CHAPTER IX.

NATURAL AS MALAVIKĀGNIMITRA

Among the seven works of KĀLIDĀSA, there are three plays. The MALAVIKĀGNIMITRA seems to be the first of these. It is a five-act historic love-play. The content of nature in MALAVIKĀGNIMITRA, is not as abundant as it is in VIKRAMPRAŚĪYA and ABHĪJÑĀNA-SĀKUNTALA. From the overall paint of view, the element of nature in this play is the least in all the seven works of KĀLIDĀSA. The nature in MALAVIKĀGNIMITRA is not as touching or as realistic as the nature in the RĪTU-SAṆHĀRA. It is not as expressive of emotions as it is in ABHĪJÑĀNA-SĀKUNTALA. It does not influence the emotions as it does in case of PURURAVAS in VIKRAMPRAŚĪYA.

The nature depicted in this play reflects the rational content of the minds of the king, the PAHĪVRAJIKĀ, the VIDŪŚAKA or GAṆADĀSA. It is the means to reflect their emotions.

But nature does make a distinct contribution in this play in so far as the development of the theme
is concerned. The AŚOKA, the PĪNGALA monkey, the thorn of the KETAKI, the deer all these nourish the development of the theme.

The merits and the demerits of the hero, the heroine etc., are based on illustrations and similes drawn from nature.

A characteristic feature of nature in this play is the use of proverbs with nature as its content. The elephant, the cat, the dove, and other beasts and birds have been brought in for describing the human temperament. Most important point in this connection is that nature serves as a symbol for the development of love and the resultant satisfaction. The element of nature in the first two acts of MĀLAVIKĀGNIMIṬHA is insignificant. The first reaction, therefore, would be that the function of nature in this play is subsidiary. But a little closer view leads us to a conclusion that it has quite an important function in the play. It is only on the basis of the elements of nature that the king appreciates the beauty of MĀLAVIKĀ. It is along with the development in the growth of the AŚOKA that the love between the king and MĀLAVIKĀ grows. It is the PĪNGALA monkey which saves the king from the wrath of the queens. It is the thorn of the KETAKI that serves as a ruse which helps the VIDUVĀKATA in obtaining the release of MĀLAVIKĀ and BAKULĀVALIKĀ from the SARABHAṆḌAGHA. It is not
merely as a background that nature comes in all these cases, but it is there as the essence.

The play begins in spring. The अभिज्ञाना-सकुंतला begins in the ग्रिश्म, the रत्न-साम्हरा also begins in ग्रिश्म. The central emotion of this play is love. The ultimate object of the plot is also a depiction of love. There is no suggestion of obtaining the fruit of that love -- of obtaining a son as in अभिज्ञाना-सकुंतला or विक्रमोर्वस्य अर्जुनासांभाव.

This play seems to be more realistic than अभिज्ञाना-सकुंतला or विक्रमोर्वस्य अर्जुनासांभाव. Elements of nature appear to have a mystic power in certain cases in these plays. To that extent they appear unrealistic. Of course, it is because of artistic genius of कालिदास that nature becomes as life-like as any character and plays that role.

Nature assumes a super-human form in अभिज्ञाना-सकुंतला and विक्रमोर्वस्य अर्जुनासांभाव. The forest gods give clothes, the trees weep, the young ones of the deer drop out the chewed कावलाः. A bright heap of light carries सकुंतला away from the court of दुष्यांत. A small child like सर्वदासानां counts the teeth of the lion's cub. All this is miraculous.

In the विक्रमोर्वस्य अर्जुनासांभाव, पुरुरावास, deranged because of separation, wanders in the forest interrogating trees and leaves, creepers and clouds. If any one
converses with nature, we would generally ridicule him, but KĀLIDĀSA has explained this state of mind in the MEGHADŪTA where he has said:

"

कामाली दृष्टि प्रकृतिकृत्मणा श्वेतना चेलेनेषु
"

(Passionate people are by nature, incapable of distinguishing between the conscious and the unconscious.)

