CHAPTER – III
SUPERNATURAL ELEMENTS IN
SHAKESPEARE’S THE TEMPEST AND
KALIDASA’S SAKUNTALAM
The term ‘supernatural’ pertains to entities, events or powers regarded as beyond nature in that they cannot be explained by the laws of the natural world. Religious miracles are typical of such supernatural claims as spells and curses. Supernatural themes are often associated with magical and occult ideas. The neologism “supernaturalize” meaning “to make supernatural” is sometimes used to describe the perceived process of supernatural causes to events which someone else presumes to be natural. This perceived process may also be referred to as mystification or spiritualization. Supernaturalization can also mean the process by which stories and historical accounts are altered to describe supernatural elements. The supernatural order is the ensemble of effects exceeding the powers of created universe and gratuitously produced by God for the purpose of raising the rational creature above its native sphere to a god-like life and destiny. The meaning of the phrase fluctuates with that of its antithesis, the natural order.

Shakespeare and Kalidasa are so skilful in using supernatural elements that they play a vital role and become part and parcel of the drama. In The Tempest and Sakuntalam one can find the use of
supernatural agency almost in every act. Although Shakespeare introduces supernatural elements in his plays like *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet* and so on, there is a striking difference between *The Tempest* and other plays. Generally the supernatural powers act on their own and independently and they are not subject to any potent human will. They sometimes meddle in human affairs. In *A Midsummer Night's dream* they play some harmless pranks among the mortals. But in *Macbeth*, the supernatural powers are the very principle of evil and tempt man to crime and to his doom. In *The Tempest*, on the other hand, the supernatural powers are under the control of human will.

In *Sakuntalam*, in the very First Act, it is known that Sakuntala is a semi-divine being born of the union of Menaka, a celestial nymph (an apsara) and the great sage Viswamitra. At the end of the Second and Third Acts, demons disturb the ritual sacrifices in the pious grove of Kanva. In the first scene of the Act IV, the curse of Durvasas on Sakuntala makes Dushyanta forget Sakuntala and his gandharva marriage to her at Kanva’s hermitage. This supernatural event leads to the repudiation of Sakuntala and separation of the lovers until the curse is annulled at Dushyanta’s coming in possession of the token ring from the fisherman. In the second scene of Act IV, it is learnt from Priyamvada’s account that Kanva who has returned from his pilgrimage to Somatirtha has been informed by a heavenly voice near his fire sanctuary that his daughter has been married
and she bears in her womb a royal child who will rule the earth gloriously, "Know, Brahman, that your child, like the fire-pregnant tree, bears Kingly seed that shall be born, for earth's prosperity" (IV, ii, 167).

And then Kanva presents gifts and ornaments to Sakuntala, who is leaving for her husband's place, by the trees of Kanva's hermitage.

One tree bore fruit, a silken marriage dress
That shamed the moon in its white loveliness
Another gave us lac-dye for the feet
From others, fairy hands extended, sweet
Like flowering twigs, as far as to the wrist
And gave us gems, to adorn her as we list.

(IV, ii, 169)

At the end of Act V, Sakuntala laments her sad fate after her being abandoned by her kin and her husband, appealing to Mother Earth to open herself and receive her to save her from further shame and humiliation. At this a miracle occurs. The refulgent Menaka comes down to the earth from heaven and takes her daughter with her to Hemakuta mountain. In the first scene of the Sixth Act, Mishrakesi (or Sanumati), a close friend of Menaka, who looks upon Sakuntala as her daughter, comes down to watch King Dushyanta. After she is convinced of the King's genuine grief at
Sakuntala’s separation and his pining for a reunion with her, she flies back to heaven to tell Sakuntala what she has seen. In the second scene of Act VI, a supernatural is seen tormenting Dushyanta’s Vidusaka, from the top of the cloud balcony. Later the tormentor is found to be Matali, the charioteer of Indra, who has come to take Dushyanta to the abode of Indra to fight against a deadly demon known as Kalanemi.

In the Seventh Act, Matali takes Dushyanta to Indra in his mystic Chariot fitted with horses. Dushyanta fights and kills Kalanemi and returns after receiving great honour from the hands of Indra. On his return, he alights at the divine hermitage of Marica at Hemakuta Mountain. Marica is the father of Indra, the chief god of the heavens. There Dushyanta meets his son Sarvadamana and his wife Sakuntala and they are reunited with the blessings of Marica and his holy wife, Aditi. They return to the earth again in the mystic chariot of Indra. As Kalidasa’s dramatic world covers the earth and heaven, the humans and the gods and their celestial nymphs, supernatural elements become very significant in the play. In the dramas *Sakuntalam* and *The Tempest* supernatural elements are so excellently woven into the structure of the plot that they do not abstract its smooth movement.

In *The Tempest* Prospero is credited with the powers of a medieval magician such as Dr. Faustus, who uses magic for the purpose of sensual indulgences. Prospero uses magic for the beneficent purpose of bringing
the sinners to repentance. It may be noted that Prospero otherwise resembles a magician of the middle ages. He is equipped with his books, his wand and his robe. He is also afraid of the damnation that a magician incurs by his practice of magic. So in the epilogue Prospero solicits the goodwill and prayers of the audience: “Unless I be relieved by prayer, which pierces so that it assails, mercy itself and frees all faults” (V, i, 16-20).

The *Tempest* contains many romance features and one can take pleasure in it simply as a romantic story, yet its differences from the general romance type are profound. Foremost in importance among the differences are the nature of Prospero’s magic, his position as a magician ruler, Ariel’s quality and musical activities, and certain aspects of the treatment of time and change. Prospero’s magic and Ariel’s existence among other things are not just Shakespeare’s flights of fanciful invention. They are precisely and consistently grounded in a version of a philosophical theory of the universe which had many adherents in England. According to this theory, supernatural forces were rationally demonstrable and acceptable realities. Prospero abjures magic, he proposes to “break his staff” and to “bury it certain fathoms in the earth and to drown his book deeper than did ever plummet sound” (VII, ii, 70-73). The main spirit whom Prospero employs to execute his purpose is Ariel. Ariel is a spirit of air, but he is equally at home in fire and sea. Ariel now and then seems to
get rebellious against his human master's authority, but as a matter of fact all spirits that serve human will are but unwilling agents. Prospero has command over other spirits—spirits of the earth, fire and water. But these spirits are not directly employed by Prospero. He has rather delegated some of his powers to Ariel. The spirits of the earth are employed, for example, to torture Caliban into submission.

For every trifle are they set upon me

Sometime like apes that mew and chatter at me

And after bite me; then like hedgehog, which

Lies tumbling in my barefoot way and mount

Their pricks at my football! Sometime am I

All would with address, who with cloven tongues

Do hiss me into madness (II, ii, 8-14).

To execute the masque of Juno, spirits of a more delicate nature are employed. Perhaps the same spirits are responsible for the music that fills the air of the island.

This isle is full of noises

Sounds, and sweet airs,

That gives delight and hurt not

Sometimes a thousand twangling
Instruments with hum about

Mine ears and sometimes voices

That, if I then had waked after long sleep,

Will make me sleep again. (III, ii, 132-140)

Kalidasa and Shakespeare use supernatural agencies to dominate the play with liveliness and ecstasy. In the beginning one may not know the consequences of the dominance, but in the final stage these agencies reveal themselves as masters of the play, by giving it a fruitful ending.

Sakuntala is known from Vedic literature as a nymph who conceived her superhuman son Bharata at a sacred place called Nadapit. In *Mahabharata* episode on which Kalidasa based his drama, Sakuntala is identified as the daughter born of a union between the nymph Menaka and the royal sage, Viswamitra. Menaka, meaning ‘woman’, is a paradigmatic figure of feminine beauty. She is sent to seduce Viswamitra when his ascetic power threatens gods. She succeeds and becomes pregnant with a daughter whom she bears and abandons to the birds of prey near a river. The birds, however worship and look after her. The Sage, Kanva finds the baby, and brings her up to his forest hermitage as his daughter. Having found her among the birds, he names her ‘Sakuntala’.

