CHAPTER V
From the previous chapter, the affirmation of life is seen to emerge from the characters traveling to holy places, to find the truth behind life and its intensity in this sordid world. Man’s search is from within and from without his soul. His search is not done only by himself but also needs a soul-mate to wander deeper into the chasm of life given to him. In human life, marriage plays the vital role in understanding ones positive and negative characteristics and the inter relationship of man and woman. Women psychology differs from men in various aspects of life. Women play an important role in a man’s life but at the same time there is a domination of man over woman in every turn of life. In Every literary work of art, women characters play a major role, but man does not consider her status with equality of mind. This may be an inbuilt formula that maintains, the women to serve man and his needs.

Discussing the family mobility in the Indian Family, A. Ramanamma and Usha Bambawale say that, “Marriage was considered necessary for the complete fulfillment of man and
women to achieve 'Moksha' – essential because of traditional cultural and economic dependence of women on man.\(^1\)

The Indian cultural and traditional marriage in India is the backdrop for the previous chapters and for this chapter also. The three types of marriages discussed in this chapter are, the Gandharva marriage, Arranged marriage and Love Marriage. These marriages are brought to the readers view through Rama Sarma's three - three -act plays. Sakuntala brings out a clear picture of the old type of Gandharva marriages, which is not in vogue today. Towards Marriages shows the arranged type of marriages which is common today and The Carnival shows the new, changing trends of love marriages that tend to break all norms of religion and caste.

The maiden scene in Sakuntala opens with the fragrance of the blossoms of spring, the moving of animals and birds pervading the quiet spot. Dushyanta enters the garden hermitage of Kanwa after his hunting expedition. He comes as a single man without the royal robes or ornaments. He is filled with a mysterious sense of intoxication.

In such a beautiful atmosphere Dushyanta sees two hermit girls along with another hermit girl, who has a superb radiant beauty and innocence that is unblemished. Dushyanta is wonder struck by
seeing these girls frolic like fawns here and there enjoying the gift of nature. These girls are watering the plants and are trying to finish the work fast, in order to witness the setting of the Sun and the rising of the Moon.

Priyam and Anasuya are the two maids of Sakuntala. Sakuntala looks to Dushyanta like a child of nature. Even the maids describe Sakuntala to look like flowers and creepers. Priyam in a poetic manner describes Sakuntala, saying, “As you stand under that tree, you look like a creeper clinging to it.” The creepers are even sensitive to the loving care of Sakuntala. The fawn and peacock are her friends. Seeing all these, Dushyanta is baffled and he falls in love with Sakuntala. He stands among the trees and watches these girls enjoying nature in all its glory.

These girls look at the spring – creeper, which has buds that are out of season. This indicates that something good will happen. The hermit maids feel that it is for Sakuntala, such nice things, as marriage will take place.

These girls start running towards the fields to watch the rising of the moon, when Dushyanta is seen. They are shocked at first but gather their senses back to welcome him to their place and even encourage him to eat fruits. The hermit girls are eager to know
about his royal background. He replies by saying that he is the king Dushyanta. They are surprised and even before he tells about himself Sakuntala are drawn in love towards the king. When Dushyanta in turn asks about Sakuntala's parentage, the hermit - girls reply, saying that she is the daughter of Kausika and Menaka. Kanwa is her foster father who found the babe all alone and took her as his daughter. Knowing of her parents he understands how she possesses the majestic beauty of a queen.

King Dushyanta asks if Sakuntala is to grow up as a hermit girl or if she is for domestic life. The hermits tell him that sage kanwa wants his daughter to become a wife to someone. After sometime with Dushyanta, the three girls leave the place, but Sakuntala is unwilling to leave the place as she turns to look at the king. Dushyanta sighs and says, "She is gone. How can I leave this place? This very spot is dear to me. Sakuntala you are my sweet angle, born to be my queen".

The second scene opens with the glory of nature in the spring. The garden is rich with flowers and the birds and fawns are gloriously frisking about. Sakuntala enters the garden and she feels a heavenly ecstasy in witnessing the glory of nature around her. She is so happy as to even call back to the cuckoo birds. She wants to enjoy nature with king Dushyanta but she is not able to convey
her heart - felt thoughts to anyone else. Priyam and Anasuya keep kindling her feelings about love and she keeps on blushing without giving out her say. They go to the extent of asking Sakuntala to name the king by his name, if she did not love him.

