CHAPTER IV

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Commenting on metaplays, Lionel Abel says in his book Metatheatre: A new view of Dramatic Form (193) that a play-within-the play was originally only a device employed on the stage of a metatheatre and not a literary genre. However, he extends the definition even to the plays which do not use a play-within – the play device. The plays, which he calls metatheatrical, have one common characteristic, that is,

All of them are theatre pieces about life seen as already theatricalised. The persons who appear on the stage are inherently dramatic and it is quite possible that myth, legend or past literature has dramatized them. These persons of drama are acutely aware of their own theatricality (59).

Abel continues, “Only that life which has acknowledged its inherent theatricality can be made interesting on stage” (60). The playwright is also obliged to acknowledge “in the very structure of the play that it was his imagination which controlled the event from the beginning to end” (61). Abel adds that transcending time, the characters in metatheatre, “venture far from their creators into other works by other authors” and become
"themselves dramatists, capable of making other situations dramatic besides the ones they originally appeared in" (62).

Of all the European and Indian dramatists, it is believed, Shakespeare and Kalidasa are the only dramatists who understood the terrific possibilities of what is called metatheatre today. Both of them constantly experimented with theatre by employing a play within the play device among other devices. Almost all the important characters of Shakespeare and Kalidasa are playwrights themselves for they have the capacity not only to dramatize their lives but also those of others. In every Sanskrit play, the notion of character coincides with what action is thought proper to the stage. The hero is a hero because he superintends the play’s main action, which is always suitable to his character, and enjoys its fruit. Underlying this notion of plot is a theory of action that, in its structure, purposiveness and fructability, has been taken to resemble a theory of ritual action.

In English drama the introduction (or exposition) creates the tone, gives the setting, introduces some of the characters and supplies other facts necessary to the understanding of the play such as events in the story supposed to have taken place before the part of the action included in the play, because a play, like an epic, is likely to plunge into the middle of things.
Sakuntalam, a play in seven acts and The Tempest, a play in five acts strongly carry the metatheatre device. Both are the last plays of the dramatists. The plays bear the stamp of maturing in all respects. Though the plot is taken from the Mahabharata, Kalidasa has introduced a major innovation in the signet ring, which transforms the whole plot making into a metadrama of perception. The two aspects of sringararasā, namely sambhogā and Viyoga, which Kalidasa convincingly portrays in Act I – II, and IV – VII, respectively, can be regarded as the two different roles played by the main rasa, that is, sringara. Kalidasa’s poetical genius and dramatic skill have attained perfection in this play and it has also received the highest praises from all over the world. This prosaic story, wanting in those dramatic elements which give effect and life to a play, has been dramatized by Kalidasa with such dramatic skill and mastery over his art that he is looked upon as the Shakespeare of India. Reading this matchless drama, Sakuntalam, one can relish its renewed taste, and become enraptured with its beauties. Goethe’s words that ‘the soul is charmed, enraptured, feasted and fed’, will be literally true, if applied to this illustrious production of Kalidasa.

A poet, to be truly great, must posses the faculty of imagination in an eminent degree. This was the case with Shakespeare. One of the watermarks of Shakespeare’s art is that he passes from the real world to the world of drama, which, in its sweep, carries the real world along with it,
extending it in accordance with the requirements of his art. In *The Tempest*, Shakespeare seems to go a step further and moves from the world of tragedy that he has already created to the world of romance, retaining all the tragic elements which can be fitted into the new world of the play. The opening scene of *The Tempest* seems to remind the world of tragedy in which the tragic heroes drift, as it were, in a wind-swept sea and meet their doom. Dover Wilson says, “It is as if Shakespeare had packed his old tragic vision of life into one brief scene before bestowing his new vision upon us” (Wilson 49). The tragic heroes pay no attention to the warnings sounded by the boatswain and so is shipwrecked. They drift and find themselves into a situation which borders on tragedy. In the next scene Prospero pacifies Miranda by telling her that not a soul has perished in the storm he raised with the help of his magic. While the characters in this play do not die and will reappear in their physical forms, the character in the tragedies, according to Shakespeare reappear as immortal beings, though in the process of their becoming immortal, they have to shed their mortal coils. The dramatic romances are, therefore, extended metaphors of Shakespeare’s tragedies. The final theatre of the world of romance, thus, emerges as metatheatre of the tragic theatre.

Miranda’s statement “If by your Art, My dearest father, you have / put the wild waters in this roar, allay them” (I,i,1-2) is significant. The seeming tragedy of human life is, according to Shakespeare, nothing but a
divine play. Shakespeare plays the role of the Supreme Creator in his artistic world of enormous range and extent. As Prospero, the magician elevates himself to a non-mundane or semi-divine level, so Shakespeare, the artist too raises himself to a level where he is endowed with the capacity to conduct himself with providential care. He is the supreme god of his creative world and his ways are inscrutable.

The “wild waters in this roar” (I,ii,2) portrayed by the artist is only an awesome appearance invested with the power to rouse fear and pity in the sensitive spectator, who almost identifies himself with the situation as well with the characters caught up in that situation. The fear and pity roused in the actor as well as in the spectator are meant to lead both to the supreme perception of the moment at which tragic suffering attains the balance of intensity because all violent emotions are spent and the preceding calamity has acted as a mighty leveller culminating in calm of mind. Miranda, who plays the role of the spectator, is unaware of the balance achieved by the tragic artist and also of the ensuring serenity. Miranda is not the spectator herself, but a character in the play, playing the role of the spectator. This metadramatic device is used by Shakespeare to provide his readers / spectators with the necessary clues to interpret his tragedies.
Human love may take any number of forms, but it finds its highest expression in the love of a man and a woman. Such love, in which two hearts melt into one, involves the highest degree of intensity, and it provides a more complete union than is found in other modes of relation, such as those of a servant with a master, a parent with a child, or a friend with friend. Amorous love joins two lovers on the same level in mutual satisfaction is called srngara-rasa. This, equally coupled with intensity, makes possible a level of rasa unknown elsewhere. However, because of its finite basis, this worldly love ultimately gives rise to feelings of disgust and version. The limited phenomenal rasa must finally be transmuted into the transcendent absolute Rasa. The Rasa-Sutra of Bharata brings out the concept of metadrama because, according to Bharata, rasa is not something that can be portrayed on the stage. The dramatist concerned can only portray the appropriate bhavas. Rasa, in other words, is an effect and, as an effect, it can give rise to something savoured by the connoisseur (rasika) and can be referred to as a meta drama/ metatheatre that emerges out of the drama that is shown on the stage with the help of bhavas.

In Sakuntalam Dusyanta's longing for Sakuntala is not shared by the spectator. But this state of mind, more deeply felt, dominates all other emotions. Now it belongs to both the character and the spectator. But there is a difference and the difference is this: Once the characters experience the longings, they reach the height of emotion. But the Spectator can go farther
and in a sense, deeper. For when love is awakened in the spectator, it is not like the love that the original character feels. According to Abhinavagupta and most later writers, the actor does not experience rasa, nor does the original character, nor even the author.

Rasa, thus, implies distance and without this aesthetic distance, there cannot exist literature. That is what lies behind Abinava’s famous comparison of drama to a dream. In both cases nothing in the real world happens or is affected. All the major critics of classical Indian literature admit the existence of rasa. Kalidasa, in his Sakuntalam represents the roles played by Srngara.

Abel defines a metaplay as “the necessary form for dramatizing characters who, having full self-consciousness, cannot but participate in their own dramatization”(78). Giving the examples of Falstaff and Prospero, Abel says, “Falstaff is nothing if not a dramatist, for not only is he witty himself, but he is the cause of wit in others” (82). About Prospero, Abel says, “There never was a playwright who provide better served his theatre with an island, his villainous brother who has wronged him and is now at his mercy, a choreographer spirit, and the monstrous Caliban”(69). For Abel, Jacques in As You Like It is Shakespeare’s philosopher of metatheatre because it is he who articulates Shakespeare’s vision that “all the world is a stage”. Almost every important character acts at some
moment like a playwright on another. Beckett’s plays are metatheatrical because all that happens on the stage can only be seen in terms of a theatrical performance.

While commenting on Shakespeare’s handling of language, Dr. Johnson says that Shakespeare is “one of the original masters of our language” [i.e. English] (Enright and Chickera 140). Shakespeare is, indeed, an original master of language, but at the same time, he is an original writer of plays, too. Shakespeare chose theatre as his career and as he went on writing plays for performance, he evolved a method that is unique to him. He has the capacity to see life as a divine play. According to V.Y. Kantak this view of life,

is a source of the comic but it is also a serious mode of apprehending reality possible only to the poised. . . . . . . The renaissance man, it has been said, was engaged in modifying the ceremonial conception of life to create a historical conception, and the historical view expresses life as drama. This imaging of life as a drama played out on the stage of the world has serious implications for an understanding of Shakespeare’s tragedy as well as his comedy, and is something which is always felt as still to be explored (Muir 22-23).
The Tempest heads off the first folio, printed as the first of Shakespeare comedies. It is known that the play was presented at the court of James I, which probably accounts for its masque-like qualities. The play seems to be fundamentally plotless. Its one outer event is the magically included storm of the opening scene, which rather oddly gives the play its title. Wilson Knight says, “He (Shakespeare) spins his plot from his own poetic world entirely, simplifying the main issues of his total work-plots, poetry, persons” (21). The Tempest patterned with storm and music is, thus, an interpretation of Shakespeare’s world. If there is any literary source at all it may be Montaigne’s Essay on the Cannibals, which echoed in Caliban’s name not in his nature. Yet Montaigne, as in Hamlet, was more a provocation than a source, and Caliban is anything but the celebration of the natural man.

