CHAPTER VII

Nature in KUMĀRASAMBHAVA

KUMĀRASAMBHAVA is an epic, describing the birth of KĀRTIKEYA from the union of ŚIVA and PĀRVATI. Love is according to the poet, a universal phenomenon. It pervades divinity in the same way as it pervades humanity. The poet begins with a narrative of physical love. Ideal and emotional love has always its base in physical attraction. Love that leads to greatness is certainly the higher form of emotional love. The poet has come to this conclusion in all his works. But he has also shown that this love will not grow unless it has a physical base. Ideal love will always grow after having experienced both the pains and pleasures of physical love. Physical love is limited by time.

Ideal love is eternal. Physical love is blind whereas ideal love is always conscious. If there is bestiality in physical love there is humanity in ideal love. Physical love demands fulfillment whereas ideal love has the attribute of sacrifice. There is disquiet and tempest in physical love, whereas there is peace and freedom in ideal love. There is jealousy and faithlessness attached to physical love whereas there is purity as well as faith
attached to ideal love. Physical love is influenced by the environment. Ideal love is influenced only by the loved one.

KĀLIDĀSA recognises these distinctions between physical and ideal loves. But he, therefore, does not ignore the existence of physical love. Not only that he even goes to the extent of depicting the utility and the merits of that type of love. He, at times, is absorbed in the overwhelming current of physical love. SĀKUNTALĀ was overwhelmed by physical love and therefore, she neglected her duty towards the guest. She had, therefore, to suffer the curse of DURVĀSA. The YAKŠA consumed by his passion for his beloved erred in his duties towards his master and had in consequence to suffer separation from his beloved for an year. It was jealousy born of physical love that led URVASĪ to leave her husband and in the KUMĀRASĀMBHAVA it was because of PĀRVATI'S arrogance for her physical beauty that ŚIVA jilted her. Thus, wherever physical love is narrated it is always narrated with a view to bring out the ultimate triumph of ideal love.

With a view to fulfill this object the poet seeks the co-operation of nature. Nature sometimes arrives in the form of spring in order to excite physical passions and at other times it serves to bring consolation to the distressed.

There is no real emotional love in the total
absence of physical love. Men and women meeting in sympathy and in common interest are bound to develop mutual physical attraction. The significance of EROS cannot be denied. But if the attraction is real it must develop into ideal and emotional love.

There is a representation of love in all the works of Kālidāsa. Along with love there is nature also. Society is never in the centre. Kālidāsa's philosophy of love as well as his philosophy of nature would be vitiated, if society entered his picture. He wants to depict human instinct in their purity and human instincts appear in that form only in the context of nature. It is, therefore, that Kālidāsa delineates his women in terms of nature. That is why Kālidāsa depicts love in the midst of nature.

The epic of Kumārasambhava begins with the Himalayas. The Himalayas are the abode of Gods, the place of penance of the sages, the residence of Śankara. These ranges to the North are characterised as the soul of Gods. It is likened to a measuring rod between the east and the west oceans.

The majestic description of the Himalayas in the beginning prepares the ground for great events that are to follow. Grand similes add to the majesty of the atmosphere. The great mountain is likened to a calf and the mother earth to a cow. Mount Meru is the milk-man. The heart of the mountain abounds in gems. Multi-coloured
pieces of metal resembling the clouds are lying in that mountain for the ornaments of the APSARAS. Up to this point it is the wealth of the mountain that is described.

The SIDDHAS leaving aside the clouds and the showers approach the summits to see the sunshine. This shows that the SIDDHAS inhabit this region. The bloody step marks of the KESARI who have killed the elephants are washed away by the stream of ice and the hunters in search of these marks look for the pearls that may have dropped from the paws of the lions. Śhoja-Patra grows there and the APSARAS write on it with DHĀTU-RASA having the colour of the drops of the red blood of the elephants.

The HIMĀLAYAS are the rendezvous of love of VIDYĀDHARAS' beauties. It is the place of penance of the SIDDHAS. It is the place for ornaments of the APSARAS. For the KIRĀTAS, it is the hunting ground. There is love, renunciation, violence, non-violence, wealth and the whiteness of snow. The poet refers to SIDDHAS and APSARAS and to elephants and lions, but does not mention ordinary souls anywhere. He appears to suggest that the dignified HIMĀLAYAS are inhabited by dignified inhabitants only.

The breeze blowing from the caves of the HIMĀLAYAS passing through the pores in the bamboo trees creates an impression that the mountain is prepared to play in accompaniment with the music of the KIRĀTARAS.
The fragrance of the milk coming out from the SARALÁ trees as a result of the rushing of elephants against them makes the summits of the mountain fragrant. Here are the Sandal trees and the AICHAKA trees.

The herbs in the HÍMALAYAS, appearing like the love lights kindled in the caves by the forest women, provide light in the night. Horse-faced KIMÁNARÍS do not forsake their slow gait here in consequence of their heavy hips and breasts even though the way is covered with snow. The HÍMALAYAS protect the darkness from the sun in the caves just as weak men are defended by the great. The CHAMARÍS spread their hair resembling the white rays of the moon and appear as if they are waving CHAMARAS before the lord of the mountains HÍMALAYA.

A curtain of clouds appears by divine grace near the caves for protecting the modesty of KÍNÁNARÁ-women whose garments have slipped. There are DEVADÁRU trees trembling in the midst rising out of the streams of BHÁGIRATHI and there are hunters who are in search of stray deer. The sun by his rays blossoms the lotuses that have been left in the lake after the SAPTRÁŚI have plucked them.

We come across a couple in the eighteenth verse. It is the couple of HÍMALAYA and MENÁ. HÍMALAYA is a friend of MERU. The sages have given their daughter MENÁ in marriage to him. HÍMALAYA is thus personified and is shown as having conjugal relationship with a human being and
creating a child. The amours of HIMALAYA and MENA are described here.

Thus, up to seventeen verses there is only the description of the HIMALAYAS. The main story begins with the eighteenth verse. The whole background of the story is laid in beautiful nature. Not only are the means are derived from nature but the hero and the heroine are themselves elements of nature. These elements of nature behave like human beings and MENA resembling a serpent-bride gives birth to MAINĀKA, the friend of the ocean. MAINĀKA is shown as a giant of strength. In his anger he destroyed the wing of Indra's VAJRA following him, MENA gave birth to PĀRVATI, who was in an earlier birth the daughter of DAKṣA and the wife of ŚANKARA. The adventure of the father and the love of the mother nourished PĀRVATI. She resembled MANDĀKINI of brilliant lustre and was like highly cultured language. She grows playing in the sands of the MANDĀKANI with balls and with stones performing different actions and deriving enjoyment. She arrives at youth whose weapon is the flower of KĀMADEVA. Her youth resembles a lotus which has blossomed in the rays of the sun. Up to this point her infancy, her youth and her education have been depicted by the poet in terms of the elements of nature.

SATI was born as HIMALAYA'S daughter PĀRVATI. The day of her birth is a day of great rejoicing for nature. Nature's joy then is described by the poet thus:
The directions are without dust and full of pure breeze, the note of SÂMKHA is sounding, flowers are raining, the day of birth of PÂRVATI is the day of happiness for all things movable and immovable.

Thus, the directions, the breeze, the flowers and all elements show signs of joy. The joy accompanying the birth of a child is nowhere depicted by KÂLIDÂSA in his works with such an enthusiasm except perhaps in RAGHUVÂMSA.

The beauty of PÂRVATI is described in the following words:

"तत्त्वं दुर्दशा दुर्वार सवित्री सुधासुद्रभामणताय यकासे।
भवरसमिरंतिमधसंवहुप्रिविवाय रत्नशापाकथवे।"

"हि दिने दिने सा पविविभागा (सशोदरया धागमसीव लिखे)
पुराण भावण्यमयाजिवोखोत्सांतराणीलकामान्तराणि"

( with an aura of the sun that daughter was shining on the mountain land like the straw-gem that shines in the thunder of the new monsoon. Like the growing Moon she was growing every day and like the light of the full Moon all the organs of her body became elegant. )

PÂRVATI's father had a number of sons. Even so,
he had unbounded love for his daughter. In the spring, even though there are many flowers, the row of bees is always attracted towards the mango blossoms. This simile is not appropriate to the occasion. The love between the father and the daughter cannot be compared with the love between the bee and mango blossom. The latter is in the nature of conjugal love.

Proceeding to narrate the brilliance of PĀRVATI the poet says:

"प्रभासर्थ्या शिरवेद्यeamिपस्तिमार्गियोष विवकस्य मार्गः।
संस्काराद्वित्वे जिरा मनीषी तः स पुनःस्य विभूषिलक्ष्यः।"

(Just as a lamp shines with big flames in all the three ways so also she was shining in all the three LOKAS. Just as the language of learned man becomes ornate in consequence of culture so the HIMAŁAYA is adorned and sanctified by PĀRVATI. Her infancy is passed in the midst of nature. She plays on the shores of MANDĀKINI. Her education is next described. Just as a row of swans lends beauty to GAṆGĀ, just as herbs shine in the night so does PĀRVATI shines at the time of her lessons.

PĀRVATI'S youth is also described in terms of nature:

"उनमीतित लोकसंघे कविजं स्वर्गाभिभिभिभिभविवाचाम्।
अभृत्त नस्तो अनुस्वरूपन्ति वण्डर्तिभक्तः नलच्याभन्तः॥"
After describing PĀRVATĪ's birth, beauty, education and youth, the poet proceeds to describe the brilliance of PĀRVATĪ's beauty from top to toe. The similes devised for every organ are drawn from elements of nature. Her gait resembles that of the king swan, or rather the king-swans have stolen her gait. It might be noted here that the poet has compared the gait of URVAŚĪ also with that of the king swan. The hands of PĀRVATĪ are like the trunk of the elephant and her thighs are like the KADALI pillar. The only difference is that the skin of the elephant is rough and KADALI is not warm.

Describing the breasts of PĀRVATĪ the poet says:

अन्योत्तमभूमीयामुक्तायाम्। स्तननखां पाणु तथा प्रकाशेऽऽवृत्यः।

(The two breasts pressing against one another, white and developed with their black mouths, are such that it is not possible to find out even if a thread of a lotus is placed between them.)

And then the poet proceeds to refer to her softness. Both her hands are as soft as the ŚIRĪṢA.
The brilliance of her face puts the moon to shame ...

Laxmi who was enjoying the beauties of the Moon sitting in the lotus, obtained a double pleasure as she set her eyes on the face of Uma.

Thus, her face is as beautiful as the Moon. Her lips, teeth and smile are next described:

Her voice having the sweetness of nectar resembles the note of the cuckoo. Likening her eyes with those of the deer damsel the poet says:
when there is powerful breeze the distinction between the lotus and her eyes vanishes, and she looks impatiently. The question then arises whether the deer damsels have borrowed their eyes from her or she has borrowed her eyes from them.)

When PĀRVATI proceeds to offer obeisance to ŚANKARA she has struck a NAVAKARṇIKĀRA flower in her dark hair and the leaf that she has struck in her ear moves away as she bows.

UMBĀ looked so beautiful then that ŚANKARA on seeing her lips resembling the BIMBAFRUIT lost his balance for some time as the ocean looses its balance with Moon-rise. PĀRVATI is here likened to the Moon and ŚANKARA to the ocean. The hearts of both experience a throb which is like the throb of BĀLAKADAMBA. The simile is appropriate as the emotion which both of them experience is new and their love is young.

The meeting place of ŚANKARA and UMBĀ is in the midst of nature in the hermitage of ŚANKARA. DUŚYANTA and ŚAKUNTALĀ, PURŪRAVAS and URVASĪ, ŚANKARA and PĀRVATI, all these meet for the first time in the midst of nature. The first couple meets in the hermitage, the second on a mountain top and the third in the HIMĀLAYAN region. All the meetings lead to a generation of passion. But that is
not yet genuine love. That love is the consequence of the effect of spring and EROS. The omnipotence of nature is depicted in this episode. If nature has man in her power, she has the Gods also in her power.

The brow of Pārvati is like Sālākānchana. Seeing that brow even Kākadeva throws away his Flower arrow. Seeing her braid of hair the Chāmaris gave up the love for their hair, and her modesty exceeded the modesty of the deer.

Thus, describing every organ of Pārvati, the poet has resorted profusely to the elements of nature. He does so when describing each one of his heroines. Even so, the descriptions of heroines in other works of Kālidāsa are not as detailed as in the Kumārasambhava. The description of Pārvati is of a type which shows that the poet himself has been captivated by her beauty. All attractive elements in nature have been brought together in the service of the description of the beauty of Pārvati. We may, therefore, assert without any possibility of contradiction that Kālidāsa has described the beauty of woman to his hearts content only in case of Pārvati.

This Pārvati following the code of the Vedas, plucking flowers for worship, knowing the rules for the use of Kūśa grass has begun worshipping Sāṅkara every day.

One point needs to be noted with regard to this description of Pārvati. In all this description of the beauty of Pārvati, we do not find any reference anywhere to
her garments.

After describing PĀRVATI the poet proceeds to describe HĪMĀLAYA. In describing HĪMĀLAYA the poet attributes humanity to that mountain. It is so because the poet is a great lover of humanity and he attributes humanity to nature.

Next the poet describes ŚĀNKARA where the GAṅgā flows, where the.DEVADĀRU trees are swinging in the breeze, where the musk deer spread their fragrance. It is in such an abode that ŚĀNKARA dwells dressed in animal-skin on the HĪMĀDRI mountain. This description of ŚIVA needs to be noted here as it is relevant to the philosophy that KĀLIDĀSA accepted as we shall show in the conclusion. Here is that description:

"त कृतिवासस्तपसे शलाल्मा गुणप्रवाहमितं देवकर्
प्रतः हिमाद्रेदृश्यनामाभिगमिनि किंचित्कालिनरसहवास।"

Thus, the supreme lord lives in the midst of the HĪMĀLAYA, identified with nature, having his garments of the elements of nature, his means of transport being natural and surrounded on all sides by nature. And that nature is the HĪMĀLAYAN nature. It is, therefore, that this nature has a special place in the conception of nature of KĀLIDĀSA.

