of these lived noble lives were great in knowledge and in sense of kingly duty and retired to the forests in their old age. One became the pupil of the Sage Jaimini and another attained communion with the Godhead. Three of these may be noticed here: Pariyatra, Sudarsana and Agnivarna.<sup>12</sup>

King Pariyatra laid the burden of the State early on the shoulders of his young son and gave himself up to pleasure. For the duties of the State are a hindrance to enjoyment:

तमात्मसंपन्नमनिन्दितात्मा कृत्वा युवांन युवराजमेव !  
सुखानि सोऽभुक्त सुखोपरोधि वृत्तं हि राजमुपरुद्धवृत्तम् !!  
तं रागबन्धिष्ववितृप्तमेव भोगेषु सौभाग्यविशेषभोग्यम् !  
विलासिनीनामरतिक्षमापि जरा वृथामत्सरिणी जहार !!

XVIII. 18, 19.

Kalidasa's description of this Pariyatra is significant as a foreboding, as a prelude to the description of Agnivarna.

SudarSana, who followed, ruled in exemplary manner but could not restore the race permanently. The analogy of the last spurt of a dying flame will not fail to occur to us when we read Kalidasa's special description of Sudar^ana and his virtues. When he became a recluse and retired into the holy NaimiSa Forest to do penance and gather soul- power, he left in his place on the throne his son Agnivarna. Agnivarna, who was an *Abhika*, a highly passionate type, left the secure kingdom to the care of his Ministers and himself to dance, music and women:

लब्धपालनविधौ न तत्सुतः खेदमाप गुरुणा हि मेदिनी !  
भोक्तुमेव भुजनिर्जितद्विषा न प्रसाधयितुमस्य कल्पिता !!  
सोधिकारमभिकः कुलोचितं काश्वन खयमवर्तयत्समाः!  
सन्निवेश्य सचिवेष्वतः परं स्त्रीविधेयनवयौवनोभवत्!!

XIX. 3,4

He became the slave of women and not one moment could he spend without some sensuous pastime; day or night, he never left the private apartments and if the Ministers pressed that the subjects were eager to sight of him, he just put his foot out of the window!<sup>13</sup>

इन्द्रियार्थपरिशून्यमक्षमः सोढुमेकमपि स क्षणान्तरम्!ल्  
अन्तरेव विहरन्दिवानिशं न व्यपैक्षत समुत्सुकाः प्रजाः !!

<sup>12</sup> In Tamil I have worked out this and some other episodes into a sequence of scenes called 'The Deer.'

<sup>13</sup> See Lascelles Abercrombie : Theory of Poetry : p. 31. { 1926 edition. Martin Secker, London.)

"Inspired realization of this kind is perhaps the commonest, as it is also perhaps the most useful, of the workings of genius in poetry. There is a fine example in the beautiful Indian drama; the chariot of the god Indra driving through heaven passes over a cloud, and at once the wetted rims of the wheels begin to spin moisture off in sparkling showers. Of course! That is just what would happen. Keats has the very same thing in Endymion-but he may have looked into Sir William Jones's version of Kalidasa:

" A silver car, air borne

Whose silent wheels, fresh wet from clouds of morn, spun off a drizzling dew.

गौरवाध्यदपि जातु मन्त्रिणां दर्शनं प्रकृतिकांक्षितं ददौ !  
तन्द्रवाक्षविवरावलम्बिना केवलेन चरणेन कल्पितम् !!

Lust was consuming him like fire, and from the harem to the artistes and from them to the servants, his attentions spread. He kept awake all night and slept during the day:

अन्वभूत्परिजनाङ्गनारतं सोवरोधमयवेपथूत्तरम् !  
रात्रिजागरपरो दिवाशयः !!

XIX. 23. XIX. 34.

Thus was his life speeding to ruin, and Kalidasa has chosen here the galloping metre RathoddhatS. in which we seem to feel the great race running itself out. The wasting disease that he caught reduced him fast. He was beyond the warning of doctors, for the senses allowed to run wild could hardly be turned back:

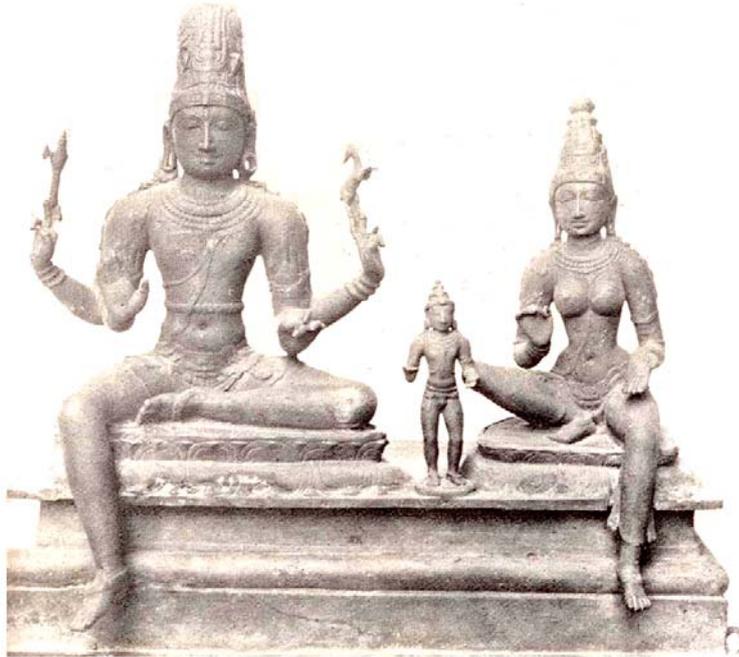
दृष्टदोषमपि तं न सोत्यजत् संगवस्तु भिषजामनाश्रवः !  
स्वादुभिस्तु विषयैर्हतस्ततो दुःखमिन्द्रियगणो निवार्यते!!

XIX. 49.

Kalidasa has an important verse here! The great race of Raghu and Rama, he says, now looked like the sky with the moon in its last digit, like the pond in summer dried to its mire, like the lamp reduced to the last flicker!

व्योम पश्चमकलास्थितेन्दु वा पडकशेषमिव घर्मपल्वलाम् !  
राज्ञि तल्लकुलमभूत्क्षयातुरे वामनार्चिरिव दीपभाजनम्!!

The poet, however, does not end the epic with the cremation of Agnivarna, which the Ministers, under pretext of treating him, did in the palace garden itself. In the last lines, the poet introduces a ray of hope. As we take leave of the epic, we have on the blank horizon the silhouette of one of the pregnant queens of the late King and the child in her womb is seen like the first digit of the re nascent moon.



SOMASKANDA

Siva Skanda Parvati

Cola Bronze from Nidur, Tanjore District, c. 1100.

*Courtesy:* Government Museum, Madras.

Of Kalidasa's philosophy of the love of man and woman finding its fulfillment in the child, the symbol of their united hearts, one cannot think of a more inspiring representation than the image of Siva as Somaskanda, the Trinity of Father, Mother and Son. In fact, the image of Kumara was, as much as that of Ardhanarisvara, constantly present before the poet's mind.

## THE KUMARASAMBHAVA

## CONTENTS

The springs and ends of human activity are given by Hindu sages as four: *Dharma* (Righteousness or Virtue), *Artha* (Material welfare), *Kama* (Emotional gratification or Desire) and *Moksha* (Spiritual salvation). The first and the last go together, the former being the means and the latter the end. The two in the middle constitute life as it functions for the great majority of us. Hinduism does not forbid the pursuit of profit or pleasure. The poet Nilakantha Dikshita says in his poem *Santi-vilasa* or the "Play of Tranquility". "Nobody says no to your enjoying the pleasures of this world; but what the sages say is that there shall be a way and a limit, a *niyama*, a rule or control, in enjoying them/' *Artha* and *Kama* shall not run like a wild flood causing all-round havoc. *Dharma* and *Moksha* shall be the banks within which the current of *Artha* and *Kama* shall be controlled. When pleasure is thus under the reign of *Dharma*, it is sublimated and spiritualized, and becomes acceptable. The Hindu ideal is then the sublimation and acceptance of love, not the running away from it; and the contrast between these two is seen most pointedly in the *Kumarasambhava* of Kalidasa on the one hand, and the *Buddhacharita* of the Buddhist poet Asvaghosha on the other.