A bee comes close to Sakuntala and she rushes away closing her eyes. While doing so, she dashes on Dushyanta and he holds her tight. They exchange glances of love and affection. They move towards the creeper Malathi and sit beside each other. Dushyanta showers praises on Sakuntala and she blushes while he puts on a lotus bracelet on her hands. She had missed it while running. When dust falls into her eyes the king blows out the dust and they enter into a trance.

Dushyanta asks Sakuntala to be his queen, but for that, she refuses because she is a simple girl with no riches. But the king assures her that she is richer in beauty and innocence. He states that he hates the court life with all the duplicity and artificiality. Only in the presence of Sakuntala the king experiences the rich delight of nature with no artificiality. Sakuntala wants to ask permission from her father but the king wants to marry her according to the Gandharva method. That way of marriage did not need the sanction of parents. Dushyanta passes his ring on to the fingers of Sakuntala and takes her as his wife. They enjoy the sweet passionate love of
a husband and wife. Priyam and Anasuya wish them true happiness and they leave the couple to enjoy the bliss of unity.

The second act titled as the castaway opens with a wintry look that is gloomy and nature looks gray and dull. The animals and birds are dull, because their maiden Sakuntala is leaving them to go to her husband's court. Sage kanwa is all tears and the maids are unwilling to leave Sakuntala. Sage kanwa feels the pain of separation but he has a duty as a father to send his daughter to her husband's place. Sakuntala is now big with child and this makes it more serious for Sakuntala to leave her father at once. This concept of the wife to go to her husband's place is the general concept of the Hindu tradition. To wait for king Dushyanta to take her to his court, is not possible any longer because of her child.

Sakuntala is sent to the court along with the hermit boys and aunt Gowthami. Sakuntala is advised by her father to be a dutiful wife and also to revere elders. Priyam and Anasuya have a talk about Sakuntala and the curse she has got from Durvasa. When Sakuntala, sad due to the departure of the king did not revere the sage Durvasa, is gets angry and cursed her. The curse is that whoever loves her will forget her. Only an object of love can restore back the memory of the person she loves. This sad moment or event is not told to Sakuntala because she will suffer hearing the curse on
her. Priyam and Anasuya think that ignorance will be, bliss for her.

So this incident is not revealed to anyone. Sakuntala takes leave of her father, her maids, her animals and the garden of her happiness.

This happiness is seen from the words of Sakuntala stating:

*Sakuntala:* - - - - - For years we played together, watered the plants and wandered in the spacious garden. Like the wild deer off its guard, we have been free and joyous.

*Anasuya:* We were here, there, everywhere in the garden. And we wished to be clouds, leaves or birds to dart into the infinite regions of bliss. Were we not as cheerful as the tender buds of Spring?

Dushyanta is in his palace that looks rich and glorious. He is enjoying the luxury of a king and his palace is full of riches. The king hears a voice reprimand him and he is shocked. He believes himself to be a noble person, not capable of jolting anyone after enjoying a short spell of love-making. He is confident of himself. At that moment a herald comes in to inform him about the hermit boys.

The hermit boys express their message and blessings from sage kenwa. They inform how Sakuntala was taken as a wife by the king. They want her to live with the king. The king gets offended towards on the hermit boys in conveying Sakuntala as his wife. The king refuses to accept Sakuntala as his wife, because he is not able to remember seeing her or having any close relationship with her. She is totally a new face to the king.
The hermit boys ask Sakuntala to convince him of his love towards her. She speaks with all the emotions of a lady in love, who is not recognized by her lover. She feels her heart, tear to pieces. She speaks of all the details during the king’s visit to her hermitage. But the king is absolutely indifferent and also harsh in using words, which mean to say that Sakuntala is a woman who uses women’s ways to seduce men. He did not have the slightest recognition of her. The king’s indifference towards Sakuntala is seen from the king’s words.

**Dushyanta:** If I accept her as my queen does it not speak volumes of my waywardness? Shall I not receive the odium of my people? Do I not become a prey to the oblique smiles and slandering glances of the common multitude?

**Sakuntala:** O Shame! Braced by his arm and leaning on his bosom did I not dream and leave the world to forgetfulness? But now that very hand abjures me?