The second canto begins with a description of the oppression of TĀRĀKĀSURA. The gods approach BRAHMĀ for succour. BRAHMĀ sees the lustreless faces of the Gods. These faces are compared with closed lotuses. BRAHMĀ is
compared with the sun. The Gods offer a prayer to BRAHMA. There is a description of BRAHMA in this prayer. The prayer is significant and has a bearing on KALIDASA's philosophy:

"भक्तिमथुलये तुभये प्राकृत्य: क्रेवनाति।
गुणवविभागाय पञ्चाप्रेमुपेक्षे।"

"यदभोधपामतरुप्य भीमम! न्यया।
अनशराचरे विश्र भ्रमतस्य गीयते।"

"तिस्मुगस्वमविख्याभिमहितामामनुतिरथन।
प्रलयसतिसिद्धानमेक: कारणां गत।"

"धीपुंसावालभागसने ले भिन्नमुरें: सिद्धांक्त।
प्रसुतिभाग: मशिष्य पावेन पितारों हृदयो।"

"स्थकलं परिभाषने व्यस्तरात्रिकद्वस्तये।
थो नु स्वप्राप्तावधादौ तै भूतानां प्रलयोक्ते।"

"जगधोनिरोधोमिस्तं भगदेण निरंतकः।
जगधोनिरोधादिस्यं भगादो निरिथचर।"

"अयममालमन्त वेलिस स्थूलस्वाभामालमन।
अयमन्त कृत्तन ह भ्यमालम्नयेव प्रलयेत।"

"प्रव: संधानकरिन्त: स्नूरम: सुख्वो नदुद्वरो।
व्यको व्यक्तस्यसि ध्रुवं ले बिनमुद्दिव।"
Bow to thee! O three formed one, created first and in one form after dividing into three qualities differences were obtained. O unborn one, when you dropped the blameless and fertile seminal seed in water. It is said that this whole movable and immovable universe arose from it in three forms. You realised greatness and became the one cause of annihilation, existence and creation. Desiring creation you divided yourself into two parts — male and female. Thus, you became the parent of the creation in the form of delivery. You divided your time into day and night and the states of beings into dream and consciousness as also annihilation and creation. O lord, you are the birth organ of the world and you are the one who brings the end of the world. You are the beginning of the world and you are without a beginning. You are the God of the world, who has no God. You know yourself, by yourself and create yourself from yourself. And in your own creation you absorb yourself as if absorbing in oneself. You are fluid which defies strokes, you are the material and the spiritual, you are small and you are big, you are the realised and the unrealised and you are capable of assuming any form. O lord, you are...
he, whose speech becomes PRA\nAVA and whose speech developed from three sources. That speech which brings heaven as the fruit of action and sacrifice has been generated from you. The PRAKRTI which is the cause of all activity is derived from you and without any attachment observing that PRAKRTI, you are known as the PURUSA. You are the father of the fathers and the god of the gods, you are in front and you are behind. You are creator of the highest like the DAKS\nAS. You are the oblation, the sacrificer, the food, the eater, knowledge and the knower, the thinker and the thought for all times. )

Then BRAHMA describes the Gods. He finds them dejected. He finds the eagle going to obtain the help of the serpent. He finds VARUNA without vigour. He finds KUBERA like a tree whose branch is broken because the mace has dropped out of his hands. YAMA does not shed any lustre on the land. The suns have become cold as their awe has vanished. The speed of the breeze has been obstructed. The BHA\nASPATI has opened his eyes resembling the lotus which has opened in soft wind. Just as the comet agitates the people, so is TARA\nK\nASURA agitating the world. The sun which shone in all his heat earlier, now succeeds only in giving warmth to the lotuses in the wells. Earlier the Moon which lent brilliance to all the stars now shines only on the head of lord. BHA\nARA. The breeze which blew forcefully in the garden thus shaking of the flowers now blows mildly and in soft rhythm. The seasons have forsaken their usual rounds
and are now serving TĀRAKA like ordinary gardeners. The ocean waits with appropriate gems for the service of TĀRAKA. The serpents leaving the ŚEṢA nāga with MAṆI shining on the head have begun worshipping him, Indra bearing the fruit of the KALPA-VRKṢA waits upon him for his pleasure. The Sun, the moon, the stars, the serpents, the breeze, the river, are all tortured by the TĀRAKĀSURA. The Gods who are enslaved fan the sleeping TĀRAKA with CHĀMARAS. TĀRAKA uprooting the MERU mountain has made it his mount of pleasure only the dirty water left by the quarter elephants remains in the MANDĀKINĪ and therefore, that abode of gold coloured lotuses has become like a well. The gods being afraid of TĀRAKA do not cross his route. Just as the most powerful herb fails to bring activity in the diseased so all the efforts of the Gods have failed, the AIRĀVATAS are sporting on the PUSKARA and the ĀVARTA clouds.

The description of nature that KĀLIDĀSA has given here is different from the one that he provides elsewhere. Nature here is not blooming. Nature here is, as it were, in bondage. It desires freedom, but it is not in happy spirit. All the forces of nature are suppressed under the might of demoniac powers.

The third canto develops the story of the epic further. Seeing INDRA sitting in a depressed mood in his court KĀMADĒVA inquires of him about the cause of his depression and offers his services for its relief. INDRA
informs him of the necessity of influencing ŚANKARA, so that he may accept the solicitude of PĀRVATI who is all aflame aflame with passion for him and who is the proper receptacle for ŚANKARA'S seed. The KĀMĀDEVA accompanied by his beautiful wife and VASANTA proceed to the TAPOVANA where sages in their pride of self-restraint are intent upon their austerities. But the arrival of the bounty of the VASANTA makes it difficult for them to keep their senses under restraint. The twenty-fourth verse depicts this influence of VASANTA on the sages who are performing austerities:

"लम्बिक्स्याने संधेनिन्स मुनि तप: समाधे प्रतिकूलवर्तमाने।
संकल्पितत्रोऽर्थिस्मानमृतमात्माय सेविताम्।"

(In that forest of the austerities of the sages practising restraint and feeling proud because of their determination, VASANTA made his entry.)

The effect of VASANTA is described in the following verses. The question arises as to why KĀLIDĀSA brings passion and spring to this abode of peace and penance. The object is dual. On one hand, it is the theme of the epic that requires this type of setting. KĀMĀDEVA and VASANTA have arrived here not on their own but as agents of INDRA commissioned to fulfill a divine mission. On the other hand, the object of the poet is to present his philosophy of love and philosophy of nature.
through this original and rich picture of penance, love and nature coming together.

VASANTA is the basis of this canto. The sentiment of love in union is expressed by the poet through his agency. Let us, therefore, realize the great power of this VASANTA. VASANTA who is otherwise called MADHU, is a friend of KĀMADHĒVA. He accompanies his friend to the HAIMĀŚRAMA and there we see his impact on the sages. And then he begins to metamorphose the whole of nature. His first influence is seen on the ASOKA:

"असूल सदा: कुसुमाङ्गस्क: स्नेह-धात्रे भृत्योऽपि सप्तद्वाराम्।
पदेन नापैश्च भुदरीणा संपर्कमासित्क्रियतन्नपुरेण॥"

(The ASOKA which expects to blossom in consequence of the kick of a beautiful damsel, has begun to blossom from leaves to flowers immediately.)

The wasps entering the flowers as they began to blossom from the leaves looked like the writings of KĀMADHĒVA. The KARṇIKĀRA flowers which are beautiful in colours but which have no fragrance feel unhappy. The VANASTHALI has begun developing in consequence of the unexpected contact with VASANTA. The VASANTA is here likened to a lover and the VANASTHALI is likened to the beloved.

The verses from twenty-sixth to twenty-ninth,
in the third canto of KUMĀRASAMBHAVA give a description of the impact of VASANTA. VASANTA is the friend of KĀMADeVA. KĀMADeVA, with his help, has brought a blossoming of nature all around the place where ŚANKARA is performing his austerities. The presence of VASANTA is indicated by the presentation of all phenomena of nature in couples. These couples are all in a mood of amour and the poet has depicted their amorous union in one form or the other. In the twenty-ninth verse VASANTA and VASANASTHAJI are described as the lover and the beloved. Even the PALĀSA flowers have adopted a curved shape resembling the young Moon because of passion.

The beauty of the spring is depicted by means of the elements of nature. On his face is the BHAKTI-CHITRA of the wasp - ANJANA. The lips in the form of leaves are coloured by the soft colour of the rising dawn. Thus, the spring has the TILAKA of black flowers and the lips of red leaves. Here is that description:

"तृष्णादिब्रह्माण्यभक्तिचित्रं सुभागं मधुमसलीतः प्रकाशं।
रङ्गेण आयुष्यं कोमलेन चुल्लिवास्वामिभरं चकरां।"

The effect of VASANTA on the beasts is also described:

"मृगं प्रियात्मयम सत्यसीं रङ्कं कुलिऱिवास्वामिभरं प्रकाशं।
अवोऽरं: प्रलोकश्चित्तस्ते विद्वेदायनं सत्तीभरं चकरां।"

11187:1
The deer are grazing in the direction in which the wind, disturbed by the pollen of the PRIYĀLA trees and which are arrogant because they have shed the old leaves in the VANASTHALI, is blowing.

The note of the cuckoo is likened to the sweet words of SMARA:

( The sweet note which the male cuckoo gave out in consequence of the sweetened throat resulting from the tasting of the mango blossoms appears as if it were the sweet word of SMARA capable of destroying the pride of the proud damsels.)

The departing cold has left its scars on the lips and the white face of the GANDMARVA women and this appears like marks of perspiration:

( The lips scarred by the cold and the face made white by it on the damsels of the KIMPURUSAS are spotted in the designs on their face because of perspiration.)

Even the sages are influenced:
The sages resident in the SĀTHĀṆUVĀNA seeing the premature activity of the VASANTA had to suppress the excitement of their minds by efforts and because of this suppressed excitement their minds became a little disturbed.

VASANTA has blossomed here. But it has not the power of VASANTA alone. There is behind VASANTA the force of KĀMADĒVA. The wasp following each one of his beloveds to suck the juice from every receptacle and the KRŚNASĀRA deer rubbing the body of the doe-deer with his horns, whose eyes had been closed because of the joy she derived from the touch of her lover. Cow-elephants offered water made fragrant by the pollen of the lotuses to the bull elephants. CHAKRAVĀKAS were offering the stalks of the lotuses to the CHAKRAVĀKAS and the KINNARAS kiss their beloveds who are exhausted by the continuous singing of songs, whose faces bear designs in consequence of heavy breathing and whose eyes have turned red as a result of the drinking of the wine of flowers.

The conjugal relationship between the creeper and the tree is described in the following verse:

"परमपर्यंपुष्पास्तक्षस्तनाभ्यः स्फुरतस्वाच्छादितोऽपूजस्वतंत्राभ्यः।
ततलवश्चेस्तस्तकः पार्वतपुष्पिनिन्मस्सवाभुजधनानि।"

1. 24. 2. 22.
(The masses of flowers are whose breasts, the throbbing PRAVĀLAS are whose lips, such captivating creeper brides are embracing with their hands in the form of branches putting them around their lovers, the trees.)

Wherever the poet comes across couples, he never misses the opportunity of depicting the sentiment of love. Wherever he sees the creepers, he depicts them as women and the similes that he contrives are all appropriate and beautiful. The flower bunches are the breasts, the PRAVĀLAS are the lips, the branches are the hands and the creepers are the brides. KĀLIDĀSA is thus, the first poet to discern the fundamental identity of traits and between women and nature.

MANDI, the ride of ŚANKARA, is referred to in the forty-first verse and he appears as if he were a human being. He has directed the wasps to be motionless and the egg-born birds to be calm. The deer have stopped moving in obedience to his orders.

The description of the forest that the poet gives is wonderful. The similes that he contrives are all based in nature. The KĀNÄDEVA ignoring the inauspicious planet of ŚUKRA, whose appearance is considered inauspicious on the occasion of a journey, saw the place of concentration of PASŪPATI surrounded by NĀMĒRU trees. ŚANKARA was sitting on a platform made of DEVĀRĀHU tree on a tiger-skin in concentration. His open hands looked like lotuses.
The JATA on his head was bound with a serpent and his black skin garment appeared darker in the shade of his black throat. The costume of ŚIVA is all drawn from elements of nature. The lustre coming out from the third eye on his forehead overpowers the brilliance of the young Moon who is softer than the lotus thread.

The poet next proceeds to describe the costume of PĀRVATI. She has decked herself with KARṇIKĀRA having the brilliance of gold and attracted by the fragrance of the AŚOKA flower, as also the SINDUvĀRA flower resembling the peacock feathers. Just as the PALLAVI creeper bows under the weight of flower bunches so also PĀRVATI being weighed down by her breasts was moving attired in red garments. The description of PĀRVATI given in the following verses reads almost like a hymn to nature:

"अंशोकनिभत्वित्व पुष्पस्माकृपुष्पेभुवितकर्णिकारम्
धृताः प्रकाश्वितविभारं वसन्तपुष्पाभिरं चहलंति।
"आवर्जितात कृत्विविध स्वतान्त्र्या तस्मां वसाना तराणकृतागमः
पर्याप्तपुष्पस्तपकावनम् संचारिणी पञ्चनिनी तल्लेव।
"सूर्य मिलायात्वालमुभामान पुनः पुनः कैसरकामकर्षितम्
न्यासीकृता स्थानिकिता स्मरण मौधी क्लीयाभिव कर्वुक्तिः।
"सुगोविनिश्चासचिविवृष्ण्यः दिब्यधारासन्त चरं किरेक्षवः
प्रलिङ्गः सृष्टमालेलटोपिकारचिन्देन निवारयन्ति।"
(She who has attired herself in garments having the fragrance of ASOka and made of KARNIKARA having the brilliance of gold, as also of SINDUVARA resembling the peacock feathers and of other flowers of VASANTA, she who is bent a little by the weight of her breasts and who has the colour of the rising Sun and looking like the PALLAMINI creeper made humble by bunches of flowers, she who is trying to replace the girdle of KESARA-dama flowers which is slipping again and again and looking like another earth appropriate for the SMARA to cast his arrow, she whose fragrant breath attracts the wasp towards her lips resembling the SIMBA fruit and who at every moment is trying to drive it away by lotus like moving eyes.)

When this daughter of the mountain approaches near her destination NANDI informs the God. NANDI is here in the character of a door-keeper. Two friends bow before SANKARA with different flowers. These are the flowers of VASANTA following SISIRA. Thus, there is, here, a suggestion regarding the season.

Then UMĀ who has adorned her hair with KARNIKARA bows before SANKARA with her head in which the leaves have become loose in the act of bowing. Obtaining the blessings of SANKARA, GAURI with her red coloured hands puts the garland of the PUŠKARA lotuses of MANDĀKINI who has been tried by the rays of the sun.

All this description is the description of
Siśira and therefore, it is proved that the arrival of spring is pre-mature.

Just as the mass of water rises with Moon-rise, so Hara loosing his poise for a moment looks at the lips of Uma. And she, in her turn, stands before him in a curved pose with eyes resembling the posture of the young Kadamba. Sankara who has lost his self control stares in the direction. He, then, disappears with his ghosts, just as vegetation disappears in consequence of the stroke of Vajra. Parvati, who has failed in fulfilling her father’s desires, returns towards her abode cursing her own beauty. Just as an elephant carries away a trembling Malini between his teeth so does Himālaya carry away his daughter.

Here physical duty, premature Vasanta and undeveloped love seem to be described.

The elements of nature, that the poet has described in the Kumārasambhava, are quite different from those that he has described in other works. Kumārasambhava is an epic narrating the birth of a super-human being, who has the attributes of nature, man and god. The poet has brought together all these three attributes in an indivisible union. In order to achieve this unity great beings like Sankara and Parvati have to undergo a penance in the midst of nature. It is only after this penance that this great creation becomes possible.
The elements of nature appear here as characters. They are as much living as ŚANKARA and PĀRVATI. HIMĀLAYA, MENĀ, VASANTA, NANDI, PĀRĀVATA and all other elements have their own distinct individuality. But in fact, these are not pure and simple elements of nature. Each one of it has a divine trace in it. Thus, we see that the characters of nature in KUMĀRASAMBHAVA are different from the characters of nature in other works of KĀLIDĀSA. Elsewhere, nature is mute. In KUMĀRASAMBHAVA, it has the attribute of speech. Elsewhere, nature is free. In KUMĀRASAMBHAVA it is dependent on Gods. These elements of nature can adopt any form at will. The elements of nature in KUMĀRASAMBHAVA are yoked to the service of ŚANKARA and the Gods. They have also to serve TĀRAKĀSURA unwillingly. These characters of nature have immense wealth. From all points of view it is different from nature elsewhere.