Kalidasa has depicted a variety of love-types in his poems and plays; burning passion, love and sublime love fulfilling itself in joy in the child. Kalidasa has portrayed in his other works man, superman and demi-god in love. In the *Kumarasambhava*, he shows us the Supreme God Himself in love; it is the poem in which love or *Kama* is himself a leading character.<sup>14</sup>

The *Kumarasambhava* is the love-story of the prime couple of the universe, Siva and Parvati in the image of whose love should all love on earth be modeled. The goddess Dakshayani had been insulted by her father, Daksha, who had refused to invite her lord, the God Siva, to a sacrifice he was performing. So, by the power of Yoga, she gave up her body as Dakshayani and appeared as Parvati, the daughter of Mount Himavan, to be in a nobler body to be wedded again to her eternal lord, Siva (I. 21). Immediately as the Goddess left her body as Dakshayani, Siva took to continence and penance (I. 53). Though He was the object of all penance, Himself the Lord who grants the fruits of others' penance, Siva performed austerities: खर्यं विधाता तपसः फ़लानां केनापि कामेन तपश्चचार ! I- 57- Even God yearned, *so atapyata*, as the Upanishad would say; He yearned for the Goddess.

The Goddess, who had reappeared as the young daughter of Himavan, the king of the mountains, wanted to marry Siva only. The father asked his daughter to go and serve Lord Siva who was at that time doing penance on one of the Himalayan slopes. Parvati accordingly attended upon Siva daily and her presence and movements were no hindrance to that Yogin of Yogins; for such is great self-control that it is not lost even in the face of great temptations:

<sup>14</sup> It is such. "Sarva-damanaa" (those of supreme self-possession) that can later become 'Bharatas' (bearers of great burdens—cf. the poet's words— भरत इति लोकस्य मरणात् Sak. VII. 33).

प्रत्यर्थिभूतामपि तां समाधेः शुश्रूषमाणां गिरिशोऽनुमेने !  
विकारहेतौ सति विक्रियन्ते येषां न चेतांसि त एव धीराः !!

I. 59.

Meantime, as the Lord was engrossed in Self-contemplation, the world-order was facing rude disturbance; the gods or Devas, the guardians of the world, had been overcome by the demon Taraka; one of those periodical reigns of terror was in full swing, the oppressed divinities waited upon their head, Brahma, who told them that there was none who could quell the demon except the God Siva or a part of that God's own effulgence in the form of a son of His, He added they would try to unite in wedlock with *Uma* (Parvati) the heart of Siva which was then bound in austerities. Then there could be born of that great union a hero who would command their forces and vanquish Taraka.

Indra, the king of these divinities, in keeping with his nature as the lord of the heavenly pleasure-world of Svarga, thought that to tempt Siva was the only way of achieving his object. Of those numberless divinities under his command was the rather important figure, the god of love, Kama. Whenever some saint was performing penance and his austerity had to be tried, Indra always sent Kama, or his emissaries to disturb the concentration of the sage. So, now, Indra thought of his usual expedient and called Kama to his aid. He did not realize that Siva was the Yogin of Yogins and that his austerities had not been disturbed even by the daily presence of Parvati in front of Him. Indra was proud of having by his side such a powerful weapon as Kama. He took Siva too to be one of the many sages, Visvamitra and the like, whose penance he had broken in the past with his aid for he called Kama to his side and said: "Friend, two are my weapons, my own thunderbolt and yourself; my thunderbolt is, however, powerless over those who are great with the power of penance, but you are my omnipotent weapon of victory:<sup>15</sup>

सर्वं सखे त्वय्युपपन्नमेतद् उभे ममास्त्रे कुलिशं भवांश्च !  
वज्रं तपोवीर्यमहत्सु कुण्ठं त्वं सर्वतोगामि च साधकं नः !!

III.12.

As Indra praised Kama thus, Kama felt elated; he thought he had been entrusted with a great task and that he was going to achieve a great thing. He imagined he could add Siva too to his list of victims and slaves and, even before Indra described to him the actual mission, he began to brag that he could achieve anything: "Command me. Is there anything in the world which you want to have done? Who has tried to aspire to your station by virtue of his long and severe austerities? I will make him submit to the power of my bow. Which man is seeking the path of liberation against your wish? I will keep him bound in the net of the glances of beautiful women. Tell me your foe. I will swell like a flood and shatter the two banks of his material welfare and righteous conduct. Which chaste woman do you long for? I will make her shed her shame, run to you and herself clasp you in her arms. Which beloved of yours have you wronged? Which beloved of yours is cross? I will throw her on the bed of suffering and make her repent. Let your thunderbolt rest; I will make your fiercest foe shudder before the angry quiver of ladies' lips. Though my arms are but flowers and my army but the spring, I will make the mighty Siva Himself lose his firmness. Which archer shall equal me?" (III. 3-10).

Such was the Kama whom Indra called as his aid against Siva, Kama at his worst, enemy of virtue and welfare (*Dharma* and *Artha*), Kama who would spoil chastity, Kama who was vile passion. It was on such a Kama that Indra counted. Kama started with his friend, the Spring season, Vasanta. But Rati, or joy personified as the wife of Desire, Kama, was afraid

<sup>15</sup> Cf. the identical expression in Shakespeare's sonnet: "This was to be new made when thou art old."

and was following her lord only at a distance, despairing of his success: रत्या च साशंकमनुप्रयातः (III. 23). Look at this masterly stroke of the poet here! How can such a Kama and Rati go together ?

The rash Kama entered the penance-grove of Siva, where extreme austerity and self-control had long been reigning. Spring went in advance, preparing the way by throwing the whole forest into festive colour and sound. Trees and creepers sprouted, bloomed and clasped each other; birds cooed and mated; when Kama entered the grove close upon his friend the Spring, there was an outburst of amorous activity all around. The Kinnara couples who were till then singing the praises of the God Siva now embraced and kissed. Even the attendants of Siva, the Ganas, began to show the effects of Kama. But there were two in that grove who were proof against this disturbing intruder: At the gate of Siva's hermitage stood the awe-inspiring figure of Nandin; he noted the Ganas lapsing into levity, raised his finger and cried halt to their fickleness, *capala*. At once the whole grove became as motionless as a picture. Kama felt rebuffed, hid himself from Nandin's sight and stealthily approached Siva from another side. And lo! Kama saw the Lord there sitting with closed eyes, senses shut in *Samadhi*, still like a rainless cloud, still like a waveless ocean, still like an unflickering flame:

अवृष्टिसंभमिवांबुवाहम् अपामिवाधारमनुत्तरङ्गम् !  
अन्तश्चराणां मरुतां निरोधन्निवातनिष्कम्पमिव प्रदीपम् !! III. 48.

Kama only saw him, but noticed not that, without his knowing, his arrow and bow had slipped down!

स्मरस्तथाभूतमयुगमनेत्रं पश्यन्नदूरात्मनसाप्यधृष्यम् !  
नालक्षयत्साध्वससन्नहस्तः स्त्रस्तं शरं चापमपि खहस्तात् !! III.51.

When thus Kama stood there, with his powers almost extinguished, there appeared on the scene, as if kindling up into a blaze the embers of his valour, the resplendent figure of Parvati. That day, Parvati was unusually arrayed. She was austere attending upon Siva who was doing penance; but now when the spring had suddenly thrown the whole forest into a festival of flowers, Parvati had decked herself with flowers of every colour. Kama saw Parvati, turned back to look at his own wife, the model of all womanly beauty, but found that Parvati's surpassing beauty put to shame that of his own wife. In Parvati then Kama found an additional weapon on coming by which he regained his strength and assured himself of success even against that Lord of Yogins, Siva:

तां वीक्ष्य सर्वावयवानवद्वां स्तेरपि ह्रीपदमादधानाम् !  
जितेन्द्रिये शूलिनि पुष्पचापः स्वकार्यसिद्धिं पुनराशशंसे !!