The Tempest is neither a discourse on colonialism nor any mystical treatment. It seems to be an experimental play prompted ultimately by Marlowe’s Dr.Faustus. Evan Anisimor says, “Prospero in The Tempest is a Faustian type in search of magical means to control the secrets of Nature and to control people through her mighty forces” (64). Prospero, Shakespeare’s Magus, carries a name that is the Italian translation of Faustus, which Simon Magus The Gnostic took, when he went to Rome. With Ariel, a spirit or angel (the name is Hebrew for “the lion of God”) as
his familiar rather than Marlowe's Mephistopheles, Prospero is Shakespeare's anti-Faust, and a final transcending of Marlowe.

In all probability Shakespeare thought of challenging Marlowe and rising above him in public esteem and he seems to be prophetic when he says in his Sonnet 86,

Was it the proud full sail of his great verse,
Bound for the prize of all too precious you,
That did my ripe thoughts in my brain in hearse,
Making their tomb the womb where in
They grew?(1-4)

The sonnet in which he appears to be apprehensive of Marlowe's rivalry is written in the past tense, which makes the reader think that Shakespeare wrote this Sonnet soon after Marlowe's death in 1593. Emboldened by the encouragement given to him by the environment, Shakespeare must have thought of preparing his own poetics a sort of theatrical programme to guide himself in his dramatic projects. In A Midsummer Night's Dream, which was in all probability composed around 1593 or early 1594, Shakespeare, as has already been noted, lays the foundation of his poetics by glorifying "the shaping power of imagination" (V, i,12-17) as the fundamental requisite without which no poet nor dramatist can compose
poems or plays. Shakespeare himself reinforces this idea when he writes, "Such tricks hath strong imagination, that if it would but apprehend some joy, it comprehends some bringer of that joy" (V, i, 18-20).

Subsequently, Shakespeare consciously or unconsciously went on adding to the programme of poetics as in As You Like It and Hamlet. The expression in the Sonnet 86, "the spirit taught to write" seems to imply that Shakespeare seems to disbelieve in the efficacy of demoniac inspiration. Therefore, if he looked upon Marlowe’s creative power as black magic he wanted his own to be governed by white magic, which is given full expression in his last play The Tempest which, in a sense, represents all his previous works—comedies, tragedies and history plays.

If Faustus is the self-portrait of Marlowe, Prospero can be said to be a self-representation of Shakespeare. Prospero is projected by Shakespeare as a dramatist, stage-director and an actor, who gives a suggestively comprehensive account of Shakespeare’s own poetics. Prospero’s statement "I drown my book" (IV, V, 57) carries with its strong overtones of the magical books. The contrast lies in the use of the words burn by Marlowe and drown by Shakespeare and one can hope to retrieve Shakespeare’s book of magic by reconstructing his own ideas about poetics by reading through his plays. Northrop Frye comes very close to this point when he says,
In many tales of The Tempest type, the island sinks back into the sea when the magician leaves. But we, going out of the theatre, perhaps we have it in our pockets like an apple: perhaps our children can sow the seeds in the sea and bring forth again the island that the world has been searching for since the dawn of history... (186)

One is almost tempted to add that the reader can sow the seeds of poetics doled out by Shakespeare and bring back the book that Prospero drowned at the end of Shakespeare’s career.

Germaine Greer in her book Shakespeare (1986) has devoted a chapter to a discussion on Shakespeare’s poetics. She argues that among all the plays of Shakespeare, The Tempest is a systematic exposition of his dramaturgy. According to her The Tempest deals with good and bad art, useful and noxious, and takes an original position in conscious opposition to the schoolmen.

Shakespeare often associated his own dramaturgy with the making of dreams. A creative artist, according to Shakespeare, was a grand dreamer or an illusionist, who created a wonderful world out of his imagination. The compelling presence of Shakespeare’s art is such that the audience suspends disbelief and gets absorbed in the world of the play.
The Tempest, according to Germaine Greer, is a play, which consistently deals with Shakespeare's view of dramatic art.

In respect to the plays of Shakespeare, critic John Drakakis supports this notion by arguing that Julius Caesar may be read as a kind of metadrama: by figuring Caesar, Brutus, Antony, Cassius and others as actors self-consciously fashioning Roman politics. A competing theatrical performance the play enacts the representation of itself to ideology and to subjectivity.

Similarly, in Kalidasa'a Sakuntalam, one can see the metadramatic aspect in the plot structure of the play. King Dushyanta, King of Hastinapura, was on a chase one day when his chariot took him to the sacred groves of a hermitage. As he was on hot pursuit of a black-buck, three disciples of the great sage, Kanva, stopped him and reminded him that his weapons were meant to protect the distressed and not to strike down the innocent and that it was his duty to look after the safety of the inhabitants of the hermitage. When the King held back his taut-strung bow, the sages, who were pleased with his good gesture, blessed him to the effect that he would beget a glorious son and invited him to the hermitage to receive their hospitality. The King left his chariot and wandered through the hallowed groves. As he was walking, he heard sweet voices and saw three sweet young women passing through the grove to water the plants.
growing there. When a honey-bee, agitated by their watering, flew at her, Sakuntala appealed to her two friends – Anasuya and Priyamvada – for help because she felt highly disturbed by the bee’s hovering around her face. Sakuntala’s friends, not knowing that the King was in the vicinity, playfully told her to call on Dushyanta for the penance groves are effectively protected by the King.

Dushyanta, stepping from his hiding, announced himself, not as the King, but as the King’s representative appointed to oversee the safety of the sacred grove and its inhabitants. While they were talking, Dushyanta learnt that Sakuntala was no ordinary maid, but the child of a royal sage called Visvamitra and a nymph called Menaka. Dushyanta learnt that Sakuntala also felt the first pangs of love for the King and believed that the god of love, Kama, had struck her with his five flower-tipped arrows.

Madhavya, the King’s jester, complained to his master that too much time was being spent on hunting and that life was too hard on him. Ostensibly to humour Madhavya, but actually to have more time to seek out Sakuntala, the King called off any further hunting and ordered his commander-in-chief as well as his retinue to camp near the sacred grove in which Sakuntala lived with her foster father, a hermit-wiseman named Kanva. A short time later, two sages from the hermitage called on Dushyanta and requested him to stay in the hermitage for a few days in
order to protect them against the evil spirits who were likely to disturb them in the performance of their rites, especially in the absence of their master. Dushyanta gladly responded to their request because he thought that he had got a golden opportunity to be close to Sakuntala. A little later, however, word came to the camp that the King's mother wished him to return to the capital to take part in certain ceremonies, but Dushyanta was so smitten with love for Sakuntala that he sent Madhavya and his retinue back, while he himself, under the pretext of protecting the sages of the hermitage against evil spirits, but actually in hopes of seeing Sakuntala again, remained in the sacred groves.

After their first meeting, both the King and Sakuntala had languished with love. One day Dushyanta found himself going right towards the bower in which Sakuntala was lodged on account of her love-fever. Dushyanta overheard the conversation between Sakuntala and her two friends – Anasuya and Priyamvada. Both Dushyanta and Sakuntala were obviously in love with each other but neither one knew how to tell the other. One of Sakuntal's friends finally hit upon the idea of having her send a love note to the King. As Sakuntala was writing the note, Dushyanta heard her speaking the words aloud: "I do not know your heart, but day and night in me, as I yearn for you, cruel one! the longing sets my limbs on fire" (III,i,13-16). Dushyanta stepped from his concealment and said, "Slender creature! Love sets your limbs on fire, but me he burns to
ashes, as the day blots the moon completely out, but leaves the water lily visible” (III, i, 23-26).

He told her of his determination to make her his consort and the head of his household above of his other wives. The two friends of Sakuntala left the lovers alone. Though Sakuntala wanted to leave, telling the King that she would have to talk over the subject of marriage with her own people, Dushyanta coaxed her to stay back assuring her of her father’s approval of her marriage.

Sometime later, when Sakuntala was engrossed in thoughts about Dushyanta, an irascible sage named Durvasas came to the sacred grove. He felt himself slighted by Sakuntala, who had not heard about his arrival and so did not accomplish the rites to suit a guest of his status. In his anger he called down a curse upon the poor girl, though she did not know of it. The curse was that her husband should not remember her as well as his marriage to her even if he is reminded of it. However, when Anasuya fell at his feet and begged for him to pardon Sakuntala, he relented and said that Dushyanta would remember her provided he saw an object of recognition. Anasuya was happy because she remembered the ring given by Dusynata to Sakuntala before he left for the capital. Both Priyamvada and Anasuya were afraid to tell Sakuntala for fear she would become ill with worry.
Not long after the King’s departure the sage Kanva returned to the hermitage. As he had the gift of omniscience, he came to know of the secret marriage of his daughter. As he returned to the sacred grove, an incorporeal voice informed him that Sakuntala would give birth to a son destined to rule the world. Kanva, thus assured of the future, gave his blessings to the union of Sakuntala and the King. He had his disciples make the necessary preparations for sending the bride to her husband as the royal consort.

When the time for the departure came, Sakuntala was filled with regret, for she loved the sacred grove where she had been reared. But Kanva told her that it was in the fitness of things that she was to leave, and that she could come back to the hermitage after her son ascended the throne.