There are two different forms in which nature appears in KUMĀRASAMBHAVA. It appears in the form of character and it also appears in description. As characters, it appears in the form of HIMĀLAYA, VASANTA, MENĀ, PĀRĀVATA, AGNI, GAŅGA etc. In the form of description, it appears in the description of HIMĀLAYAS of twi-light on the GANDHAMĀDANA mountain, in the description of night given by ŚANKARA, in the description of marriage procession of ŚANKARA, in the description of the army of gods at the time of his departure from heaven and in similar other places.
The fourth canto of KUMĀRASAMĪHAVA is mainly devoted to RATI'S mourning. Lord SĀNKARA reduces the KĀMADEVA to ashes for his evil action and RATI goes into a swoon for her widowhood. Then she begins to bewail her bereavement. The reduction to ashes of KĀMADEVA is the basis for the creation of KUMĀRA. It is the victory over crude carnal passion which results in union based on real love creating power. In the third canto, KĀMA had brought into play a number of couples and thus had generated unmixed physical passion. That physical passion is now destroyed. Depicting the failure of PĀRVATI'S physical love, the poet represents the importance of PĀRVATI'S austerities and RATI'S love of identification. The fourth canto is the beginning of this representation.

The verses in the beginning are full of pathos but they do not contain any element of nature. The mourning of bereavement leads us away from nature. Man loves his own kind first and nature only next. The first two verses give this sentiment of pain only. In the third verse is described the form of KĀMADEVA lying on the ground as it is reduced to ashes. In the fourth verse, RATI whose breasts have become dirty as she wallows on the ground and whose hair have become disordered, makes the VANASTHALI, the beasts, the birds and every phenomenon sympathise with her in her misery.
She who was pain-stricken has made her breast like dust by wallowing on the ground and was making the VANASTHALI sympathise in her pain with her hair in complete disorder.

Thus, the mourning of RATIO influences nature. Nature also begins to mourn. Just as human sorrow influences others, so also the sorrow of beasts and birds is contagious. When the young one of the deer pulled her garment, SAKUNTALĀ experienced the pain of separation, when BUDDHA saw the wounded swan, mercy dawned in his breast. Similarly the earth and the VANASTHALI sympathise in the pain of RATIO. The bond between man and nature is shown here very effectively as it is shown in ABHĪJÑĀNA SĀKUNTALĀ and MEGHADŪTA.

And this is how the poet describes the state of RATIO:

"I have been forcefully separated from you as NALINI is separated by the waterfall arising out of a breach in the dam."

The poet here compares every phenomenon with symbols of nature. The poet resorts to the elements of

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nature to express the distressed stage of the human mind. RATI says:

"O ŚYĀRA, are you displeased with me because the pollen of flowers dropped into your eyes by my playful striking of spring flowers? Do you remember that when stark darkness is spread over the town roads, when the clouds are thundering and when the frightened beloved is intent upon meeting her lover, who else but you can be of help to her?"

The power of love here is shown as superior to the power of darkness and thunder. Your dear friend the Moon will slowly give up his weakness. The new blossoms of mangoes whose arrival is announced by the sweet note of the male cuckoo will not adopt an attractive form. The rows of bees which formed the string of KĀMA'S bow are weeping in tragic notes like RATI. RATI, therefore, appeals to her beloved husband to arise to inspire nature's learned agent sweet noted cuckoo. She appeals to him to return to complete the colouring of her right foot. She invites him to descend by the route of the fires made by the butterflies and says that she feels as if she sees the KĀMADEVA on all sides talking with VĀSANTA with bow in his lap and a smile on his face. The Moon and VĀSANTA are the friends of KĀMADEVA, the female cuckoo is his messenger of love, flowers are his arrows as well as the garments of RATI.
Hearing this mourning VASANTA reappears:

रतिमधुसुपलुमाणुरा मधुरालमानसदयिष्टिपुरः ॥

(The MADHU revealed himself to RATI in order to console her.)

The reason for his appearance is given in the following line:

स्वलबस्य छु तृत्यमात्रो बिचुल्लस्यविकोपायलेः ॥

(When one's own kin is in pain the doors of the heart always open.)

There is a similar line in KAMADHUTA:

कालोदन्तं सुकुमुपनात् संगमालिकंविदुनः ॥

(The meeting with the friend deputed by the lover is only a slightly less pleasing than the meeting with the lover himself.)

The poet compares the colour of the ashes of KAMADEVA with the colour of the dove and says that those ashes are being progressively dispersed by the wind:

लतिवं कणशो विकिरितसे पदमेश्वरम कपोलकर्पुर्यम् ॥

Next follows an observation with respect to the nature of man:

दयितास्वयस्यस्यक नृणां न रक्तस ग्रेम चलं मुख्यान्त ॥
And then RATI proceeds to describe her own state. Just as a flame which is put out by wind cannot be reignited, so he is not going to return and my state will be like the smoke issuing from unbearable fire. I have been separated from KĀMADI, just as the creeper entwined round a tree is separated by the blows of elephants. Even the elements without consciousness recognised that women are always in the company of their husbands:

"अशिना सह वाति कौमुदी सह मेघेन तारितप्रकीयते |
प्रभदा: पतिवर्मिना इति प्रलिपन्तः दि विचेतनेष्यि ||

(Just as the Moonlight accompanies the Moon and the lightening unites with the cloud so women are always following their husbands as is known even to the unconscious elements.)

The poet has here pointed out that nature has no consciousness. The scientific aspect is perfectly known to him. A similar assertion is found in the MEGHADUTA, where the cloud is described as a conglomeration of smoke, light, water and wind. RATI, then, declares her intention to immolate herself in fire after having applied ashes of her lover to all the organs of her body. Then she requests MADHU to light the funeral fire as he had helped in spreading the bed of flowers earlier. She
requests him to kindle the fire with the southern wind quickly and to offer an oblation of water so that his brother may become united with her.

RATI, who is thus prepared for self immolation, is pitied by SARASWATI who is spread out in space, just as the first rains pity the fish that are in distress because the lake has dried up. That SARASWATI then gives a message through space remaining herself unseen. This is her message:

"कृष्णायुधपत्नि! पुरुभक्षयन्ति भलेन धिराङ्गिज्ञाति।
शृणु येन स कर्मणा गत: शरदृश्च तरलप्रेमाधिनिषी।"

(O bride of one whose weapon is flower, your husband will not be unobtainable for long, listen to me, he will not remain in this state for long.)

"परिणेत्यति पार्वितीं यदा तपस्वा तल्प्रयणिकृतो ठर।
उपलब्धसुरुवस्तव समरं वपुषा स्वेन नियोजित्वति।"

(When PARVATI after having pleased HARA marries and obtains happiness there-from, SANKARA will unite SMARA in his own body.)

Thus was RATI prevented from immolating herself. She was consoled also by VASANTA. The bride of MADANA waiting for her lover, passed her days becoming slim, just as the digit of the Moon which is lustreless at twilight waits for the night.
This fourth canto is mainly a canto of mourning. RATI describes the control of KĀMĀDEVA over all elements of nature. Her mourning influences the VĀNAŚTHRĀLI. The similes and instances, which she resorts to, are mainly drawn from nature. The beauty agents referred to are all natural. And the three main characters—KĀMĀDEVA, RATI and VĀSANTA are all pervading throughout nature.

Proud of her beauty and aided by VĀSANTA, PĀRVATI desired to triumph over SĀNKARA. It was for her that the bounty of VĀSANTA was spread over the HILLĀLAYS. But SĀNKARA did not recognise love that was based on passion of the senses. It was, therefore, that SĀNKARA reduced KĀMĀDEVA to ashes and PĀRVATI began to hate her own beauty. She decided to obtain SĀNKARA as her husband through austerity and not through beauty or VĀSANTA. Her mother repeatedly tried to dissuade her from this decision and in doing so she said:

"मनोक्षिता: सन्ति गुरुजेषु देवलास्तपः कं चंचलं कं च वालंकं वयुः।
पदं सहोवत भोमस्य पेनतवं शरीरं गुणं न पुनः पतञ्जः॥

(where is the austerity that gods can perform and where is your body desiring to do so? The petals of SIRISA flowers can bear the weight of the feet of a wasp but they cannot bear the weight of birds.)

Inspite of all these efforts, MENA did not succeed in dissuading PĀRVATI. Her determination was...
as firm as that of water flowing downwards.

The illustrations, the similes, the metaphors etc. that the poet brings in here are all based on nature. PĀRVATI discards all her ornaments and clothes and proceeds to GAURISĪKHARA in the midst of nature. That summit has derived its name GAURISĪKHARA from her name. She dons bark-garments there. For a penance of love, she selects a place in nature. KĀLIDĀSA always conceives of the incidents of love in the midst of nature. Garden, forest, or hermitage are the nourishing ground of love for him. Living in the midst of society, he does not like love to flower there. Real love has, for its ground, nature according to him. Love and nature are in his opinion indivisible. Just as the sages who aspire to freedom perform austerities in the midst of nature, so also for a perfect happiness in life the austerities for love are to be performed in the midst of nature. Real love between human beings should not develop in artificial surroundings but should develop in the midst of nature if it to is to be ideal. It is therefore, that he depicts love germinating in nature and also creation resulting in nature.

PĀRVATI, who is performing austerities, is completely metamorphosed. She, who used to dress her hair beautifully, has now bound the Jatā on her head. Even then the beauty of her face increased. A lotus looks beautiful not only in the midst of a row of wasps but it looks beautiful also when surrounded by mud. A beautiful
thing looks beautiful in all the surroundings. This beautiful simile is given in the following verse:

“यथा प्रतिरूपम पुराण शिवोत्सुभाषितमवेदगृहसूचनम्
न ज्योत्स्नाशेषामिव पद्मः सर्पपालसुमभि प्रकाशनि”

A similar view is expressed more poetically in ABHIJĀNA-SĀKUNTALĀ. When DUŚYANTA on seeing SĀKUNTALAR as she is watering the plants says:

कामाक्षानुरूपमं लयसो वलकलय | न पुनर्लक्षणार्जुने कुलः |

“सरस्वतिनुविचुः श्रवणहनापि स्यं ||
मलिनमलि चिमांलोककुस्तक्षं तक्षभी तनोति |
रूपमाधिकमनोसं वलकलनापि तत्वी ||
किमिव हिम भधुराणां मण्डन नाकृतीलाम ||”

( “The bark-garment is not appropriate to her age really. Not that it does not give to her the beauty of ornament. The lotus looks attractive even if it is covered by moss. The dark-spot beautifies the Moon even if it is dirty. Even so, this slim bodied one is pleasing more to the mind even in this bark garment — what is not like an ornament to the sweet formed one? ” )

PĀRVATI, who used to wear a waist band, now wears instead a band of JUṆA grass. Even that band excited her ROMAS and instilled passion in her. The ornament here is a natural element. PĀRVATI, thus, was performing
The garments and ornaments of पार्वती were made of elements of nature in both her states. In the earlier state, when she desired to obtain love on the basis of her beauty, that love was on the physical plane. She resorted to the delicate elements of nature like flowers then. Now that she has adopted the path of penance for love which is ideal, the elements of Nature she resorts to are coarse. In the earlier state, she utilises flowers like नवाकार्णिकारा, सिंडुवरा etc. Now she resorts to bark-garments, महुजाग्रा grass etc., but does not utilise flowers and leaves.

Her hand now does not approach her lips with a view to paint it with लाक्षारागा. Her fingers which had become red in the act of applying colour to the breasts and in playing with balls are now wounded in the act of plucking soft pointed कुशाग्रा grass. There is in that hand a rosary of रुद्राग्रा beads on आक्षासुत्र. The poet here suggests that the woman, who pined for enjoyment and youth, is now giving up all luxury and ornaments of that type.

This description reminds us of the hermitage of मारिच्य in the seventh act of अभिज्ञान-साकुंतला.

साकुंतला is performing the penance of love as does पार्वती. Both of them accept similar coarse conditions. There is another similarity between these two characters. Nature provides them both with garments.
Nature provides PĀRVATĪ with garments needed for penance. She provides SĀKUNTALĀ also with garments but with a view to add to her beauty.

A contrast of PĀRVATĪ's condition in the two states is built by the poet. PĀRVATĪ, who could not bear the pressure even of soft flowers in her bed now lies down on the ground utilising her own hands for her pillow. She has left her delicacy in the TANVĪ creepers and her swimming eyes in the female deer. She has forsaken her all for love. But she has not forsaken these for ever. She has made a deposit of her passions for the duration of her penance. The attribution of the characters of females in the elements of nature is found in KĀLIDĀSA in a number of places. We find the beauty of the female form in creepers and lakes, in rivers and the ocean and in other phenomena of nature.

PĀRVATĪ considers the little trees as her sons. The water pots are her breasts and she nourishes the trees by sprinkling water from them. Similar ideas are found in other works of KĀLIDĀSA also. SĀKUNTALĀ treats the young one of the deer as her son. MĀLAVIKĀ considers AŚOKA as an element nourishing her love. YAKŚINI in MEGHAḌUTA brings up MANDĀRAVRKṢA as her son. This sentiment is, thus, expressed by KĀLIDĀSA in a number of places.

When PĀRVATĪ was feeding the active female deer
with forest seeds like the NIVĀRA seeds from her palm,

She looked with curiosity in the eyes of those female friends and identified her eyes with theirs. Those elements of nature, which are cruel, have in this atmosphere of penance cast aside their pride and the hermitage, which has been sanctified by fire, offers sweet fresh flowers to the guests. The impact of penance is shown here as purifying even nature. If the object of penance is love, that penance is bound to influence the landscape and the hermitage. It is not the influence of the penance for renunciation. It is the influence of love. The penance of renunciation has a different impact. ŚANKARA, whose penance is of the latter variety destroys KĀMADEVA as he opens the third eye. But that has no other effect on the rest of nature. Here, when PĀRVATI performs a penance of love, her austerities influence all nature, make her humble, obedient and wise and infuse in her love for the woman.

The twentieth verse shows the ascendency of man over nature:

"शुची चलुर्जो चयनतं देविर्भुजा शुचिसिमत मध्यगता सुमध्यमा |
विलित्य नेत्रप्रलियालिनां प्रभामनयद्रष्टि सवितारमेक्षत्।"

(In the GRISHA, PĀRVATI with a serene smile sat in the midst of sacrificial fire on all the four sides, having conquered the brilliance that strikes the eye, she looked steadily at the sun.)
This extreme penance may appear exaggerated to ordinary view. But to those who have experienced the power of love, it looks quite in the fitness of things. Women undertake any risks for the sake of love — even that of going out all alone in darkness for meeting their lovers.