As Parvati approached Siva for service, as usual, Siva just woke up from his trance; and as Parvati neared Siva with her offerings, Kama placed his arrow called *sam-mohana*, the Infatuating, on his bow to shoot at the two. The eyes of Siva and Parvati met in an unusual manner; Hara, the indomitable Yogin, seemed to have lost His firmness for a while and Parvati turned and took a bewitching profile pose:

हरस्तु किञ्चित्परिलुप्तधैर्यः चन्द्रौदयारम्भ इवम्बुराशिः !  
उमामुखे बिम्बफ़लाधरोष्ठे व्यापारयामास विलोचनानि !  
विवृण्वती शैलसुतापि भावमङ्गैः स्फुरह्वालकदम्बकल्पैः!

साचिकृता चारुतरेण तस्तौ मुखेन पर्यस्तविलोचनेन !!

III.67.8.

But before Kama discharged his arrow, Siva became aware of the change, controlled his senses, and cast His eyes around to find the cause of the disturbance. His eyes caught Kama in action and instantaneously, fire flashed forth from the third eye of the Lord, and in that fire, Kama was reduced to ashes. Wishing to avoid even the proximity of women, Siva at once left that place and repaired to another part of the mountain to continue His penance:

तमाशु विघ्नं तपसस्तपस्वी वनस्पतिं वज्र इवावभज्य !  
स्त्रीसन्निकर्ष परिहर्तुमिच्छन् अन्तर्दधे भूतपतिः सभूतः !!

Now, to the story of Kama and his spouse, Rati. Widowed, Rati began to weep bitterly. She thought Love was at an end in the world and that there was no purpose in her living independent of her lord, Kama. This incident had significantly burnt Kama and allowed Rati to live. She wanted to follow her lord but a heavenly voice assured her of reunion and asked her not to give up her life. The same voice explained why her lord, Kama, had perished in the fire of dispassion and penance. The Kama that had been burnt was the servant of Indra and the enemy of *Dharma* and *Artha*, and of chastity. The voice told Rati of the episode of the ignoble incest to which that Kama had of yore tempted Prajapati and for which he had been cursed to perish in that manner:

Meantime, with all her hopes reduced to ashes, Parvati returned home. Her beauty, her adornment, all that was of no avail; they could not capture Siva. Parvati thought that her physical beauty was futile:

व्यर्थं समर्थ्यं ललितं वपुरात्मनश्च !

III.75.

She began to hate her beauty:

निनिन्द रूपं हृदयेन पार्वती प्रियेषु सौभाग्यफ़ला हि चारुता !

But she loved none except Siva, deemed none else a worthy husband and was resolute on winning him. She decided to win Him through the same penance that He was performing:

इयेष सा कर्तुमवन्ध्यरूपतां समाधिमास्थाय तपोभिरात्मनः !

She laid aside her beauty and sought penance as the sole means. How can such love—*Prema*, not *Kama*, is the word used by the poet here—and such a husband be attained by any other means?

अवाप्यते वा कथमन्यथा द्वयं तथाविधं प्रेम पतिश्च ताहशः !

Kama and physical attraction alike are now extinct, but the heart of Parvati is still yearning. This is symbolized in Rati surviving and Parvati doing penance. Parvati's mother tried to dissuade her, urging that terrible things like penance were not for delicate ones like Parvati. But the course of water could be turned back, not Parvati's resolve (V. 5). Parvati performed severe penance throughout the year, standing amidst fires in the hot summer and neck-deep in freezing water in the cold of winter, such penance as men and sages had never performed (V. 29).

One day a Brahmacharin, a young unmarried Brahman, arrived at Parvati's hermitage and enquired as to the purpose of her penance. He could not understand a woman doing penance, much less the daughter of the king of mountains who could command anything; if

she was doing that for gaining a husband, it was unnecessary, for such beauty was courted and it never went abegging:

न रत्नमन्विष्यति मृग्यते हि तत् !

Parvati was in austerities and could not talk; so her companion spoke on her behalf; she told the Brahma charin the story of Uma, of her great love for Siva, of the futility of her physical beauty of the burning of Kama, and of her betaking herself to penance as the most efficacious means of attaining Siva. Parvati had no other object in view, neither *Kama* nor *Artha*; *Dharma* alone was there in her: अनेन धर्मः सविशेषमद् मे त्रिवर्गसारः! V.38.

Parvati confirmed her friend's account with a few dignified words. But the learned Brahman ridiculed the idea; commanding all his satire, he depicted Siva as the very image of oddity and inauspiciousness and dissuaded her from that dogged attachment for such an unworthy object, *Avastu-nirbandha*.

Parvati replied in a masterly manner that the conduct of the great OIKS was not of this world; it was out of the way and its causes were inscrutable; but fools, unable to understand them, laughed at them and abused them:

अलोकसामान्यमचिन्त्यहेतुकं द्विषन्ति मन्दाश्चरितं महात्मनाम् ! V.75.

She began to have poor respect for that flippancy and as he looked unsatisfied and still anxious to speak, she said "Well, let Siva be as you depict Him; I love Him, and love is blind." She could not stand any more of the ridiculing of her lord and wanted to leave that place.

As she lifted one foot to go, someone held her; she turned and lo 1 she saw the very object of her penance, Lord Siva, with a smile playing on His face, out of the guise in which He had come to test her. The first test had been over long ago when Siva burnt Kama, rendered her humble- *अवनताङ्गि* -and put her to penance. Now again He tested her and found her all the more absorbed in Him self. He told her "Verily, you have bought me by your penances' the suggestion of humility in the expression '*Avanatangi*' with which Siva addresses her now may be noted:

अद् प्रभृत्यवनताङ्गि तवास्मि दासः !  
क्रीतस्तपोभिरिति वादिनि चन्द्रमौलौ !! V.86.

As a later poet summed it up: Each got the other as the fruit of each other's penance, these prime parents of the world, the first husband and wife:

परस्परतपः संपत्फलायितपरस्परौ !  
प्रपंचमातापितरौ प्राञ्चौ जायापती स्तुमः!!

Now that a soul-union had been achieved through penance, the wish of Rati was fulfilled and Siva allowed Kama to come back to life and do his work. For now Kama had been made *Ananga*—non-physical, spiritual, sublime.

Indra had been taught well. Brahma had asked him to try to unite Siva with *UMA* (II. 54). Uma, as Kalidasa says, is the name of Parvati as one engrossed in penance (I. 26) and we may also remind ourselves in this connection of the reference to this Goddess with the name Uma in the Upanishad as the embodiment of spiritual knowledge.

## THE THREE DRAMAS

### INTRODUCTORY

We shall now take up one after another the three dramas of Kalidasa, the *Malavikagnimitra*, the *Vikramorvasiya* and the *Abhijnanasakuntala*. When judging the kings who figure as heroes in these dramas, we have to go by the norms which the poet himself, the material and its historical background furnish us. The kings had a harem which was part of the ancient royal paraphernalia and polygamy was the prevailing custom, though the high ideal of devotion to a single wife, *Ekatani-vrata*, as in the case of Rama, was held in highest esteem. These kings were all the same exemplars of virtue, in fact royal sages, *Raja-rsis* as they were referred to. Kalidasa makes Dushyanta, the hero of the *Sakuntala*, speak of himself as a noble soul, one whose conscience was a sure guide as regards right and wrong conduct. By the constant practice of *dharma*, their natures had become so attuned to the code of righteous conduct that they could appeal to their self-satisfaction— *Atmatashti*, as a proper authority; echoing Manu and the lawgivers, it is Dushyanta in Kalidasa's play that says: In matters of doubt, for the great and good men, the *Sat*, what their heart felt was correct:

सतां हि संदेहपदेषु वस्तुषु प्रमाणमन्तःकरणप्रवृत्तयः!