But when Sakuntala and the hermits of the sacred wood appeared before Dusyanta, the curse proved true, for King Dushyanta failed to remember Sakuntala and his marriage to her. One of the hermits, who got angry, hurled abuses at the King, but they cut no ice with him. Sakuntala tried her best to convince the King of his marriage to her, but to no effect. Heartbroken at her husband’s repudiation of her, she looked for the ring of recognition he had given her. But unfortunately the ring had been lost during the journey from the sacred wood to the palace. Gautami, the
guardian of Sakuntala's virtue, told her that the ring must have fallen from her finger when she was refreshing herself at the holy pond called Sacitirtha. Dushyanta mocked at the old woman for giving lame excuses. One of the hermits found fault with Sakuntala's secret marriage. Finally, feeling that they had done their duty in escorting Sakutnala to her husband, the hermits left her in the King's household. Sakuntala, who wanted to go back with them, was threatened by one of the hermits. Gautami's efforts to persuade him proved futile and she too had to leave, along with the hermits.

Not long after Dushyanta had seen Sakuntala, his family priest came to tell him that a transient streak of light from the sky had come down to the palace, picked up Sakuntala, and carried her away into the heavens. The King was much disturbed over the event, but he resolved to erase it from his mind.

A few days later, the ring of recognition, bearing the King's name, was discovered in the hands of a poor fisherman. The police arrested him. On being questioned, the fisherman told them that he had found the ring in the belly of a carp. But suspecting him of having stolen the ring, the police took him to the King. No sooner had the King set his eyes upon it than he remembered Sakuntala and their secret marriage, for the sight of the ring removed the curse.
Remembrance of Sakuntala did the King no good; when she had been snatched from the palace, she had almost been lost to mortal eyes. Dushyanta grew remorseful and refused to be comforted. He remembered the days he had spent with Sakuntala in the sacred grove and his remembrance of all that happened in the past served only to redouble his sorrow.

Meanwhile a friend of Menaka, who was much concerned about Sakuntala, took notice of the King’s unhappiness and longing for his lost wife. In the meantime, the King of heaven, Indra needed the help of Dushyanta to subdue an invincible demon called Kalanemi and so he sent his charioteer, Matali to bring Dushyanta to heaven. Dushyanta responded to Indra’s request.

When Dushyanta was on his way back from heaven, he found near the hermitage of Sage Marcia, a young boy playing with a lion. He was amazed to see what the child was doing and felt a strong attraction for him. While he was watching, an amulet fell form the child’s body. He picked it up to the surprise of heavenly attendants, for the amulet was deadly to all but to child’s parents. Dushyanta, recognized as the true father, was taken to Sakuntala, who readily forgave her husband. Dushyanta told Sakuntala that he remembered her the moment he saw the ring. When Dushyanta, Sakuntala and the child went to pay their respects to the sage Marica with
whom Sakuntala was staying, the sage told both Dushyanta and Sakuntala the story of the curse and advised Sakuntala not to be angry with her husband. Dusyyanta, Sakutnala and the child, Bharata, returned to Hastinapura to live many years in happiness. Thus, Sakuntalam carries the metatheatre device. It is seen that Kalidasa has introduced a major innovation in the signet ring which transforms the whole plot making into a metadrama of perception.

Abel, while discussing metadrama as a new view of dramatic form highlights the differences between tragedy and metatheatre. According to him, tragedy gives us a stronger sense of the reality of the world, while metatheatre shows that the so-called reality is only a projection of human consciousness. While tragedy glorifies the structure of the world, which it reflects in its form, metatheatre regards no image of the world as ultimate. When tragedy shows man as being vulnerable to fate, metatheatre suggests the dreamlike quality of man's life and states that facts can be overcome. Tragedy tries to meditate between the world and man when metatheater denies the existence of the world by saying that it is created by human imagination. Tragedy always believes in an ultimate order, metatheatre, on the other hand, believes that order is something that is continually improvised by man. While tragedy transcends optimism and pessimism metatheatre makes all forget the difference between optimism and pessimism by forcing them to wonder.
METADRAMATIC STRUCTURE OF THE PLAY

Taking into consideration Kalidas'a adoption of the five stages of a sacrificial performance, the plot-structure may be said to resemble the structure of sacrificial altar (Yajja-vedi), which may be shown as follows:

The five stages of sacrificial performance are:

(i) Arambha (Beginning),

(ii) Yatna (effort),

(iii) Prapty-asa (some sign of obstacle followed by Hope of Attainment),

(iv) Niyatapti (sure expectation of attaining the object by overcoming all possible obstacles), and
(v) Phalagama (Attainment of fruit). It must be noted that, according to Bharata, anyone, who launches on a serious project, has necessarily to go through these five stages, in their orderly succession, in order.....to enjoy the fruit of his action.

In Kalidas's play the five stages of progress of plot may be shown in the following way:

1. Arambha (Beginning: From the beginning of the player proper till the stage-direction in Act II – (Both Dushyanta and Vidusaka walk around and sit down).

2. Yatna (Effort): From the point at which both of them walk around and sit down (in ACT II) till the end Of Act III;

3. Prapty -asa (Sign of obstacle followed by Hope of Attainment) begins at the beginning of ACT IV and extends up to the point at which in Act, V, Sakuntala, following the advice of Gautami, removes the veil covering her face (Iti yathoktam karoti).

4. Niyatapti (Sure Expectation of attaining the object by overcoming all possible obstacles) begins with Sakuntala removing the veil that covers her face Act V and goes on till the end of act VI.

5. Phalagama (Attainment of fruit) begins with the beginning of Act VII and comes to an end at the close of the same act.
In the first stage, Dushyanta falls in love with Sakuntala and in the second, Dushyanta, initially, seeks the help as well as the advice of Vidusaka, and after the departure of the latter for the palace at the end of Act II, puts in efforts himself. His efforts culminate in his Gandharva-marriage to Sakuntala and giving his ring to her at the end of Act III; the third stage begins with a hint regarding Dushyanta’s forgetfulness, which is apparently shown as a curse by the irate sage Durvasas who, in fact, is used by Kalidasa as an off-stage dramatic persona to announce the fact of the hero’s forgetfulness and also the possibility of the re-union of Sakuntala and Dushyanta, on account of the episode of the recognition ring given to her by Dushyanta at the time of taking farewell of Sakuntala. But though the possibility of removing the obstacles in the way of re-union is hinted at, the forgetfulness of Dushyanta lingers till Sakuntala removes the veil which covers her face. On seeing the face of Sakuntala, Dushyanta seems to be in a fix, in that, he wonders whether he has married her, but still he finds himself in a position in which he can neither accept nor reject her:

However, this indicates a step further in the act of recognizing Sakuntala by Dushyanta. Dushyanta’s mind is assailed by indecisiveness and, in this respect, he is like a bee, at day break, circling –not being able to enjoy –over the dew-filled cup of a lotus. He cannot permit himself to possess Sakuntala nor can he bring himself to relinquish her. And this ambivalent state continues till the recovery of the ring picked by the
fisherman from the belly of a fish. The recovery leads to remorse, agony and anguish. Burning tears scale him down like molten lead. However, this intense suffering results in his perceiving Sakuntala as an inseparable partner of his life. The relationship he visualizes seems to point to a stage at which the male and female halves will not have excessive procreative association (unlike in the relationship in Act III where Dushyanta’s eager concern is nothing but sexual union – Sangama). The future relationship will be characterized by contiguous closeness in which there is no room for carnal desire – a relationship hinting at the implication of Ardha- naarisvara figure or that of Parvati-Siva.

Phalagama (Attainment of Fruit) begins with the beginning of Act VII and goes on to the end of the play. After his victory over the demons, Dushyanta is on his way back to his palace. Matali, the charioteer of Indra, advises him to break his journey for a while near the Sage Marica’s hermitage and pays his respects to the great saint. As his luck would have it, Dushyanta meets his young son and Sakuntala at Marica’s hermitage. After learning from the sage the reason why he had repudiated Sakuntala, he returns to his kingdom with his wife and son.

Dushyanta, like any ordinary lover, initially rushes headlong and indulges in hasty action his Gandharva-marriage with Sakuntala, which is the result of his uncontrolled passion. Misguided perception is seen in his
union with Sakuntala and then he separates from her. Till the discovery of the ring, he seems to be lacking in the necessary evenness of mind. The recovery, which makes him suffer both mentally and emotionally, results in his achieving equanimity — a balanced mental state in which he perceives the worth of his beloved wife. This new perception is shown as a metatheatre which emerges out of the theatre of Sangama (Acts I-III) and the Theatre of Viyoga (Acts IV-VI). In the metatheatre of right Perception, Dushyanta stands, before the spectator, with perfect equanimity and peace.