Such an extremely miraculous form of nature is not found anywhere in the MĀLAVIKĀGNIMĪTRA. There is no super-human element there. There is very little unreality there. The whole play is developed on the basis of reality consider the AŚOKA tree or the PIŅGALA monkey or the KETAKI thorn or the proverbs drawn from nature everywhere we find nature in its real form. This does not mean that nature has no significance in this play. It does play an essential role. Even though its proportion is comparatively thinner, its importance nonetheless is significant.

Reviewing the place of nature in MĀLAVIKĀGNIMĪTRA, we come to a conclusion, that KĀLIDĀSA has treated nature in two aspects: (1) In its spiritual aspect and (2) in its practical aspect. In the MĀLAVIKĀGNIMĪTRA it is the practical aspect of nature that is dominant.

The AŚOKA, the PIŅGALA monkey and the KETAKI thorn are the three aspects of nature which we come across even in our practical life. It is a fact of our
experience that a child gets frightened of a monkey and a thorn brings out blood.

The other use to which the poet has put nature to is with respect to the description of the beauty of the organs of the body of Mālāvika and of the virtues of the king.

The poet has described the mid-day in this play and has shown the state of birds like the swan, the peacock, the dove etc. The greater importance of nature here is with respect to its function of relieving the passions of passionate men. Lovers derive peace in the forest. It is so because nature is pleasant. It gives cold and it pacifies the excitement, impatience and the passions of the lovers. Flowers are a form of a suggestive gift for the expression of love. This is so in India even in the present age. Flowers perform this suggestive function in the Dāsakumārakūta, the Abhijñāna Śākuntalā, the Mālāvīkāgnimitra and elsewhere in literature. In this play, except the Pāhīvṛājīkā, no other female character resorts to a description of nature. It is mainly the king who refers to the elements of nature in describing the beauty of Mālāvika. Similarly Jñānadāsa also refers to the elements of nature. Thus, the poet has presented only the male characters as describing nature.

Beautiful elements of nature have been refer to by the poet in the dialogues where men address the
women. VIRTUES also are characterised in terms of nature. Elegant organs of the female forms are compared to flowers and other elements of nature.

The poet has resorted to nature in expressing human emotions. When MĀLAVIKA enters with DHĀMIKI and PARIKRĀJIKA adorned like a bride, the king says:

"As the drop of water on a lotus leaf shakes so shakes my heart."

How transparent and chipelled is this sentiment? The AŚOKA blooms and blossoms only after five nights. The blooming of the AŚOKA, in consequence of the kick of a youthful maiden, is in itself significant, but the significance becomes pregnant with a much deeper suggestion when it is said that it blooms and blossoms after the lapse of five days. This is the episode which leads the play to a happy end. It is because of the blooming of the AŚOKA that MĀLAVIKA begins to be respected. By the time, her real identity is also established. This interregnum provides the space of time necessary for the development of love. Love that is born in indiscriminately or without restraint is unwelcome to KĀLIDĀSA. It is, therefore, that he depicts the development of love in MĀLAVIKAŚRIMUTRA in proper stages.

This is a five act-play. In the first two acts the element of nature is very thin. The next three acts have a greater proportion of nature. If the spring dominates
the opening scene, so does it dominate the climax in the conclusion.

The play begins with the spring festival. There is a reference to this festival in the first act, where the SUTRADHARA addressing the NATH, says:

"मालविकानथिधित्र नाम नाटकमसिनु वसन्तोलसवः।"

(This play named MĀLAVIKĀGNITRA in the VASANTOTSAVA)

Next, when queen IRĀVATI invites king AGНИMĪTRA to a swing, it is spring time. The queen has sent the first KURAVAKA blooms of the season to the king as a gift. This is a sign of love. The VIDŪŚAKA reminds the king:

"संवस्तन्ततावतरण्यमेवेनेवर्धयत्या।"

(By a suggestion of the arrival of the spring by IRĀVATI.)