The face of PĀRVATI, turned towards the scorching rays of the sun, looked like the beauty of the lotus and the long sides of that face became dark gradually:

"तथातिस्वरुपस्वरथिज्यातीतिस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूपस्वरूप
open eyes. The nights were witnesses to this grand penance. The lightenings are the eyes of the night.

Just as PĀRVATI had donned the elements of nature for her penance, so the penance itself was identified with nature. She stared at the brilliance of the sun. She broke her fast with the drops of mist, she slept on the stone-slab, and she sympathised with the CHAKRAVĀKA couple that was intent upon entering the cold waters and in doing so, even suffered the wind in which snow-flakes were carried. Although PĀRVATI herself is unhappy, she does not like the misery of others, not even of the elements of nature. She herself is suffering from separation. But she does not like others being separated. One point becomes very clear here. Nature does not like to see separation in the midst of humanity and humanity does not like separation in nature.

And the appearance of PĀRVATI is described here picturesquely. She looked beautiful in her lips which trembled like the leaves of the fragrant lotus. Uniting the KUMUḌA with the showering of mist-drops she beautified the water. PĀRVATI herself gets almost identified with the lotus here:

"मुखोऽि सा प्रमुखसुगविना निश्च प्रविष्टमाधरपत्सुगविना ।
लुप्ताक्षेत्रसंपन्नां सरोजसंधानमिलयाकणयाम।"

And even then her endurance is tested by
the poet:

"स्वायत्तिसहितूमपर्णञ्चलिता पशु हि काश्य तपस्तत्या पुनः
तद्विधायकीणित: प्रियंवदं विद्यापराति च तां पुराविदः"

(The leaves which have dried up and have fallen down by themselves are whose life, the highest austerity is her penance and therefore she does not even eat those leaves, wherefore she is called APARNA. Such is her penance.

The poet next describes her form:

"मृणालिकापेणवस्यमाधिकिर्मिति: स्वमंड़ उपयन्त्यथसिद्धिः
तप: शरीरः: कान्तिनेतुपालिन्त तपस्यिना दूरमध्यकारां सा"

(She is reducing her body which is like the leaf of MRMĀLIKĀ and soft as the root of the PADMINI by keeping it in the midst of fire and water day and night and thus put the penance of the sages which is obtained by difficult means to shame.)

This is followed by a description of SĀNKARA.

His garment is of black hide. He holds a PALĀSA-DANPĀ in his hand. His speech is rich. He shines with the lustre pervading BRAHMA. Such a youthful and full bodied JATILA entered the TAPOVANA. The word TAPOVANA appears here repeatedly.

This is the self same TAPOVANA where PĀRVATI has entered with pride in her beauty. It is a TAPOVANA...
in which Kāmadeva had discharged arrows of flowers. It is a Taṇḍava where Vasanta appeared prematurely. It is a Taṇḍava where Śaṅkara had burnt Kāma to ashes. It is in such a Taṇḍava that Pārvati had entered into a severe penance and where Śaṅkara, who had jilted her, had returned.

This Taṇḍava is situated in the Himalayas. But each of the Taṇḍavas has its distinct individuality. The two Taṇḍavas here, the two Taṇḍavas in Abhinava-Sākuntala, the forests in Vikramorvasīya—all these have their distinct individualities.

Śaṅkara is inquiring of Pārvati's well being refers to all elements of nature. The sacrificial fuel, the Kūśa grass, water, Pravāla, deer, etc. are referred to. Śaṅkara inquires whether the mind of Pārvati is pleased with the female deer accepting the Darbha grass from her hands, whether she desires to compare her eyes with those of the female deer. Thus, a simile is drawn between human organs and the organs of the deer.

Then there is a reference to Himalaya. Himalaya who had not become sanctified by the oblations of the Gods and the sprinkling of the water of Gangā has become so sanctified by the pure character of Pārvati. Pārvati's penance is thus shown to be superior to the oblations of the Gods and the water of Gangā. Pārvati has discarded the ornaments of youth and has donned the bark garments appropriate to old age. Śaṅkara, therefore, asks: "How
does the night which has become beautiful because of Moon and stars grow anxious to meet the dawn?" Then, with a view to test PĀRVATI, ŚANKARA makes a statement which would upset her. He says: "It is not proper to don bark-garments in youth. Why should you discard ornamentation? What does your father lack? He has the land of Gods. He has wealth. Why do you, then, perform a penance?" Then learning from PĀRVATI's sigh her desire for the husband, ŚANKARA says: "He, for whom you are pining, appears to be stone-hearted. You whose ear-leaves have dried up and the string of whose VENI has become loose and has become yellow like rice-stalk. He that ignores you must be very hard. You have grown lean because of your vows of sages. And therefore, the places where you adopted ornaments have become black. You, therefore, look like the row of spots on the Moon during the day. Your body has become like the lotus in hot water because of your penance. From the moment that flower-arrowed one has struck your heart with his arrow, your hair have become dirty by the sandal paste on your forehead. You have no peace."

After the passage of the three quarters of the night, PĀRVATI sometimes rises up suddenly and shouts in sleep: "Where is NILKANTHA?"

Next, ŚANKARA gives his own description in terms of nature. He says:
"How will you hold the hand of ŚANKARA over which a serpent is entwined? where your hand covered with the marriage thread and where his hand with the serpent wristlet? where your DUKŪLA garland resembling the KALA-HANSA and where his blood dripping elephant skin? who is that enemy who leads your steps to the land of ghosts from your house where they are coloured by flowers? How will it be possible for you to bear the ashes of the funeral Pyre on your breasts which are being pasted by sandal? Where you, who ride the elephant and where you, who will have to ride the old bull?"

ŚANKARA draws a ghastly picture of PĀRVATI after her marriage with ŚANKARA. Of course, ŚANKARA is all throughout this description in an unrecognisable form. But PĀRVATI does not listen to him. She makes a firm reply. She says:

"whatever he may be, he may be adorned by the serpent or by the skin of the elephant or he might be KAPĀLI, he might be crowned by the Moon, every thing is possible for the body of that VIŚVAMŪRTI."

"The mount of ŚANKARA is the bull and the mount of Indra is the elephant. Even so, INDRA with the elephant mount bows with the garland of MANDĀRA flowers"
before the feet of the poor ŚANKARA and colours them red. The contrast between ŚANKARA and INDRA is brought out here by means of the bull and the elephant.

The MANDĀRA flowers seem to have a special significance attached to them as the poet always refers to them whenever the occasion for offering salutations arises.

The description of both ŚANKARA and PĀRVATĪ is given in terms of nature. When PĀRVATĪ, who had become wrathful because of the insulting references of ŚANKARA, who had come in disguise, instructed him through her female friend to depart and she herself moves away, her bark-garment slipped and her breasts became uncovered.

The reference here and the references all throughout KUMĀRASĀMBHAVA, suggest that there was no use of sewn garments in vogue in those days.

Just at this moment, ŚANKARA casts off his disguise and appears in his real form. Just as a river, unable to decide which way to flow when faced by a mountain in its course, becomes unnerved so the daughter of the king of the mountains seeing ŚANKARA standing in her way became unnerved. Describing her picturesquely, the poet says: "Neither did she go nor did she stand." The picture here is life-like and effective because the whole setting is in a frame of nature. Here is that classic word-picture:
And the next verse giving the acceptance of PĀRVATI'S love by ŚĀNKA is in fact the climax of the epic as it declares the triumph of the penance of love which is meant to lead to the creation of a power destroying all evil. It therefore, deserves to be quoted here:

"अन्यप्रभृत्यवनलाढि! तवासः
क्रीतस्तपोभिरिति यादिनि यन्त्रमौलेि|
अद्वाय सा भिमाजः क्रांमुस्ससर्जः
क्रुशः कलेन छि पुनर्विला विधले ||

( Now on, 0 you with the bowed organs! I am your servant, whom you have won by your penance. So said CHANDRAMAULI. She, therefore, discarded the regret and pain arising out of the observation of rules and adopted her original form again. )

PĀRVATI refers to her father as a giver. Now although the HIMĀLAYAS are non-living, we do not feel any-where in the poem that HIMĀLAYA in the poem is a mountain. He behaves at all places as if he were an ideal house-holder.

PĀRVATI now looks like the mango-blossoms directing their faces towards the cuckoo in spring.

\[ \text{१. कृ. } \text{२. रु. } \text{३. कृ. } \text{४.} \]
The relationship between the mango-tree and the cuckoo is shown here.

Next, ŚANKARA remembers the SAPTARŚI with a view to seek their help in bringing about his marriage with PĀRVATI. The description of the SAPTARŚI is full of references to elements of nature. The SAPTARŚI looked as if they had come after having bathed in the GAṅGĀ flowing in the sky whose waters had become fragrant because of the collection of MANDĀRA flowers and because of the fragrant juice of the quarter elephants. Thus, there is a union of fragrance with cold.

They have donned the sacred thread of pearls, and gold bark-garments and therefore, resemble the KALPAVRKṢA surrounded by AKṢASŪTRAS of gems. KALPAVRKṢA is referred to by the poet only in the HĪMĀLAYAS. It is referred to again and again in the KUMĀRADHĀMA. There is a reference to it also in the UTTARA-MEGHA.

All the references to rich material here are made with a view to emphasise the beauty and richness of the elements of nature.

The sages are so great that even the sun having a thousand rays bowed before them lowering his flag. They rested along with the earth at the time of the deluge upon the ŚEṢAṆĀṆĀ because of their greatness. Thus, their place is considered as significant as that of the Sun and the Moon.
When the SAPTARŚI inquired of ŚANKARA about the reason of remembering them, ŚANKARA informed them of the task that the Gods had assigned to him. He said that the Gods were praying for his son in order to destroy the demons as anxiously as the CHĀTAKAS aspire for rains. With a view to fulfill this object, ŚANKARA directs the SAPTARŚI to ask HIMĀLAYA for the hand of PĀRVATI in marriage. He tells them that he will meet them near the confluence of the MAHĀKOSĪ river in AUṢADHIPRASTHA.

Crossing the dark skies in a moment the SAPTARŚI arrive in the AUṢADHIPRASTHA. The poet then proceeds to describe that city. It is more wealthy and more dignified than the wealthy city of KUBERA, ALĀKĀ or heaven itself. It is surrounded by the courses of GAḤGĀ. The forests surrounding it are full of herbs. That place shines with gems. Elephants, lions and horses live there in abundance. YAKŚAS, KIMPURUSĀS, citizens, YOSĪŚTAS, forest gods, etc., reside here. There is unlimited bounty of nature here. There is no distinction between man and nature in this region. Rhythmic sounds of great masses of thundering clouds attracted towards summits are heard here. In the area, where the citizens reside, are seen the tops of various mechanical devices. The KALPA-DRUMAS appear as if they are swinging their flags in the forms of their branches. The reflections of the palaces there, look like rows of flowers at night. Damsels, on love errand moving out in the night searching their way in the light of herbs,
behave as if they do not know darkness. The Vīḍyādhāras sleeping in the shade of Sāntānaka trees live upon the external garden situated on the Gandhamādāna mountain. The poet has depicted all elements of nature here. Men, beasts and vegetation, clouds and their musical notes, Kālpadrūmas, constellations and shades of trees have all come together here to beautify the place. The only significant omission is that of birds.

The Saptarṣi are also elements of nature. They are a celestial phenomenon of nature in the skies. But they have been attributed with speech. They can fly. They can go wherever they choose. Even so, they are under the control of Sāṅkara. They pray to him and obey his orders. All their garments are drawn from elements of nature. It is they, who carry the message for the marriage of Sāṅkara and Pārvati to Himalaya. The whole of the epic is set in the midst of nature. The elements of nature seem to serve the purpose of uniting the unconscious, the conscious and the super-conscious. The poet attributes the element of intellect to nature. Sāṅkara remained absorbed in sexual sport for a hundred years but was unaware of the passage of that long duration. It was the dove that brought consciousness of the passage of time to him. Sāṅkara did not discharge his semen on any Āpsara; or on Pārvati but he discharged it on Agni, who transferred it to Gaṅgā. Thus, the relationship between nature, man and super-man has been brought out. The poet once again gives
a wonderful description of HIMALAYA. His lips are like DHĀTUTĀMRARASA. His hands are like the DEVADĀRU tree. He is by temperament moral. He offers a warm welcome to his guests and serves as their guide. He is humble in speech. When the SAPTARŚI arrive at his place, he feels pleased as if rains had arrived prematurely or as if flowers had bloomed before time.

The poet has conceived this HIMALAYA as a human being. He is the perfect Indian householder. Although he was a king, he feels that the arrival of the great sages will convert him into a place of pilgrimage. The poet depicts the social ideal through the symbol of this HIMALAYA. In order to do this effectively, the poet has given the attribute of speech to him. It is significant that the poet has attributed speech to nature only in the KUMĀRASAMBHAVA.

Preparations for PĀRVATI's marriage are afoot. These preparations are in the midst of nature. The father is all nature, the daughter desires natural surroundings, the husband is the lord of nature, and so, it is quite in the fitness of things that the whole marriage ceremony may become fully based on nature.

The appearance of the festival is described in terms of nature:
The relatives of HIMĀLAYA arrive and taking PĀRVATI on their lap, they give gifts of ornaments to her. Who are these relatives of HIMĀLAYA? They must be mountains. Even so, they have been attributed with humanity. In the month of FĀLGUNA, at the time of the union of the Moon, auspicious women perform ceremonies with various materials on the body of PĀRVATI. The poet at this time gives a beautiful picture of natural phenomena. We get here a glimpse of the poet's knowledge of astronomy:

"अभी च संप्रक्षुपमेत्य बाल नवेन वीराविधिसाधकेन |
करेन भानोबिन्दुव्यस्ताने संधुःत्यमाणेव शताक्षःस्या ||

( When the young maiden in the initiation ceremony touched by SAYAKA looked like the digit of the Moon after the end of the dark half when he is touched by the hand of the sun. )

All the material used in the initiation ceremony is drawn from elements of nature. After the bath, PĀRVATI
looks as beautiful as the earth when the crop has blossomed.

Her garments and ornaments are made fragrant by DHŪPA, flowers are struck in her head. The braid of her hair is woven with white flowers. A design is made on her face with GROCHANA. This design looks like the rows of step-marks made by the feet of CHAKRAVĀKAS on the banks of GAṆGĀ.

"विन्यस्तविकुण्डलि चक्रकुर्ढः गोरेः चनापत्तिविभक्तमस्यः।
सा चक्रचाककृतिसंकल्पायसिद्धोऽसः कानिष्ठतः तद्भवः॥"

Her face is like the lotus surrounded by wasps, or like the full Moon surrounded by clouds. She has woven YAVAPRAROHA in her ears. They have become lustreless because of LODHRAÇHURĀ, KĀJALA has been applied to her lotus like eyes. This beauty of form of PĀRVATĪ has been described in a beautiful verse:

"सा संभवच्छः कुसूमालं तौतिकिन्यतहितिक जियमाः।
सतिबिरतं जैवित्यमाने समुच्च्यानभरणा चक्रास्ये ॥"

( Just as the creeper looks beautiful because of flowers, just as the night looks beautiful because of the rows of swans, so does PĀRVATĪ look beautiful in her ornaments. )

PĀRVATĪ in her new garments looks like the Moon in SARAD and like the foam of the milk ocean.