James Calderwood, in his book *Shakespearean Metadrama* (1971), expresses his dissatisfaction with the term metatheatre itself because “the prefix may suggest to some readers plays that somehow go ‘beyond’ or at least strain at the limits of drama as though afflicted with a kind of artistic hubris” (4). Abel, according to Calderwood, used the term metatheatrical as a dramatic genre to suggest a kind of anti-form “in which the boundaries between the play as a work of self-contained art and life are dissolved” (4). To Calderwood, metadrama is a play which consciously comments on the dramatic art itself, which includes the materials, its media of language and the existing social order. For Shakespeare, Calderwood argues, metadrama is the dominant theme and his most abiding subject. By employing the terms of his trade, Shakespeare provides the spectators/readers with a complex and coherent mode of dramatic meaning. Calderwood says,
Shakespeare’s primary—and indeed only—loyalties in writing a play were to the play itself that whatever his attitudes may have been about politics, religion, war, love, roaring boys, etc., they were subdued …… to what they were worked into: dramatic art. (7)

Calderwood further argues that Shakespearean poetics is inextricably intertwined with the other meanings in his plays. Possessing a kind of detachment, Shakespeare indulges in a kind of artistic self-reflection. Commenting on Eugene Paul Nasser’s *Shakespeare’s Games with the Audience*, Calderwood says that Eugene sees a ‘double’ in Shakespeare’s plays: (1) The core drama, the basic dramatic illusion and (2) another dimension of the play detached from the core play, which observes and comments on it. For Calderwood, this dimension is metadrama. This dimension, says Calderwood,

*Is conditioned by Shakespeare’s desire to control his audience’s attitudes toward the play, to meditate on the play, to play games with the play, to explore more fully the wider implications of any theme or situation that is impelling his core action, and to take the audience along with him in his meditations.*(8-9)
Shakespeare was thus, doing two things simultaneously: making-an-'illusion' and 'making'-an-illusion. This undoubtedly, helped Shakespeare to have multiple perspectives towards anything. For example, Shakespeare saw a character both as a realistic person in a realistic world and as a device fashioned by himself to insert into an artificial environment in such a way as to satisfy the necessities of a literary and theatrical structure.

Commenting on Shakespeare's use of a play-within-the play aspect of The Tempest, Northrop Frye says that Shakespeare has used the Peter Quince play in A Midsummer Night's Dream and The Mousetrap in Hamlet as separable pieces inserted into the main narratives. But the play-within-the play which he sees in The Tempest is according to him, unique because, "In The tempest the play and the play-within-the-play have become the same thing: we're looking simultaneously at two plays, Shakespeare's and the dramatic structure being worked out by Prospero" (Frye 172). Frye argues that the theatre itself becomes the central character in Shakespeare's plays and the plays themselves can be seen as Shakespeare's expositors of his own poetics. Seeing Prospero to be a self-portrait of Shakespeare, Frye calls Prospero an actor-manager, who works out the action of Shakespeare's play. The Tempest, according to Frye, is "consistently both process and product" (173).
The storm in the opening scene of The Tempest is symbolic of the stormy atmosphere in the great tragedies such as King Lear, Hamlet, Macbeth, and Othello. Part of the intention of Shakespeare seems suggestively to define the atmosphere. However, unlike in the tragedies, the characters in Act I Scene 1 of The Tempest do not meet with death. The absence of death points to the happy ending that the play reveals. Perhaps, Shakespeare also wants indirectly to tell his audience that the physical death at the end of each one of his tragedies does not mean that the hero perishes; rather he ends up with a revelation for which the passage of death acts as precondition. The hero willingly embraces death to shed his mortal coil so that he can become immortal. This is a fact unknown to Miranda, who seems to speak on behalf of the audience at the beginning of Act I scene i, therefore she implores Prospero to “allay” the “wild waters” (I,ii, 2) which he set roaring.

Miranda seems to be speaking from the vantage ground of theatre, where she is like a spectator whose empathies surface on seeing the suffering of those who are caught up in the storm. The compassion that is roused in her seems to transfer to the situation in which she identifies herself with the sufferer – one of the important requirements of tragedy, according to Aristotle. Shakespeare is almost rephrasing the Aristotelian idea in Miranda’s words: “…O, I have suffered with those that I saw suffer” (I,ii, 5-6). The “cry” that “knocked against” (I,ii,8) her heart is not
the ordinary worldly cry. Miranda, like an uneducated spectator, is not aware the wheels within wheels. Hence her statement: “Poor souls; they perish’d” (I,i,9). Prospero’s attempt at pacifying Miranda shows that he senses Miranda’s as well as the audience’s ignorance of the real import at the end of the tragedy. Thus, his statement, “Tell your piteous heart/ There’s no harm done” (I.ii,215-216) becomes an instance of discriminative criticism, in that, he seems to be telling Miranda/audience that she as well as the spectator is rather guilty of misplaced sympathy, for the context here is the theatre and not the work-a-day world. In the theatrical context pity is meant to be purged and not to be nurtured at heart. This argument is further reinforced by Prospero’s immediately following statement “thou, art ignorant of what thou art” (I,ii,17-18).Miranda is not only the surrogate of the audience, but also Shakespeare’s art. Raymond Powell says,

In one of the many accounts of the play which identify Prospero with Shakespeare himself, Ariel becomes Shakespeare’s imagination, craving liberty....kept in servitude and Miranda is the drama to which Shakespeare gave birth. (Powel 77)

Shakespeare, who has portrayed himself in Prospero, feels that he must provide his audience with the necessary clues for the interpretation of
his great tragedies and so Prospero tells Miranda, who represents both the art and the spectator of the Shakespearean tragic theatre, to put and end to her “worldly sorrow” and relish, instead, the “art sorrow”, which has the capacity to elicit artistic response from the spectator because he has so carefully followed the rules of tragic art that things fall into their place and there is “not so much perdition as an hair” (I,ii, 30).

There is an effective interplay of life and death in Francisco’s description of Ferdinand swimming from the wrecked ship:

Sir, he may live:

I saw him beat the surges under him,

And ride upon their backs; he trod the water,

Whose enmity he flung aside, and breasted

The surge most swoon that met him;

His bold head

‘Bove the contentious waves he kept, and oar’d

Himself with his good arms in lusty stroke

To th’ shore.......... (II, ii, 114-121)
Swimming seems to be an apt image of the interplay in question, since the swimmer actively creates the current which sustains him so that waves may return to buoy him up. Thus, Ferdinand beats the surges only to "ride upon their backs", treads, flings, breasts, and oars an ocean which is by no means just pliable material, but contentious, antagonistic, recalcitrant to human shaping. But it is just this resistance which allows him to act upon it. The implications are that the tragic hero puts up a heroic fight against odd circumstances and emerges renewed and reinvigorated. This is as good as saying that the tragic hero does not perish but, on the other hand, becomes immortal. Northrop Frye seems to be full of insight when he says,

One of the most beautiful songs in the world tells us quite clearly that Alonso is drowned, and Prospero's renunciation speech mentions raising the dead to life as one of his powers. He also speaks of Miranda to Alonso in a way that gives the impression that she is dead. We can say here, as in The Winters Tale that people die and come to life again, but only metaphorically. Fine in a poetic drama there is no meaning except metaphorical meaning. (180)
Prospero’s book is, in fact, Shakespeare’s book which deals with his poetics in which the Shakespearean tragic hero, unlike the Monrovian Faustus, does not end up with damnation and descends to the depths of hell. Instead, he elevates himself to the Aristotelian poetic heaven in which he is contented to live as an ennobled and enlightened soul, which has spent all passion and centered in the eternal calm (Orgel and Goldberg 715).

While commenting on what the play signifies, Powell says, “To climb out into the air is to climb onto the comfort and security of Prospero’s island, surrounded by the sea and safe from it” (101-102).

Powell could have gone a step further and said that Prospero’s island is almost identified by Shakespeare with the poetic heaven that Shakespeare visualizes — a heaven in which all that is harsh and dissonant in life melts into one sweet harmony.

The brief, precise, yet comprehensive exposition of the poetics of his art by Prospero is so enlightening in effect that it elicits the spontaneous exclamation of Miranda, the connoisseur “your tale, Sir, would cure deafness” (I,i, 107). Indeed art which lays bare the secrets of life can metaphorically make the blind see, the deaf hear and the dumb speak. Shakespeare in his thirty-seven plays has written the “bright book of Life” dealing with fundamental issues and problems of life-its joys and sorrows. He has portrayed life in its infinite variety, pushed the boundaries a little
farther than the horizon at which they seemed to be fixed to ordinary perception. His range and extent encompasses the whole universe.

Abel shows clearly that a theatrical self-consciousness in the dramatist as well as in his protagonist is responsible for the creation of a metatheatre. The main focus of a metatheatre is on the illusiveness of reality. Abel makes it clear: “A gain for consciousness means a loss for the reality of its main object namely the world” (78). He unhesistantly asserts that tragedy has been replaced by metatheatre. In Shakespeare’s The Tempest and Kalidasa’s Sakuntalam, the metatheatrical aspect is similar and thus both dramatists’ treatment of the plot of the story indicates the metatheatrical perception in the dramas.

PSYCHOLOGY AS METADRAMA

One of the major concerns of Kalidas, in the Abhijnana – Sakuntalam seems to dramtize ancient Indian psychological ideas which deal with memory and forgetfulness. The title, ‘Abhijnana’, can be said to be suggestive of this.

In the traditional families of India one was asked to remember backwards every night, all that one had done or experienced the previous hour, the hour before that and the one before that, and so on, and then go on to remember the previous day, all the days of the previous month, the
previous year, till one could recall the time of one’s birth, and then to cross
the known to the previous lives. Such practices are related to the exercise
of recall, attaining a complete recollection of one’s life as humanly as
possible – for to remember is to master the past, and thereby get rid of it.
In this tradition one remembers in order to forget. Those experts who
indulge in this practice of remembering seem to believe literally that one
who does not remember the past is condemned to repeat it. In Hindu, Jaina
or Buddhist conceptions of Karma, acknowledged past actions have a way
of imposing their structure on the present, usually with the subject and the
object reversed, with oneself as the victim and one’s former victim as the
aggressor in life after life. Thus, one’s deeds or karma as well as one’s
memories have a pattern in common: deeds leave behind traces called
samskaras and memories leave behind traces called vasanas (smells or
impressions of the past) and both samskaras and vasanas persist in future
lives. It is through these that the past structure is revived, whether in
memory or in the workings of karma. Only awareness, recollection,
remembering, rising beyond one’s natural tendency to forget and erase, can
release one from the threadworm of repetition and rebirth.