And thus, the VIDŪŚAKA inspires the king to go to the PRAMADAVĀNA. We see here, that the fresh spring is a symbol of the new blooming love. As the king enters the PRAMADAVĀNA, he is delighted by the blooming spring on all sides and thus, addresses the VIDŪŚAKA:

"अभिनंदः सचरु वसन्तः। सखो, पश्य।"

उम्मचाचा भवप्रतिमाहः कौनिते। कौनितानां सातुङ्कोशं भनसितत्कं। सातुङ्कोशं प्रथमतः। अंहुं प्रात्रप्रसवस्वर्यभिक्षिणेन मारलो में। सार्वस्पर्शि: करतले प्रमच्छापात्ना भाष्येन।"

1. मालवि. २। २। २। मालवि. ३। ४। २। मालवि. २। ४।
("Oh, friend, the spring is maturing on all sides. The spring time in the form of the MALAYA breeze made fragrant by the fresh blossoms of the mango touches, as it were, my body with his hands. I feel as if it is inquiring of passion or not.

The king further describes the spring thus:

(The red ALAKTAKA colour on the HIMBA-like lips of beautiful women appears dull in comparison with the beauty of the Red ASOKA flower. The TILAKA on the forehead experiences a defeat from the red coloured KURAVAKA flower. The wasps are as black as the KAJALA. The PUNNAGA flower triumphs over the TILAKA on the forehead. It seems as if the grandeur of spring is jesting at the make-up material of women.)

Just as the VIDUSAKA ignores the ornaments of women with a view to emphasise the beauty of spring so also the king jests at the TILAKA, the KAJALA and the red colour applied to the lip by women for decoration. The colour of the HIMBA-like lips is paler than the KURAVAKA. The KAJALA is not as dark as the BHARAMARA. The colour of the TILAKA is not as bright as that of PUNNAGA. The poet here emphasises the beauty of the
flowers of VASANTA and asserts their superiority over the artificial make-up materials used by women.

The young maiden is here compared with VASANTA. Even the VIDUŠAKA is an admirer of nature. There is a statement made by NIPUNIKA to this effect.

BAKULĀVALIKĀ says to MĀLAVIKĀ that the blossoming of the mango-tree is a sign of the arrival of spring, when the mango-tree blossoms we realise that the spring has arrived.

Thus, the SŪTRADHĀRA, the VIDUŠAKA, NIPUNIKA, BAKULĀVALIKĀ have all described the beauty of spring.

When the ASOKA blooms and queen DHĀKINI pleased with MĀLAVIKĀ goes to PRAMADAVANA to see the grandeur of ASOKA, VIDUŠAKA says:

"किभिरिविरणवत्तादिव अवस्था: प्रमदवने तन्हेवः

(It seems as if the youth of spring has matured in the PRAMADAVANA.)

There is a suggestion in this utterance—the suggestion of the full development of love between the king and MĀLAVIKĀ. The whole development of spring in this play is auspicious.

A little later the king says:

"भाष्ये विकिरणकरकोकलनालकवियमानसङ्करम् |
परिणाममाभिमुखमृतोरतसुक्रकल्यात्मा चौधने चेतः ||

1. मानव: 1. 202. 2. मानव: 5. 4.
(The fruits and flowers of the blooming KURAVAKA were embracing the mango blossoms. At this time, the youth of this spring excites the mind.)

This verse uttered by the king is an evidence of the beauty of spring. Further, the union of mango blossoms with KURAVAKA fruits and flowers is applicable to the king himself. Proceeding further the king says:

"सर्पशिखलक्रणां प्रथमं सुधितवसन्तःविभवानां
निर्दृष्टवोद्देःस्मि सर्कमल्लानीय कुमुमानि"

(The ASOKA trees had expressed the bounty of spring earlier. Now that its desire has been fulfilled it seems that flowers are smiling at all trees.)

The king has succeeded in fulfilling his love with the co-operation of the spring and the ASOKA. It is therefore, that he addresses queen DHARINI thus:

"मायं देवी भाजन्यं न नेव: सत्काराणिैभिशानामभोकः
य: सावन्तो माधवश्रीनियं पुष्यः संसत्यारं त्वमप्रवलः"

("Oh Devi! you should adore this ASOKA because he, who had ignored the wealth of spring, has expressed his respect for you by blossoming as a result of your efforts.)