1. 15. 24. 2. 15. 41.
The ornaments mentioned here are all natural. There is some reference to gems but gold does not seem so attractive. His greatest preference is for ornaments made from elements of nature. He likes flowers and pastes the most. He therefore, describes these more than the other ornaments. The material utilised in the marriage ceremony of UMĀ are also drawn from nature. MENĀ applies paste of two elements of nature, HARITĀLA and MANASSILĀ to UMĀ. There is in the ear of UMĀ DANTRAPATHA. MENĀ then paints a TILAKA on UMĀ'S forehead. She is then described thus:

\[ \text{Just as the foam waves of the Milk ocean or just as SARAD night in full moon looks beautiful so did PĀRVATI look beautiful in her DUKULĀ garment.} \]

SĀNKARA also had put garments of nature. The mothers who had brought ornaments and clothes for him were accepted by him only in token, and he converted his own decorations into the desired ones.
The ashas became as if it were white fragrant paste. The skulls assumed the beauty of the crown. The hide of the elephant appeared like DUKULĀ with designs of swans etc. on its front part.

The third eye in the centre of the forehead was shining. The apple of the eye in its middle shone like the eyes of stars. That eye being touched by HARITĀLA assumed the form of TILAKA.

The eye of ŚÁNKARA is described as yellow here as well as in a following verse (K - 7-162-50) which suggests that the eyes of the inhabitants of the cold regions are yellow.

The serpents of ŚÁNKARA also become an ornaments. The tiger-skin seat is prominent. The bull is like KAILĀSA. He seems to be striking his horns in the clouds.

Now the poet describes the marriage procession of ŚÁNKARA. The seven mothers following ŚÁNKARA on their mounts appear to be adorning the sky with lotuses:

"प्रभाकरं चक्रुरिवाल्कर्तिः काम"

Kāli who is following them is described thus:
Kāli, with ornaments of skulls, shone like the row of black clouds following white female cranes, as if the lightening is sent ahead by the black clouds.

The sun held the newly created umbrellas, GAṅGā and YAMUṆĀ, anxious to meet the ocean, came to serve the God with CHĀMARA. The SAPTARŚIŚ came to bless him. The Moon also came.

Seeing such ŚIVA arriving, the lord of the mountains HIMĀLAYA went forward to receive him along with his rich relatives mounted on elephants. He then looked like a mountain with blossoming trees.

They both then meet. And looked as if two streams of water were united by a bridge. The path traversed by ŚANKARA is strewn with flowers. As he was proceeding, the women of the city came to the gallery to see him. Some of them were arranging their Gōiffureurs, some were applying LĀXA-RĀGA, some were applying ANJANA to their left eye after having applied to the right eye, some were fixing their bodies, some came with RĀSANĀ being drawn by the thumb.

When ŚANKARA enters the abode of HIMĀLAYA, the women of the city welcome him with elements of nature.
Amorous women welcome him with fists full of LĀJA. There is a reference to a similar reception given to RAGHU and AJA in RAGHUVAṂŚA.

When ŚANKARA is taken to PĀRVATI, the description of the meeting is given by the poet in a beautiful simile. He says, just as the foams rise at the time of the tide on the arrival of the rays of the Moon, so was ŚANKARA taken to PĀRVATI. And the face of PĀRVATI shone like the KUMUD in Moonlight, and ŚIVA on seeing PĀRVATI was pleased and looked like the serene water in SĀRAD.

The preceptor made both of them throw LĀJA in fire and they went round the fire, as if the night was following the day.

The marriage ceremony and the marriage procession, the reception given to ŚANKARA and the description of the women of the city — all these have been described with the aid of the elements of nature.

ŚANKARA and PĀRVATI were married. PĀRVATI obtained her desired husband but she was ignorant of the ways of love. No doubt, she felt within her the emotion of love and the instinct of sex. But she did not know anything of its practice. She, therefore, felt a sense of reserve in entering into a sexual union with PINĀKINA. ŚANKARA, in order to remove her reserve, sits with closed eyes and PĀRVATI begins to observe her lover with curiosity. But
as she does so she finds his eyes open and, therefore, is
taken like lightning.

The night is the appropriate time for love. Darkness increases the attraction of love. SÁNKARA also enters into the love-sport with PÁRVATI at night.

The love between SÁNKARA and PÁRVATI is described by a simile of the love between the ocean and GÁN¿GA:

"त धधात्मस्ट्रेत्व तथे अशुरसनमयत वरसत्वेव नागः
साजसामनपणि हि आङ्गली सौंधपि संपुष्प्वांकृ तविःभाकः"

(As JÁHNAVI who does not return from the ocean creates in him a desire for the juice of her mouth, so she did with respect to her husband who was as desirable as herself.

The face of PÁRVATI is described beautifully. It resembles the fragrant lotus in full bloom. The similes so far are all based on nature. But then comes the description of the love amours between SIVA and PÁRVATI. It is a characteristic feature of KÁLIDÁSA'S poetry that nature goes into the background as soon as love comes in front. What is the reason of the poet's treatment of love in this fashion? Is the poet of the opinion that there should be no intrusion when two lovers are together in a mood of complete absorption mutually? Nature, according to the poet, is as much living as the human being and, therefore, even its presence becomes objectionable to the fulfillment of the extremely intimate relation...
between the lovers. Even those who do not accept the validity of the opinion that nature has a consciousness and an individuality similar to the human being do experience the disturbance of elements of nature when they themselves are in that state of intimate union. We find this attitude expressed in a number of instances in the works of Kālidāsa. We find it in Abhījñāna-Śākuntala and Vīkramorvasīya and also in Meghadūta. Wherever there is a narration of the intimate sex union, we find an absence of the description of the nature. Nature comes to supply the background for the development of love. It co-operates in that development. It provides solitude. It serves to create favourable circumstances. We see that the female friends of Śākuntalā disappear under the excuse of pursuing the deer and thus leave the loving couple alone so that they may have an opportunity of uniting. There is a similar episode in Mālavikāgnimitra. In Abhījñāna-Śākuntala, there is a suggestion of the union only. The union itself is not depicted. We learn from a statement of Duṣyanta that there has been a union as he says that he will return to re-enjoy the creeper. In the Meghadūta, when the Yaksīṇī sees her husband in the act of an amorous union with another maiden in a dream or whenever she thinks of intimacy with him we find the elements of nature always absent. It is, therefore, clear that the description of the ecstacy of the amorous union so absorbs the poet that he forgets the beauty of nature for the time being.
This principle is illustrated most effectively in the first twenty-one verses of the eighth canto of the \textit{AMITĀRASAMBHAVA}. Nature creeps, sometimes, in the background in the description of ornaments etc. The same is the case with the description in the \textit{UTTARA-MEGHA}. Love, there, is dominant and the bounty of nature is in the background.

To resume the narrative, we shall proceed with the development of the theme of the epic, \textit{SANKARA} after bidding farewell to his father-in-law, in \textit{AUṢADHIPRASTHA}, starts on his honey-moon along with his bride. The bull is his mount. Riding it, the couple comes to the \textit{MERU} mountain. The speed of this bull is as fast as the wind. The \textit{MERU} mountain is not described by the poet.

The poet next describes the \textit{MANDĀRA} mountain. It is sanctified by the foot-steps of \textit{HARI}. Fresh nectar-like drops of rain are falling there. \textit{SANKARA}, greedy of \textit{PĀRVATI}'s mouth as the wasp is greedy of lotus, began to reside on the \textit{MANDĀRA} mountain. The simile here reminds us of a similar one in \textit{ABHIJÑĀNA-SĀKUNTALA}. There, also, \textit{DUSYANTA} is compared to the wasp. But there is a distinction between the state of these two lovers. \textit{DUSYANTA} could not himself put himself in the place of the wasp. He was jealous of that element of nature and could only express his jealousy in addressing that wasp. \textit{SANKARA} himself becomes like a wasp. There is, therefore, a greater fulfillment of love in his case.
Another point is brought out here very effectively. Nature has co-operated in the love in all other cases in its initial stages. But it has obstructed PĀRVATI in that stage. Nature in its pure form had co-operated with ŚAKUNTALĀ. Even though her attraction was only carnal, it had not obstructed MĀLAVIKĀ. Why then did nature not co-operate with PĀRVATI when she cherished intense love for ŚANKARA? That is because the nature in case of PĀRVATI was not earthly. It was divine nature. Nature that was not itself free was not in a position to co-operate in the love of humanity. Again that nature must have recognised PĀRVATI'S pride. Love must be free. It must aim at sacrifice and it must be free from the stain of pride. PĀRVATI'S love was not of that character. It was, therefore, that she was jilted and nature also was humbled. Nature had not shown this type of attitude in any other case.

The poet next describes the itinerary of ŚANKARA. Just as he describes the route of the cloud messenger in MEGHADŪTA, so also he describes ŚANKARA'S itinerary on five mountain summits. The fascination of the poet for the mountain regions becomes apparent in this context.

ŚANKARA enjoyed the Moonlit night in company with PĀRVATI on mount KAILĀSA. Then he proceeded to the MALAYA mountain. There were sandals made from sandal creepers giving out sweet fragrance. PĀRVATI'S exhaustion
is removed by this fragrance. The south wind of the MALAYA mountain is described here. There is the sandal
and its fragrance. There is wind which brings relief.
The wind is soft. The significance of the south wind is
brought out by the poet here. Wind is the significant
in all the works of KALIDĀSA. It is always serene.
The poet has nowhere shown the wind in a destructive mood.
Many elements of nature are shown as becoming antagonistic
in different places but in no place is the wind so depicted.
The wind in all seasons is shown as relieving. What is
the reason for this? Why is the wind always auspicious
and such as leads to well-being?

"तस्य आँतु अत्यधच्चतनलें धृतचन्दनलतः प्रियाकुशभा\nआचामुष सङ्गलजङ्कर केसरक्षेष्टङ्कर हव कचिन्निलः॥"

( The south wind blew there softly, shaking the creepers
on the CHANDANA tree and carrying the pollen of LAVAŅGA,
appearing as if speaking softly to the beloved in order to
relieve her exhaustion resulting from amorous play. )

It is a matter of experience that women being
pained by passion, experience relief from cold, soft
fragrant breeze. If that breeze is a south breeze, it
is considered more well-come.

Naturally new-wed couples love to pass the initial
days of their love in the midst of nature. In practice,
we find couples being surrounded by society immediately.
after marriage. The poet, on the contrary, leads the lovers away from society in the midst of nature far away into the mountains. It is his belief that an indivisible union between man and woman is achieved only when they are all alone in the midst of nature. The real, full and unobstructed pleasure of the fulfillment of love is achieved only when the couple is all alone in the midst of nature. It is, therefore, that SĀKUNTALĀ and DUŚYANTA in ABHĪJñĀNA-SĀKUNTALĀ enter into a GĀNDHARVA marriage when they are alone in the hermitage. PURŪRAVAS and URVAŚI also united in a mountainous jungle. YAKṢINĪ had her abode in a similar surrounding of nature. PĀRVATI, also, is here in an abode of nature. Of course, she did feel the emotion of love in the residence of her father. But that feeling received free and unrestrained expression only when she arrived in a place of solitude. PĀRVATI and ŚANKARA have their love intercourse in the TARAṅGINI river on the MALAYA mountain. The lover plays with the beloved with golden lotuses. The beloved closes her eyes while playing with the lover with water. The rows of fish in the water, look like a second waist band of the bride:

"हेमतामरसशांतिप्रिया तत्करमभिविमित्रित्केशणा |
सा यजातल तरंगिणिमृणा मीनपंजिपुनरसकमेखला"

The poet leads ŚANKARA progressively to higher
and higher heights. Just as he leads this couple to the highest point, he also leads the cloud to KAILĀSA. The intense attraction for KAILĀSA in the poet is significant. It is for him the supreme abode of love and of beauty. It is also the supreme abode for realising the unity of Truth, love and Beauty.

We feel that the poet here presents alternate pictures of love and nature. He describes the amorous play of the couple. He describes PĀRVATI’S ornaments and her love-play with elements of nature. The elements chosen for the purpose — gold lotus — water, Pārijātā — are as delicate as PĀRVATI.

Thus, ŚANKARA was gambolling in the midst of nature. Enjoying the bliss of heaven and earth along with his beloved friend PĀRVATI. He, at last, arrives on the GANDHAMĀDANA mountain. The description of that mountain is exquisite. There the sun shines pleasingly. There he resides on a gold-coloured slab with PĀRVATI. Being overpowered by the beauty of this place he proceeds to enjoy sexual intimacy with PĀRVATI.

Thus, after having sojourned on MĀRU, MALAYA, and GANDHAMĀDANA mountains, ŚANKARA rests on the last and there he describes the evening twilight to PĀRVATI. The evening twilight is always preferred by the poet. Just as he likes the night more than the day, so does he prefer the twilight. The sun with the brilliance of red lotuses
in the day is troublesome for PĀRVATI. That sun is now about to set in the western horizon. If the poet compared the beauties of the female form with elements of nature earlier, he now compares the evening twilight with PĀRVATI'S eyes. SĀNKARA says:

"तिरिन्दित्ते निर्भयं प्रसन्नेन बिन्दुवति | 
मनःचापपरिंत्वेकुण्यतां निर्माणस्तव विलुभिन्नत्वाभि ||

(When the sun goes down, his rays being united with drops of water create a rainbow. Now that he is setting, the rays cease to appear. The streams that you see flowing have their origin in your father.)

The poet here depicts the beauty of the streams. He observes closely the phenomenon of the rainbow. The rainbow appears in consequence of the passage of the rays of the sun from the drops of water. As the sun goes down, the rainbow disappears. The time of the twilight is the occasion for the separation of the CHAKRAVĀKA couple. Separated only by the leaves of the golden lotuses, they feel that there is an enormous distance between them. And in consequence they bewail so intensely that a deep pathos is created. Along with references to these golden lotuses, the CHAKRAVĀKA couple, the KESARA flowers, etc., the poet has also referred to elephant and the wasp. These elephants being scared by the scent of the SALLAKI tree as a result of its branches being broken, resort to...
the water upto the morning in which the wasps are captivated in water lotuses. The observation here is extremely close.

"स्त्रानमयान्तरस्य दृश्यं सन्तुक्तीनवितं सन्तुक्तिः | 
अधिभाषपरवेशाय गद्धले वारिस्तवविवेचनः \|

All this observation is conveyed to us through the medium of ŚANKARA, who has a serpant garland and a garland of skulls in his neck. Such an unaesthetic looking being becomes a poetic medium in the hands of KĀLIDĀSA. The description of the evening twilight given by ŚANKARA is unparallelled. There are descriptions of twilight in MĀLAVIKĀGNIMITRA, ABHIJNĀNA-SĀKUNTALA, VIKRAMORVASHIYA, etc. But none of these is as detailed and as enchanting as the one in KUMĀRASAṂBHAVA. ŚANKARA says:

"पश्चिमविन्दुकालममविहिनानि निमित्तं हितकरोऽविवस्थला | 
लघुपूर्वया प्रतिपियश्रोमेयसं तपनिच्छिन्तोऽवस्थित्व-धन्यः \|

( Look here, O beloved of measured speech! The sunlight which has been elongated upto the western division and looks as if there is a golden bridge across the lake. )

The poet then proceeds further:

"उत्तरदिकिति पल्लवं गाढपुर्केनलिङ्गितलप्यां | 
दिशिणो वनवरवृक्षो दमभेकुरविसमेशकः वच ||

1. \. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12.
( The herds of forest boars had entered the mud when they who have been tortured by extreme heat come out of it, their teeth appear like the broken blossoms of lotuses. )

Then there is a picture of the peacock. He looks as if he is absorbing the evening twilight with his raised head.