The hermit boys get angry with the king but they are not able to put in their force. Sakuntala thinks of a last resort – that of the ring that was put on her finger. She looks at her finger and finds the ring missing. She is not able to fight her fate and accepts defeat. The hermits leave her to face any consequences. The king asks Sakuntala to be in the palace till she gives birth to her child. This insults Sakuntala and she leaves the court cursing her fate.
The last act titled as the woman, reflects the sun setting and the season is a display of the autumn splendour. The fruits are ripened to the core. The flow of the stream and the minutest motion of the breeze are in unison. After rendering his services to Lord Indra, Dushyanta walks to the beautiful stream nearby. He is rapt in meditation and is in grief. He looks at the ring in his hands and his thoughts come back clear as crystal about Sakuntala, and how he had disgraced her in front of all the people in the court. He feels for his unjust behaviour and thinks of the years of separation from his wife. At that moment of grief he sees a boy playing with a cub and two hermit girls trying to pull him away from his mischief. The boy's appearance and his courage is a wonder to Dushyanta and he yearns for such a wonderful boy to be his heir.

As the hermit girls see the King they ask him to control the boy. He questions the hermit girls about the boy, addressing him as a hermit boy. They tell him that he is not a hermit boy but the son of Sakuntala. They are also very angry with the father of the young boy saying that they did not wish to mention his name.

As soon as he hears the news, he sees Sakuntala coming and they are in raptures, forgetting their environment. They forget each other's faults and they are united heart and soul. She tells him that Bharata is their son and that is the happiest moment for
Dushyanta. The hermit girls tell the news of the reunion and sage Kasyappa comes to shower his blessings on the couple.

It is at this moment that sage Kasyappa tells them about the curse of Durvasa. The sage also tells them that the intoxication of youth, the spring is over and the mellowed autumn with its ripened fruits is now found in them. He also explains that love of the highest type is strengthened by the advent of an offspring. He tells them that from the earthly life the ascent of spiritual life is made possible. Sage Kasyappa blesses the couple and requests the king to take his wife and son to his palace. The affirmation of life is seen to blend from the first act to the end of the play. Life's spring, winter and autumn is brought on stage, with characters rendering every stage of life in the human form. The spirit of youth entering into union with marriage and in the end entering into mellowed fruitfulness is blended in this play.

The story of Sakuntala is taken from the Mahabharata. Kalidasa renders it into a play. His talent and imagination gives to the play richness of content and universality of theme. The ring episode reminds one of the ring-episode in The Merchant of Venice which leads to complications. By losing the ring the king forgets Sakuntala and restoring it back makes the king come back to her. Goethe writes as:
Would'st thou the young year's blossoms
and the fruits of its decline,
And all by which the soul is charmed,
Enraptured, feasted and fed,
Would'st thou the Earth and Heaven itself.
In one sole name combine?
I name thee O Sakuntala and all at once is said. 

Rama Sarma's reason for writing Sakuntala in three acts is to focus the readers on the sublimity of love, how the physical love transforms into spiritual love. The tradition of Gandharva marriage gives the sanction for Sakuntala to marry Dushyanta. The Gods and the wind, along with nature is the silent witness of her love and marriage. The first act is the maiden Sakuntala. The second act is chilly and cold referring to the sorrow of Sakuntala by the curse of Durvasa. It refers to the castaway. The next act is the woman perfect and also dignified, the womanhood that has mellowed down with the expression of love for the child. This is a story of love at first sight transformed and transmitted into sublime love. The Gandharva form of marriage shown in this play is given a definition by Heramba Chatterjee Sastri as:

The Gandharva form represents the individualistic aspect of marriage in its full-fledged form. The groom and bride swear their reciprocal attachment and are united into a matrimonial alliance, quite independent of their guardians and their relationship being divorced from the association with force, fraud or financial consideration.
There is the union of the male and female out of mutual lust — fullness. Reciprocal amorous association, between a young man and a damsel, with mutual desire born of sexual inclination is the basis of Gandharva marriage. In the Atharva Veda we notice the anxiety of the parents to see their daughters winning the hearts of persons. This form of marriage was acceptable in olden times and Dushyanta of The Mahabaraté argues with Sakuntala stating that, "one is one's own friend and in one lies one's right of the course of action to be followed." Marriages in Hindu law may be divided into the following classes:"1. Those according to family customs. 2. Those according to local tribal and caste customs. 3. Those according to sectarian customs." Banerjee states his views about English runaway marriages as:

Marriage in this form depend mainly upon the agreement of the contracting parties, resemble to some extent what are called Gretna Green marriage — that is runaway marriage by persons governed by the English law at Gretna Green and elsewhere in Scotland to evade the provision of that law against ill — advised and clandestine marriage.