This observation is, as I said at the beginning of these lectures, quoted as an authoritative pronouncement by the philosopher Kumarila. This is true of Pururavas too, the hero of the *Vikramorvasiya*. Agnimitra, though not one of the celebrated monarchs of mythology, but a historical King, was born to the same tradition and court life. It is through this multiplicity of women that the impediments to the course of love, which are necessary not only to develop the plot but to refine and stabilize love it, are worked out by the poet in his plays. In the *Vikramorvasiya*, the poet says that love is made to grow a hundredfold in intensity by obstacles to its realisation, even as the current of a river mocked on its way fey uneven rocks:

नद्वा इव प्रवाहः विषमशिलासंकटस्खलितवेगः !

विघ्नितसमागमसुखो मनसि शयः शतगुणी भवति !!

III.8

### CONTENTS

## THE MALAVIKAGNIMITRA

In the *Malavikagnimitra* Kalidasa gives us a play with a well constructed plot, with charming motifs worked in, like the dance and the *Dohadapurana*. In Sanskrit literature you have the belief that certain flower-bearing trees long for the attention of beautiful women; they are somewhat tardy in putting forth their seasonal blossoms, but when ladies embrace them or administer a kick with their specially decorated soft foot or spit on them a mouthful of wine, they burst into blossoms. This forms one of the important motifs employed in the play.

In the story, we have the King with his chief Queen Dharini, his erstwhile sweetheart Iravati and Malavika the heroine of the play. Malavika. Is a Vidarbha Princess sent to King Agnimitra the hem, but an accident befalls the party on the way; she is picked up by the guardian of the forest-outpost of the King and sent to the Queen to join her retinue as an artiste. There Malavika. is being trained in the dance. It is in a picture of the Queen is all her company that the King first sees this newcomer and begins to feel strongly attracted to her. Before Malavika came on the scene, the King had found in Iravati one, like her in the Queen's retinue and accomplished in music and the dance, and had taken her as his beloved, Dharini, the chief Queen, has to witness this transfer of the King's love from herself to

Iravati and from Iravati to Malavika. The King, in such a theme, belongs according to the classification of the types of lovers in the rhetoric of love, to the class called the *Daksina* or the considerate or courteous or polite one, who observes all decorum and endeavours his utmost not to offend his senior Queen or his earlier beloved

On Dharini sits all the dignity of the chief Queen. She bears the significant name of "one who bears everything." In a play of this kind, the type represented by Dharini easily rises above the rest in dignity and moral stature. In the *Ramayana* we have Kausalya and in the other play of Kalidasa himself, the *Vikramorvasiya*, we meet the type again in Queen Ausinari, the daughter of the King of Banaras. These embody the ideal of the *Pativrata* and place the happiness of their lords above all else, what' ever the sacrifice they may be required to make for this. The learned matron Parivrajika in the present play observes of Queen Dharini: "These noble women, so much attached to their lords, serve them even though it .be against their own happiness."

प्रतिकूलेनापि पतिं सेवन्ते भर्तृवत्सलाः साध्यः !

V.19

To begin with, as one sensible of the high dignity attaching to the King, Dharini tries to prevent the further development of the King's love for one in her own retinue. When the King enquires who the new girl is, she keeps contemptuously silent. When the clown contrives a quarrel between the rival dancing-teachers of the court and arranges to bring Malavika for a display of her dancing before the King, it does not take the Queen long to see through the whole thing. With withering satire, she observes: "This efficiency deserves a better purpose; it would indeed be good if shown in state-matters."

यदि राजकार्येष्वपि ईद्दशी उपायनिपुणतार्यन्नस्य ततः शोभनं भवेत् !

She feels quite exasperated and remarks of the way the King is flouting all decorum: अहो अविनय आर्यपुत्रस्य ! But, in the end, she herself presents the King with Malavika, and when the real identity of Malavika as the Vidarbha Princess is revealed, she feels sorry for having put fragrant sandalwood to unbecoming use; she begs to be excused for having kept her in confinement and bestows on her the status of a Queen.

Iravati, the quondam sweetheart of the King is, compared to Dharini, more human. She has no complete counterpart in the other plays of Kalidasa. Perhaps, we have an echo of her in Hamsapadika whose plaintive song we hear from behind the curtain at the opening of the fifth act of the *Sakuntala*. In Iravati, intensely a woman, jealousy, anger, active interference and sarcasm are all very well portrayed. Having been completely surpassed by one of such superior endowments as Malavika, she has eventually to resign herself to contentment but not without letting fall her bitter verdict: "Ah! These men, untrustworthy by nature ! We, like innocent deer duped by the music of the hunter, fall prey to their words of deceit and do not understand!"

अहो अविश्वसनीयाः पुरुषाः! आत्मनो वञ्चनावचनं प्रमाणीकृत्या-क्षिप्तया व्याधजनगृहीतचित्तयेव  
हरिण्या एतन्न विज्ञातं मया !

III.19/20.

It may be that against this background, it is difficult for us to appreciate the love of Agnimitra and Malavika. There is obviously no high ideal of love that the poet intends to depict in this play, but it may be borne in mind that in all such cases, the love in the leading theme has to be deemed a love higher than any to which, before meeting the present heroine, the hero had risen. It stands to reason that though not new to love, these heroes find in the new love U which they are depicted in the play a completeness which they had not been able to realize before they met these heroines. It is the hero of this play, King Agni- mitra,

who makes this declaration of the nature of true love/ "To me there is no joy in that union that comes to two who are not most anxiously yearning for each other; and when the two are of equally intense love, but have no hope of coming together, I would prefer even their lives to perish."

अनातुरोत्कण्ठितयोः प्रसिद्धयता समागमेनापि रतिर्न मां प्रति !  
परस्परप्राप्तिनिराशयोर्वरं शरीरनाशोऽपि समानुरागयोः !!

III.15.

In *Malavika*, Kalidasa has drawn an exquisite picture of one who is not only naturally beautiful but whose Personality has gained the embellishment of accomplishments in the arts. In her, the King says, Cupid has a row dipped in poison. When the King first saw her in the picture, he thought the painter had drawn an ideal figure, but when he saw her in person, he thought the artist had been lacking in concentration, *i.e.*, the portrait did not come up to her real beauty.

In the art of dance, her teacher says: By improving upon whatever I teach, she appears to reimpair the lessons to me; and when she finishes the display of the dance and stands for a moment for the gaze of the King, her still pose is more charming than those of her movements in the dance.

The clown, ceaselessly planning to advance the love of Malavika and the King, contrives a fall for the Queen from the swing, rendering her thereby unable to fulfill the longing of the Asoka tree which has to be treated with the kick of a beautiful foot. The Queen's favour falls on Malavika who is not only asked to deputize for her but is promised the fulfillment of her desire if the Asoka tree puts forth its flowers within five days. The scene in the garden, the longing soliloquy of Malavika, the masterly way the maidservant handles her and the situation, all this in this scene of the first meeting of Malavika and the King is done by the poet with fine artistry. Unfortunately, Iravati breaks in and she not only frustrates their plan, but later calls of the queen and gets Malavika and the clever maid-servant imprisoned. The resourceful jester has to feign snakebite to get the Queen's ring with the snake-ensign, and effect the release of Malavika with its aid. The jester then arranges for the King a further meeting with her in the cool water-girt chamber but there again Iravati happens to come and disturb the tryst. Things take a sudden bright turn, however. The pet Asoka tree of the Queen puts forth its blossoms, joyous news of the success is heard by the Queen from her son, and close upon good political tidings from the Vidarbha country, Malavika's royal identity also is revealed; the Queen now gratifies the King and Malavika by presenting her to the King and bestowing on her the status befitting a Queen.

## THE VIKRAMORVASIYA

CONTENTS

The plot of the *Vikramorvasiya* is based on a legend which is as old as the Veda and the hero is one of the most ancient celebrities of Indian mythology. Kalidasa reshapes the theme in this play which stands between the *Malavikagnimitra* already reviewed and the *Sakuntala* to be considered. As in the case of the *Malavikagnimitra*, while writing this play too, the poet has been under the full spell of the stage and the arts of the dance and the drama; in the former, the dance is introduced as a motif and here, the enactment of a drama and some of the principles of dramaturgy and the traditions of dramatic lore are introduced as part of the theme. While, like the former, it is intended by the poet as a romance capable of some exquisite depiction of moods and situations of love, it does not have the plot-interest of the former. It makes up for this, however, by a matchless scene in Act IV depicting the hero, Pururavas, in the frenzy of one separated from his beloved. Suddenly, the hero and the play soar up and the dominant idea of the poet, which found expression in his poems and which is going to loom large in the coming *Sakuntala*, namely, the sublimating motif of the child, begins to show itself and transform the whole finale of the play.