Kalidasa shapes the epic story in such a way that on the details of Sakuntala’s semi-divine origin and her role within the universe of Siva are
highlighted. Impressed by the King’s account of Sakuntala’s exquisite beauty, Madhavya advises the King to “marry her quick, then, before the poor girl falls into the hands of some oily-headed hermit” (II, i, 139).

Dushyanta then asks Madhavya to invent some excuse so that they can enter the hermitage again. As they are debating and deliberating on the tactics, two young hermits come to visit the King. They praise the King in lavishing terms commending his role of protecting the welfare of the people of the world. Since Kanva is away, they request him to come to the hermitage and guard them from the demons that often violate their sacred rites. The King feels honoured at such an invitation, while Madhavya comments on the luck that favours the King. In the Third Act, at the end, a voice in the air warns Dushyanta that the ‘flesh-eating demons’ (III, i, 167) are on the prowl again, ready to pollute the Holy Fire. At this, he rises to protect the offerings against the demons.

Any dramatist who attempts to convey a supernatural story in dramatic terms faces a major practical problem - how to bridge the gap between the lack of reality of the supernatural and the experience of the audience. A dramatist may do this in three different ways. He may derationalise or distance the general surroundings amidst which he wishes to portray his supernatural as much as possible from ordinary human experience. Alternatively, he may rationalize the supernatural elements by bringing than as much in contact with common place thought and
experience as possible. The dramatist has also a third alternative. He may
unite with the supernatural as much as possible of what he possibly can
perceive from the world of reality. Kalidasa and Shakespeare use all the
three alternatives available to them while treating the supernatural
elements. At the very start of the play, Shakespeare and Kalidasa achieve
such a landscape by setting the scene of the play in an unknown island and
in a beautiful forest, away from the hustle and bustle of city life. Infact, the
landscape exists only in the minds of the dramatists.

Shakespeare and Kalidasa are great lovers of nature. For them
Nature, whether animate or inanimate, has a special appeal. In the words of
Prof. Hiriyanna:

Kalidasa looks upon things in nature with a peculiarly
tender feeling, and one may regard him as another St.
Francis of Assisi, calling the very flowers his sisters
and mothers, And looking upon the hill with
tenderness and making dear friendship with the
streams and grove. His descriptions of nature are
everywhere tinged with this family love and with such
descriptions he combines profound interpretation of
human life and character. (Keith 24)
Both Kalidasa and Shakespeare are great masters in picturing the beautiful scenery. They are interested in describing the beauty of nature. For example, the play Sakuntalam begins in the most beautiful surroundings of nature. Around Kanva’s hermitage, there are creepers and flowers, plants and trees; birds fly and deers roam about without fear. They are all part of Kanva’s family in which Sakuntala is the centre, a paragon of beauty and virtue. She has a creeper sister (Latabhagini) in the ‘Sylvan light’ (Vamajyotsna) wedded to the ‘Mango’ (Sahakara). A female deer is much a friend of Sakuntala as Asansuya and Priyamvada are and a fawn is Sakuntala’s foster-child. She has compassion even for plants and trees. She would not wound them at any time. Their flowery growth is a source of joy to her. Separation is going to be as painful to nature all around as it is to Sakuntala. She is born and bred in the midst of Nature. It shares with Sakuntala her joys and sorrows. Unity of this sort between man and nature has been very effectively indicated in the Act IV.

The plot has succeeded in establishing a spiritual kinship between man and nature in many of its manifestations - the beauty of flowers and their sweet fragrance, the slenderness and charm of creepers and the attractive growth of plants and trees and behind these manifestations, a living spirit. The poet values the association of birds and animals with man, and sets their life in comparison or in sharp contrast with that of man. Such
an attitude of Kalidasa towards nature is consistent with the theme of universal love.

Similarly, Shakespeare is an equal master in picturing the colourful features of nature and, in The Tempest it is supreme. He creates an uninhabited island which is replete with the benedictions of unadulterated nature. It is a setting which is haunted by the supernatural, the island is deserted, uninhabited and virtually inaccessible. It is a location which is reached by men by “accident most strange” (I, ii, 178), “by providence divine” (I, ii, 159), and by the “bountiful strange”, (I, ii, 178). It is protected by a series of three terrible storms, from which the play derives its title.

It has wondrous charm as well as a subtle, tender and delicate temperature. In it ‘the air breathes most sweetly’ and the grass looks ‘lush and lusty’. It is an island which bestows nothing but the benediction of life. There is a cell for dwelling and the rift of a cloven pine and the knotty entrails of an oak are the prisons there. Labour on the island is limited to fetching wood for fire, and making dams for collecting fish. There are the fresh brook mussels, withered roots and husks of acorns that are epitomes of goodness.
The beneficent island makes Gonzalo think of a golden age. When there would be no traffic, no magistrate, no riches or poverty, no weapons, no treachery. It would be a commonwealth where,

All things in common nature should produce

Without sweet or endeavor, treason, felony,

Sword, pile, knife, gun or need of any engine,

Would I not have, but nature should bring forth,

Of its own kind, all foison, all abundance

To feed my innocent people. (II,i, 156-161)

These suggestions of nature are scattered through the entire play and they culminate as a climax in the masque of the Act IV, whose prime function is to establish a prodigal accumulation of wealth provided by nature. Once Shakespeare establishes a proper background for his play, he goes about the task of presenting the enchantment itself. He displays this enchantment in such massive detail that it becomes rationalized. The supernatural element of the play establishes a law of its own to such an extent that it appears as a credible system. The enchantment not only manages to break the arbitrary link between cause and effect, but also establishes a train of causes in its most potent array. Thus, when the voyagers jump from the ship which is about to be wrecked, into the tempestuous waves, all of them reach the island without sustaining even
the minutest of scorch or injury with, "Not a hair perish'd, on their sustaining garment not a blemish, but fresher than before" (I, ii, 217-219).

If these are effectless causes in the play, there are also causeless effects. The warrior draws his sword to strike with all the force but he is "charm'd from moving". The enchantment in fact begins twelve years prior to the start of the play, when the enchanter, Prospero is expelled from Milan. There is, of course, another element of enchantment when the barrier between mind and matter breaks down. Ferdinand thinks about the loss of his father, only to be interrupted by an unseen voice, which removes all the doubts that he has been having. A similar thing happens to the revellers. In their inebriated state it is not surprising that they forget their tune, but not for long, for an invisible pipe and a tabor play for them.

In the same way, supernatural elements play an effective role in Sakuntalam. In the second scene of the Act IV, Kanva returns to the hermitage after his pilgrimage. Anusuya is unable to do any of her morning tasks as she is worried over Sakuntala’s marriage and she does not know how her father Kanva will react to the news. At this point, a supernatural element is used by the dramatist; Kanva has already been informed about Sakuntala’s marriage by a voice in the air. Another significant supernatural agency which changes the action of the play is the ‘curse’. Kalidasa has always predilection for curses. The Meghadutam opens against the background of a curse. The Raghuvamsa carries a curse in the very first
Canto, and this is followed by two others in Cantos eight and nine. In *Sakuntalam*, the curse is intimately wedded to the ring. The ring, as a token of recognition, goes back to the ancient era of legendary throughout the world. Emperor Justinian of Byzantium is said to have recognized his son Antonia through the ring that he had left with him. In the *Old Testament* this motif occurs in the story of Judah. He has a son, by his widowed daughter-in-law, Tamar. He condemns her to be burnt for prostitution, but revokes the sentence when she shows him pledges of his signet-ring, bracelets and staff. In Maeterlinck’s *Pelleas* and *Melisande*, Melisande’s wedding ring is lost in a pool as she playfully tosses it in the air and her husband gets angry. The symbolism of the wedding ring, like that of the South Indian Mangalasutra, is so potent that many persons will hesitate to remove the one from the finger and the other from the neck.