That Kalidasa had psychological ideas regarding memory and traces
and impressions the memory of past (vasanas) as his foundational material
is clear when Dushyanta
On seeing beautiful sights or on hearing sweet sounds,

Even a perfectly happy creature is filled with longing

With that frame of mind, without knowing it.

He recalls the deep-rooted friendship of another life. (V, ii, 46)

Kalidasa seems to have been aware of Patanjali’s explanation of how the deep-rooted impressions of the previous life are recalled. According to Patanjali, a yogin’s actions are neither white nor black. The actions of others are of three kinds — white, black and grey. The white, black, and grey actions of an average person produce fruits and a chain of reactions. White actions produce static effects, black actions tamasic effects, and grey actions rajasic effects. White actions result in virtue, black in vice and grey actions in a mixture of effects and of positive and negative emotions.

An average person is full of ambition. He desires rewards for his deeds, but forgets that they carry the seeds of pain. If, however, his ambition is transformed into spiritual aspiration, he is not interested in rewards and comes to understand that action is done for the sake of action. He becomes refined, his mind and consciousness become clear and his actions become clean. He collects no impression. He takes future births
only to cleanse himself of the past accumulated impressions. He anchors his mind and consciousness unreservedly to the will of the divine. All his actions are free from the seeds of reaction.

The three kinds of actions (white, black, mixed or grey), says Patanjali, leave impressions which become manifest when conditions are favourable and ripe. They leave behind potential residues which are accumulated as impressions in the memory. Memories create desires, and the result of desires in turn becomes memories. They move together and form latent impressions which, according to their maturity, either manifest immediately or remain dormant, to appear unexpectedly later in this life or in future lives.

Dushyanta's statement also seems to refer to the implications of another sutra of Patanjali: the law of Karma functions interruptedly throughout successive lifetimes, though each life is separated by rank, place and time. Desires and impressions, are stored in the memory and connect the behavioural patterns of previous lives with those of the present and future lives. As memories and impressions are interrelated, interconnected and interwoven, they act as stimuli in the present life. The oneness of memory and impression flashes consciously, subconsciously or unconsciously and moulds the pattern of the present life.
It looks as though Kalidasa uses the expression, “jananantara-Sauhrdani” under the influence of Patanjali’s ideas regarding three kinds of action and, especially, the oneness of memory and impression. As the plural form ‘Sauhrdani’ suggests, he refers to the love-relationship of Dushyanta and Sakuntala not only in their present life but also in their previous lives. Most probably, he treats the story of Dushyanta and Sakuntala in the Mahabharata and the Vedic version of Sakuntala as a seductive nymph conceiving her superhuman son at a place called Nadapit as referring to their previous lives and love-relationships.

Both the Mahabharata story and the Vedic version (Satapatha Brahmana 13.5.4-13) are suggestive of three types of action mentioned by Patanjali (white, black, and grey) indulged in by the lovers – especially by Dushyanta. The first part of Kalidasa’s play (Acts I-III) and Dushyanta’s repudiation of Sakuntala in Act V seem to connect themselves with the epic story and the Vedic account and the three types of action which characterized the conduct of the lovers. In both the epic story and the Vedic version, which are mere chronicles of events, unrestrained passion characterizes both Dushyanta and Sakuntala. As a dramatist, Kalidasa has no need to carry out a mere chronicle of events. Kalidas’s main concern is the portrayal of the dominant rasa (sringara-rasa) which the plot of his play needs. He therefore brings the unrestrained passion of the hero and heroine. Within the ambit of the sringara-rasa, he portrays it as
sambhoga-srnga\(\text{r}\)\(\text{a}\) \(\text{(Acts I-III)}\), one of the two worldly manifestations of the srnga\(\text{r}\)\(\text{a}\)-\(\text{r}\)\(\text{a}\).

Kalidasa cannot stop at this point. His aim is to show how the dominant rasa (srnga\(\text{r}\)\(\text{a}\) \(\text{r}\)\(\text{a}\)), points to a perfect balance between emotional responses and socially ordered behaviour – between Kama and Dharma. As Barbara Stoler Miller says, he is advocating “passion tempered by duty and duty brought alive by passion” (Sundaram 42). The srnga\(\text{r}\)\(\text{a}\)-\(\text{r}\)\(\text{a}\) that is manifest at the end of the play does point to this balance. And as the balance of these vital forces is restored, Dushyanta can now recognize Sakuntala as his Ardhangi (as in the Parvathi-Siva relationship), as one who, along with him, will participate in all the duties that both of them perform and as the mother of a great son who will turn the wheel of the empire. Dushyanta’s victory of the demons, unlike his initial chase of black buck, is an act of heroism that entitles him to love.

In consonance with the narratives of the \textit{Mahabharata} and \textit{Prataphata-Brahamna}, Kalidasa portrays sambhoga-srnga\(\text{r}\)\(\text{a}\) which shows the residues of the three types of actions (white, black and grey), which marred the trouble-free life of the householder’s (karma-yogi’s) life in their previous birth. Then he extends the story by seeming the dramatic curse of Druvasas (which is, in fact, the psychological forgetfulness of the Dushyanta) and the ring episode, both of which throw the lovers into a
highly complicated situation from which, after a long, severe trial of separation, they emerge with a consciousness into the unknown. Barbara Stoler Miller says, “The fire of parted love that the king experiences as he worships her (Sakuntala) in his memory consecrates him for the sacred work of destroying cosmic demons that threaten the gods” (Devadhar, 35). And his act, as has already been noted, entitles him to love. The noiseless reunion of the lovers in the hermitage of Marica is blessed by the benign sage Marica in the words that suggest a blissful relationship in which the lovers, all passion spent, are calm of mind:

Here is Sakuntala, the virtuous wife

Here the fine son, and here your Majesty

Faith, Fortune, Performance – the THREE

Most happily have come together. (VII, i, 29)

The dharmic desire of begetting a worthy son, which had the blessing of the sages in Act I, was almost set aside by the inordinate passion with which Dushyanta was physically united at the end of Act III. That dharmic desire is now considered to be very important by Dushyanta. For in begetting a worthy son he sees not only the possibility of continuing the family line, but also, more importantly, the possibility of assuring his
subjects of safe as well as happy life. He will distinguish himself as a mighty emperor and a benign ruler.

According to Kalidasa, the two lovers (Dushyanta and Sakuntala) are inordinately passionate or full of abhinivesa. In Act III, Sakuntala says, “Intense indeed is my affection “(94). A little later Priyamvada tells Sakuntala, “fortunately your affection is well placed” (97).

Kalidasa’s chief concern in portraying sambhoga-srngara in the first part of the play is to give dramatic treatment to the intensity of affection in both the hero and the heroine. The dramatist is indeed aware of the warning given by Patanjali that intensity of affection is an instinctive urge. He knows that Dushyanta and Sakuntala will, inevitably, have to face the consequences of their hasty action in coming together to appease their sexual hunger through the Gandharva mode of marriage. As has already been noted, Dushyanta is guilty of dereliction of duty in so far as he has no mind to go back to his Kingdom and pay attention to his administrative responsibilities. Dushyanta himself admits at the end of Act I. “My keenness to return to the city has been blunted” (53).

The attitude of the King has been pointed out by Vidusaka as an instance of dereliction of duty. “It is all very well for you to give up the affairs of the state – not to mention a floor you can walk on without tripping up – and come and live like a savage!”(61). That Sankuntala too is
guilty of ignoring the responsibility placed on her by her father is made clear by her failure to notice Durvasas who, comes to the hermitage as a guest.

The curse that Durvasas pronounces on the absent-minded Sakuntala seems to be nothing more than an off-stage dramatic persona’s announcement of the inevitable course of forgetfulness that Dushyanta has to go through on account of his total abandonment of the affairs of this state. As his exclusive pursuit of passion (kama) has made him almost forget his responsibility as a king, so his pursuit of duty (dharma), when he is back in the palace, makes him forget his affairs with Sakuntala in the forest. In other words, if in the forest he is preoccupied with passion and desire and his sexual desire conflicts with dharma, in the palace he is preoccupied with dharma which would conflict with sexual desire displayed by him in the company of Sakuntala. Till the end of Act V, there is no indication of his having brought about the necessary balance between kama and dharma — a balance which puts an end to tension, conflict and complications and also makes allowance for the legitimate enjoyment of passion (Kama).

Memory consists is not allowing an object or an affair to slip away from the mind. Loss of memory is due to distraction —due to involvement in something else as the word Sampramosa implies. Patanjali’s idea of
loss of memory due to involvement in something else, parallels what is called in modern Western psychology 'retroactive inhibition'.