King Pururavas of the Lunar race, very near to the divine progenitor of the line, was one day returning in his chariot after worshipping the Sun when the celestial nymph Urvasi, going along with a friend of hers, was waylaid by a demon. Pururavas rescued her and from that moment, she made him captive. Urvasi returned to heaven and the King to his capital, Pratihthana. Their shoulders, which rubbed against each other on the chariot, retain the horripilation still. Soon Urvasi comes down to meet the King in his own royal garden and even as they are enjoying their first regular meeting, there is a message from heaven calling Urvasi back, as the Sage Bharata, the promulgator of the drama, was producing a play for the heavenly audience and Urvasi was to play the heroine's role. Instead of uttering the name of her lord in the play, Purushottama, Urvasi utters that of her real lover, Pururavas. Indra, King of the heavens, understands the situation, and Pururavas being his *own* friend and never-failing ally, he permits Urvasi to go and live with Pururavas.

The King has to attend a twelve-year sacrificial session for which he absents himself from his capital. Urvasi was by this time bearing the promise of the race of Pururavas. When sending her down, Indra had said that she could live happily with her lover till they should see the face of the son; to be able to prolong her stay with Pururavas, she has therefore to hide her son from his father. The twelve-year sacrifice and the King's absence were helpful and Urvasi, soon after the birth of the son, took the latter to the hermitage of Sage Chyavana and left him there to be brought up and trained in all the branches of learning.

On Pururavas's return from the sacrifice, Urvasi, desiring to have the King completely for herself, took him to the Gandhamadana Forest on the Himalayas. As they were roaming about, the King's eyes fell for a moment on a Vidyadhara Princess playing on the sands of Ganga.. This excited Urvasi jealousy and leaving the King suddenly, she, in forgetfulness, entered the place called 'Kumaravana' where women were forbidden. According to the preordained penalty Urvasi was turned into a creeper Pururavas went in search of her, the gathering cloud and the sylvan, surroundings driving him almost mad. Pururavas apostrophizes birds, beasts and plants. Finally he comes across a miraculous gem which has the power of restoring separated persons to each other's company. With its aid, he regains his beloved.

Then, when once they are in the capital, this bright miraculous gem is mistaken for a lump of flesh and snatched away by a vulture. In a short while the bird falls together with the gem, shot down by someone's arrow. When the name on the arrow is read, the King is surprised to find "Ayus, son of Pururavas and Urvasi." Close upon the arrow, messengers from Chyavana's hermitage arrive with the boy. Urvasi has now to reveal to the King the story of their son, as also the sad news that, according to Indra's original injunction that is also to be the end of their union. Indra, however, had foreseen a battle with the demons and, for helping him in that battle, wanted Pururavas to continue in harness; and as the only means to induce Pururavas to stay on in the kingdom, Indra permitted Urvasi to continue to live with Pururavas.

In this narration of the story of the play I have not mentioned the chief Queen of Pururavas, Ausinari, the daughter of the King of Banaras. As I stated while dealing with the earlier play, she is of the same type as Dharini. Being a mythological figure, she is depicted in a manner much more ideal than in the case of Dharini. Her maid-servant cleverly manages to get from the King's jester the real cause of the King's mental preoccupation and, like Iravati of the former play, she enters the pleasure-garden where the King is meeting Urvasi, and comes by Urvasi love-letter on a bhurja-leaf which was being carried away by the breeze. Having interrupted the meeting of the King and Urvasi, the Queen departs, impressing upon the King her displeasure.

But soon she repents and wishing not to be a hindrance to the King, proposes to perform the worship of the moon. This is a beautiful observance which the poet depicts in Act III. It is to be done when the moon is up and unites with the constellation Rohini and worship is paid to the rays and reflection of the moon on the crystal flooring of the open upper terrace. The Queen sends word to the King that he should be present at this moon- worship on the terrace.

The King observes: I bowed to her and asked to be excused, but she brushed me aside and went away in anger; but she has since repented and wants to demonstrate her consideration for me; such is the nature of noble women.

Ausinari worships the moon and then the King, and prays that she should always be well-disposed towards the King and, when the jester makes the unkind remark that she is trying to make a virtue of necessity, she declares to him: "Fool I my lord is so dear to me that even at the risk of putting an end to my pleasure, I wish him all happiness."

If Malavika was beautiful and had the added attractions of artistic accomplishments, Urvasi was a celestial nymph and the leading danseuse of the heavens, "an ornament to ornaments, decoration to decorations and the standard of comparison for all things of comparison," as the King says. In Indra's court she had been all the time trained in love and the arts of enticement, and compared to young Malavika she is a past master in the art of love. She belongs to the heroine-type called the Praudha, the mature adept. In her hands are also such facilities as the divine contrivance of remaining invisible. The very fact that she is celestial puts her on a superior pedestal. She comes of herself to meet the King and herself manages the course of her love. She hides the son and takes the King away from the kingdom so that she might have his unbroken company. In the Vedic version of the legend she is depicted in a more imperious form as the all-powerful woman who could take poor man when she pleased and then fling him away. "The hearts of women are those of hyaenas," says she in the Veda. That picture of the hyaena- like woman is completely touched up by Kalidasa, still her superiority and her concern primarily for her own pleasure are there all the time in Kalidasa's play too.

Which normal woman would keep her son away so that her cram association with her lover might not be broken? Compared to her, Pururavas redeemed himself towards the end. As Act V opens, the jester informs us that the King, who is back at his capital, has only one regret, viz., that he has no son. When young Ayus is ushered in by the escort from Chyavana's hermitage, the jester says to the King, "He resembles you greatly." The King replies: "yes; as my eye falls on him, it moistens with tears of joy; my heart fills with affection; my mind attains tranquility; with my throbbing arms, I want to hold him fast."

बाष्पायते निपतिता मम हृष्टिरस्मिन्  
वात्सल्यबन्धि हृदयं मनसः प्रसादः !  
संजातवेपथुभिरुज्झितधैर्यवृत्तिः  
इच्छामि चैनमदयं परिरब्धुमङ्गैः !!

V. 9.

And the young son remarks: "If even the mere report of my being his son should move the King so much, oh. What a love would he have if I had grown on his own lap!"

यदि हार्दमिदं श्रुत्वा पिता ममायं सुतोऽहमस्येति!  
उत्संगे वृद्धानां गुरुषा भवेत्कीदृशः स्नेहः !!

V. 10

## THE ABHIJNANA SAKUNTALA

It is significant that the first literary composition in Sanskrit to have been introduced to English readers is the *Sakuntala*, which was translated into English in 1789 by Sir William Jones, the revealer of Sanskrit to the Western world. Ever since Goethe sang of it in a sonnet, imitated its prologue and wanted to adapt it for the opera, it has continued to hold the appreciation and admiration of poets and artistes in Europe. A contemporary German composer, the other day, was announced as composing music for it. Indigenous criticism in India has always held it as the highest point reached by the Indian muse—"Of poetic creations, the drama is the most beautiful, and of dramas, the *Sakuntala* is the most beautiful runs a popular saying in Sanskrit.

At the very first glance, we shall be able to note the marked departure made by the poet in this play in eschewing the multiplicity of women through which he worked in the two other plays that we have considered above. The heroine Sakuntala occupies the whole of the horizon. For the tragic complication of the plot which is much more substantial and intense here, the poet has recourse to the more elevated device of the curse, which, with an equally pointed moral significance, is traced to a lapse, though quite a natural one, on the part of the heroine herself. As we shall see when we come to that crucial part of the plot this motif of the curse serves to maintain the character of the hero too.

