



Original Article

The Relation of Man and Nature in The Works of Kalidasa and Bhavabhuti

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Abstract:

In ancient literature the relationship between Man and Nature is one of the most important themes almost covered by the poets and authors. With their particular coordination the cosmic order stays stable. Our ancient playwrights have already mentioned about the natural laws, the rhythms of seasons and its impact on human mind. The oldest form of Vedas tells us that once nature is worshipped and the ancient society believes in its sacred and divine nature. In the works of many Indian and Western classical nature poets and playwrights like Kalidasa. Valmiki, Vyasa, Bhavabhuti, Homer, Virgil and Theocritus, nature is presented as alive, sensitive and deeply connected with human emotions. In the present piece of research, we are trying to probe deep in the two works: Vikramorvasiyam by Kalidasa and Malatimadhava by Bhavabhuti and we will try to see the importance of nature in the mentioned works. The method of research here is mainly historical and descriptive.

Keywords: Man. Nature, Harmony, Spiritual.

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In ancient literature the relationship between Man and Nature is one of the most important themes almost covered by the poets and authors. With their particular coordination the cosmic order stays stable. Our ancient playwrights have already mentioned about the natural laws, the rhythms of seasons and its impact on human mind. The oldest form of

Vedas tells us that once nature is worshipped and the ancient society believes in its sacred and divine nature. In the works of many Indian and Western classical nature poets and playwrights like Kalidasa. Valmiki, Vyasa, Bhavabhuti, Homer, Virgil and Theocritus, nature is presented as alive, sensitive and deeply connected with human emotions. In Kalidasa's *Meghaduta*, we find an abundance of



seasons, mountains, rivers, beautiful flowers and dense forests. In Valmiki's *Ramayana* also there in an abundance of natural scenic content, the episode of Rama's exile also presents a deep connectivity between nature and man. Sage Valmiki has shown that a royal person Lord Rama and the royal princess Sita, went to Dandakaranya forest during their exile period. These royale persons were shown as coordinating with nature perfectly during this tenure, they were helping the forest animals and searching their food items from that dense forest only. And they were not afraid of living under the open sky, in-fact they were living in a perfect coordination with nature. In Bhavabhuti's *Malatimadhava*, two aspects of nature were portrayed before our eyes the romantic and the fearful.

In the works of Western nature poets like Virgil, Homer and Theocritus, we came to know about the different aspects of nature, for example in Homer's *Iliad and Odessey*, Homer has highlighted the inner and outer landscape, seas, storms; Virgil's pastoral poetry *Georgics*, highlights the rural way of life along with nature and Theocritus in his *pastoral poetry* has highlighted the simple way of living and rural landscapes and its impact on our life.

All the above-mentioned poets and playwrights have mentioned nature as living and meaningful, they have tried to connect nature with the inner landscape of human beings. All the forth coming Romantic poets have also followed their path and they had also created marvellous nature pieces. In the ancient works we have observed an emotional parallelism between man and nature. In our present research we will present the emotional bond between nature and man in the two select works: *Vikramorvasiyam* by Kalidasa and *Malatimadhava* by Bhavabhuti. We will delve deep in this part of research in searching the emotional parallelism between man and nature.

Kalidasa as a playwright in *Vikramorvasiyam* has tried to reflect the Indian classical aesthetics by showing the deep connection of nature and human beings. He has shown a perfect harmony between these two. Nature has presented as a co-partner with humans. The male protagonist Pururavas as well as his beloved Urvasi both were deeply in love with nature and the rest of the characters also reflects the same connectivity. Nature has a great bonding with the human beings. The beauty of nature is described in the dialogues of the characters, in the opening scene of Act II in a conversation between Gracioso and King Pururavas, the beauty of nature is described in a well narrated form:

GRACIOSO- Only look, I beseech you, at the beauty of the garden with the Avatar of spring revealed.