The eastern section of the sky looks like mud because of darkness. And the rest shines without water.

SANKARA then invites the attention of his beloved towards the hermitage. It appears attractive because of the deer sitting in front of its huts, because of the trees watered from their very roots, because of the big cows entering its precincts and because of fire. The KUSA lotus whose petals have closed have kept a hole for the wasp to enter as it appears to be inviting him to enter.

The directions have become saffron coloured even though the sun has gone far away. These directions look as if they are adorning some damsel with BANDHUJIMA TILAKA.

The horses of the chariot with their touching neighing and the sages by reciting the VEDAS are praying to the sun, who looks like the brilliance of fire that absorbs the rays. When the sun sets, the sky shines with great brilliance. The sun himself shines at the time of rising and becomes dull at the time of setting.
The evening twilight follows the sun as the sun follows the morning. Thus, they co-operate with each other in happiness as well as adversity.

Next, is a description of the clouds as they appear in the evening twilight. Multi-coloured pieces of clouds looking beautiful in their designs with red, yellow and green colours appear in the sky. The saffron coloured hair on the neck of the lion, the tree with fresh leaves, and the metalled summit look like three beautiful pieces in the evening twilight. The sages worship this twilight. "O ADRĪRĀJATANAYĀ," says ŚANKARA, "I seek your indulgence to follow you for the sake of enjoyment."

There is a description of the twilight from the twenty-ninth to thirty-seventh verse of the eighth canto. As long as this description continues, the poet does not touch the earth. He does not even refer to love. It appears for a moment that there is only a mood of serenity. The evening twilight is calm and serene. It is not excited or passionate. There is no indication of excited behaviour anywhere. There is a picture of the herd of bears appearing peacefully. There is a picture of the peacocks enjoying the twilight without making any noise. The deer and the cows are quiet. Even the wasp does not hum. The lotus remains steady. In this setting, we see the sky which is a mass of light and darkness and the twilight which spreads beautiful colours. The twilight
is quiet and brilliant and it follows the sun. The day or the night or the dawn sink into insignificance before the beauty of the evening twilight which is spreading in the sky. This twilight is worshipped by all, beginning with beasts and birds up to the ordinary human beings and the sages. Even the divine being worships it. That is his greatness. There is thus, an emphasis on the worship of the sun and in the worship of the sun, the greatest importance is attached to the evening twilight.

It is a significant fact that this twilight spreads everywhere and brings pleasure to all elements and when we realise this, we also feel a sense of pleasure and beauty.

There is a symbolic significance in this twilight. It seems to be representing the beautiful and dignified form of femininity. Even the male bows before this phenomenon of nature.

There is a difference between the twilight as presented in RTU-SAMHARA and in KUMĀRA-SAMBHAVA. The GRISMA twilight in the former instills a desire to mate in the loving couples. The twilight in the KUMĀRASAMBHAVA leads the lover to ever greater heights in order to establish an indivisible union between them. The ideal appears to be the same as in MEGHADŪTA where the poet leads the cloud to ever greater heights, where ultimately
a real and lasting union between the male and the female principles is to take place.

The twilight inspires every one. It does so with love as well as with awe. It does so in case of both living and non-living. It makes the mountain multi-coloured and inspires the trees, the bears, the lions, the horses and all phenomenon of nature. But as it does so, it does not excite. It inspires a serenity which is in fact an attribute of real love.

The poet's understanding of the human mind is put to use in the description that follows. As ŚANKARA goes for offering his worship to the twilight, PĀRVATI raises a love quarrel. It seems as if she is jealous of the twilight, who is also a female. We are reminded here for a moment of the jealousy that PĀRVATI experiences for GAṆṆA in the MEGHADŪTA. When the twilight disappears ŚANKARA proceeds to describe the Moonrise. The Moon rises with a view to drive darkness of the night away. When the Moon rises the east looks beautiful as if it were covered with the pollen of KAITAKA. The night which is full with constellations is addressed by the Moon from behind the MANDARA mountain as PĀRVATI is being addressed with love by ŚANKARA. As the day has passed the Moonlight spreads as if a smile is pervading every where. The entourage of the Moon appears at night so that all directions may be discerned. This Moon which looks like
a ripe fruit and which has spots of deer, excites the CHAKRAVĀKA couple. Its fresh rays are similar to the marks which you make on the barley corn for making your ear ornaments. The Moon kisses the KUṆĀLA lotuses as if he were kissing the face of the night after grasping the stock of hair on her head with fingers in the shape of rays. The bottom of the sky looks as transparent in consequence of the darkness having been removed by the rays of the Moon as MĀṆĀSA-SAROVĀRA which has become transparent after the passage of some time after it is disturbed by the gambols of the elephants. The Moon removes the reddish colour from the sky. The brilliance of the Moon is steady as it ascends. When it is dark, the brilliance descends. This reminds one of the ups and downs of fate.

The mountain awakens the peacocks sleeping on the trees in the mountain ranges with the water drops created as a result of the rays of Moon. When the rays of the Moon penetrate the KALPAVṛKṣa it seems as if a garland of greenery is being made by it. The hills and dales in the mountain look like designs made on an elephant because of alternating Moonlight and darkness. The wasp comes out of the KUṆUDA, humming freely in order to absorb the sweetness of the light of this developed yellow Moon. When the KALPAVṛKṣa shakes in the breeze the Moonlight that penetrates it appears as if a white garment is shaking.
"The dried leaves and the fallen flowers as they rise look as if your female friend is raising the braids of your hair.

O beautiful faced one! This Moon, united with active constellations and beautiful stars, looks like a bride-groom united with a trembling new wed-bride. O, beloved! The reflection established by the disc of the Moon in your eyes is as white as SARKANDA grass. That Moon light seems to be mounting up the parting up of your hair with pleasure. Your face resembles the wet KESARA SUGANDHA. Your eyes are naturally red because of excitement. They do not need any other intoxicant."

Even so, SANKARA offers to PĀRVATĪ MADIRĀ to drink. He then leads her into the solitude of the cave enclosure. Here, there is a very clear suggestion that SANKARA chooses a place of solitude in the forest and that too, in a cave as the place for a loving sexual embrace.

This canto is saturated with descriptions both of nature and of love. The picture of love here is different from the one that we saw in the third canto. We witness here both nature and love. But both of them have clearly distinct forms. They do not seem to be reacting on each other.

As we proceed up to this eighth canto we feel that human being does not dominate over nature.
The descriptions of twilight and Moon-rise, given by ŚAKARA are serene in mood. The mood of love comes to the fore-ground only after those descriptions are concluded.

As if he were the wasp, ŚAKARA began amorous intercourse with his beloved facing her lotus-like face. As he was absorbed in the act, he saw a dove on a day. Here, the poet brings in an element of nature as an intruder. The dove that ŚAKARA sees is in the heat of passion. His eyes are red. He cooes in high and low notes. He withdraws his feathers. In this state he looks very handsome. That there is an intense passion in union even in nature is indicated here. That dove moving in circles on both wings was enjoying pleasure and had the colour of the Moon. When ŚAKARA first saw this dove he was pleased. But when he found that it was the AGNI in the form of the bird, he was enwrathed. Immediately, AGNI, forsaking his adopted form, appeared before ŚAKARA and addressed him in an appealing tone. ŚAKARA was appeased by this appeal. He, then, again begins to converse with PĀRVATI.

This is followed by a description of the amorous gambols of ŚAKARA. That description is full of references to nature. ŚAKARA covers the breast of PĀRVATI with a garland of PĀRIJĀTA flowers. He feels that the lines of PĀRVATI'S face are like the lines in the naval of the deer and that the world-conquering incantation of love is written there. He places a large MUKTĀFALA garland around PĀRVATI'S
neck so that it reached her uplifted breast. PĀRVATI then looked like LĀKŚĪ in the midst of two streams of GAṆGĀ upon MERU mountain. SĀNKARA bound a girdle around PĀRVATI as if he were binding the soul in the form of a deer with a net. He produced KĀJALA from his third eye resembling a flame and applied it to PĀRVATI. He washed PĀRVATI's feet with the water of GAṆGĀ flowing from his head. His hands which became red in the process were also washed.

Thus, SĀNKARA himself decorates PĀRVATI with ornaments from nature. PĀRVATI, who looks like the female king-swan of the MANASA is led away by SĀNKARA for intercourse.

Again NĀNDI enters. SĀNKARA and PĀRVATI mounting upon him bid farewell to the GARDHAMĀDANA mountain. when they move, the speed of the bull is like the breeze. SĀNKARA and PĀRVATI then enjoy the breeze that is made fragrant and that gives the occasion for the birth of the PĀRIJĀTAKA flowers and that brings relief to the woman exhausted after the strain of amorous intercourse. This wind also is cold, fragrant and soft.

Now SĀNKARA approaches the KAILĀŚA mountain. Night also approaches. The constellations of the stars are reflected in crystal palaces then. The brides of the SIDDHAS have enjoyed amorous intercourse and the pearls of their broken pearl garlands that have fallen
look like stars. The ocean of nectar that is flowing in the sky resembles the mirror of the damsels flying in the sky.

The poet has given a very realistic picture of the love-play preceding intimate sexual embrace in this ninth canto. An unbreakable unity is established between ŚANKARA and PĀRVATI. That is one of its functions. Love play preceding the sex embrace is meant to establish a complete harmony, unity and identity between the lovers. The second function is to show the significance of nature with respect to this development of unity. It is nature, only which can bring about a real unity between the lovers. The third function is to establish the fact that the real and the full ecstasy of love can be achieved only if the amorous play is set in the midst of nature. Śankara and PĀRVATI enjoy the best of their days in the midst of nature, achieving relief from the exhaustion of their unbounded amours from cold breeze. The whole of nature is favorable to them as they proceed to fulfill their desire. But even then, nature does not express its joy in song and dance as do the followers of ŚANKARA and the Gods at the time of his intercourse.

A review of all the works of KĀLIDĀSA convinces us that nature always observes a respectful restraint at the time of the great creative act of loving sexual embrace. The solitary exception of passion found in the midst of
nature is that of the passionate dove. But that dove is not pure, earthly nature. That is only a form adopted by divine nature.

Love is always the central theme of the poet. He is a great advocate of love and its full expression. But the final fulfillment of that love should take place only after marriage according to him. SAKUNTALĀ transgressed in this respect and was therefore, cursed. PĀHVATI wanted to transgress and was therefore, jilted. Nature that follows the flowering of love does not become passionate but remains serene co-operating with the lovers and blessing them.

The wrath of SĀNKARA is described in the next canto. The poor dove approached SĀNKARA in all humility with a view to bring relief for the Gods but that led to its own ruin.

We find nature serving in the interest of the well-being of humanity everywhere. We find nature supplying clothing and ornaments to SĀKUNTALĀ. We find elements of nature like MANDĀRA, KESARA, SĀRIKA and peacock consoling the YAKŚINI in MEGHADŪTA. A sacrifice of a much greater magnitude is made by nature in the KUMĀRASAMBHA VA. Nature appears in this epic in numerous forms. It comes as an accompaniment of penance, as the place for performing that penance, as ornament, as a co-operator and finally as the supreme sacrifice in the
interest of the well being of gods. It was the form of a bird that brought relief to the Gods although it had to suffer an excruciating pain in achieving this object. The pain of the burn inflicted on by SĀNKARA could not be subdued and therefore, he went to INDRA for relief. INDRA sent him to BHĀGIRATHI. At this point the poet gives a hymn to GAṂGĀ which is full of devotion. The poet gives many names to GAṂGĀ here.

Just as we derive pleasure from elements of nature so does nature remove our sorrow, our misery, our pain and our sins. It was with the aid of nature that PURŪRAVAS and URVĀŚĪ were united. It was with the co-operation of nature that MĀLAVIKĀ'S love was fulfilled. It is nature that brings relief to AGNI here. So far the poet had depicted the greatness of the hermitage, the ASKĀ, the peacock and the other elements of nature. Now it is the turn of the river. We find rivers elsewhere also. We find them in the MEGHADŪTA. But there, the river is the beloved. The river here, is a purifier. The river here, performs the function of co-operating with creation. We feel that this approach is different from the usual approach of KĀLIDĀSA.

Then AGNI proceeds to GAṂGĀ. The virtues of GAṂGĀ are described here. The description is the description given by the devotee. Nature here appears in the form of God's grace. KĀLIDĀSA's nature in all
places is more like a friend and consoler standing on an equal footing with humanity and experiencing human emotions. Nature, here, is on a different level.

ŚANKARA’S semen enters the GAṆGĀ. And GAṆGĀ magnanimously expects it. GAṆGĀ, with all her forbearance is agitated for a moment in consequence of the semen. Just then KRTTIKĀS, pained by the scorching sun of MĀGAHA, come for a bath to the GAṆGĀ and ŚANKARA’S semen enters them. These KRTTIKĀS are virgins. They, therefore, feel abashed in being impregnated by ŚANKARA’S semen. They, therefore, transfer it to ŚARAVANA on the banks of GAṆGĀ.

The episode of ŚANKARA’S semen and the hymn to GAṆGĀ form the subject matter of this canto. GAṆGĀ is a symbol of maternal love. It is maternal love that brings relief and that nourishes the foetus with love.

The poet appears to be depicting GAṆGĀ in a complete woman’s garb. A river is to him, always a woman. GAṆGĀ gives birth to a son and performs breast-feeding. There is a tussle between GAṆGĀ and the KRTTIKĀS in connection with the child. Just at that moment ŚANKARA arrives on the scene in VIKĀNA accompanied by PĀRVATI. ŚANKARA says that this is the son destined to act in the well-being of the world. It was my semen that went to AGNI and from AGNI to GAṆGĀ and from GAṆGĀ to KRTTIKĀS therefrom to ŚARAVANA and was born as a child. As PĀRVATI hears these words, she experiences ecstacy.
touches her son with her fingures. Those fingures resemble a KUḌMALA lotus. That new born son is placed on the lap pf PĀRVATI by the lotus like hands of the Gods.

The poet then describes the appearance of the son:

1. नस्यकान्तादितपामप्रमलध्री क्रमार्धादनीं नुकुम्म ||

2. हैमी कलं ठेमितेलिव विकर्त्तर नाक्ष्यवाह प्रम ||
    पुर्वदिव संदर्णिमुमारात पार्वती नन्दनमादधाना ||

(Just as LAXMI shines in the midst of the five-petalled lotus so looked PĀRVATI as she kissed the six faced Kumara.

Just as the creeper on the HEMAGIRI is adorned by the golden fruit, just as GAṄGĀ is adorned by the lotus, just as the eastern direction shines at the time of the rising of the Moon, PĀRVATI shined with her son.)