In their critical discussion of Consolidation Theory and Retrograde Amnesia, Hilgard, Alkinson and Rita say that,

There is increasing evidence that once new information is entered into LTM (Long Term Memory) a period of time is required for it to consolidate and be firmly recorded in the memory. This idea, which has been called Consolidation Theory, proposes that changes in the nervous system produced by learning are time-dependent; that is, the memory space must undergo a consolidation phase during which it is unstable and vulnerable to obliteration by interfering events. If the trace is in any way disrupted during this period, memory loss occurs.

(81)

That Dushyanta's forgetfulness is due to interfering events of the affairs of state is suggested, when, in Act V, Sarngarava asks the King, "Just suppose your involvement in something else has made you forget what did you do, how could you, who fear to do wrong, reject your wife?" (I,i, 184).
Raghavabhatta, in his commentary on this passage, says that "Anyasanga" may refer to Dushyanta's involvement with Vasumati or his involvement with the affairs of the state. If Durvasas's statement is read in the light of the psychological ideas discussed above, Durvasas seems to be a dramatist persona used by Kalidasa to give expression to Dushyanta's act of forgetting Sakuntala owing to involvement in the affairs of his state. Durvasas's statement is not a curse in the literal sense of the word "curse (sapa)", but in the metaphorical sense that Dushyanta's forgetfulness acts as a curse, first in the case of Sakuntala (in the repudiation scene in Act V) and later in the case of both Dushyanta and Sakuntala (in Act VI). Durvasas says,

Because you are lost in the thoughts of one.

To the exclusion of all else,

And as such do not notice that I

A hoard of holy austerities

Who am here He shall not remember you, however much reminded,

Even as a man, drunk or inattentive, remembers not thereafter,

The scene he made before. (IV, i, 42)
It is interesting to note that the commentator, Raghavabhatta, interprets the world “Pramatth’ in two different ways: (i) intoxicated, drunk, and (ii) inattentive. The first interpretation almost foreshadows Sarngarava’s accusatory outbursts in Act V:

In this revulsion from a dead done?

Or disregard for one’s own actions?

Or turning away from one’s own duty?

Such aberrations usually swell

And come to a head in those intoxicated

Drunk with power.(18-22)

Sarngarava’s words seem to be directed against Dushyanta of the Mahabharata and that of Kalidasa’s play. That the inhabitants of the hermitage are well acquainted with Mahabharata story is suggested by Anasuya when she, in Act III, tells Sakuntala,

“But it seems to me you are experiencing exactly what women in love are said to experience in the Itihasa stories” (III,i, 76). The expression, “Itihasa stories” is obviously an indirect reference to the Mahabharata story of Dushyanta and Sakuntala. In the Mahabharata, what Dushyanta displays is motivated forgetting. Modern psychology holds that,
One aspect of motivated forgetting is the principle of repression, whereby some memories become inaccessible to recall because of the way in which they relate to our personal problems. The inaccessibility is due neither to faded traces nor to disruptive learnings, for the memories are still there and can be revealed under appropriate conditions. The theory of repression holds that memories are not recalled because their retrieval would in some way be unacceptable to the person possibly because of the anxiety they would produce or the guilt they might activate. (Hornby113)

In the itihasa (Mahabharata) story, when Sakuntala, along with her six-year-old son, goes to the court, Dushyanta, despite the fact that he knows that he had secret affairs with Sakuntala and that the one who accompanies her is his own son, refuses to recognize her for fear of being slighted by his courtiers and subjects. Therefore, Dushyanta’s forgetting, in the Mahabharata, is obviously ‘motivated forgetting’. The change that Kalidasa makes, in his play, is a significant one. Kalidasa replaces the “motivated forgetting” of Dushyanta of the Mahabharata with the “retroactive inhibition” implied in Patanjali’s Yoga-sutra (1.11). This change is significant because it makes room for the viyoga or virahadubhka which brings about a change of heart in Dushyanta, when the ring
is recovered and also helps him achieve the necessary balance between passion (kama) and duty (dharma). The change that Kalidasa makes is also significant because it enables the spectator to view Kalidasa's play as metadrama in relation to the Mahabharata story. The Viyoga or virahadubka that Kalidasa's inventive genius introduces as a follow-up of the abhinivesa of the play is of tremendous significance in so far as it results in the emergence of the final theatre, which the spectator may entitle "Perception as Metatheater".

Viyoga, or Viraha-Dubka or Vipralambha-srngara (Love-in-separation), which acts as corrective as well as a restorative, according to ancient Indian poets, is a characteristic of classical literature. It gives a more accurate, more varied, or fairer idea of the situations well as of a more meaningful relationship between lovers than they would have had without it. For it points to a condition in which the lover demonstrates a devotion transcending the mere sensual gratification of what is called sambhoga-srngara (love-in-union). The importance of Love — in — union (sambhoga — srngara), cannot, however, be underestimated. Figuring as it does in the first half of Kalidasa's play, it sets up the expenses, and the second half (Love-in-separation) relieves them as memories through the marks and impressions (vasanas) that those experiences have left behind. This relieving begins at the very beginning of Act V when Dushyanta hears
Hamsapadika singing the following song, accusing him of being a fickle lover, a bee which has left one flower to go and settle on the next:

Greedy as you are for fresh honey
Once, O Bee! You passionately kissed
The mango’s fresh spray of flowers.
But now content merely to stay
Within the full-blown lotuses.
Have you forgotten that earlier love? (V, i, 81-86)

When Dushyanta hears this song sung by Hamsapadika, he understands her immediate context in which Hamsapadika complains of her grievances by gently reminding the King of his secret affairs with her, after which he seems to have abandoned her till the moment she sings the song of complaint. However, the content of the song transfers itself to the wider context of Dushyanta’s secret marriage to Sakuntala in the hermitage. The expression cuta-manjarim serves to establish a contact with the mango flowers referred to in the first part of the play, especially in Act I. And so metaphorically it refers to Sakuntala. This is proved by the fact that Dushyanta is troubled by sub-conscious feelings and he says. "How is it that the song as well as its content fills me with anxiety and sorrow though I’ m not separated from those whom I love" (V, ii, 157).
As A.K. Ramannujan says, “The samskaras or viaasanas that all experiences leave behind that we carry with us everywhere can be reactive by these triggers. Through them we remember, recognize what we have forgotten, re-integrate our neglected past with the present” (72).

On a closer examination of the play, one is able to see that this is what exactly Dushyanta does in the second half of the play (Acts V-VII). As Barbara Stoler Miller says,

The richly developed counterpoint of the final act is built from the latent impressions of images and events that accumulate throughout the play. By sharing these with Dushyanta as he moves to the enchanted celestial grove to find his son and Sakuntala, the audience participates in the celebration of their reunion (89).

Kalidasa’s main concern is, indeed, that of achieving structural unity by portraying sringarasa the dominant rasa in the Sakuntalam. However, he seems to be concerned with the unison of memory, forgetfulness and recollection leading to perception. The successful portrayal of rasa is dependent on the selection of proper Vibhavas, Anubhavas, and Vyabhicari-bhavas, which makes the audience in the theatre forget, for the time-being, the ordinary life of the work-a-day world and enter the blissful non-mundane (Alaulkika) world. So Kalidasa can easily integrate
the way he portrays memory, forgetfulness and recollection into the way he portrays the *srngara-rasa*, along with its two obvious manifestations, namely, *sambhoga-srnga**ra* and *vipralambha-srngara*. For example, in the *Prastavana* part of the play, both the *sutradhara* (stage-director) and the audience are so enthralled by nati’s (actress’) song that they are transported beyond the concerns of everyday life. On being awakened by the actress from the state of oblivion, the *sutradhara* is able to account for the effect of the song:

I have been carried away by

The measure of your song,

Enchanting to the ear,

Even as the King Dushyanta,

Here is drawn far by fleeting deer.

(I, i, 1-4)

As Barbara Stoler Miller says, ‘The actress’s singing, like the beautiful movements of the magical antelope, or the art of poetry, makes the audience “forget” the everyday world and enter the fantastic realm of imagination that is latent within them. The entire play is a reenactment of this idea. This mind of the poet, the hero, and the audience is symbolized here by the director, who holds together the various strands of the theater so that the *rasa* of the play can be realized and savored’ (Miller 38-39).
The stage-director, like Dushyanta, passes from the world of memory through the world of forgetfulness to the world of perception. When he is in the world of memory, he announces the title of the play he is going to put on. But the enchanting melody of the actress's song casts a spell on him and makes him forget the play. On being awakened by the actress he bursts out into an aesthetic rapture in which he is able clearly to perceive the effect of art on him as well as on the audience. As this is what exactly the play deals with elaborately, the play can be said to be metadrama in relation to the Prastavana. The aesthetic rapture which leads to perception suggests that perception itself is a metadrama which rather mysteriously and imperceptibly springs from the previous two stages of memory and forgetfulness. The sutrahara elaborately reenacts, in his role as Dushyanta, in the play proper, his experiences of memory, forgetfulness and perception, by dramatizing them, by going through these stages in their successive order.