Human Emotions displayed by Nature:

Kalidasa has displayed the inner landscape of his characters in a mirrored form in nature. The main characters displayed Pururavas and Urvasi has shown a deep connectivity with nature, both of them had shared their joys as well as their hearts swellings with nature. Nature carries a true testimony of their love life. When the hero of the play Pururavas experiences joy and love in his life, Kalidasa has reflected his emotions by adding natures vibrant and beautiful description. So when he got separated from his beloved all the natural components like rivers, wind and seasons were shown by the playwright as losing their charm. In this way nature has been shown as a living companion of human beings.

Nature as the nurturer of Love:

The different scenes display the natural surroundings and also presented love growing amidst nature. All the main scenes depict the



mountains, rivers and hermitages with a dense greenery. The dense greenery is presented by the playwright as a romantic abode nurturing love, a spiritual enchanting place best suited for the lovers to share the strings of their emotions. The female protagonist Urvasi herself is presented as a heavenly soul and she also represents the divinity of nature. Her meetings with the Pururavas shows this natural bond.

Nature as a guide of humans:

Kalidasa has presented nature as a perfect guide and as a path finder. Human behaviour is also shown as controlled by nature. The playwright has given a universal message through his play *Vikramorvasiyam* that being with nature purifies our inner self.

Nature as a symbol:

The playwright has also used nature as a symbol to present the ups and downs in the life of the two lovers Pururavas and Urvasi. Their inner landscape and outer landscape are fully portrayed in the play. When these characters keep silent during the tenure of their separation, nature displays their grief. The playwright has used the different natural symbols perfectly fitted to the situation. Kalidasa has used different seasons and landscapes as the symbol to display the human emotions. The spring season was displayed to present the union and the beauty of love, wild forest and harsh winds shows the separation of both the lovers. Heaven has presented the eternal love. Overall Kalidasa has presented an inseparable connection between the human beings and nature. The playwright through his technique of natural presentation has tried to present nature's divinity. After reading *Vikramorvasiyam* the readers can experience an emotional connectivity with the rhythms of nature. Now let us see the same connectivity in

Bhavabhuti's *Malatimadhava*. He has presented the connection of Nature as the supporter of Emotional Bonds:

Nature has been used by the playwright to display the different types of human feelings. In *Malatimadhava*, Bhavabhuti has also used the silent aspects of nature to present the peaceful situations and he has used the scary aspects of nature to show the emotions like anger and wrath. He has shown the dangers and emotional trauma of human beings through the good and bad sides of nature. While describing the tantric activities of Kapalakundala in a cave along with his co-partners Bhavabhuti has shown the fearful and scary form of nature, which is presented as a destroyer not a protector. This Tantric use to practice the black magic in the dense forest and the aloof places, specially near the mountains.

[Act V, Scene I. pp.49-50]

During the presentation of this bad and scary people nature has been presented as a threatening one. Bhavabhuti has together presented the adverse situation together, he has portrayed the beautiful and the scary part of the love story in the same slot, and this is the reason why he has acquired a unique position in literary world.

Presentation of Order:

Like the other playwrights for just becoming famous among his audience, Bhavabhuti has never tried to give a flowery description. In-fact he has tried to reveal the true picture of life in-front of his audience. The male and female protagonist Madhava and Malati were fully aware of the norms laid by the society and they have never tried to break it. Madhava being a royal person was fully aware of his duties towards his kingdom. To provide a relief to his audience Bhavabhuti has also constructed beautiful natural places and the peaceful abodes for the lovers to express their inner self.



Mother Nature as Protector:

The playwright has presented the forces of nature as a protector for the good characters. A morale has been taught by this presentation, that the good deeds are rewarded at the end and the evils are punished. And nature by helping the two loving souls has proved this lesson. There was a moment in the play where, Malati was kidnapped by the Tantric and he was preparing for sacrificing her; while dramatizing this situation the playwright Bhavabhuti has depicted the wild face of nature, harsh wind started blowing scattering the things near the Tantric, the playwright has created a setting to convey the tension in the play. Bhavbhuti has presented a multidimensional role of nature in human beings' life.