The curse brings about the loss of memory. Sigmund Freud, in his *Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, elucidates the psychic mechanism of memory and amnesia. He cites an instance from Ernest Jones’ psychoanalysis which comes also close to Dushyanta’s forgetting Sakuntala. This pertains to Caesar’s forgetfulness to take leave of Cleopatra on his leaving Egypt in Bernard Shaw’s *Caesar and Cleopatra*. This failure is construed as a clear indication of Caesar’s indifference to Cleopatra. And yet, while Caesar forgets only to take leave of Cleopatra, Dushyanta forgets Sakuntala herself. When Sakuntala is near the cottage,
but does not hear with her heart, the irascible sage Durvasas announces himself there. He could infer from Sakuntala's absent-mindedness that her heart was set on some lover and as such a guest like him was ignored. Hence, Durvasas chose to curse her:

Do you dare despise a guest like me?

Because your heart, by loving fancied behind,

Has scorned a guest in pious like grown old,

Your lover shall forget you though reminded

Or think of you as of a story told. (IV, i, 163)

Kalidasa intents to save his hero from crudeness which, to some extent, characterizes his counterpart in the Mahabharata story, where Dushyanta repudiates Sakuntala almost deliberately. In the play, Dushyanta discards Sakuntala because of the forgetfulness caused by the curse. He could not accept her even after some arguments by Kanva's disciples and by Sakuntala herself, because of the fear of committing an unrighteous act. His mind is clouded by the effect of the curse and he cannot remember his own action relating to Sakuntala. So blame is on the curse; and Dushyanta's nobility of conduct and his moral stature are both preserved and sustained. The introduction of the curse is the product of a masterly imagination. With it, Sakuntalam attains the status of the most sublime art. The episode of the curse adds charm and dignity to the character of
Dushyanta. It creates an excellent dramatic interest. More than all this, like the inexorable fate, it plunges Dushyanta and Sakuntala into deep separation, during which they understand each other through sacrifice and self-denial and thus become worthy of pure love. "With masterly skill" as Tagore says "the poet here shows that what Durvasas's curse had brought about had its seeds in human nature". (Sundaram 127) The curse is an integral part of the drama of human life whereas the ring-episode is a dramatic device of immense consequence.

In Shakespeare's time, the belief in the presence and power of the supernatural touched life at every point. Not only did the poor believe in it, but all classes of people were under its spell. They carried charms and mascots, found horror in spilling salt and walking under ladders and dreaded at the number thirteen. The Elizabethans had always been susceptible to believe in the supernatural. As a youth, Shakespeare was susceptible to all kinds of influences around him. Owing to the widespread obsession with the supernatural, Shakespeare was compelled as a writer to adopt the views of the majority. The people who crowded the theatres and paid the money demanded fairies, ghosts, witches and all the commonly held beliefs regarding them. So Shakespeare packed his works with popular beliefs about the supernatural.

The play The Tempest was staged in the Banqueting Hall, which was specially constructed for the production of plays and masques. The
walls of the auditorium had galleries for spectators. Elaborate structures and mechanical devices were available for the simulation of moving clouds, flowing waves and descending gods. There were traverse curtains, back cloths painted with vistas or seascapes, lighting effects by candelabra, a 'music house' draped with silk to conceal the orchestra, and possibly three-sided 'flats' to facilitate scene-changing. Costumes were rich and splendid. Those worn by Ariel and the spirits in their various guises symbolized the nature and powers of the characters they represented.

The supernatural powers used by Shakespeare and Kalidasa are not merely the figments of their creative imagination. With a profound understanding of the beliefs of their time, Kalidasa and Shakespeare were able to create masterpieces that critics and readers all over the world have eulogized.

The supernatural machinery is the integral part of The Tempest. The initiation and the development of the action of the play are intimately connected with magic. Thus in the opening scene of the play shipwreck is brought about by Prospero's magic. But for the shipwreck, Prospero could not have met his old enemies and brought them into the mood of repentance and exercised his power of forgiveness nor could Miranda have been restored to her own. The supernatural element is always introduced by Shakespeare to serve a dramatic purpose. In The Tempest the supernatural
is the very basis of the structure of the play. The action of the play stands or falls with it.

In The Tempest and Sakuntalam, Shakespeare and Kalidasa handle, with far more perfect art, many of the supernatural incidents. Both are equally excelling in depicting characters with love and sorrow. For those who are predisposed to an acceptance of the supernatural as a divine decree, the curse has its own significance. They may think that it is either the fate of Sakuntala or perhaps the divine punishment for an unacknowledged course of action. To an extremely rational mind, the supernatural character of the curse may pass off for a dramatic device requiring for its appreciation, a willing suspension of disbelief. However, it is possible to read into the curse a meaning that is perhaps more true to the spirit of the whole play.

Sakuntalam is, as has already been pointed out, said to be a development from blossom to fruit, from earth to heaven. The mortal and the divine are expected to combine here for conferring benefits upon the world. So it is appropriate that an apparently supernatural agency has been introduced by Kalidasa so that the texture of his play could be woven with threads of the supernatural. Of course, in the play the intention of the dramatist is never to represent Dushyanta as a fickle-minded person, nor to show that his fickleness operates as a parallel force with the curse. However, Kalidasa wants that the curse should act on Dushyanta as a veil.
which covers all about a past event of his life. It also adds dignity and
nobility to Dushyanta's character and contributes to the skilful construction
of the plot.

Anusuya's doubts and Durvasas's curse in the beginning of the Act IV are in conformity with the uncertainties that beset the future settlement of all the newly-married brides in the abodes of their husbands. The uncertainty is more pronounced in the case of Sakuntala, not only because of the imprecation of Durvasas's curse but also due to the factors that are beyond the control of Sakuntala and of her two friends after Dushyanta's return to the capital. However, this prelude of the curse fits into the tenor of pathos in Act IV. The old and most venerable sage Kanva, in spite of being a hermit, is overpowered by sorrow on account of the impending departure of Sakuntala. He says,

My heart is smitten with anguish, b'coz
Today Sakuntala will depart; my voice is
Choked by suppressing the flow of tears
My sight is paralysed by anxious thought
Such indeed is the anguish through affection
Even to me a hermit. How then are
Householders afflicted by fresh pangs of
Separation from their daughters. (IV, ii, 168)

Kalidasa also draws a contrast between the genuine simplicity of a hermit life and the gross sophistication of a royal court, as an indication of the apparent lack of harmony between them. The King’s life is a complex of administrative responsibilities and unmitigated luxury. His love is often shared by many a wife in the harem leading to jealousy and dissatisfaction among them. Hamsapadika’s song in the beginning of Act IV addressed to a bee in the words, “O bee how is it that you who eagerly long for fresh honey, after having kissed the mango-blossom in that way, should have forgotten it, being now satisfied with more dwelling in the lotus?” (V, i, 178) is richly suggestive. Like the bee, the King is said to be inconstant. Thus, the poet skilfully prepares the ground for the tragic sequence of Sakuntala’s repudiation by Dushyanta.