The poet expresses this contrast with a purpose. He wants to suggest that love is more powerful than spring. In the KULĀRAGAŚHĀVA spring bloomed prematurely, even then, it could not achieve its object. Here, also, spring fails. This is because PĀWATI'S love sought the
the co-operation of others. The element of personal effort was subsidiary. Here, the effort comes from MĀLAVIKĀ herself. PĀRVATI was proud of her beauty. MĀLAVIKĀ was a simple girl who had no pride of her beauty nor had she sought the co-operation of KĀMADHĒNA or spring. She kicks the AŚOKA under orders from queen DHĀRINI. Her purpose in doing so is to fulfill her desire of securing the love of the king for herself. If the AŚOKA bloomed, she would fulfill her object.

Nature, here, is sympathetic to humanity. She always co-operates in the well-being of man. There is one point which needs to be noted here. Spring is referred to as VASANTI all through out the play. It is only here, that the word MĀDHAVASĪ has been used.

Thus, of the elements of nature, spring has the supreme significance in this play. At the same time, there is a significant role of other elements of nature as well. They help to develop the theme, the characterisation and the love between the characters.

Let us take the AŚOKA first. The AŚOKA is significant with respect to the development of love. It is also significant for the development of the theme. As we come across the spring in the first act of the play, so we do not come across AŚOKA. The episode of AŚOKA occurs in the third act. MĀDHUKARĪKA is the supervisor of the garden. Seeing all the trees in the garden in blossom except this single AŚOKA, she comes
to a conclusion that the AŚOKA must have developed a desire. She, therefore, talks to the queen about this desire to the queen. It is in this desire that the seed of the love between MĀLAVIKĀ and AŚHIMIṬRA lies. No doubt, love for the king has sprouted in the heart of MĀLAVIKĀ but it has not been expressed. The king also is attracted towards MĀLAVIKĀ, but he also has not found the occasion for declaring his love. AŚOKA also is in a similar state. Flowers have not arrived on him. That is why he has developed a desire. If that desire remained unfulfilled that would be inauspicious.

MĀDHUKARIKA says to ŚAṆṆHIṬIKA:
"अनुभवस्या विरागमणिकु सुमोदिकम्य लपनीयशेषर्वती
कृिदनिगिति वेदेऽः निषेदयानि!
" (As this golden AŚOKA has taken a long time without blossoming, I will report the matter of its desire to the queen.)

The real love theme begins here.

The red AŚOKA has been referred to in the description of the spring given by the king where he compares spring with women. The AŚOKA is a red tree. Its red colour is brighter even than the red colour of the ALAKTIKA applied to the lips of women. The reddishness of AŚOKA which nourishes the spring is a symbol of love. It is because of this that the king calls him red-AŚOKA. MĀLAVIKĀ calls him heated AŚOKA. She says to
herself:

"तथा ताधुःत्वा तपनीयशिविकस्य कष्टं निर्वित्तेऽपि"

(You should go and should fulfill the desire of the not ASOKA.)

She, therefore, comes to the garden for the fulfillment of this desire of the ASOKA. If the ASOKA has a desire, MĀLAVIKĀ also had one. She wanted some excuse for the expression of that desire. This suggestion is contained in a statement made by MĀLAVIKĀ she says:

"अयं स तल्लितपुष्करणीयः दापेभी अत्गृहीतकसुमनेपथ्य
उत्कर्षिताया समास्थुकसर्वस्यः"

("This ASOKA without blossom is waiting for the fulfillment of his desire through some sweet and soft medium and is having the same anxious state of mind as myself. Here, the ASOKA expresses the mind of MĀLAVIKĀ. Nature reflects the human mind. The ASOKA which is a beautiful element of nature is also a symbol of love and, therefore, it expresses MĀLAVIKĀ's love.

But MĀLAVIKĀ feels diffident. She nourishes a doubt as to whether she would succeed in the test.

Seeing her anxious BAKULĀVALIKĀ says:

"उत्कृष्टस्य अण्ट्वकस्य तपनीयोफकस्य कुस्मोदांमें देवी"

(Devi is anxious to see the ASOKA blossoming.)