This form of marriage was accepted in the case of the 'Ksatriyas' — the royal families. In any form of marriage the basic foundation is the man and woman relationship. Eve was created by God to give solace and commune with Adam. There was no form of marriage then and their union can be brought under the Gandharva form of marriage. In all the three forms of marriages, the only
guiding view for the man and woman concerned is the affirmation of life. It is for this life that, man and woman live to achieve their successes and failure. The reward in this life is their offspring who give man and woman a depth in living their lives. To live in this world, according to the laws of any particular times, shapes the life of every family. The Gandharva system was accepted at a particular period and this gave the union of Sakunthala and Dushyanta a meaningful relationship.

The growth from childhood to adolescence and into womanhood shows the gradual growth of Sakuntala. She has to live her life to attain an affirmation in her life, so as to undergo the ups and downs of her life ordained by God. The stream of life is the major strain in this play of Rama Sarma, who has pictured Sakuntala’s pain and happiness very movingly. The touch of reality makes this play feel real and the readers are taken to the garden of Sage Kanwa.

The influence of laws and rules on society, have made the Gandharva method of marriage lose its importance or sanctity. The gradual move from the Gandharva type of marriage brought the arranged marriage system into vogue. This form of marriage is formed by the mutual consent of parents. The consent of the girl has no importance in this form of marriage. The father is the head of
the family and the sole deciding factor for the marriage. This form of marriage is called the Brahma form of marriage. About this kind of marriage, Heramba Chatterjee Sastri says,

As love marriage was never encouraged as an ideal form by the sages, it was thought to be more wise to leave the affair of groom - selection entirely in the hands of the father of the bride, who by reason of his experience and wisdom as also for affection of daughter is viewed as a better judge.\footnote{11}

This method of marriage is seen very naturally to emerge from Towards Marriage of Rama Sarma. The play depicts the marriage fixed by parents, according to the status, looks, occupation and family background of the opposite sex. This type of marriage is still in vogue today and respected by many families in India. The elders have a sense of pre ordained, made - in - heaven premonition, in fixing this kind of marriage.

The play Towards Marriage begins on an early day in 1940 and the scene takes place at Lalita's house. The house is well arranged with chairs and is absolutely clean. The protagonist Prakash arrives at the house with his two friends Krishna and Raja Rao. He is only 17 years old and his friends are 16 years old.

These three friends come into the house of the bride Lalita and are looking at the pictures on the wall. The rich old men in the
pictures are looking miserly to the three of them. Understanding that the bride's people are rich they ask Prakash to demand a dowry for his marriage. They want him to ask for a cycle. Prakash has a view of asking a wrist-watch and a gold ring. Prakash thinks that marriage is fun because he will get a lot of presents, dresses and there will be parties too.

The three friends are interrupted when Lalita's father enters with his friends. The elders look at Prakash's friends. The elders look at Prakash and have their own judgement of him. Lalita is asked to come in and she is only 14 years old. She is pretty looking and she plays the piano in the next room for the bridegroom to listen. They have their own doubts about the piano being played by Lalita. The bride and bridegroom seem to like each other and they accept the marriage. Prakash is a bit nervous and he is not bold enough to look at the girl.

Four years later the bridal night comes forth and Prakash is with Lalita. Prakash comments on the Brahmin, who chants the wedding verses. The old people's jokes are intolerable to the couple. They are yearning to be left alone. They are left alone and they start talking about their life, before marriage. When Lalita questions about any previous affair in Prakash's life, he refuses saying that no girl ever had an attraction like his wife. He is all
praise for his wife's beauty. He tells her that her features are very
perfect. He even tells her that he has a poet's imagination and a
soul of an artist. He considers Lalita to be a perfect woman. Prakash is intoxicated by his wife's beauty and his youth adds to his bliss.