In both the plays the supernatural brings suffering especially to the lovers. Ferdinand suffers because of Prospero’s magic and Dushyanta’s suffering is due to the curse. In both dramas Kalidasa and Shakespeare use the supernatural to give more attention to the action of the play. Prospero’s acid test is successfully faced by Ferdinand. Though Prospero is happy with Ferdinand, he makes him endure the suffering in order to make him the fittest lover. The same happens to Dushyanta, because the curse makes him more constant in his love till the end.
Prospero’s magic is different from that of the wicked Sycorax. His self-discipline as a magician is the self-discipline of a prince, whose aim was to make his people virtuous by his own efforts. His constant endeavour is to acquire both worldly and heavenly power. He strives to achieve the power and fortune of a King, the illumination of a man of god, and the learning of a man of thought. Prospero’s use of magic is symbolic. It controls nature. It requires virtue from its practitioner if he is to succeed in his endeavour. It is the kind of world which is closed to Caliban and in fact a world closed to every evil. Yet even here evil is co-existing timidly with bold moral terms. Prospero does have the powers to control nature for virtuous reasons. Even the storm ordered by him does not harm anybody in the least. If as a magician he controls nature, as a prince he conquers the passions which had excluded him from his Kingdom. As a scholar he repairs his loss and as a man he learns to temper his own passions. He himself admits, “Though with their high wrongs, I am strut to the quick, yet with my noble reason against my fury, do I take part” (V, i, 25-17).

It is significant that Ariel refuses to use his supernatural powers for Sycorax, but he uses them with joy for Prospero. Sycorax is the epitome of evil in the play whereas Prospero symbolizes virtue. Shakespeare seems to convey to us that the action of magical laws is evident in our lives so selectively that in reality their force is seen only intermittently. Though the forces of virtue triumph ultimately, one cannot hold it as a rational
conviction that this may happen in every single case. Ariel is seen in the play on seventeen occasions. On eight of these, he is invisible to all barring Prospero. It is he who creates a shipwreck and is present during it in the form of a molar or a supernatural light. Though he causes the storm and creates a situation where a shipwreck seems inevitable there is no loss of life or property. All the royal members of the ship reach a shore safely. Ariel has been ordered to ensure that the ship’s courtiers reach the island separately. It is he who lures Ferdinand to Prospero’s cell so that the prince of Naples meets Miranda. The King of Naples thinks that his son, Ferdinand has drowned in the sea. He is an elemental being of the higher order, identified with the upward-tending element of air and fire, and with the higher nature of man. He has the qualities of air and fire. He is invisible, but like lightning he can take shape as he wishes. Like air and fire he can penetrate anything treading the ooze of the salt deep, running upon the sharp wings of the north, doing business in the veins of earth when it is baked with frost. His natural speech is music and waves of air. His ideas are the ideas associated with the atmosphere of liberty and omnipresence.

There are four spirits in the play: the spirits of fire, water, the earth and air. Prospero employs all these four classes of spirits in succession, but always through Ariel. The spirits of fire creates the fire on the ship, forcing Ferdinand to jump into the sea. Elsewhere these spirits play the part of a
will-O-wisp primarily to cause discomfort to Caliban. The spirits of water
are the sea nymphs, or the elves of brooks and standing lakes. The spirits of
the earth are instruments of punishment. Sometimes they torture Caliban as
apes that mow and chatter at him, bite him and pinch him. Later in Act IV,
Scene I, they appear “in the shape of dogs and hounds” and chase Caliban
and his fellow-plotters about the island. Prospero orders Ariel to make his
“goblins......grind their joints with dry convulsion” (IV, i, 259).

There are also spirits which chant delicious melodies and suggest
delightful dreams. Their obedience is the result solely of the magic power
of Prospero. They have no interest in the worldly intrigue that Prospero
has. All they want is their liberty. Ariel may have enormous supernatural
powers, and he may have at his command all the spirits of the play, but he
uses his powers and bids others use theirs at Prospero’s commands. While
commenting on the last phase of Shakespeare’s writing, Dowden states that
the spirit of these last plays is that of serenity which results from fortitude,
and the recognition of human frailty.

Shakespeare in this period is most like his own Prospero. In these
“Romances” and in the “fragments” the supernatural is present. Man does
not strive with circumstances and with his own passions in darkness, but
gods preside over human lives and fortunes and communicate by vision, by
oracles, through the elementary power of nature. Shakespeare seems to
have reached a pure and supreme elevation after having probed the
darkness of his mind. He seems to have ostracized whatever demons he
had in his soul. It is in this period of ethereal tranquility that he wrote The
Tempest.

Similarly, Kalidasa has made use of the supernatural element curse
more effectively in Sakuntalam. The curse is a blessing to King
Dushyanta because it makes him more qualified for perfect love, suffering
and sacrifice. It makes the noble Dushyanta nobler. The curse gives an
opportunity for self examination and the vindication of his uprightness in
Act V, which is brimming with dramatic interest. Dushyanta had a great
respect and solicitude for ascetics and women. Sakuntala, Sarngarva,
Saradvata and Gautami all from the hermitage of Kanva find no difficulty
in getting access to the palace. The virtuous monarch is, no doubt, curious
about the veiled beauty that is Sakuntala who stands before him with the
others from the penance-grove. But he knows that “one ought not to gaze
upon another’s wife!” (V, i, 183) and Sakuntala’s presentiment of fear
begins to gain ground. When Sangarava and Gautami inform the King, at
the instance of Kanva, about Sakuntala’s secret marriage with him and her
being quick with child, and straightway appeal to him to receive her, he
reacts saying “what is all this brought before me?” (V, i, 182). Naturally,
these words are ‘like fire indeed to Sakuntala’.

Kalidasa makes it abundantly clear that Dushyanta is a man of
courtesy and honour and he is incapable of deceit. However, it is possible
that it is just this substratum which offers a suitable breeding ground for a conflict culminating in forgetfulness, if there should be tendencies in character working in the opposite direction. Kalidasa does give several pointers towards such a psychic potential in Dushyanta through diverse characters in diverse contexts. Some critics, like Olden Berg have said that Durvasas’s curse brings an element of chance and incalculable happening in the development of the plot. Modern psychologists will say that the curse, in fact, is inevitable. Even if Durvasas had not been there, the curse would have been the curse of human conflict. It is an outward symbol of his inward propensity.

Kalidasa uses the supernatural machinery in the first act as King Dushyanta is in hunting poised to shoot an antelope. An ascetic coming upon the scene prevents him from doing so, informing the King that the animal belongs to the hermitage. The King is then invited to receive the hospitality of the hermitage. Although Kanva, the leader of the community is absent, his daughter Sakuntala is present to welcome the guests. Upon entering the hermitage, Dushyanta’s right arm throbs, indicating good luck. These supernatural elements perhaps indicate that human life is governed, at least to some extent, by destiny. The Divinity not only governs our life but takes interest in it. For instance, when Sakuntala is asked to stay at the royal palace till her delivery and thus is reduced to a humiliating position, Menaka comes and helps her. Moreover, gods take a keen interest in
effecting the reunion of Dushyanta and Sakuntala. Thus, humanity and Divinity work together in harmony. As Sakuntala moves out of the palace, lamenting her sad plight, a miracle suddenly happens. A celestial nymph from heaven descends and takes her away. This miracle is conveyed to the King by his ministers and those who have seen it with their very eyes. The King feels relieved that the matter has been settled through divine intervention.

Shakespeare and Kalidasa beautifully use supernatural elements through magic and curse. In the play The Tempest the supernatural works in every action through the magic of Prospero. The magic of the play is so developed and potent that it becomes the major reason for the play's enchantment. It humanizes the external universe, and some of the spirits of Prospero have traits of human personality. The comic side of ordinary life also contains enchantment through intoxication. The constantly grumpy Caliban is converted into a worshipper owing to intoxication, as he accepts the inebriated butler as his god. Stephano pours alcohol down the throat of Caliban, whom he confuses to be a dead moon-calf. Shakespeare makes Caliban, at his first taste of alcohol, break from prose into verse. The supernatural element gives the play its distinct tone and colour. It has the remoteness of nature in which distance from the real presents itself as nearness of the unseen. The island of the play is such that there is nothing
that can break the enchanted spell by endowing them with human tempers and sympathies and an occasional appearance of human will.