1. सामवेलं 2. प्र. 1. 2. मालविकं 2. प्र. 8. 2. मालविकं 2. 84. 2.
Analysed closely the ASOKA is only a means, it is compared with the king's heart. As it were, he expresses the sentiment, the mind of the king. The king possesses the attribute of speech. He expresses his deep love for MĀLAVIKĀ. Even so, the poet brings in the ASOKA as a character and through him expresses the king's mind more clearly. We know that the ASOKA has no speech, even so, he symbolises the king. Without him, the king's mind could not have been fully expressed. The king says:

"अकुसुमितमशोकं कोंडवापलया च प्रणमितशिरसं च कलमप्रपिषाधम्"

("With these feet, this girl can kick the ASOKA who has a desire and the lover who is guilty of love."

The similarity between the king and the ASOKA is brought out clearly in this verse. The poet seems to hold ASOKA in a special regard. He has named and described a number of other trees and creepers, but he has not depicted any one of these with as much emotion as he has depicted the ASOKA. The description of the ASOKA is the description of a lover.

When IRĀVATI goes to sit in the shade of the ASOKA tree. The finds BAKULĀVALIKĀ painting the feet of MĀLAVIKĀ. There is only one ASOKA tree and two women intend to sit under it, so also, there are two women loving the same king. But MĀLAVIKĀ has arrived under the ASOKA before IRĀVATI. This is a suggestion given by the poet that she will achieve precedence in the love for...
the king.

NIPUNIKA, here, informs IRĀVATI about the mission of fulfilling the desire of ASOKA having been entrusted to MĀLAVIKA by DHARINI because she has injured her foot in consequence of a fall from the swing. This accident also is significant. That accident provides an opportunity to MĀLAVIKA of fulfilling the desire of ASOKA and thereby of securing the love of the king.

The poet depicts the ASOKA in different roles. He is the symbol of love between the king and the queen. He is the instrument of the fulfillment of the desire of DHARINI. He is the shade, under which queen IRĀVATI hopes to find rest and he is the symbol of passion when BAKULĀVALIKĀ says:

"न ताबड़ता | तथोदोकशारावतनथी पद्मवंगुरूः"

("It is not the master, it is a bouquet of leaves.")

MĀLAVIKA, then, wears the bouquet in her ear, and proceeds to kick the ASOKA. Thus, she accepts him. But she is not certain of the success of her effort. It is, therefore, that she asks BAKULĀVALIKĀ whether she will succeed in her mission. But BAKULĀVALIKĀ, in reply, says that if the ASOKA did not bloom, it would not be the fault of MĀLAVIKA but it would be an indication of the thanklessness of ASOKA.

The king also makes a similar statement:
The VIDūsaka says that it is not proper for a maiden to kick the ASOKA with the left foot when the lover is in proximity. When the king sees Mālaviṅka kicking the ASOKA, he immediately gets excited and inquires whether the act has not hurt her foot. Īlāvali on hearing this experiences anger and says:

"अशोकक तुकूल्यम् न देशविल | अन्य पुनः पुल्लेवं |
(The ASOKA does not give flowers, it will not blossom, but will yield fruits."

There is a bitter sarcasm in this statement, but it is at the same time suggestive of future developments.

When the king and Mālaviṅka are together, VIDūsaka with a view to give them privacy says to BAKULĀVALIṅka:

"तेघ अकाशायेकुशलस्य पद्मवाणि तद्विति टिरिणः |
(The deer is transgressing the leaves of the little ASOKA tree."

He therefore, suggests that they go to chase it away. Thus, it is ASOKA which serves as an excuse for
affording privacy to the lovers.

When the AŚOKA blossoms, there is joy pervading all around:

"अतुर्य द्व वृष्टीर्ज श्रीवस्ती शुभः: संग्रहस्तफलियासोऽकः।"

This is a statement heard from behind the curtain. Before the end of five nights the AŚOKA has blossomed. VĀLAVIKĀ's test is, thus, over by the end of the fourth act. The climax of the play is reached here.