In Shakespeare's The Tempest and Kalidasa's Sakuntalam, the metadramatic aspect is similar. Shakespeare, perhaps, wanted his audience to "graduate from a mimetic 'all that I see' to register something of the vast symbolic potency of his plays" (Calderwood, 14). Calderwood says that any play can succeed as a realistic illusion only when the members of the audience see the stage properties as having a unique meaning in the structure of the play. For example, a stool, which is a mere stage property
becomes a part of Macbeth’s furniture and later represents the ghost of Banquo. Regarding the language used in a play, Calderwood says,

The language the poet uses comes as drab and gross from the everyday world as Macbeth’s joint stool; but it has been transformed by the poetic imagination into a self-enclosed complex of meaning that abandons its referential dependence on the world outside. (35)

The idea that Shakespeare writes his poetics in The Tempest is also supported by the fact that throughout the play Prospero directs Ariel, who plays the role of an actor. Ariel comes into the play before Caliban does, and is finally dismissed to his freedom. His last words to Prospero are: “Wasn’t well don?” (V, i,240), reminding us of an actor speaking to a director. Ariel’s role is an endless play, in the air and in the fire. Caliban is plainly a contrast to Ariel. He is all earth and water. He is grumpily re-adopted by seemingly reluctant Prospero — “... this thing of darkness I/Acknowledge mine” (V,i,275-276) — and may go off with his foster father to Milan to continue interrupted education, and his education is, in all probability, in stage-acting. This way of interpreting is not far-fetched because throughout the play one can find in Prospero a harassed, overworked actor-manager who scolds the lazy actors and praises the good ones in a connoisseur’s language. For example, Prospero compliments
Ariel for the role he plays as a harpy to frighten Prospero's enemies. Throughout the play Prospero addresses Ariel as spirit, which in Shakespeare is a synonym for an actor. For example, in the introductory prologue of *Henry V* the speaker of the prologue describes, with humility, his actors as "flat upraised spirits" (9). Prospero says,

Bravely the figure of this Harpy has thou

Performed my Ariel; a grace it had devouring;

Of my instruction has thou nothing bated

In what thou had'st to say; so, with good life

And observation strange, my meaner ministers

Their several kinds have done.

My high charms work. (III,iii, 83-88)

These lines seem to contain words suggestive of the words of a veteran dramatist/stage-director, who plays the role of an instructor to his young up-coming apprentices, besides containing words of compliment. Moreover the following words of Ariel are also noteworthy in the present context.
All hail, great master! Grave sir, Hail! I come to answer thy best pleasure: be't to fly,
To swim, to dive into the fire, to ride
On the curl'd clouds, to thy strong bidding task

Ariel and all his quality.(I, i, 189 -193)

The study clearly shows that Shakespeare/Prospero had a troupe of young actors who were enthusiastic about carrying out their master's bidding. It may also be said that this troupe performed only Shakespeare's plays.

And again, one can find Prospero giving instructions to Ariel to perform the whole thing within the stipulated time of three hours:

PROSPERO : What is the time o' the day?
ARIEL : Past the mid season,
PROSPERO : At least two glasses.

The time 'twixt six and now
Must by us both be spent most

Preciously. (I,ii, 240)
Prospero also seems to be as anxious as Shakespeare to do the laudable job of his performance.

Once again one can find Prospero commending the work that Ariel had already done and requesting him to be ready for another performance – this time a masque for the young couple:

**ARIEL:** What would my potent master? Here I am.

**PROSPERO:** Thou and thy meaner fellows your last service

Did worthily perform; and I must use you

In such another trick. Go bring the rabble

O'er whom I give thee power, here to this place:

Incite them to quick motion; for I must

Bestow upon the eyes of this young couple.

Some vanity of my art,

It is my promise. (IV, i, 34-41)

The word “trick” refers to the scene in which Ariel acted as the harpy causing frightful amazement in the minds of Prospero’s enemies. It also refers to the masque, the main aim of which is to evoke the sense of wonder in the spectator. We also note that when Ariel gives a detailed
report on all that he did during the shipwreck, he tells Prospero "I flamed amazement:" (I.ii, 198). It looks as if one of Shakespeare's aims was to give the impression to his audience that he was, in every character of his plays, presenting something which should throw the spectator into amazement.

Prospero's last words spoken to Ariel are very significant:

"My Ariel, chick, that is thy charge: then to the elements, be free, and fare thou well!" (V, i, 318-320).

In this passage Prospero gives instruction to the young actor for the last time and grants him the permission to perform his roles himself thereafter.

Similarly one can find Prospero scolding Caliban by telling him:

Abhorred slave.

Which any print of goodness wilt not take,

Being capable of all ill! I pitied thee,

Took pains to make thee speak,

Taught thee each hour
One thing or the other:

When thou didst not, savage,

Know thane own meaning,

But wouldst gable like

A think most brutish,

I endowed thy purpose

With words that made them known.

But thy vile race,

Though thou didst learn.

Had that isn’t which good natures

Could not abide to be with. (I,i, 352-361)

This passage is full of suggestive hints. In all probability Shakespeare had a few youngsters in his troupe who were rather rebellious and as such had to be dealt with in a severe fashion in order to shape and mould them into good actors. Expressions such as “I pitied thee”, “Took pains to make thee speak”, “taught thee each hour/ one thing or the other”, “when thou didst no, savage, / know thine own meaning, but wouldst gable like/ A thing most brutish,I endowed thy purposes/ with words that made
them known" clearly suggest that Shakespeare took pains to train dull and disobedient actors by teaching them the proper accent, utterance of dramatic speech and various other aspects of acting. At the same time Caliban's words quoted below are also noteworthy:

......the isle is full of noises,

Sounds and sweet airs, that gives delight and hurt not. Sometimes a thousand twang line instruments

Will hum about mine ears, and sometimes voices

That, if I then had waked after long sleep,

Will make me sleep again: and then, in dreaming,

The clouds me thought would open and show riches

Ready to drop upon me that, when I waked,

I cried to dream again. (III, ii, 144- 152)

This passage shows an artist's as well as a connoisseur's spontaneous outburst of his emotional reaction to his surroundings with which he almost falls in love. It can also be noted that music is the redeeming feature in Caliban's character. Music or any sweet sound
throws him into a dreamy world in which he day-dreams, besides piling
dream upon dream and thus, creating a situation of metadreaming.

THE EPILOGUES INDICATING SHAKESPEARE’S THEATRE IN
MINIATURE

Prospero seems to be constantly aware of his limited time before his
show goes on. His nerves seem to become tense and alert for breakdowns
while the show is going on, and he seems to be looking forward longingly
to peaceful retirement, yet in the meantime seeing the need to go out and
beg the audience for applause. Thus, Prospero is, indeed, Shakespeare who
wants to explain the principles that he followed while composing his plays
which are quite unlike the plays composed by his contemporaries. As any
language cannot survive without its grammatical treatise in which the basic
principles of structure are clearly explained so also new species of plays,
like those of Shakespeare, cannot be understood and appreciated by
posterity unless he provides the audience as well as the reading world with
useful hints about the poetics he put into practice in composing and
presenting his plays. It is for this purpose that Miranda is portrayed as the
surrogate of the audience who is acquainted with suggestive hints
regarding the typical characteristics of Shakespeare’s tragedies and tragic
heroes. And Prospero’s mention of the time-frame within which he wants
to execute his intended plan (or present the plot of his drama) is
Shakespeare's indirect explanation of the three unities — a favourite concept cherished by the critics of his time.

The Tempest, as has already been noted in this chapter, suggestively contains all of Shakespeare's plays. The Tempest may, then, be described as all in one. Wilson knight says The Tempest "repeats ... in miniature, the separate themes of the whole of Shakespeare's greater plays..... it distills the poetic essence of Shakespearean universe" (Kermode 113). Therefore one expects Shakespeare to write more epilogues than he seems to do in The Tempest. A careful study of the play, reveals the presence of three epilogues in The Tempest: Act IV. Scene I 148-158; Act V. Scene I 34-57 and the epilogue spoken by Prospero at the end of the play.

The following words uttered by Prospero form an epilogue:

Our revels now are ended. These our acts,

As I foretold you, were all spirits and

Are melted into air, into thin air:

And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,

The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces

The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yes, all which it inherit, shall dissolve

And like this insubstantial pageant faded,

Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff

As dreams are made on, and our little life.

Is rounded with a sleep. (IV, i, 148-158)

It sounds like an epilogue to the complete works of Shakespeare in which his main intention was to provide entertainment to his audience throughout his career, which has now come to an end. Hence “Our revels are now ended”(IV, i,148). All the characters that the master craftsman presents on the stage are the ones belonging to the past, but they are invigorated in his plays. These characters and all their belongings, after their active roles in the world of Shakespeare’s theatre, “are melted into air, into thin air”. The glamour of Shakespeare’s theatre was, perhaps, on the verge of disappearance as the younger playwrights started an entirely new species of plays, thereby necessitating the introduction of an altogether new theatre. Hence the dissolution of “the Globe itself” which had represented Shakespeare’s own idea of theatre. Gareth Lloyd Evans makes a pertinent point when he says,

**Cymbeline, The Winter’s Tale and The Tempest** may, to some extent, be regarded as a new beginning. In these plays
Shakespeare seemed to be responding not merely to fecund movements in his own imagination but to change in theatre fashion. (Evans1)

Like Prospero, Shakespeare too is tired to carry on the experiment and he implies that The Tempest is the last play. Lloyd Evans' comment substantiates this:

The sentimentality and theorizing which has attended the critical discussion of the plays written in the last ten years of his life often presupposes that Shakespeare was aware that, for generations yet unborn, they would fall into a category called 'The Last Plays'.(7)

As Shakespeare is sure that his theatre will be replaced with an entirely different type of theatre to cater for the needs for changing tastes, he announces the disappearance of the Globe Theatre. He was almost prophetic in putting the statement into Prospero's mouth "... the great globe itself, / Yea all which it inherit shall dissolve" (V, i, 143). Anthony Burgess says that in the "summer of 1613, the prophesy of Prospero came true, the great Globe itself (42) dissolved. The timber burned speedily, and a noble edifice became a charred nothing. 'See the world's ruins,' said Ben. Nobody was injured, though one man's breeches were set on fire and quickly doused with 'bottle ale'. But the material loss must have been
heartbreaking. Besides the fair structure itself, all the costumes and properties, all those play scripts were burnt down.