The Tempest and Sakuntalam are renowned dramas noted for their excellent plots, brilliant characterization, picturesque descriptions and the fusion of the heroic sentiments with the romantic. In the hands of Kalidasa and Shakespeare the simple tales assume mystic dimensions endowed with a delectable flair. The curse in Sakuntalam is an innovation which effectively brings out the grandeur of Kalidasa’s writing. The curse is pronounced immediately after the departure of Dushyanta. The King has left, and on the same day Priyamvada and Anusuya are gathering flowers for the worship of the ‘Saubhagyadevata’ of Sakuntala. On the same day the curse is pronounced and the King loses his memory of Sakuntala and of his own ring.

Sakuntala learns about the curse only after the reunion. Till then she suffers in silence and, therefore, in Act VII shines as an exalted, ideal Hindu wife, ever full of love and forgiveness. In the end sage Marica informs both the lovers about the curse. Their misgivings are removed when the curse is known to them and thus a perfect reunion is effected. In this way, the ring motif has been used by Kalidasa in a very effective manner.
From the very beginning, the ring appears to be ill-omened to the person possessing it. When in the first Act, Dushyanta holds it out, it reveals the truth about him when he wants to hide it. The King wants to give it, but it does not reach Sakuntala's finger. Priyamvada and Anusuya place confidence in the ring and it betrays their confidence. It slips away from the fingers at Sakuntala without her knowledge. In the royal court, when it is badly needed, it is not available and thus it puts Sakuntala in an altogether pathetic position. In the sixth act it comes back to Dushyanta's hands only to make him extremely sad.

The course of Dushyanta's sorrow has been very well depicted by Kalidasa. He wants to recreate his sight with the slender creepers which bear a faint resemblance to his beloved. He asks his friend the jester, who was not present at the time of repudiation, as to why he did not mention her ladyship's name, making an admission in the words, "having no more intelligence than a lump of clay" (VI, ii, 208). Vidusaka assures Dushyanta that, he believed all that he said about Sakuntala was a mere joke. Otherwise, the Vidusaka could have averted the crisis. Recalling Sakuntala's condition at the moment of rejection, Dushyanta feels he is consumed by a poisonous shaft. The Vidusaka assures lamenting that "the ring itself was a proof that there may be an unexpected meeting which is necessarily to take place" (V, ii, 146). The ring and Sakuntala's picture engage the attention of the King for a while. He feels that the ring is as
unlucky as he is, in as much as both are separated from Sakuntala. The ring has been so unfaithful to Sakuntala that she loses all confidence in it and therefore, at the time of the reunion, she refuses to accept it when it is offered to her by Dushyanta.

The admiration of Goethe and the title of the Shakespeare of India accorded by Sir William Jones, the first to translate *Sakuntalam* evidence Kalidasa's interest in his unfeigned devotion to the brahmanical creed of his time. The range of his technical knowledge is apparent in his skilful use of dances and songs to set off his dramas. He provides a rapturous song glorifying the summer season through the stage director and the actress in the Prologue to the *Sakuntalam*. The heroine shows her skill in movement in Act I.

Similarly, Prospero performs his magic feats in song and through the 'airy spirit', Ariel. His magic is essentially white magic free from trafficking with Satan and it is never used merely to amuse or frivolous entertainment, and it is more extensive and elevated than the magic of other contemporary play-magicians. Its virtuous and benevolent nature is firmly stressed, because a commonly-held rival theory maintained that all magicians were in league with Satan and that the spirits they commanded were evil spirits.
Philosophers generally agree that all created things are arranged in an orderly way and made complementary in function by God. There were detailed analogies between the physical universe (the macrocosm) and man (the microcosm). Thus, disorders in one corresponded to the disorders in the others. In *Julius Caesar* storms in heavens correspond to the perturbation in Brutus’ mind that led to the political assassination of Caesar. Celestial influences from the sun and the planets are constantly pouring on human beings. *The Tempest* is a vision of neo-platonism, so called because it was derived from a renewed study of Plato, Pythagoras, and their followers. Here the references are taken mainly from Cornelius Agrippa’s *Occult Philosophy*, a most popular book throughout the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries.

Music which is carried by air directly into a man’s ear and is intermingled with his vital spirits has a more powerful influence than anything communicated through the other senses. As the universe was created in harmony and maintained in musical tones and movements, music is apt to receive heavenly influences, and be accompanied by manifestations of divinity.

The island governed by the benevolent power of Prospero is in itself a type of the golden island, where no ill is ultimately allowed, where strike and friction are allayed and were everything is to be wrapped in a serene air atmosphere of celestial harmony. The terrible discord of the storm along
with its tempestuous noise of thunder and its fearful flash of lightening at
the very beginning of the play is indicative of the discord that has been
perpetrated in the microcosm. Prospero and Miranda have been deposed
from the lawful state and the deposers are now brought to Prospero’s
island. By music’s power of music he is able to sort out his problems one
by one and harmony is restored finally.

First, Ferdinand is to be secured as the husband for Miranda so that
the succession to the Dukedom of Milan from which he has been banished
by his brother may be secured to Prospero by the marriage of his
opponent’s son and his daughter. Ferdinand is accordingly shipwrecked on
a different part of the island away from his father. Alonso, Duke of Naples,
who once assisted Prospero’s brother Antonio is effecting Prospero’s
deposition of Antonio. Ferdinand is immediately led by music. His
comments on hearing the invitation song indicate that the music which
alayed the storm is now drawing him almost against his will farther into
the island by its power. The music has the power of enchantment, guiding
Ferdinand to Prospero’s cave. It breaks off and begins again to suggest to
Ferdinand a sense of direction and leads him to Miranda.

Commenting on the supernatural content of the play, Charles Lamb
remarks:

Spirits and fairies can not be represented,
They cannot even be painted and they can
Only be believed. But the elaborate and anxious
Provision of scenery which the luxury of the age
Demands in these cases works a quiet contrary
Effect to what is intended. The garden of Eden
With our first parent in it, is not more
Impossible to be shown on a stage than the
Enchanted Isle, with its no less interesting
First settlers. (Muir 116)

The musical chiming of the storms is accompanied by the ordered
dance of the spirits in Ariel’s song. Ariel’s music leads Ferdinand to
Prospero’s cell, and his song ‘Full fathom five’ announces the theme of
metamorphosis which pervades the whole play. Ferdinand looks upon
Miranda in greater wonder as ‘the goddess on whom these airs attend’.
Later in the same scene Ariel plays solemn music, which lulls to sleep all
the company except Antonio and Sebastian, who, presumably, have no
music in their souls. The harmony, and the blessing devised in the masque
are symbolized together with chastity and fruitfulness in the ‘graceful
dance’ of the reapers and nymphs. The approach of Caliban and his
conspirators rudely shatters the harmony into a ‘confused noise. The
solemn and heavenly music draws Alonso and his courtiers to Prospero’s cell and slowly restores their distracted minds to calm and sanity. Cutting across the solemnity, comes Ariel’s joyous lyric of freedom. It heralds the change not only of his own state, but the freedom of the others from Prospero’s spell and from the slavery of their own sinful passions.

Shakespeare has aptly made Ariel’s very first speech characteristic of him. After he has described the manner in which he has raised the storm and produced its harmless consequences one can find that Ariel is discontented that though he has been freed, from a cruel confinement, he is still bound to obey Prospero and to execute any command imposed upon him.

Shakespeare and Kalidasa have introduced the heroes as rulers—Ferdinand a prince and Dushyanta a King. They love, suffer, sacrifice and experience a happy ending. Prospero the magician ruler is unusual. His magic does not degrade men and its purpose is to restore and exalt them, to increase their knowledge of self, and to raise them as it were, on the scale of perfection in terms of neo-Platonism. Thus, the changes he brings about are always ultimately from disorder to order, from storm to calm both in the universe and in the minds of men. Ignorance turns to self-knowledge and evil to good. In his Kingdom men come to knowledge of themselves and fulfil themselves within the divinely appointed order. Nowhere else does Shakespeare display so full an awareness of the neo-Platonic
conception of its powers nor employ it as so comprehensive and integral a part of the play as in The Tempest.