The woman attendant of the garden has made the VETUCARANDHA for the worship of the AŚOKA in the beginning of the fifth act. That act begins with signs of auspiciousness. As soon as the queen learns of the blossoming of the AŚOKA, she sends a message to the king with her attendant inviting him to go to see the beauty of the bright AŚOKA blossoms. The AŚOKA thus, brings joy to everybody. His blossoming is auspicious. It does not arouse jealousy in the mind of queen DHĀRINI. The king, the queen, the garden attendant, the VĪDĪSAKA all these refer to the AŚOKA and his flowers with pleasure. The king expresses this state of mind most effectively. He says:

"संविशेषतः न्यानी न वृक्षिवस्ती विभवानां।
निर्भूषकृष्णेश्चितिन्यानं जननीय कृतुमालि॥"

(The bounty of all those AŚOKAS which had blossomed)
earlier in spring as it were, come together in this ASOKA
tree whose desire has been fulfilled.)

The king, then, appeals to DHARINI to respect
the ASOKA as he has blossomed out of season. There was
VASANTA when it did not blossom. Now even though the
season has passed, the ASOKA has blossomed in response
to the austerity of MALAVIKA. The king says:

"अयो देव्य भाजन्तया न नयः संकारणामीट्टानामास्थकः।
यः साधव श्रीनिः शोषेऽपि संतत्यादिऽ वल्लवले।"
(Devi ! you ought to respect this ASOKA because, ignoring
the commands of VASANTA-LAXMI. He has respected your efforts
by flowers.)

Towards the end of the fourth act, the king is
conversing with MALAVIKA, queen IRAVATI prays upon them.
Seeing this the king is up-set. To save the king from this
delicate situation the poet brings in the episode of the
PINGALA monkey. VASUMATI, the daughter of DHARINI, is
terrified by the PINGALA monkey and the king running up to
her, is saved from the wrath of IRAVATI.

The deer is also put to a similar use in the
fourth act as we have noted earlier. ASOKA-SAKUNTALA
also has an episode of this type. When king DUSAYANTA and
SAKUNTALA meet, PRIYANDADA says to ANASUYA "This young one
of the deer is in search of its mother. Let us lead it to
her."
In the fourth act, there is a device adopted by the Vidyusaka for bringing about a meeting of the lovers. He poses as if he were bitten by a serpent. He reports that he had gone out to fetch a garland of flowers for the queen, and there he was bitten by a serpent hiding in a ravine in the tree.

"ततः: कोटरिष्णलेख सर्पमेण कल्लेन द्विशेषिः"

He, then forecasts his death. He describes the helpless state of his mother. Queen Dharuni is touched in consequence of this report. She feels that it is her responsibility that this calamity has befallen him. Immediately, on the suggestion of Dhruva and Dhruvi, she takes out the serpent-mangled ring from her finger and it is with the help of this ring that the Vidyusaka obtains the release of Malavika and Bakulavali from the Sarabhanga. This leads to a meeting between the king and Malaviya. There is a further use to which the serpent is put in the play. The serpent which brings about the release of the two maidens at another place only on the basis of its reference or on the basis of an illusion created by a similar shape frightens the Vidyusaka. It is in this same act that Mipunika touches the sleeping Vidyusaka with a crooked stick, thereby, frightening him into a belief that a serpent has come upon him. And immediately, he makes a declaration in which he confesses that the lie about the serpent with reference to the earlier incident when it was only a Kattaki thorn that had struck him, has been
punished by this real arrival of the serpent. The whole
of this episode is full of references to elements of nature
and to the importance that they have in the development of
the theme.

Let us now turn to still another element of
nature which the poet has referred to. That element is
the element of proverbs based on elements of nature. The
whole of this play is full of proverbs and these proverbs
refer to beasts, insects and other elements of nature.

There are plenty of similes which are based on
the elements of nature and are very penetrating. HANADATTA
complaining about the behaviour of ANBADASA says:

"अरभवलः किल भम ए शेवावालयोक्ष्यातर्किति"

(There is as great a distinction between you and me as
there is between the ocean and the pond.)