SĀNKARA proceeds with PĀRVATI and the new born son to KAILĀSA. There is no suggestion as to the place where they had arrived on the banks of the GAṄGĀ nor is there a description of the route they followed in returning to KAILĀSA.

Nature, and its description is very slender after the ninth canto. The poet who describes the twilight on the MANDARA mountain does not give any description of the panorama of nature of the GAṄGĀ but only proceeds to sing a hymn of devotion to her. The poet has characterised
rivers, as beloveds. No where has he given to them the
epithet of destroyer of sins or destroyer of uneasiness.
when the semen of SANKARA enters the GAÑGÁ, the occasion
is one that would lead to unbounded ecstasy. The poet
would not talk of her purity and piety then. And PĀRVATI'S
meeting with her son ought to be more emotional and more
poetic.

In the earlier cantos KĀLIDĀSA has described the
GAÑGÁ and the Gods but never does he become so much absorbed
in BHAKTI. Whereas, here we find whole cantos full of that
emotion.

SANKARA celebrates the joy of the birth of KUMĀRA
in KAILĀSA. TORĀNAS from celestial trees, garlands of
golden thread resembling the rays of the Moon of the skies,
etc. are witness in every home of KAILĀSA. Here the breeze
is delightful, the directions are pleasant, the fire burns and
the sky also appears to be participating in the pleasure.
There is a shower of flowers from the sky. There is
pleasure on all sides and in all creation, movable as well
as immovable. But the reflection of this pleasure in
the midst of nature is not depicted with full enthusiasm.
One is reminded of the contrast between the narration of
the event of the birth of PĀRVATI and the sports of her
infancy with this description. There is a superficial
similarity between these two. But the poetic throb of
the former is missing in the latter. The son of PĀRVATI
plays in dust, plays with the horns of the bull, counts the teeth of the serpent entwined around ŚANKARA'S neck, grasps the ŚIHRĀŠ of the GAṅGĀ and his eyes bloom like the lotuses in the GAṅGĀ.

Nature seems to be inactive in this cento. There is no ecstasy, no pleasure, no enthusiasm in it. It does not inspire. We do not feel the same naturalness about KUMĀRA that we feel in case of URVĀŚI'S ĀYU or ŚAKUNTALĀ'S SARVADAMANA.

At last, INDRA meets HARA, just as a thirsty man meets a cloud. So far it was not possible for him to come to meet him. It was after a very great effort that he came to KAILĀSA mountain. The KAILĀSA has a higher status even than heaven. It performs a number of functions. It becomes the ground for the germination of love. It is the place for penance and renunciation. It is the abode of fruitful love between GAURI and ŚANKARA. INDRA comes to meet ŚANKARA here and he comes over the clouds' route.

This mountain has been sanctified by the foot-steps of GAURI and ŚANKARA. This mountain is as transparent as a crystal. INDRA himself saw his different images reflected in it. The poet describing this mountain attributes whiteness to it, thereby suggesting its purity. If the mountain is white the courtyard of ŚIVA'S abode is whiter.
The poet next proceeds to describe SANKARA:

"विभुवणहुक्ततरकम्यलो गङ्गा अजगुरूपरं भजन्तीम्।
जो नित्यस्पन्दन्तं उत्सन्निमिति स्वयमेव: शरद्य सुखोऽर्थः॥'

(The JATĀ on the head of SANKARA is washed by the GAGGA whose waves rise high and smiles sarcastically at PARVATI with her foams which are white like the SARAD sky at PARVATI sitting on his lap.)

There is a verse containing the same simile in the MEGHADUṬA:

"अमीरवक्रमुकुटिरिच्चा या शिष्यवेद कोणः।
राजोऽपि गोपालश्रीमकरोदिनुजःग्रामिनिनस्ताः॥'

(The GAGGA appears as if she is playing with her fingers in the form of her waves, looking sarcastically askance at PARVATI whose brows have become bent.)

The waves of GAGGA are white. Its foam is white. Even her smile is white. HIMĀLAYA is white. The sanctity of the place is conveyed by the poet with repeated references to the white colour.

SANKARA shining with the gem on the head of ŚEṢAṆĀGA resembled the golden summit of the SUMERU mountain.

The Moon on the head of SANKARA becomes more attractive as it is reflected in the waves of GAGGA and
because of the brilliance of snow, because of the drops of light and because of its rays, SANKARA appeared more imposing because of this Moon.

"गंगा तराकं प्रतिकलितले: स्त्र्या हिम भवनों शिरसा सुधांसुमुः
| चतुर्विश्वास्यश्रुद्धार्येषु हृदयां गंगारसलिलसनत्तनाम ||"

(Reflected in the waves of the Ganga, the Moon on the head of Siva multiplied himself. The mass of rays of the Moon became whiter and resembled the whiteness of the mist as its lustre was reflected.)

The third eye in the forehead of SANKARA is described as रघुनंदनः. It is the eye that burnt the KAMANANDA. The Sun and the Moon are his earings. Nector emanates from the Moon on his head. Ashes have been applied over the body of SANKARA. PĀRVATI sitting on the lap of SANKARA looks like the lightening across the SARAD sky. The GANAS are fanning SANKARA with fans that are as white as the rays of the Moon.

White elements have been projected in this description all throughout. The description of SANKARA here is full of the spirit of devotion. Even so, there are suggestions of both love and nature in this description.

This description is followed by description of INDRA. INDRA began to shine like the flowers in the branches of the mango tree, seeing the brilliance of SANKARA.
resembling the lotus. KUMĀRA looked like the essence of the golden mountain like the SUMERU mountain.

SANKARA inquires of INDRA:

"िहिमादितिन्यमृदितस्य किं व: प्रस्थि द्वारे वधते मुखानि ||

( How is it that the faces of the brave heroes have assumed the cowardice resembling the lotus touched by snow drops? )

The sentiment here is that of dejection.

Proceeding further, SANKARA asks INDRA as to why he had to come to the earth forsaking the heaven. And INDRA replies: "'वर्णानन्तप्रोषविपन्तिमयो महामुदाकिं दरते कमानम् ||

( Who else but the cloud can quench the forest fires? )

At every point the poet brings appropriate similes and these similes are all drawn from nature. There are illustrations also and these illustrations are all drawn from nature.

Then INDRA proceeds further and makes a definite request:

"िविधायामकामविक्कल्पानां नवीनममंत्रेश्वरिधीनाम ||
सुन्दरं नवनमालमं न: सेनायमेलं स्वयमादिक्ष्वम् ||

( Direct your son to lead his army to pacify the heat of the vegetation that has become lustreless and distressed with..."
hiss rain. }

KĀRTIKEYA is here compared to the first clouds.
He brings new leaves to the vegetation.

The significance of the white colour has been
emphasised in the fourth canto of RAGHUVAṂśA, where the
victorious march of RAGHU is described also. Although,
the setting in both the epics is different, the object
is identical. That object is the description of the
purity, sanctity and the brilliance of the white colour.

"पुष्परीकालपत्रस्त्र विशमस्तकाकाष-धामरः"

( PŪṆṆARĪKA is RAGHU'S umbrella and the blooming KĀŚA
flowers are his CHĀMARA. )

Both of these flowers are white. The CHĀMARA
in the KUMĀKASĀMBHAVA is made of the rays of the Moon.
There also the colour is white. Again in another verse
in the same canto of RAGHUVAṂśA, the importance of the
white colour is emphasised:

"दुःश्रेष्ठीषु लांसु कुमुक्तसु -च वारिष्ठु"
"विशमस्तकाकाष-धामरः पवित्त्रस्त्रय-धामरः"

( The greatness of his glory had spread to the rows of
the swans, the stars, the lotuses, and the waters. )

All these elements are white.
Again at the end of the twenty-fourth verse in the same canto in the fourth foot there is a reference to ZT. There also is a suggestion of the white colour.

The pre-eminence of the white among colours is always brought out by the poet through references to elements of nature.

INDRA makes preparations for taking KĀRTIKEYA along with him. When KĀRTIKEYA bows before his parents on the occasion of his departure, his appearance is described in terms of nature:

"विरिणिक्षित्र्या विवर्णस्त्र्या विविधाणि नक्षत्राणि रिववत्रेः"

(KĀRTIKEYA was shining in the midst of Gods as if the Moon had begun to shine in the midst of constellations even during the day.)

Similes based on constellations, stars and Moon are conceived in three consecutive verses here. INDRA and his companions arrived in the heaven across the path of constellation. The region between the earth and the sky is described by the poet in VIJĀRAĀMORVĀŚIYA in which the first meeting between VIJĀRAĀ and URVĀŚI takes place on a mountain between heaven and earth. Here in the KUMĀRASAŚĪBHĀVA, the poet takes KĀRTIKEYA to heaven itself.

There are references to constellations in other
works of KĀLIDĀSA, but the significance of the constellation is not so great in any other work. In fact, the poet does not describe the sky in very great detail generally. He is essentially a poet of the earth.

This distinguishing characteristic of KUMĀRASAMBHAVA is fully reflected in this canto as elsewhere. The SAPTARŚIS DESCEND from the sky, INDRA arrives in the KAILĀSA from the sky. KĀRTIKEYA goes up into the sky. On all these occasions the sky, the constellations, the stars and the path of the constellations are referred to and KĀRTIKEYA is compared with these. The details of this description leave no doubt, about the poet's close understanding of astronomy. KĀRTIKEYA is the king elephant in the midst of the herd of elephants that he leads. Just as the king elephant leads the elephants, so does KĀRTIKEYA lead the army of the Gods. PURŪRAVAS in VIJAYAMUKHAVASĪYA is repeatedly compared to the elephant. Great and brave men are always compared by the poet to the elephant.

KĀRTIKEYA arrives at the GAṅGĀ. She is attributed adjectives, here, also as she was in an earlier description she is called स्वर्गधुनि. The GAṅGĀ'S course is of yellow water where the colours on the bodies of the damsels of the Gods was washed in their water sports. The elephants intent upon a sojourn in the water were uprooting infant trees on her banks. The daughters of the Gods played
on her banks with golden sands, were hiding jewels in that sand and were building VEDIKAS there. Thus, GAÑGĀ is the place for love and for play. It is not only the elephants who become intoxicated on her banks but other elements also are similarly affected:

"सौरभानुबंधमणोपाशीकिंशुरयुक्तसावल्मिकेनत्रेतः |
परिपंचाकर्त्त्वयात् पशुः परिपंचाकर्त्त्वयात् ्
"

(The wasps attracted by fragrance, the swinging rows of golden swans and the pollen falling from the lotus — all these together have made her water yellow.)

The GAÑGĀ of the gods has become pleasant as she receives the reflections of the divine damsels. Thus, the banks of the GAÑGĀ bring pleasure to all like the elephants, the daughters of the Gods, the wasps, the swans, the lotuses, etc. There is no distinction here between any creation.

INDRA, who sees this GAÑGĀ after a very long time, is pleased because GAÑGĀ is his close relative. KUMĀRA bows before this GAÑGĀ along with the Gods. The cold breeze of the GAÑGĀ, which is united with the fragrance of the SAROJA flowers and the coldness of the waves of water, removes the fatigue of KĀRTIKEYA. GAÑGĀ is pleased with KĀRTIKEYA and offers to him theb breeze for relieving KĀRTIKEYA’S fatigue. Why is GAÑGĀ touched so much on..
seeing KĀRTIKEYA? We know that ŚANKARA'S semen was accepted by GAŅGĀ from AGNI. Thus, there is a relationship of mother and son between them. Again GAŅGĀ resides in ŚANKARA'S JĀṬĀ and KĀRTIKEYA used to play with her. His father had accepted her. She was, therefore, deserving his respect. This sentiment is no doubt, suggested by the poet here, but the suggestion is not developed further.

The swan, the wasp and the elephant are referred to here. The only flower referred to is the lotus. No other flowers are referred to. No creepers or trees are referred to. The poet refers to the KALPAVṛKṢA, the MANDĀRA flowers etc. in other places, but here on the banks of the GAŅGĀ he does not refer to any of these.

After having paid his respect to GAŅGĀ, KĀRTIKEYA enters the SĀLVANA, the garden of sport of the Gods. The demons have destroyed it. Having seen this garden KĀRTIKEYA proceeds to AMARĀVATI. She looks depressed as would a young damsel, who has been married to an important husband. Its crystal palaces have been destroyed. The destruction wrought by the demons in AMARĀVATI is described in two verses. The description is full of similes drawn from nature:

"उत्तरकालीककरणपुङ्कानां दिनंत्विनानन्मवृक्षिलानाम् ।
हिरण्यारंश्रजवल्लिलानां विद्याकविहर्मदिशिलानाम् ॥

अ ॥ २ ॥
Whose golden lotuses of the sun have been uprooted,
whose quarter elephants have been broken, whose waters
have been polluted, whose golden swans have been abandoned,
whose slabs of VAIDURYA gems have been broken and where
grass has grown around the water sport house-wells: seeing this unhappy state made by the enemies, he was
filled with shame resulting from regret.

Here, in AMARAVATI, KUKARA enters the VAIJAYANTA
palace of INDRA. Here also, the elephants of the demon
have destroyed the walls. Climbing the steps of the
palace, he was received by the sages with KALPADRUMA
TOHANAS and garlands of flowers. Thus, throughout this
canto, we find descriptions of nature but some how we feel
the throb of life missing.

KARTIKEYA arrives in the abode of the Gods. He
raises a beautiful umbrella for bringing relief to the
Gods. The poet describes the elements of nature with
which KARTIKEYA is decorated in the beginning of the war.
He was shining in the midst of CHAMARAS resembling the
white and crystal rays of the SARAD moon. INDRA was also
riding on AIRAVATA who was like a brother of the crystal
rock. Then AGNI rode upon the sheep, who was like a
brother of the summit of a mountain. VAIVASVATA, YAMA
rode on the he-buffalo. The R̄TA-RĀKŚASAS riding upon ghosts followed KĀRTIKEYA. VARUNA followed the son of ŚĀNKARA with his DURVĀRĀPAṢA upon a black and hideous fish resembling a new cloud. The wind followed him on the deer. KUBERA took a blood-thirsty axe. The ISĀNA Gods also followed KĀRTIKEYA with weapons.

The rides of the Gods here are all elements of nature. They are beasts, they are appropriate to the status and the position of the God mounting them.

Every God has his own typical mount in Hindu mythology. It is either a beast or a bird. Their colours are either white or black. They symbolise brilliance and hideousness respectively.

These Gods also symbolise nature and natural phenomena.

After describing the Gods and their mounts the poet proceeds to describe the Army of Indra. There are proud elephants and horses. The great noise created by them echoes throughout the sky, the earth and the directions. That noise resembles the heavy thunder of the ocean. The dust raised by the hooves of the horses spreads in all directions fanned by the large ears of the elephants and it rises up slowly because of wind. It surrounds the directions and that golden dust clouds the brilliance of the sun.
The effect of this army on nature is described in detail. Here is one such description:

"ब्रजोद्विन्दन कथानमेविनिर्मल्यां रज्जो च भृगु विद्वेद नमस्त्यथायं स्वयंहः स्वयंहः।
अकालसंध्यायनसागरविध्यामुद्रायं धनं धनानागिविन्दुमयं वृंबमुखः॥"

(The dust of the golden land that was raised by the army began to shine in the directions and the sky, it seemed as if a mass of clouds having the red colour of twilight had appeared prematurely.)