Magicians are normally divided into two classes as follows:

i. Magicians who have at their command the service of superior intelligence.

ii. Necromancers, wizards and witches who enter into a league with or submit to the instrument of these powers.

Prospero belongs to the first class, the witches of Macbeth belong to the second. In The Tempest Prospero operates through interior agents through the medium of Ariel, a spirit of the air, who, despite hating commands, loves Prospero enough to do his bidding. Shakespeare gives due prominence to Prospero’s magic books, wand and robes. The book, of course, takes the prime place. Prospero praises them above his dukedom as he declares, “I’ll to my book for yet, ere supper time, must I perform much business appertaining” (III, i, 94-97). Later, when he relinquishes his art, he says that “and deeper that did ever plummet sound I’ll drown my book” (V, i, 56-57).

Caliban is aware of the value of these books and the strength of Prospero. While he incites Stephano and Trinculo to murder his master, he tells them to remember “first to posses his books”. (III, ii, 90) He knows that without them “he’s but a sot” (III, ii, 91). Next to the books, Prospero
values his magic wand as an instrument of power. When Ferdinand leaps into the sea to escape the fire, he yells, "hell is empty and all the devils are here" (II, i, 72). When Prospero finally abjures his magic, he apostrophizes the spirits of water. The spirits of the earth or goblins are usually employed by Prospero as instruments of punishment. Caliban is well aware of them, since he is mostly at the receiving end of their punishment. Later in the play, they appear, "in shape of dogs and hounds" and hunt Caliban and his co-conspirators about the island—Prospero orders Ariel thus:

Go, charge my goblins that they
Grind their joints, with dry convulsion;
Shorten up their sinews with aged tramps,
And more pinch-spotted make them,
Than pard, or cat 'O' mountain. (IV, i, 256-259)

Just as the ancient drama was a part of a religious ritual (honouring Dionysus), so there is a religious aspect in the classical Hindu drama. The play would have been enhanced throughout by dances and songs. Goethe was so impressed by this and he added such a prologue to his Faust. In order to understand how far Shakespeare and Kalidasa exceeded other writers, a comparison of their supernatural characters is necessary. In the other pieces of literature, ghosts, witches and devils are merely monsters whose purpose is only to scare. However, the supernatural elements of
Shakespeare and Kalidasa are almost flesh-and-blood characters bringing about the action of the play. Another point that sets them apart from other writers is their refusal to use the supernatural for its own sake and not for the purpose of the plot. The demands of the people convinced lesser writers to introduce supernatural element that had no connection with the theme. But, Shakespeare and Kalidasa handled and portrayed old beliefs always in the interest of their plots and because of this, they set themselves above all other writers.

Kalidasa introduces supernatural elements admirably through the celestial nymph Mishrakesi (Sanumati) in Act VI, scene ii. Like Prospero's magic in *The Tempest*, in *Sakuntalam* Durvasas's curse plays a vital role. It is for the consummation of this role that the ring episode is included. The spring festival in honour of Kama (god of love) is a boisterous celebration called 'Holi'. Dushyanta is not behaving like a tyrant while forbidding the celebration of the spring festival. His grief has actually prevented the coming of spring to his mind. The celestial nymph Mishrakesi enters Dushyanta's pleasure garden through the path of heaven and she becomes pitiful on seeing the plight of Dushyanta. She says that while she was guarding the Apsaratirtha (the lake of nymphs) during the pilgrim season, she was requested by Menaka to look after her daughter, Sakuntala. Though it is spring season, she wonders why there are no preparations for the spring festivities in the pleasuregarden. The palace appears to bear a
deserted and dismayed look. She becomes invisible through her magic
power and overhears the conversation of the two female keepers of the
garden.

The two female garderners are overwhelmed by the maddening sight
of the neglect of the blossoming mango buds and the trees blooming in the
spring. They keep exchanging their views telling how their emotions are
‘stirred’. As they try to gather mango blossoms, the chamberlain of the
King enters there and takes them to task for gathering the mango blossoms
as the spring-festivities have been prohibited. The chamberlain then tells
them that the King has become melancholic ever since he sighted the ring
that a fisherman had found and restored to him. The sight at the ring has
awakened his memory of his marriage to Sakuntala and his cruel
repudiation of her. Both Sakuntala and Dushyanta do not know anything
about the curse. To her, who is ‘virtue itself in human form’, Dushyanta’s
reaction is calamitous. For Dushyanta, whom the curse has rendered
innocent, any talk about his marriage with the lady standing before him is
outrageous. Sakuntala’s virtue on the one hand and the vindication of
Dushyanta’s righteous conduct on the other engage the attention of the
dramatist. He does justice to both.

Under the influence of the curse, Dushyanta repudiates Sakuntala,
not blindly nor deliberately but with a swing of his mind between his own
connection and the possibilities of truth in the pleadings of Sakuntala and
her people before him. Sakuntala’s veil is liberally removed, but the veil of curse continues to lie over Dushyanta’s mind though, across its translucent structure, he could perceive something which is both indistinct and indefinite. The conflict of his mind is best expressed in the following words:

While I am doubtful whether this unblemished
Beauty which is thus brought near to me may
Or may not have been formerly married by me: verily
I neither can enjoy nor forsake her,
Like a bee at the close of night,
The Kunda flower filled with dew. (V, ii, 86 -90)

Dushyanta’s firmness of attitude inspite of all charges, accusation and an attempt on the part of Sakuntala to convince him through evidence like the ring and so on, is revealed in his words addressed to her, “Good woman, Dushyanta’s conduct is well-known yet this is not found in it” (V, i, 190). Such traits of his character as a high sense of duty and righteousness are brought out in this context evoking one’s admiration for him. Finding himself in a strait between these two virtues, he declares, “In a doubt as to whether I be infatuated or she speaks falsely, shall I forsake my own wife or defile myself by accepting a strange lady? (V, i, 191). He is on the side of a righteous conduct.
Thus, the V Act throws abundant light on the greatness of Dushyanta's character, the nobility of which the dramatist intends to sustain by making the curse responsible for what otherwise would be deemed a flaw. The King shines in the full glory of a virtuous monarch with unaffected purity of conduct. The curse preserves the purity of his character and conduct, and adds to the artistic construction and the design of the plot. At the same time it is significant that the curse has an antidote in the sight of a token ornament. The curse is an event that causes repudiation of Sakuntala by Dushyanta, bringing about separation between them. Its end is not separation but true love resulting from suffering and sacrifice during separation. The union between Dushyanta and Sakuntala is brought about, through a token ornament. By virtue of its intimacy of association, the signet-ring is chosen to play the role of an effective instrument of union.

The curse causes separation, the ring removes it, but not at a time when it is expected to do so, that is, when Sakuntala tries to produce it before Dushyanta as an evidence of his former love. In that predicament, it is found to be missing. But when it is restored, it is too late, because the unfortunate repudiation has taken place by that time. Psychologically and spiritually the loss of the ring matters as much as its regain. But from the point of view of dramatic interest the loss of the ring is more significant.
There is nothing artificial about either the loss or the gain. They happen as a matter of course and in the most natural way.