Another illustration, in point, is about the
description of MĀLAVIKĀ under the interment of Queen
DHĀKIPI given by VINDUSAKA:

"सीधुपाणानेवलस्य मल्लव्यक्षपनताः"

(The state of MĀLAVIKĀ is that of a fish placed before a
proud person.) When the king sees RĀVAKENTR entering the
DOŁĀBRHĀ and when the VINDUSAKA refers to that entrance the
king says in reply: "हि कमलिनी दुधा ग्राहम्येको गतिमुक्तः"

1. मालविका. 1. 4. 1. 2. मालविका. 4. 55. 1. 1. मालविका. 4. 1. 1. 1.
(Seeing the lotus, the elephant is not afraid of the alligator.)

Another instance where there is sarcasm is to be found in the incident when Mālaviyā and Bakulāvalikā are sitting under the Asoka and Iśāvāy and Nipūnikā arrive there. Nipūnikā says at that time.

"अवज्ञकेनुं भिन्न चुलाहरे चित्रबद्धोऽः पिप्पलिकानिर्देशः"

(Going to see the mango blossom, and began to bite.)

Referring to the internment of Mālaviyā by Dhāminī the Viṇīṣaka says:

"यो विज्ञानगुरुताया: परमलितायाय:"

(The cat carried away the cuckoo.) Bakulāvalikā also says:

"दृष्टा चाहरततिलं किं देव: पुर्णिमी वर्षिः स्मरति"

(Does the rain sprinkle waters on the land because of the croaking of the frogs?) Viṇīṣaka says about Mālaviyā:

"अथ-धनंस्यं गृहकपोतो विज्ञानिक्षिप्यापानेकं पतितः"

(The cat saw the released dove.) This is in reference to Dhāminī and Mālaviyā. When Dhāminī realizes the innocence of Mālaviyā she says:

"वर्णनं सवनं मया पालकोपयोजने इविलम"

(I have devalued the sandal by using it as Pādukā.) This signifies her repentance. She feels that she has done injustice to Mālaviyā, who is a princess.

Thus, the poet has made a very profuse use of proverbs to depict the virtues, the temperaments and the characters in the play.
some bright woman, he resorts to the elements of nature.

It is common experience that the beauty, the delicacy and the grace of the female form become fully expressive when compared with elements of nature. The sun, the Moon, the Stars, the Lightening, the Clouds, the Trees, the Rivers, the Ocean etc., have definite attributes and they represent certain virtues which have a similarity with human attributes. This fact of life has been brought out perfectly by Kālidāsa.

When the king sees Mālavikā as a pupil of Gandāsa, in the second act he is captivated by her innocent beauty. Her face appears to him as bright as the Moon in Śarad. The lustre of the Moon in that season is both entrancing and cooling. The king, who has been struck by the arrow of love, will find satisfaction only through the Moon in the form of Mālavikā. We know that the king had his first glimpse of Mālavikā in a picture. That glimpse had kindled love. Then the king views her in a dance-pose. She touches her waist with two hands decorated by bracelets made of gems. The king compares her appearance then with that of a Śyāmalata creeper entwined round a tree. Here, the king compares both the hands of Mālavikā with the bunches of flowers on the Śyāmalata creeper. There is another beautiful picture of Mālavikā. The king says: "Just as the pollen appears in the lotus in full bloom so does the row of teeth in the lotus-like mouth of this big-eyed one as she smiles. "The comparisison between the pollen and the row of teeth here is really ingenious. There is immense beauty and attractiveness in this comparisison."
MĀLAVIKA is attracted towards the king. DHĀRINI is an obstacle in her path. She then dries up like the MĀLATHI garland.

The king compares the eyes of MĀLAVIKA with SĀRANGA deer. Her cheeks are white. There are very sparse ornaments on her body. She looks like the KIN DĀLATA with ripe leaves and few flowers in the spring. Referring to her feet the king resorts to an excellent simile. He says: "The red colour applied to the feet of the beloved looks like a tree representing KALIDÅPA who has been burnt by MĀLÅDA." And SĀKULĀVALIKA compares her feet with red lotuses. The king calls them:

"नत्यस्वरुपोऽकृतिः करणोऽस्मिन संमाविः"

(Foot resembling the fresh sprouted lotuses)

The varying moods of joy and sorrow of MĀLAVIKA are compared by the poet to sunset and sunrise. MĀLAVIKA, adorned in silken costume and ornaments, appears to the king like night made beautiful by bright constellations.