The poet here imagines red twilight. The conception is fully realistic as the golden dust rising in the sky mixed with the white light would certainly assume reddishness.

The elephants seeing their own reflections in the golden land strike it with their teeth. Other elephants, who moved on the red coloured land, did not see their own reflection and were therefore, steady.

This large army shaking the ranges began to come down the SUMERU mountain. It resembles the ocean:

"इति क्रमेणामराजवाहिनी समस्थवमेवविचिन्त्वतासमाससमासदोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसदसोऽसদ
RAGHU'S army is compared to the GAÅGĀ:

"अमातर दशरथस्रजा गाण्डिव भगीरथः"

( It became like the GAÅGĀ brought down from the JATA of HARA by BHÅGIRATHA. )

Now is described the effect of the army on beast beasts and birds. The effect on lions sleeping in the caves is represented in the KUMÅRASAÅMBHAVA and the RAGHUVAÅMĀSA almost in identical terms. The KUMÅRASAÅMBHAVA says:

"सुरेंद्रादिकेश महायुधशया सिंहोऽपि सुखस्मृति न न्यूनाः"

( The lions sleeping in the caves of the lord of the mountains of the lord of the Gods did not forsake the pleasures of their dreams. )

"शाश्वस सुमुखसत्यानां सैन्यं धोषेक्षसंभाम | गुलाश्यानां सिंहानां परिपृत्यावलोकित्तितम ||"

( By the suggestion of the noise of the army, doubting it for that of similar elements, it was viewed by a backward glance by the lions sleeping in the caves. )

This shows that the descriptions of the army and the war in both the epics of KÅLIDÅSA have many parallels.

The whole canto is full of descriptions of
of mountains, army, elephants, horses and the sky. The arrival of the army on the mountain engenders pride in the Gods. Seeing the army feel as if the SUMERU mountain has grown, it creates an illusion of a new GANDHARVA nagari. That army as vast as the ocean reposes on the outskirts of SUMERU. The noise of the elephants and the horses drowns the noise of the drums. The dust raised by the army envelops the flags, the mountains, the chariots, the horses and every thing else.

It creates an effect on the swan as well, feeling that the cloud has arrived, they become intent upon going to the MANASA-SAROVARA. The peacocks begin to issue their notes:

"धनेकिलोक स्थागिता श्रमणले श्रमुर्जातिनिर्विचित नभस्थङ्गम् ।
अवाधि तंसेरिबि मानसं धनभोमण सान्यञ्जनति केकिभि: ॥"

(As a result of the illusion of clouds being created in consequence of the sun being covered by the dust raised in the sky by the army, the swans desired to proceed to the MANASA and the peacocks began to dance issuing their notes in the pleasure of the arrival of the Monsoon.)

The flags in the sky resembled the lightening in the new monsoon.

The dust has been represented as performing various functions. It raises the stature of the SUMERU
mountain. It creates an illusion in the minds of swans and peacocks. It creates a premature twilight in the sky. It creates an illusion in the minds of elephants and leads them to strike with their teeth. Thus, the dust pervades all throughout the sky, the earth and the directions.

The other phenomenon referred to repeatedly is the noise of the army. That noise pervades the caves, the sky and the directions. The trumpeting of the elephants and neighing of the horses creates an impression as if the breath of the world is controlled. The trumpeting of the elephants makes the directions dull.

The colour of the dust enveloping the directions creates the illusion of the directions experiencing menstruation. The sun and the sky are covered with the dust. The elephants move in the sky looking like large mountains uprooted by breeze. Chariots fall on the ground like clouds.

Thus, the poet has described the effect of the army on the sky and the earth.

The significance of the dust raised by the army is also referred to RAGHUVAMSA:

"रजोभि स्यान्तादुत्तराय धर्मसंसारः।
भूवस्तलसिप ध्यामुऽकुर्व-योगेष्व भूलम्॥"

1. 2. 3. 4.
(The bottom of the sky became like the bottom of the earth by the dust resembling the cloud raised by the chariots and the elephants.)

The reference to dust in the RAGHUVAṆṆĀ is limited to one verse only, whereas in the KUMĀRAŚAMBHAVA it is referred to in a number of verses in this canto as also in the following one.

TĀRAKĀṢURA has made all the preparations for the battle. He viewed the great warriors who had the capacity to shake the ocean. He mounted a chariot which made a noise drowning the noise of the AIRĀVATA elephants of the Gods and the noise of the oceans and mountains. An army resembling the directions covered by dust at the time of the deluge, making noise and the suns followed him. The ranges of the mountains echoed with the sound of the drums. The GAṆṆA of the Gods enveloped by the sound of that army lies low with its lotuses. It offers inauspicious signs to TĀRAKA by adopting a melancholy form. Vultures, doves etc. are flying in the sky near that army in the hope of getting a meal. Its flag and umbrellas are waving in the breeze. The dust on the ground is rising. A breeze, shaking the horses, the elephants and the warriors is, blowing. Serpents hissing aloud, issuing poisonous fire from their mouths move in circles in its path. The sun also blazed severely. Jackals, desirous of drinking the blood of demons, began to weep. Stars began to fall even in
day-time. The umbrella of the enemies began to fall to the ground because of unfavourable breeze. The crowns on their heads began to shed pearls as if they were weeping with sorrow. A rain of bones with blood and fire began to fall. Masses of smoke arose. The directions became as dirty as the throat of the donkey. It seemed that the adamant of INDRA, filling the directions with echoes, had fallen.

The anger of TĀRAKA expressed in his roar increased seeing all this and tore the summits of the mountains and their ranges. His reason had vanished because his end was approaching.

Fire began to burn the sheath of his arrows. He saw a serpent sitting on his flag. The horses of his chariot, the hair on their neck and on their ears began to burn.

The poet has depicted nature as hideous and inauspicious. Except in RAGHUVAṂSA the poet has not represented nature in such hideous form anywhere else. Even there, in representing the death of RĀVANA, the poet has not created such a pathos. In the KUMĀRASAMBHAṆA, the poet has represented this hideousness with a view to suggest the outcome. All the elements of nature referred to are therefore inauspicious.

The suspicious elements of nature are on the
side of Kārtikeya. White flowers, Cāmaras, Aīrāvatā, elephant, the red colour, twilight etc. are there.

The poet proposes to depict an atmosphere of war. It is, therefore, that he creates hideousness. Bringing the auspicious and the inauspicious elements in right proportion, the poet creates a realistic picture.

Nature does not tolerate injustice. It is always just. It sacrifices itself in the interest of justice. It adopts the same attitude towards man, God and demon. It became harsh when an effort was made to win Śāmkara's love by improper means. We feel in such cases that nature always renders poetic justice. In that process it sacrifices even itself. The Āsoka suffered the kick for this purpose. The vulture sacrificed itself to unite Āyu with his parents. The fish in Abhijñānaśākuntalā sacrificed itself for reuniting the lovers. If nature plays such a role it would certainly punish the unjust in order to render justice.

Would it have been possible for Kārtikeya to win in the battle without this co-operation of nature? Auspicious signs have the power of auto-suggestion. They instil courage and inspiration, whereas inauspicious signs weaken the unjust. The poet has shown a deep insight into the understanding of the human mind in this description.

Thus the idea is really suggestive and the
description full of pathos. But it seems it is over-done. It lacks in the poetic element. This type of nature is depicted in both this and the following canto.

In the sixteenth canto there is the scene of the battle. We find forces of nature battling with similar forces on the other side. Horses fight against horses. The swords of the brave sparkle like the lightening. The arrows resemble the fire coming out from the mouths of serpents. The sky is filled with the noise of birds. Falcons are flying, other birds are weeping. Weapons of warriors resemble the solar system. The mountains are shaking in the breeze of the deluge. Heads are smashed by arrows with the shape of the crescent. Elephants like mountains fall pierced by arrows. Some warriors go to the battle riding the elephants and when the teeth of these elephants strike against each other fire is ignited.

All throughout this canto there are repeated references to horses and elephants. That militates against the interest of the description.

The guardians of the directions on the side of Kārtikeya spread darkness in all the directions by the rain of their arrows. And the enemy of the Gods rained arrows on the Gods like the rain of great clouds upon mountains.

The arrows of Indra and the other Gods of the directions became eagles and circled round the arrows of
TĀRAKA, which had become serpents. The fire arrows of the Gods burnt the demons as if they were grass. The angry Lord of the demons bound the Gods with a serpent, which had assumed a giant form. A glance only from KĀRTIKEYA liberated the Gods from this serpent bondage.

whatever is described is described in the form of nature. Even the noise of the chariot is described through a simile based on nature:

"प्रकृतिधारितत्त्व, द्वारा ज्ञाता हैः"

(The noise like that of the deep steady noise of the angry cloud.)

The Gods were trembling like the mountain trembling in the breeze of the deluge.

Coming face to face with KUMĀRA, TĀRAKA warns him:

"एष स्वयं पवित्रि भक्तिः दुर्मिलाः पापाण्यनासिरिः निम्बस्यगते पुरा । ॥"

(Just as a stone boat goes down by itself in the water so they will drown you.)

The illustration in his argument is based upon nature.

But KĀRTIKEYA does not relent. A devastating
battle ensued. Arrows were flung against each other. They had no effect. At last darkness engulfed the whole army. KĀRTIKEYA sent out the JALTRA arrow. The demon created an illusion. And the God did the same. The demon issued the wind weapon. As a result a powerful breeze began blowing and the umbrellas of the army of the Gods flew into the sky. They resembled KUNDA flowers. It seemed as if king-swans were flying in the sky. Here is the description of these umbrellas given by the poet:

"उत्तीया नामकुले सुकुलप्रमानि
मेघामुखिलिमिने नभसि प्रसादुः ||

And again:

"सुरसैनयसङ्गपला का
सीला नभः स्थलस्तु निमलद्रिक्षापः |
स्वयमलजलमधैः प्रसरससलीनि:
त्यातेनिरे दिति सतामयरक्षेति बनो न ||

(Resembling the flying KALAHAMSAS (the umbrellas) which had become dirty because of the dust raised by the army fell from the sky.)

The flags of the army of Gods, which had arrived in the sky, had the brilliance of NAVAMALLIKĀ like the thousand faceted mass of water of GAṆGA when it is covered by an illusive white cloth.)
The poet here again refers to the white colour on the side of KĀRTIKEYA. The elephants of the Gods were falling on the ground like mountains. Darkness enveloped all sides as if it was monsoon. It seemed as if black lotuses had covered the ground. Seeing this the king-swans being misled into a belief that it was monsoon became impatient to proceed to the MĀNASĀ lake. There was fire that would out-shine the fire of the deluge. It resembled lightening in the clouded sky.

KĀRTIKEYA then released an arrow. Clouds accumulated in the sky. Lightening sparkled. It rained in torrents. The fire arrow of TĀRAKA was frustrated. Lightening was shining in the sky. Water and fire were raining.

At last, TĀRAKA was defeated. He forsook his chariot and rushed towards KĀRTIKEYA. Just at that moment KĀRTIKEYA released the ŠAKTI and the earth bowed down under its force. TĀRAKA fell and the Gods were victorious. Flowers of the KALPAVREŚA, appearing attractive because of wasps attracted by the fragrance of the water of GĀNGĀ sprinkled on those flowers, rained upon KĀRTIKEYA.

What is the essential message of KUMĀRASAUMBHAVA? KUMĀRASAUMBHAVA narrates the birth of KUMĀRA who was destined to destroy evil. Such a noble being is represented as coming into existence as a result of the
confluence of God, Nature and Humanity. SANKARA represents the divine, PĀRVATI the human and HIMALAYA the natural elements. It is the union of these three that produces a super-man.

The whole background for KĀRTIKEYA is set in the midst of nature. He is, from beginning to end, in close contact with nature.

Another significant note of KUMĀRASAMBHAHA is with respect to the emphasis placed on penance. Gods, humans and natural elements are all shown as performing penances. But if there is penance, there is also love. In fact the penance is a penance for love. Nature co-operates both in penance and in love.

Nature both, celestial and terrestrial, is described in this epic.

The philosophical aspect of KĀLIDĀSA'S creations finds a very clear presentation in this epic. The unity of PURUṢA and PRAKṛTI, of man and nature is the ultimate purpose behind all creation. That seems to be the credo of the poet.

Nature in KUMĀRASAMBHAHA is different from nature in ABHIJñĀNA-SĀKUNTALĀ or VIKRĀMORVĀŚIYA. It is because love, here in both its physical and spiritual forms, is the main basis and nature is an accompaniment. Of course, love is an essential element in all works of KĀLIDĀSA.
But whereas love is a development in the case of other works, in KUMĀRASAMĪBHAVA it is the core of the theme. The object is creation and creation is possible only in love if that creation is to be outstanding.

We find the sentiment of love dominating the whole in case of the other works of KĀLIDĀSA. There is love even in nature. But in case of KUMĀRASAMĪBHAVA, love is limited to only the two main figures, who are destined to create a super-man. Even the love between ŚANKARA and PĀRVATI has been limited to only a section of the epic. Elsewhere we find different moods and emotions.

The object of PRAKRITI is to arouse love which only can unite PURUŚA to PRAKRITI. We find Nature performing this function all through the works of KĀLIDĀSA. But in so far as nature comes to create physical love, it succeeds only partially. The ultimate object is not achieved. The ultimate object is achieved only after penance. The fullest representation of this philosophical aspect is seen in the KUMĀRASAMĪBHAVA. What that philosophy is will be elaborated in the conclusion.

Over and above the two forms of nature via the forms of free and fettered nature, there is still a third form. That is the form of nature as an ascetic. When PĀRVATI performs the penance, nature also appears to be performing a similar penance.

Nature in KUMĀRASAMĪBHAVA is not as much dynamic
as it is in the other works of KĀLIDĀSA. Even the elements of inanimate nature elsewhere throb with life and achieve the status as characters. We do not find that happening in the KUMĀRASAMBOHA, except in case of celestial nature. Celestial nature is introduced mainly in the form of characters.

We may assert that the poet has depicted nature, physical love and nature love consequent upon penance. He has not united all these three elements into a synthetic whole. The reason for this is not far to seek. KUMĀRA-SAMBOHA is more of a symbolic philosophical epic than a narrative love poem. SĀNKARA, PĀRVATI and the phenomena of nature are all symbols. It is, therefore, that they do not get fused.

Unlike SĀKUNTALĀ, PĀRVATI never ignores nature. She always identifies herself with it. It is in the midst of nature that she proceeds to move SĀNKARA. It is in the midst of nature that she performs her penance of love. And it is in the midst of nature that she fulfills the beauty and happiness of love.

The five heroines of KĀLIDĀSA: SĀKUNTALĀ, URVAŚI, MĀLAVIKĀ, YAKSINĪ and PĀRVATI accept nature in different relationships. SĀKUNTALĀ accepts nature fraternally or maternally. URVAŚI identified herself ultimately with nature and she herself adopts the form of nature. The YAKSINĪ experiences a bondage of
sympathetic friendship. MĀLAVIKĀ seeks only the co-operation of nature. PĀRVATI is distinctly different from all these. To her, nature is a superior power to which devotion is due.