Priyamvada and Anasuya, like good friends, feel that informing Sakuntala about the curse would be too cruel but, intelligent as they are, they know fully well that her interests would be best guarded only when they make her conscious of a token with her which she could use if the King was slow to recognize her. This very idea is a shock to Sakuntala. What would have happened to her if she had been told about the curse. How would it affect the dramatic charm if she had been made to know in clear terms the nature of the association of the King with the curse? It is the genius of Kalidasa that could conceive a course of action as represented. Absence of all knowledge about the curse and of the part the ring could play in the removal of the effect of the curse, gives a new significance to the ring-episode and a beautiful turn to the entire play. It gives the loss of the ring a naturalness and enhances the value of the token-ornament as the crowning feature of Sakuntala’s story.

In the beginning of Act IV that is, in the scene where the chief of the city police and two policemen recover the ring from a fisherman, one gets a glimpse into some sharp practices of those times. Besides, the light talk among the characters here provides some amusement which, in the wake of the gravity of the earlier events, is most welcome.
When Dushyanta sees the ring, his veil of forgetfulness is removed and now he realizes that what Sakuntala said was true and that he was not correct in repudiating her. The curse being what it is, even before seeing the ring, the King says, “True, I do not recollect this daughter of the sage now repudiated to be my wife; nevertheless my heart being powerfully agitated almost persuades me to believe her story” (V,ii, 278-280). An indication of Dushyanta being already under the influence of the curse is found in his melancholic reaction to Hamsapadika’s song. Later, the appearance of Sakuntala and the chance of his marriage with her son aggravate the condition as to create a conflict in his mind. Now with the recovery of the ring, both the melancholy and the conflict take the form of remorse and this remorse is consistent with Dushyanta’s moral and sympathetic understanding. It is a penance for the sake of Sakuntala.

Kalidasa vividly describes the course of Dushyanta’s penance. He has no mood to enjoy even the spring-festival and hence it is forbidden. As if in obedience to his command, the vernal trees put forth no bloom and the voice of the cuckoo, the herald of the spring season, falters in the throat. It looks as if nature shares with the King his sorrow and regret. Ever since he saw the ring and remembered that he had married Sakuntala and had abandoned her under a delusion, he has been remorseful. He abhors everything pleasurable. He spends his nights without even closing his eyes. When, out of politeness, he addresses the usual gentle words to the ladies
of his palace, he blunders in their names and becomes for a long while disconcerted with shame.

In *The Tempest* Prospero is a magician but all that he performs is wrought by means of Ariel. By forgiving the sinners, he brings a happy ending to the play.

It is a dictum of Sanskrit critics that there is no charm in love unless it is sweetened by separation. The curse occurs exactly in Act IV. Its development is seen in Act V and in Act IV, all the bitter consequences of the separation lead to utter disappointment. On account of the King’s distressed state of mind, the spring festival is cancelled.

The King then moves to the jasmine bower where he has painted a portrait of Sakuntala on the drawing board. Mishrakesi follows him invisibly. She hides behind the vines to have a good look at the portrait so that she can later inform Sakuntala about the great love her lord bears her. The King pines for Sakuntala and recounts to Madhavya his very first meeting with her; he is sad that Madhavya was not present when he repudiated his beloved. He recalls Sakuntala’s pathetic plight when she was harshly disowned by him.

Madhavya then asks the King when he gave the signet-ring to Sakuntala. The King replies that when he was leaving for the capital after the consummation of their marriage, he slipped the ring onto Sakuntala’s
finger as she had asked him when he would take her to his palace. But unfortunately, the ring slipped off her finger as she was worshipping at the Sachithirtha in the Ganges. It was devoured by a fish. It was caught by a fisherman and when he carved it open, he found it in the fish. The police force arrested the fisherman mistaking him for stealing the valuable ring. That is why Sakuntala could not produce the ring at his court to prove her marriage to him.

Once Matali, the charioteer of Indra appears before Dushyanta and informs that he has come there on orders of Indra, the god of heavens to take Dushyanta along with him to fight against a brood of titans known as Kalanemi. Indra’s invitation to Dushyanta to rout the demoniac brood of Kalanemi is a great tribute to the superhuman valour of Dushyanta. The King then sends word to his minister, Pishuna and orders him to attend to the affairs connected with the Kingdom while he carries out the mission of Indra to destroy the evil demons tormenting the gods. Matali asks the King to mount Indra’s chariot. As soon as the King gets seated on the chariot, Matali drives the chariot through the sky to the world of Indra.

Shakespeare and Kalidasa include supernatural elements in order to make the characters realize the importance of the values of life. Honoured by the King of gods, the victorious Dushyanta is on his way back to the capital flying in the air across a heavenly region, which is said to be the
second step of Vishnu. Kalidasa gives a beautiful description of the flight in the clouds the rims of the wheels are bedewed through the interstices of its spokes, and the horses are lapped in lightning flashes. Equally interesting is the description of the world of men below as it appears to the eyes of Dushyanta.

Mountain Hemakuta of the Kimpurusas is a place where sage Marica practises penance along with his wife Aditi. Dushyanta and Matali the charioteer, descend on this mountain to pay a visit to the holy retreat of Marica. To Dushyanta, it is a ‘place more delightful than heaven’. He is surprised to see a young boy sporting with a lion’s whelp in the holy abode of Marica. His heart inclines towards the boy as if it were his own son and sees in him the marks of universal loyalty. It is only a great poet who can give expression in such beautiful words to the delight caused by children. What transpired to be a meeting between Dushyanta and Sakuntala through physical attraction is transformed into a union of partners in married life through a son. The ideal of love in married life depends, for its realization, on the birth of a child. Kalidasa illustrates it in the play. He forestalls what the great Bhavabhuti declares. “A child is the acme of married life. It is the most perfect bond of the parents and that unique tie of joy....” (Krishna Sastri 17). Kalidasa has given the most artistic and sublime expression to this idea of love in the drama.
Dushyanta, however, gets the clue that the boy's mother is Sakuntala. Of course, these unusual situations create a ground of hope in him and the last one is positive enough. A keen insight of the dramatist into the workings of a grief-stricken mind which, on account of the intensity of grief, has endless doubts about even the readily available means of removing that grief. The amulet on the hand of the boy which slips down and is found by Dushyanta, clears all doubts, for when it falls to the ground, no one but the parents or the boy himself might touch it, as intended by the holy Marica at the time of the birth rites of the boy. With great delight Dushyanta embraces the boy. The grief-stricken Sakuntala makes her appearance before Dushyanta now. Of course, he too has suffered from pangs of conscience and remorse. But Sakuntala, as a product of private suffering and self-sacrifice, seems to be greater than Dushyanta. However, both are purified by suffering and their minds are ripe with true love, a state in which all individual differences would vanish. The very self is sacrificed for the sake of love and the unity is realized by 'breaking through the bonds of selfishness'. Infact, the evolution of love into the true, the beautiful and the good is the theme of the play and Kalidasa's success in tracing it is indubitable and masterly.

In *Sakuntalam* the curse and in *The Tempest* the magic play as the supernatural elements and speed up the action of the dramas. Magic was a controversial subject in Shakespeare's day. In Italy in 1600, Giordana
Bruno was burnt at the stake for his occult studies, and John Dee, an Englishman and student of supernatural phenomena died in disgrace in 1608. Outside the Catholic world, in protestant England too, where Shakespeare wrote The Tempest, magic was a taboo. However, Cornelius Agrippa a scientist and John Dee described a kind of magic similar to Prospero's one based on the sixteenth century rationality and divinity rather than on the occult.