Thus, the poet has described the various organs of the female form like the face, the teeth, the hands, the feet, the eyes, the nose etc., with reference to the elements of nature. But these descriptions are not precise and detailed as the descriptions in the other works of KALIDÅSA. The other point to be noted in this connection is that the beauty of MĀLAVIKA is described mainly by the king.

1. मलाविका. 2. भ्र. 13.
Development of love is the theme of MĀLĀVIKA-MIṬRA. There is one remarkable point in this connection. Just as the AŚOKA develops, just as the spring develops, so also develops the love between the king and MĀLĀVIKA. Love dawns with the emergence of AŚOKA and spring. It develops along with them, and it arrives at fruition also with them. There are slight references to the cloud and the monsoon. He has referred to this with a view to reflect the minds of the characters. Just as drops of rain falling into the shell become pearls so a pupil receiving proper training develops. This is stated in relation to the development of MĀLĀVIKA as a pupil learning dancing. The PAKLVARĀJKĀ also refers to the thunder of the cloud. She says: "When the bugle announcing the beginning of the play sounds, the peacock at a high pitch and pea-hen at a medium pitch begin to squeak.

The VIDŪŚĀKA also refers to the cloud when he says:

"भया नाम शुक्कियनगणितेष-तरिके नलीपानमिच्छला चातकक्त्वितम्"

(Just as the CHĀ.ĀKAS look at waterless clouds in the skies so have I done.)

He wants to suggest that his behaviour is foolish.

The king referring to the wrath of IRAVĀTI says:

"Just as a collection of clouds breaks the VINDHYA mountain,
so does IRĀVATI strike with waist girdle in her wrath."

Here, the collection of clouds, IRĀVATI, lightening, the waist girdle and the VINŚHAYA mountain have all been brought together in a grand simile.

Birds, vegetation and insects have been described beautifully in this play. KISALAYA, ŚYĀMALATĀ, PALLAVA, KUNDALATĀ, VITAPA, KURABAKA, KAHALA, ASOKA, BIJAPŪRAKA, KETAKI, SAHAKĀRA, MANJAKI, ĀKRA etc., are phenomena of vegetation referred to in this play. Among the beasts and birds are CHĀTAKA, CHAKRAWĀKA, CHAKRAVĀKTI, NAYURA, SĀRAHA, elephant, SĀRAHA, deer, fish, wasp, cobra, serpent, frog, monkey etc.

Nature has been brought into express human virtues and human beauty in a number of places. A beautiful word-picture of mid-day is given in a verse:

"...
Patra-dhāraya loneliness, Mukūnātanayana, Viśichīpāchānana
Sāīdha-devanāthapālataṁ viketabhimanditaṁ
Bīnūpaṇiṣṭapātān: paṃsasrāta śritisvā bhāsīmaśrāyaṁ
Sārāhā: samanjātanām bhumānāmyānām
dharmārthānām: saṁśaktānām
dharmārthānām: saṁśaktānām
dharmārthānām: saṁśaktānām
dharmārthānām: saṁśaktānām"

(The swan is sitting in the wall in the shade of the lotus leaf with closed eyes. The flock of doves does not like to go up to the VALABHI of the royal mansion. The group of peacocks rushes towards the fountain for drinking water. This is because, the scorching sun is shining at mid-day. When all the birds are resting peacefully we should complete our task.)

1. सांभवि 2. १२.
These words are uttered by the Vimūṣāka. It gives an idea of the calibre of this jester of the king.

The aesthetic sense of the king is really wonderful. He views nature from different angles. He depicts the spring, the monsoon, and all the forms of nature. His description of the state of Mālavikā and Bākulāvalikā when they are interned is extremely poetic: "The cuckoo on the mango tree and the bee could not escape the devastating hurricane and untimely rain."

Thus, we find nature appearing in Mālavikāśānimitra in many forms. Its importance here, is essentially with reference to beauty and passion. There is no doubt, identity between man and nature here, but that identity does not develop into a unity as it does in Abhijñāna-Sākuntala. Even if that unity is not realised here, the elements of Kālidāsa's fully developed view of nature are discernible here.