Prospero’s immediate reference in the phrase, “these our actors”, is to the characters that he has presented and all the characters shown in the masque are non-worldly beings. But because of the connection of the phrase with “the great globe itself”, Shakespeare can be said to refer to all the characters of his thirty-seven plays. These characters too are non-worldly characters because, as Prospero says in Act V Scene I, “...... graves at my command / Have waked their sleepers, opted and let’ em forth / By my so potent art” (48-50). Therefore it is convincing to note that all the characters that he portrays in his plays are like spirits.

Shakespeare also gives a representative list of stage properties in such expressions as “cloud-capp’d towers”, “gorgeous palaces” and “solemn temples”. The “great globe” may be said to refer at once to (i) the globe theatre, (ii) the dramatic world created by Shakespeare, and (iii) the real world, which becomes the master metaphor in his plays. Shakespeare thus predicts not only the insubstantiality of the theatrical world but also, like a great philosopher, the dissolution of the whole world in the course of time. The concluding remark enforces this idea “We are such stuff as dreams are made on, and our little life/ is rounded with a sleep” (IV, i, 157-158). To Shakespeare, his plays look like dreams just as the life of an
individual with its span of seventy years is far too insignificant in the context of universal life. The tone of the passage may imply that Shakespeare is pessimistic, but in the light of the reconciliatory note that he strikes, the reader may arrive at the conclusion that he is far from being pessimistic and that he accepts the rather forced retirement of his (Shakespeare was only forty-seven years old in 1611 – the date of composition of The Tempest) with a kind of passive resignation that characterizes the end of every great tragedy. One might even say that in all his plays he is supremely content with his achievement.

In Act V Scene i, Shakespeare writes another epilogue in which he suggestively evokes his achievements in both the comedies and the tragedies he wrote in the peak of his career:

Ye eleves of hills, brooks,

Standing lakes and groves

And ye that on the sands with printless foot

Do chase the ebbing Neptune and do fly him

When he comes back; you demi-puppets that

By moonshine do the green sour ringlets make,

Whereof the ewe not bites,
And you whose pastime
Is to make midnight mushrooms, that rejoice
To hear the solemn curfew; by whose aid,
Weak masters though ye be, I have bedimmed
The noontide sun,
call'd forth the mutinous winds,
And 'twixt the green sea and the azured vault
Set roaring war: to the dread rattling thunder
Have I given fire and rifted Jove's stout oak
With his own bolt: the strong-based promontory
Have I made shake and by the spurs pluck'd up
The pine and the cedar: graves at my command
Have waked their sleepers, opted,
And let 'em forth
By my so potent art. But this rough magic
I here abjure, and, when I have required
Some heavenly music, even now I do
To work mine end upon their senses that
This airy charm is for, I’ll break my staff,
Bury it certain fathoms in the earth,
And deeper than did even plummet sound
I’ll drown my book. (V, i, 13-37)

Lines 34-40 take the reader back to the world of A Midsummer Night’s Dream (“ye elves of Mills”), As you Like It (“brooks, standing lakes and groves”), and so on. The tone is such that the playwright seems to be recounting all that he wrote and produced in order to entertain his audience in the Globe Theatre. Lines 40-50 review the dramatist’s achievement in the world of tragedies, and the spectator / reader is prompted to visualize the way that Shakespeare composed and presented the plots of King Lear, Hamlet, Othello, Macbeth (“I have bedimmed / The noontide sun call’d forth the mutinous minds, / And ‘twixt the green azure vault/ Set roaring war”) and so on –plays which the mighty heroes put up a brave fight against an adverse fate and odd circumstances and ultimately emerge with reorientations and susceptibilities. Jan Frans van Dijkhuizen says,
In *The Tempest*, the whole gamut of Shakespeare’s tragic material is played in three hours. *Hamlet*, *King Lear* and the History Plays are reenacted on a desert island, this time with the desire to resolve the tragedy and restore harmony and forgiveness. (Dijkhnizen 74)

Lines 51-57 establish a connection with the world of dramatic romances in which music and charm are in full play. The phrase “rough magic” may refer to Shakespeare’s own art which, according to him, was in need of further refinement. Perhaps sensing the change in taste as well as the emergence of a new theatre which, in all probability, was different from that of his, Shakespeare decides on retiring from the theatre which he almost dominated for nearly twenty-two or twenty-three years. This, indeed, seems to be the implication of, “I’ll break my staff, bury it certain fathoms in the earth, and deeper than did even plummet found, I’ll drown my book” (V, i, 34-37).

Shakespeare’s method is uninitiated and inimitable, and there seems to have been no conscious attempt on the part of any later dramatist to emulate the example of Shakespeare, and to that extent his assertion seems to carry conviction. But, on the other hand, considering the popularity that he has been enjoying since the middle of the eighteenth century and also taking into account the critical study of his plays, especially in the
twentieth century, which is revealed in the highly sophisticated nature of his plots, structural aspects and characterization, one must say that the implications of "rough magic" and also of "deeper than did ever plummet found/I'll drown my book" have been falsified.

The subtle transition from the world of tragedies to that of dramatic romances hinted at in this passage has its own rich overtones in so far as it has, consciously or unconsciously, stumped critics such as Lionel Abel, Richard Hornby and their followers and they discuss, rather seriously, the metadrama structure of Shakespeare's plays. The ideal theatre of romance is, emerging from the preceding tragic theatre, which itself is looked upon as a precondition to the final felicity and harmony that pervade the final theatre. The two theatres are inextricably bound together and they look in retrospect to the world of comedy, which precedes the tragic theatre. In this sense the theatre of the comedies may be regarded as exposition, that of tragedies as complication, and that of the romances as the final resolution. The second epilogue thus seems to be suggestive of these important ideas, though Shakespeare, the playwright, might not have been aware of them.

An analytical study of The Tempest and Sakuntalam thus shows that these two plays are metatheatrical. They are theatre pieces about life. The persons who appear on the stage are inherently dramatic and it is quite
possible that myth, legend or past literature have dramatized them. In the very structure of the two plays Shakespeare and Kalidasa have acknowledged that their imagination controlled the events from the beginning to end. The characters like Prospero have become dramatists themselves. The hero superintends the play's main action and enjoys its fruit.

In The Tempest and Sakuntalam which are metatheatrical, the introduction creates the tone and the setting introduces some of the characters and supplies other facts necessary to the understanding of the play. Though Kalidasa has taken the plot from the Mahabharata, he has introduced a major innovation in the signet, which transforms the whole plot, making it a metadrama of perception. One strange similarity in the lives of these two dramatists is this: Shakespeare has never originated the main plots of his dramas, but in his hands they received life and meaning and made him what he is - the unrivalled master of his art. Kalidasa too, selected a mythological lovestory to serve as the basis of his drama, fully conscious that such a story would have greater charm for his countrymen. His poetic genius, aided by his deep dramatic insight, quickly saw that the story, though simple and unromantic in its form, was pre-eminently fitted to be the nucleus of such dramatic situations and incidents as would stir up the hearts of his countrymen, or rather of men of poetic susceptibility, and produce a magical effect upon them.

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Prospero, on the other hand, plays the role of an artist indulging in the act of reflection and interpretation simultaneously. Yet he, is seriously a character too, the protagonist, to be precise – playing, for the time being, the role of an interpreter who tells the spectator that neither the noble heroes of his tragedies, who have to put up a brave fight against the mighty circumstances in the wind-swept sea of life, nor even the characters who are shipwrecked in The Tempest, are lost for ever but instead are anchored in serenity, the shipwreck being merely a symbol of laying to rest all the disturbing emotions.

Shakespeare’s similar metadramatic device in The Tempest is also seen in Kalidasa’s Sakuntalam. On a close careful examination of Kalidasa’s masterpiece, Sakuntalam, the spectator / reader finds that it is the two wordly manifestation of Srngara-rasa, namely Sangama and Viyoga that Kalidasa apparently dramatizes in Acts I-II and Act V-VII respectively. It also strikes the sensitive reader / spectator that the dramatist’s main concern, however, is the delineation of the imperceptible, non-dualistic Srngara-rasa throughout the play. In this context, it must be noted that in classical Indian Tradition, the drama Sakuntalam is described as the Srngara-rasa-pradhana-natakam. However, Kalidasa realizes that he can only suggest it by imperceptibly developing it as an inner metadrama through a careful delineation of its two wordly modes.
In the same way, Shakespeare constantly wrote plays with a metadrama perception and this perception is of a theatre and not of life with its inherent complications because in life all can play roles and perceive life in different ways. The play has relevance to the contemporary world that is increasingly aware of precisely how its values and practices are constructed and legitimized through perceptions of reality. Metadrama can be said to openly question how narrative assumptions and conventions transform and filter reality, trying to ultimately prove that no singular truth or meaning exists.

The Tempest and Sakuntalam carry this perception and both dramas can be considered to be metadramas which allow their readers a better understanding of the fundamental structures of the narrative while providing accurate models for understanding the contemporary experience of the world as a series of constructed systems.