In *Malatimadhava* act II, Scene II, the playwright has presented nature as a powerful tool to check everyone. If we study the other ancient literature, we can see the supremacy of nature and its forces in it. The beautiful seasons, mountains, flowers and all the natural things of earth have found a special place by the poets and authors. In the play *Malatimadhava*, when Malati was kidnapped and taken away from Madhava the situation of separation is portrayed by presenting darkness, storms and barren lands. Thus, the playwright has skilfully used nature as the reflection of human emotions.

Nature's Divinity:

Nature has been portrayed as pure and divine as it has all the pure things created by God in it like-rivers, streams, mountains, sky, earth, moon, animals and birds in it. In the other ancient Indian texts also, nature has been presented as the dwelling place of sages and divine souls. All the sages and divine people use to live in the far-off dense forests to perform their holly rituals and for achieving their enlightenment. In *Malatimadhava*, Bhavabhuti has

tried to merge the earthly and Celestial souls together. By presenting the love story of a Celestial maiden and an earthly king Bhavabhuti has shown us the power of divine. And through his beautiful narrative technique he was successful in giving us the Shirin picture of divinity. As mentioned in the ancient text of dramaturgy Natyashastra, Bhavabhuti has also offered prayer to the Goddess Nandi in the Benediction part of the play:

*May the trepidations of Vinayaka's countenance,
attended by the cry of terror, long preserve you!
.....struck by the delighted Nandi.*

As he has introduced many Celestial souls like Indra, Narada, Mandakini and Urvashi, he has maintained the respectful atmosphere from the starting till the end of the play. He has urged a blessing from heaven on him and his plays performance. He has fully completed the religious ritual of offering prayers to God before the final presentation of the play.

Nature as Humans Guide:

Our ancient sages and our fore-fathers always went to nature for receiving its guidance and support. Nature has always guided humans in reaching their perfection. A proper coordination with nature shows our state of wellbeing. In the play *Malatimadhava*, the playwright has tried to teach a moral that if we break our coordination with nature or try to dominate its forces, then we are going to be destroyed. And the end of the play *Malatimadhava* has proved this. All the evil forces and all the disrupting elements just vanished with the blessings of nature and heavenly blessings. The last scene in Act X of the play gives the audience a perfect bliss:

*The fertile showers descend and may the people,
Blest in their friends, their kindred, and their
children, Unknowing want, live cheerful and
content.*



The concluding scene of the play presents a cheerful atmosphere, where all the negative elements were removed and defeated and finally both the lovers met and rejoined forever with the blessings of Lord Indra.

Plot Perfection with Nature's Imagery:

We have also noticed the use of a lot of natural imagery in the play, like the change of different seasons had shown the change of the characters phases of life. When the playwright has used the imagery of landscapes he has tried to merge the inner and outer landscapes of his characters. As an artist Bhavabhuti has used various natural imageries to enhance the beauty of his plots. The theory of Rasa is perfectly used by him in *Malatimadhava*.

Nature has always served as a divine force of re-union and bonding. Ancient Indian writers mostly our sages were the persons who were very near to the nature and they have written many spiritual writings describing man and nature. All these writers have always tried to make a nice blend of nature and our precious culture. Indian philosophies always talk about the environment, society, and family and they have also laid some principles to guide mankind to protect the natural environment as well as their inner soul. From the very ancient times Indians were the worshippers of the different objects of the nature. Indians never look at nature as a commodity to be consumed but they always praise and worship nature. This deep eco-consciousness is seen in the works of our ancient authors also like Kalidasa, Bhavabhuti, and Valmiki. These ancient authors have tried to capture the environmental philosophy as practiced by the Indians. The authors have tried to portray a beautiful and Shirin connectivity between nature and man.

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