Another remarkable factor of appeal in the play is that, in a manner more pronounced, more complete than in his poems or in the two other plays, Kalidasa integrates here human being and Nature into one, making the trees and the creepers, the deer and the birds as much *dramatis persona* as the inmates of the heroine's sylvan home. Except two acts in the middle, all the other five are located in forest hermitages presided over by Sages who, by their penance and spiritual realization, have seen the unity of all life. The permeation of this ideal again is another source of the fascination exercised by this drama.

As the curtain rises the heroine and her two friends are introduced in their daily work of nurturing the plants, creepers and trees of the hermitage; for, as their foster-father and the head of the hermitage, the Sage Kanva, says later, "Before they are watered; Sakuntala would not take anything; though fond of decoration, out of her tender consideration for them, she would not pluck even a sprout from them; and every first efflorescence among them would be celebrated by her as a festival." "Grown as another fawn among the fawns of the forest" says the hero about Sakuntala. This invests her and her whole background with simplicity and innocence against the background of which, when the complication comes on, the tragedy assumes a depth all the more poignant.

Sakuntala was the daughter of the Sage Visvamitra and the celestial nymph Menaka who came to disturb the Sage's austerities and went away leaving the child in the forest. The birds first, and later the Sage Kanva, took care of her. She grew up in Kanva's hermitage and once, seeing by force of his inner vision, some indication of an unfavorable turn of Fate for her, the Sage repairs to a holy spot to do something to ward off that fate.

When he left his hermitage, he instructed his foster-daughter to be attentive to the reception of the guests who might drop in at the hermitage during his absence. Soon the first guest came: the King of the realm, Dushyanta, the famous, righteous monarch of the lunar race. He was on a hunting expedition and was pursuing a fleet deer, which brought him into the hermitage\* The Sage Kanva's pupils stopped the King from aiming his arrow at the deer, for it belonged to the hermitage and there was to be no violence in the hermitage. The deer

with which the drama opens is another significant idea in the play. The timid deer is the very picture of the innocence and charm of the sylvan hermitage and, as the King later observes, symbolizes Sakuntala herself brought up in that atmosphere. This deer-idea may be followed in the analysis of the story.

The Sage's disciples request the King to step into the hermitage and receive the Sage's hospitality at his daughter's hands. As the King comes round the hermitage, the happy augury of a throbbing arm promising him something welcome, he hears the pleasant chat of some young women. Sakuntala with her two companions, Priyamvada and Anasuya, is watering the plants and creepers. The two friends are making observations about Sakuntala's youth which was every moment putting forth a fresher bloom, and are jesting about her marriage. Such enthralling beauty which would adorn anything that came near it the King had not set his eyes upon till then. He feels attracted towards her, finds an opportunity to announce him, learns from her friends her whole story, and assures himself that his heart had not set itself on one improper for him to love and aspire for.

Now the hunt is cancelled and luckily, as the sacrifice going on at the hermitage has to be safeguarded against demoniac miscreants, the King receives an invitation to stay on. There is a message from the palace requiring his presence at a function but the King sends his jester to officiate in his stead, a development which later helps to complete the tragedy. Further, primarily to prevent the jester's gossip at the palace about the King meeting someone in the forest, the King tells the jester when sending him off: "Where are we, and where these poor things *of*. The forest, grown like fawns among the fawns? AU this pleasantry to which you have been witness is for fun; don't take it seriously."<sup>1</sup>

The yearning is equally intense on both sides and the two meet. While the Sage Kanva is still away, the two are married in the manner permitted for Kshatriyas and the only witness to this marriage was Sakuntala's little pet deer called the Long-eyed One. This may be noted, as we shall be hearing of this sole witness to which Sakuntala later makes a pathetic vain appeal. The King puts on her finger his signet-ring, which is embodied in the title of the play, *Abhijnana Sakuntala*, and tells her: I shall now go to, my capital; ere you finish counting the letters of my name, one by one each day, an escort from my palace will come and bring you to me.

The two friends of Sakuntala were propitiating the deity presiding over the conjugal felicity of their friend. Before the royal messengers came, there arrived in the hermitage the second important guest, the irate Sage Durvasas, to offend whom was to court an instantaneous dire curse. With pregnant significance Kanva had enjoined on Sakuntala the attentive discharge of the duty of receiving guests. Of course, one guest she did receive in that manner and that guest were occupying her thoughts all the time.

As the two friends were gathering flowers for the propitiation intended for Sakuntala's happiness and Sakuntala herself was lost in her thoughts of King Dushyanta, the Sage Durvasas who had stood unattended to for a while, flew into his usual temper and pronounced a curse upon Sakuntala: "That person, engrossed in thoughts of whom you do not heed a Sage come to you as guest, will not remember you even if you remind him, even as a madman would not remember what he had said the moment before." When, however, one of the two young friends of Sakuntala fell at the Sage's feet and begged his pardon, the Sage added the blessing that the curse would lift when the King should see the signet-ring.

The Sage Kanva returned, learnt of the happy marriage of his foster-daughter with the great King and made arrangements to send Sakuntala to the court. For, the moment the curse

was uttered, the thick curtain of forgetfulness had been drawn on the King's mind, and no messengers ever came from the court. When Sakuntala, who had lived like one of themselves, was leaving her sylvan abode, all the trees of the forest gave her a send-off, lie wish-yielding trees presenting her with silks and ornaments. On another side, however, as the time of her departure neared, the grief of separation affected not merely the human beings in the hermitage but every living thing there, 'pie deer stood still with their half-chewed grass falling from their mouths; the peacocks stood still abandoning their dance; and the creepers with their leaves falling, looked as if they were shedding tears. Sakuntala could not. out of the place without taking leave' of the creeper called "Forest-Moonlight" which was a sister to her. And she had also to leave a word with her foster-father the doe which was shortly to be delivered of a young one. Then when she moved, something tugged at her garment and there she saw her pet fawn, an orphan which die had been tending since its birth, her favourite "Long-eyed One," which came round and round on her pathway. She assured it that Father Kanva would now take care of it.

The Sage asked her to dear her eyes of tears lest she should slip on the rugged forest path. To the King and to her, the Sage gave his message, embraced her and gave her leave to go. It was with a pang that the two friends of Sakuntala saw her go. With the old lady, Gautami, and two pupils of Kanva as escort, Sakuntala left for Dushyanta's capital.

We are now for the first time in the city, and at the court of the King. The scene opens on the King, in the company of his friend the jester, listening to a song sung from the interior apartments by a lady Hamsapadika, who had once received some attention from the King. In her song, the poet accomplishes an important purpose: the song apostrophizes the bee, which stands for the King, and mildly chides it: "Eager for the fresh honey, having so ardently kissed the mango blossoms, you are now resting on the lotus and have forgotten the mango-blossoms altogether." With this, the poet sets the action of the coming scene on the move, its leading idea of forgetting the beloved being conveyed here symbolically. That this song proves to be of no avail to rouse any memory in the King is clear from what he tells his friend. "The Sweet strains produce a vague longing in my heart, though I am not separated from anyone dear to me, For such is the nature of beautiful sights and sweet sounds that on seeing or hearing them, one begins to long, though one is happy; Surely one begins to have intimations of the slumbering attachments of bygone births."

रम्याणि वीक्ष्य मधुरांश्च निशम्य शब्दान् !  
 पर्युत्सुकीभवति यत्सुखितोऽपि जन्तुः!  
 तच्चेतसा स्मरति नूनमबोधपूर्व  
 भावस्थिराणि जननान्तरसौहृदानि !!

Though actually separated from his beloved, the King refers to his not being separated and the subconscious recollections of attachments are referred by him to past lives, not to his recent visit to the forest. This gives us the background against which we should judge the King in what follows.