When King James ascended the throne, Dee found himself under attack for his beliefs, but was able to defend himself successfully by explaining the divine nature of his profession. So Shakespeare is also careful to make the distinction that Prospero is a rational and not an occult, magician. He does this by providing a contrast to him in Sycorax. Sycorax is said to have worshipped the devil and been full of "earthy and abhorred commands" she is unable to control Ariel, who is "too delicate" for such dark tasks. By virtue of his rational goodness Prospero is able to control Ariel whereas Sycorax can only trap him in a tree. Sycorax's magic is frequently described as destructive and Prospero seeks to set things right in this world through his white magic. Once that is done, he renounces it, setting Ariel free. Through the use of his art, Prospero is able to bring Ariel, whom he releases from the imprisonment of Sycorax, under his control. By transcending into the realm of the supernatural, Prospero brings about an inversion of the natural order. Whereas Prospero is but a mere
mortal, Ariel is beyond humanity at the spiritual end of the natural hierarchy. However, Ariel is liable to abuse the authority that Prospero possesses, as there might be a human temptation for Prospero to use Ariel to exact his revenge on Alonso's company, who are effectively at his mercy. This is a test for Prospero's test, not only in his treatment of the court party but also in his treatment of Ariel. He had to exhibit benevolence and temperance before he could pass this test. Initially, there are lapses in Prospero's control over his anger. When Ariel asks for his freedom, Prospero replies in a harsh tone: "If thou more murmurs't, I will rend an oak and peg, thee in his knotty entrails, till thou had howl'd away twelve winters" (III, ii, 117).

It is only when Prospero acquires the qualities necessary to control his passions with reason and makes it clear that his purpose is to educate his enemies and not to take revenge that he wins the respect of the audience. Ariel acts as a source of a great entertainment for the audience as he goes about his work for Prospero, especially when he proceeds to undermine Caliban's murder plot with great relish and excitement as he leads the intoxicated conspirators through a filth mantled pool, symbolic of their bestiality. The antimasque of the spirits in the form of dogs and hounds, which hunt them down is also symbolic of bestiality.
The juxtaposition of a spirit of the elements with a miscreant of the earth in the form of Caliban highlights bestiality. The subjugation of both creatures is reminiscent of forced colonialism. Caliban would rather be his ‘own King’ while Ariel repeatedly asks for ‘my-liberty’. While the bestial Caliban responds to Prospero on a sensory and sensual level and operates on his baser instincts, Ariel rationally obeys the instructions of his master in the pursuit of justice. Such a contrast between a beast and a spirit reflects the conflict between the passion and reason within Prospero’s own inner nature.

It has been noted that The Tempest seems to have been written when the sensation of the Virginia expedition had hardly died down. At first the ship, the Sea Adventure, in which George Somers sailed in May 1609, was reported to have been lost. In the summer of 1610 the news of the ship’s safely reached England. The opening scene of The Tempest seems to reproduce the storm and shipwreck, which were the current topic of the day. Sylvester Jourdain, who had been on board the Sea Adventure, had in the meantime published his tract A Discovery of Bermudas and one may logically imagine that Shakespeare has read it. In fact, he caught the popular enthusiasm which was running high and the outcome was The Tempest. Shakespeare humorously alludes to the endless speculations about the future government of the colonies. Gonzalo’s discourse on the ideal of commonwealth may not be any substantial contribution to the
solution of the problem, but it certainly reflects the new movement of thought and interest. Shakespeare also refers to traveller’s tales in The Tempest which, however extravagant, were listened to with bated breath.

So, Goazalo says,

When we were boys who would
Believe that there were mountains
Dew-lappid like bulls,
Whose throats hanging at’em
Wallets of flesh?
Or that there were such men
Whose heads stood in their breast?
Which now we find each putter
Out of five for one will bring
We Good warrant of. (III, ii, 44-50)

Gonzalo might be paying an unconscious tribute to the travellers of his days. In the last two lines there is a reference to the insurance against the risks of a voyage. In those days sailors used to bring home from abroad one or two ‘natives’, American Indians and monsters. They were exhibited in streets, or at public fairs. So Trinculo when he chances upon Caliban lying flat on the ground, says,
Where I in England now,
As once I was and had
But this fish painted,
Not a holiday fool there
But would give a piece of silver.
There would this Monster make man,
Any strong beast there makes when
They will not give a don it to receive
Lame beggar, they will layout ten to
See a dead Indian .(II, ii, 28-32)

Thus, the whole play is under the influence of the supernatural. The structure of the play itself is in keeping with this supernatural tone and colour.

Words are inadequate to describe the noblest and the loveliest poetic creation of Sakuntalam and The Tempest by the immortal bard Kalidasa and Bard of Avon. It is often supposed that the Jataka stories suggested the ring episode to Kalidasa. Moreover, it is well known that a ring was often used as a token or recognition of love. Even in the Ramayana, Rama gives his ring to Hanuman. Kalidasa might have picked up the idea of the ring from the popular tales and not from any particular story. The Tempest
undoubtedly has the basic parameters of a romantic play. It has the images
of the sea with its ability to harm through tempests and shipwrecks. It is at
the beginning of the play that the royal entourage faces its tremendous
upheavals. One can remember that Prospero and the little Miranda had
already faced the torments of the sea twelve years earlier. Since The
Tempest is stage managed by Prospero’s spirits, there is an undeniable
image of the supernatural and the unreal. It is true that Shakespeare and
Kalidasa use supernatural elements with the prime motive of achieving
union, reconciliation and a happy ending, yet it is the supernatural which
prevails throughout the plays. Kalidasa’s Sakuntalam has the same
features of the supernatural as used by Shakespeare. It is wellknown that
the Elizabethans were immensely superstitious and believed in ghosts and
magic. Even royal personages like Queen Elizabeth and King James I
strongly believed that witches and demons affected the fortunes of men.
This made Shakespeare to introduce ghost and witches in his plays. In the
modern age the supernatural may appear as an aberration and may be
condemned as an improbability. Although the supernatural is not essential
for the action of a play as it is in Macbeth or in A Midsummer Night’s
Dream, Shakespeare uses it in The Tempest to provide an atmosphere of
enchantment. Although the shipwreck could have been caused by a natural
storm, Shakespeare lets Ariel cause it instead with sole purpose of adding
the supernatural to the play. These supernatural elements present a masque
for the entertainment of Ferdinand and Miranda and condemn the sinners of the play.

One can find numerous similarities in Kalidasa's *Sakuntalam* and Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Both dramas have love at first sight, and supernatural elements and even the portrayals of characters have a close resemblance with each other. For example, the heroines Sakuntala and Miranda, are of royal birth. They grow up in complete ignorance of their birth in the beginning and they are saved by fortune in the end. They fall in love with the King Dushyanta and Prince Ferdinand respectively not even knowing their status. Owing to the supernatural machinery they all suffer but later in the end there is a great reunion in which the long-lost people are found. Although there are conflicts, they overcome by forgiveness. Kalidasa's dramas achieve their aesthetic and moral impact not through conflicts of individuals but through the perennial human conflict between duty and desire. His dramatic exposition is rooted in the ancient Indian scheme called the "four human pursuits" (Purushartha) and is divided into the worldly duty (dharma), the material gain (artha), the pleasure (Kama), and the supermundane concern for liberation from worldly existence (moksa). In the two plays *Sakuntalam* and *The Tempest* the hero and the heroine are the focal dramatic vehicles for conveying the states of minds of the dramatists. The heroes of the plays are royal personages whose character is expressed according to the norms of the classical society and
the dramatic theory. In *The Tempest* Prospero’s magic brings together Ferdinand and Miranda but he finds that this union is too early. He is afraid that too easy winnings may make the prize cheap. He, therefore wants to test the constancy and sincerity of Ferdinand’s love. Hence, the idea of imposing on him the task of bearing logs. The sufferings of the lovers in *The Tempest* and *Sakuntalam* are equally painful. The sufferings of Miranda in a lonely island, the acid test of her love, Sakuntala’s separation and repudiation are very pathetic events. But Sakuntala’s state of separation is heavier than Miranda’s, since Sakuntala is completely repudiated by her husband whom she married by ‘Gandharva Vivaha’. However, in both dramas, every sin is pardoned and all are reunited. In order to bring such a dramatic end the supernatural becomes vital and it activates the action of the play energetically and interestingly.