The court minstrels and the court priest are introduced eulogizing the King's righteous rule and high character; these again are not for customary padding but to emphasize the King's character and to make us bear that in mind in the coming scene. The visitors from Kanva's hermitage with a young lady are ushered in. The mention of Kanva's hermitage hardly kindles any recollection, and the King imagines all sorts of reasons for the arrival of messengers from there. When he actually sees a young woman in the party, the merely looks at her but suddenly turns aside, remembering that it is sin to gaze upon others' wives, as if

she who had come was one such. The bland reception starts the first palpitation in sakuntala's heart. One of the Sage's pupils then delivers the message of Kanva that the Sage had approved of the King's marrying his foster- daughter, and that as she was now to be a mother, the King might take her into his home. The King is perplexed and the Sage's pupil irritated; the latter accuses the King of suffering from the intoxication of power and the wayward behaviour natural to it.

The King mildly replies that he has been too strongly chided.

The old lady escort now removes the veil from Sakuntala's face so that the King might have a fuller view of his beloved; the King is all the more confounded. When the angry pupil urges the King to speak, the King says that, however much he might exercise his mind; he does not remember his marriage with that lady and does not know how he could take himself to be the father of the child in her womb. Whereupon, the Sage's pupil, in indignation, calls the King a thief; the other pupil considers it none of their business to convince the King and asks Sakuntala herself to speak.

When love of that degree had come to this state, what was the use? Of any attempt to remind the King? She begins to address the King as "Lord" but corrects herself, as the very fact of the marriage had come to be doubted. She addresses him by the noble dynastic name that he bears and asks if it is proper for one like him to break into the hermitage like that, deceive the simple sincere folk there and now repudiate one of them thus.

The King is somewhat stung by this attempt to question his honor and asks her in turn why she tries thus to drag down her name as well as his.

Sakuntala then proposes to remind him with his signet-ring but, when she looks for it, she sees but an empty finger. On the way, she had got down at the holy waters of Sachitirtha and there, the old lady says, the ring might have slipped off.

The King has a fling at the natural resourcefulness of women.

Laying the blame on Fate, Sakuntala now proceeds to narrate the story of their private marriage of which the sole witness was her pet fawn. When Dushyanta and Sakuntal were together, the King had tried to give it some water in a cup of lotus leaf; it would not drink; but when Sakuntala had offered it the fawn had drunk. Dushyanta observed: "Everybody has confidence in one like oneself, "both of you are from this forest."

The narration was touching; the reference to the deer with whose innocence she had been compared is very suggestive. But the King makes one more sarcastic observation: "It is by such honeyed words of falsehood that adventurous women entice weak men."

At which the old lady from the hermitage, unable to put up with the insult, retorts: "Worthy King, you ought not to speak thus; this Sakuntala hermitage and knows no cunning." a verse which should be specially marked, sarcastic fling he tells the old lady: "Untaught resource fullness is seen among the females, even among those who do not belong to the human order; what to say of those who belong to the intelligent race ? Before they jffy lot# the skies, the cuckoos, well-known as the tribe fostered by others, get their young once nourished by other birds."

The cuckoos, whose young ones cannot be distinguished from those of the crow, do not themselves offspring; they lay their eggs with those of the leave the young ones to be brought up by the cuckoo is .called 'Para-bhrita,' "brought up by another."

Apart from the general reproach offered to women here, if you examine a little more

closely the overtones or the ambiguity of the essential words of this utterance, you will find this to be the most cruel dagger driven into poor Sakuntala's heart. The analogy of the cuckoo's young;erne brought up by another applies to her completely brought up by another; the word "Dvija" used for the bird that brings up the young cuckoo is it means also a Brahman and refers to the who had to bring up Sakuntala. Further, even the expression "Amanushishu," "those not belonging to order," bears the meaning "divine" and' expression "Antariksha-gamanat," "going in to the skies" or flying," it makes an unkind raference to the celestial nymph who had given birth to Sakuntala, left her and flown away to the heavens, and nurtured by Kanva.

That this meaning was there is clear from what follows. The moment the King said this, Sakuntala drew herself up to her full stature and in righteous indignation called the King an ignoble man, anarya, and said "As your heart is, so do you make your inference." She described him as one who had put on the cloak of virtue and as a well whose face was hidden by grass.

The effect was perceptible. The King thought for a moment, within himself, that her indignation was righteous and it was he who had been cruelly forgetful. However, he replied: "Dushyanta's character is well-known; such a thing has not been known in him."

"Ah! I have been reduced to a wanton woman, I who, relying on his great association with the Puru race, came into the clutches of this sweet-tongued, poison-hearted man I" Saying this Sakuntala covered her face with the end of her garment and wept.

The Sage's pupil, who was witnessing all this, aggravated the situation by observing that so did all rash and secret love end in enmity.

The King tried to take this up with the Sage's pupil but only got one more powerful snub: "Ah! We have seen the right and wrong of it! The folk that, from birth, live a guileless life—their word is not believable; but they are trustworthy authorities who study here diplomacy and deceit as their chief lesson."

As the exchanges between the two were tending to grow more vehement, the other pupil of the Sage suggested that they had discharged the task entrusted to them by their, teacher and that, having brought Sakuntala to the King, they should now go away. When Sakuntala tried to follow them, one of the pupils chided her severely and asked her to stop there. The priest suggested a way out of the impasse, viz., that he would play host to Sakuntala till her confinement, and on her giving birth to child they would be able to decide the question and into the palace if the son was endowed with marks of4£te monarch-to-be. The priest had taken but a few steps, asking Sakuntala to follow him, when suddenly a light flashed and a divine nymph swooped down and disappeared with Sakuntala. When the miraculous happening: was reported to the King, he said that there was an end of the matter; but inwardly there was a pang at his heart, the intensity of which seemed to din into him: "Oh, you did marry her."

Artist that he is, the poet now interposes a light inter- Jude after the tense act. Through this is brought in the turning-point of the further sequence of the play. The city police bring a poor fisherman who had found a royal signet-ring in the stomach of a fish caught by him. The sight of the ring tears aside the veil of forgetfulness and the King auks into remorse and grief.

He forbade every enjoyment in the place and the austerity order was so stem that the buds which appeared on the garden-trees of the palace stopped midway from opening into

blossoms and the cuckoos muffled their half-risen voices within their throats. The King said "When I had repudiated her and the Sage's pupil had asked her to stand back and not follow them, she cast another look at me, a look tormented and bathed in tears; that look, like the poisoned tip of an arrow, bums me still." The separation and the sense of the cruel wrong he had done his beloved burnt the King. From a picture of her which he had drawn, his imagination called up her presence before his vision and he chided the down for reminding him that it was only a picture. Sleepless nights prevented even a dream-union.

When the King is in this condition there occurs an incident which adds a new dimension to the King's sorrow. One of the merchant-magnates of the city had come to grief on the high seas and there was no issue to succeed to his possessions; the Minister wanted to know if his properties would not escheat to the State. The King counseled patience and asked if, having been a wealthy man, the merchant "had not more than one wife and if none of them was in the family way. Indeed one of them was. This set the King's mind on his own misfortune which had deprived him of the joys of parenthood. "Ah I my line too will come to an end like this. When I married Sakuntala, I hoped that I had ensured the future of my family: and now I have abandoned her."

The golden thread of the child, it maybe rioted, runs through the play from the beginning. At the very outset, the younger Sages who accost Dushyanta at- the entrance to the hermitage, pronounced the blessing, "May you have for your son a monarch endowed with these same high qualities I" When Sakuntala's two friends put some searching questions to Dushyanta on how he would treat her, Dushyanta said that in her he saw the hope of his race.

The closing act of the play is located in a hermitage, even as the opening one was, but the difference is that the last one is on a higher altitude; it is on the Hemakuta Mountain. The "golden crown mountain" is but symbolic of the last act being the crown of gold of the whole play. Maricha who is in penance there is a Sage of greater eminence than Kanva, who presides over the hermitage of the earlier acts. "Sublime and beautiful— is the whole place/" says the King as he descends upon it,

At the close of the previous act, as' dejection, Indra, the King of the gods, had teer to fetch dushyanta to the heavens engagement with demons; On his way back, descended upon the Hemakuta Mountain and the hermitage of Maricha. There is a fine description of the chariot of Indra speeding through the clouds, its wheels spinning sprays of water as they grind through the clouds. I draw your attention to this because Keats has the same thing in his Endymion, and the eminent critic, Lascelles Abercrombie, who notes this, observes that Keats might into Sir William Jones's translation of our was to Maricha's hermitage that Sakuntala brought when she moved out of Dushyanta's court begging mother Earth to take her into her bosom, There is a significant description of the place and the embodiment of Samyama or self-control and the subjugation of all desires. All the objects of desire one would aspire for through penance are here all around, in their midst, the Sages here are in their self-possession and dispassionate penance.

In this hermitage, Sakuntala had given birth to a son and was living a life of austerities. The son was named "Sarva-damana," one who subdued everything; he no doubt subdued every ferocious beast of the forest, but the beasts were only symbols of the passions and furies, so that the name "Sarva-damana" really signified the perfection of self-control and spiritual sublimation that Sakuntala now embodied. As the King enters the hermitage, he does not meet sakuntala, who, as it is appropriately reported later, is listening to an

exposition by the Sage Maricha of the way of the devoted wife; but the King meets the little boy playing with and teasing lion-cubs. The King does not yet know him to be his son; but the very sight of the beaming face of the child sends a thrill through his frame, and he exclaims: "I want to hug him; with the budding teeth gleaming through in spontaneous bursts of laughter, with sweet babblings, these children who love to climb on the lap—it is the blessed ones that take them up and soil themselves with the dust of their limbs."

आलक्ष्यदन्तमुकुलान् निमित्तहासैरव्यक्तवर्णरमणीयवचः प्रवृत्तीन् !  
अंकाश्रयप्रणयिनः तनयान् लभन्ते धन्यास्तदङ्गरजसा मलिनौभवन्ति !!

Remember the verse of Kalidasa describing Dilipa taking baby Raghu on his lap, to which I drew special attention. It is in these verses on children that Kalidasa's heart seems to come out with unmistakable personal feeling.

Enquiring step by step of the identity of the boy Dushyanta comes to know of sakuntala's presence there and of the boy being none else than his own son. The gradual revelation is worked out by the poet with artistry, and is completed by the motif of a herbal talisman which the venerable Sage had tied to the boy's wrist. This talisman of miraculous power protected the boy who was much given to play and wandering. It could not be handled by any except the Sage and the boy's parents; in the case of others, it turned into a snake and bit them. This talisman had fallen when the boy was teasing the lion-cub and the King picks it up without any harm to himself. To him as well as to the two hermit women looking after the boy, all doubts are set at rest by this event; the latter rush to report to sakuntala who is engaged in her austerities.

As Sakuntaia came wearing a dusty garment, her face shrunken from the penances she was doing, with her tresses braided in a single plait, looking resplendent in the halo of her sufferings, Dushyanta felt exalted indeed; he fell at her feet and asked her pardon. "You have recognized me, though I had been cruel to you. A powerful delusion was on me; even the flowery garland that falls on his head, the blind man mistakes for a snake and casts away." He says later: "When Sakuntala came to me, I did not recognize her; when I got the ring I gained my memory. It is like a fool who did not see the elephant when it actually went past him, but later looked at the steps and inferred that an elephant had passed."

There was no bitterness in Sakuntala, and she found remorse writ large on the pale face of her lord. And when with the son, the two went to the Sage to pay him respects and the Sage revealed that it had been the curse of Durvasas that had caused the tragedy, the hearts of the two were completely reconciled. Thus this second and lasting union is wrought through the son. Even as in the Kumarasambhava the real union, of Siva and Parvati was effected through penance, in the Sakuntala too the lasting union of Dushyanta and Sakuntala is achieved through the spiritual welding that the fire of suffering brings about. It is for the Kumara, the heroic son that Siva and Parvati come together in the poem. In this play the higher quality of this second union is brought out by the simile that the Sage Maricha uses to describe the coming together of the two parents and their son; he likens Sakuntala to faith, Dushyanta to the sacred injunction, and the son to the material resource which gives effective expression to the two in an act of adoration:

दिष्टया शकुन्तला साध्वी सदपत्यमिदं भवान् !  
श्रद्धा वित्तं विधिश्चेति त्रितयं वस्समागतम् !!

VII. 29.

It is this sublimation of love that Goethe sings of in his tribute to the Sakuntala as the

union of the young year's blossoms and the fruits of its end and as the union of earth and heaven. The Poet Bhavabhuti, who more than once gives effective expression to the suggestions of Kalidasa, says in his play on the Later Life of Rama: The child is the climax of love, the child is the supreme bond that ties the two together; it is ' the knot tying the two loving hearts together that is called by the name "child":

प्रसवः खलु प्रकृष्टपर्यन्तः स्नेहस्य अपरं चैतदन्योन्यसं श्लेषणं पित्रोः !  
अन्तःकरणतत्त्वस्य दम्पत्योः स्नेहसंश्रयात् !  
आनन्दग्रन्थिरेकोऽयमपत्यमिति कथ्यते !!

Uttararamacharita III.17.

Describing the love of Dilipa and Sudakshina on the birth of their son, the poet says that, being now shared by the son, their mutual we witnessed an increase:

रथाङ्गनाम्नेरिव भावबन्धनं बभूव यत्प्रेम परस्पराश्रयम् !  
विभक्तमप्येकसुतेन तत्तयोः परस्परस्योपरि पर्यचीयत !!

With the child, says a later poet Yajnanarayana, it is as if aging man and woman secure an immortality of their being:

जरावशीर्णः क्रमशः शरीरिणः तपोभरैरेव रसायनैरिव !  
नवीभवन्तो<sup>15</sup> भुवि नन्दनात्मना प्रवाहनित्याः प्रभवन्ति केचन !!

Sahityaratnakara III. 20.

Or as Shakespeare puts it in one of his sonnets:—

From fairest creatures we desire increase  
That thereby beauties rose might never die,  
But as the ripener should by time decease  
His tender heir might bear his memory.

In his thesis on the will of the individual as the will of the species, Schopenhauer shows that it is this truth that gives a sublime import to love and makes the lovers' raptures and troubles transcendent. The longing of the lovers to be really united and to be made into one being is, he says, Concretized in their child.

Thus the purification of the physical attraction through the suffering of separation and completing the sublimation of this love through the child constitute the essence of Kalidasa's treatment of love indeed of that of all Sanskrit poets, for in poems or plays, others but followed the lead that Kalidasa gave in portraying the emotion. This idea that separation acts as the true touchstone of love and as a greater welding force is given expression to by different poets: In the Bhagavata Purana, when the cowherd lasses are in anguish because of their separation from Krishna, the latter tells them: "To the degree to which the mind gets possessed of the lover when he is far away, it does not when he is near and within sight."

यथा दूरचरे प्रेष्ठे मन आविश्य वर्तते !  
स्त्रीणां च न तथा चेतः सन्निकृष्टेऽक्षगोचरे !!

In an anonymous verse, a lover apostrophizes his far-off beloved and says: Though living here, I am yours; though living there you are mine; physical union is not the only good union; the union of hearts is the real union:

अहमिहैव वसन्नपि तावकः तत्र वसन्त्यपि मामिका !

न तनुसंगम एव सुसंगमः हृदयसंगम एव सुसंगमः !!

In another stray verse, the lady separated from her beloved says: Between company and separation, separation, not his company, is preferable : for in company, he is single; in separation the whole universe is full of him ;

संगमविरहविकल्पे बरमिह विरहो न संगमस्तस्य !  
एकस्य एव संगे त्रिभुवनमपि तन्मयं विरहे !!

A third poet says: Separated or united, it is the annihilation of duality that loves aims at:

वियोगी वाथ योगी वा अद्वैतापत्तिमिच्छति !!

Quoted in Caturbhuja Misra's commentary on Amaruka.

It is this advaita, the two becoming one that is symbolized on the one hand by the idea of the child and on the other by that of Siva and Parvati, the prototypes of man and woman, becoming the one united image of Ardhanarisvara. These are portrayed most effectively by Kalidasa in the Sakuntala, in which his drama reaches its acme and the Kumarasambhava, in which he offers his best in poetry.