After teasing each other and enjoying little playfulness, Lalita asks Prakash about his liking for a profession. He immediately replies saying that he wants to become a poet. Lalita does not take this very seriously, on that night. She feels wonderful to imagine herself, to be the wife of a poet. She even teases him saying that he might become wild like a poet and run away with women. Prakash replies saying that he is a votary of beauty and he admires beautiful women in an aesthetic sense. Prakash brings out his dreams by saying that both of them can have a quiet home and can be seated in the evenings, listening to the birds twittering and enjoy the poems written by him. They enter into blissful oblivion.

Prakash is now 22 years old and his wife is 19 years old. She enters the room of Prakash, where he is entranced in his thoughts. She gives him tea but even receiving the tea is quite mechanical. She is irritated by his trance and shakes him and plucks the book from his hands. She explains that she is unwilling to stay with him because he is too boring and not attentive to her likes. Prakash
accuses her of being impudent, self-willed and arrogant. Lalita feels hurt and Prakash is called as an intellectual snob. Prakash tries to soften her temper but he goes on to say that if he will get a chance of marrying at that present age, he will not choose a wife like Lalita's temperament, who can never understand his mind and heart. She accuses him of being cold and poetic. He is willing to give her all material comforts as a wife, but he is not willing to possibly love her or give his heart to her.

Prakash: Lalita don't misunderstand me. As you are my wife it is my duty to make you happy. I can give you every material comfort. But I can't give you heart.

Lalita: I am really fed up with you. I want to go to my parents. There I will be free and happy. Nothing amuses me here, and your cold, austere personality repels me.  

Lalita insists on going away to her parents who will look after her and she is quite free to be at her home. Prakash asks her if nothing in nature can attract her imagination and she replies that she cannot be silly like him. She did not want 'moons and rainbows' but only a good husband and a pleasant home. "Lalita: I am an ordinary, simple girl. (With a gesture of contempt) what do I care for moons - - - - and rainbows? A pleasant husband and a peaceful home is all I want."  

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For Prakash the beauty of a woman is not enough. He craves for the intellect of a woman to kindle his imagination. He accuses her of being unresponsive and he feels better, talking to a wall than to her. He tries to pacify her temper by asking her to understand him. He even asks her to make an effort or give some time for understanding. Prakash calls it a pity that the Indian system of marriage is a defect, where two different minds of different tastes and temperament have to come into marriage. Here, the undercurrent of misunderstanding between husband and wife is found to break their marriage. This is due to the fact that the arranged marriage form does not care about the bride and bridegroom’s likes and dislikes or mental liabilities. There is no occasion for the bride and bridegroom to talk and understand their feelings. They are pushed together according to the likes of the respective parents. Their age is too young to understand the depth of life that needs polishing and understanding. They are keen on fault finding rather than finding the best within each of them.

Lalita does not agree with Prakash, because her view is that he is always living in a world of his own, where he does not bother to think that roses have thorns and jasmines have insects inside. But Prakash wants to see the beautiful side of life alone and not the imperfections of life. His affirmation of life is a dreamy and beautiful one. Lalita’s affirmation of life is that, life has its defects and
drawbacks to cope up with. When Lalita leaves him, he feels relieved and continues his reading again.

Prakash goes to the city club one day to meet Raja Rao, his friend of boyhood days. When others go to watch the tennis match, Prakash sits down to read a book. At that moment Jaya, a woman in her twenties, enters the room. She is good looking and a brunette. She has been a member and she comes over to Prakash and introduces herself to him. She is wonder struck to know that he is 'the' poet Prakash. She is all admiration towards him. She prefers to stay with him, instead of watch the tennis match. She is not interested with the noisy people of the club.

Jaya, while talking to Prakash comes to understand that he is not happy with his wife. Jaya admires his intellect and wisdom, which makes Prakash come closer with Jaya. The other members enter the hall and Prakash is introduced to the club members. They all drink and smoke but Prakash and Jaya do not drink or smoke. The members are surprised by his manner. When Kesavarao tells about the pleasure of drinking and smoking, Prakash strongly condemns, saying that Indians have started copying the vices and not the virtues of the Englishman. Jaya also joins with Prakash and they give a piece of their mind to the members of the club. Suseela,
Sundari and Lakshmi belong to the upper class and they have made it a habit to drink and dance.

Prakash requests the members to use their money for the needy people. This view is too obnoxious to even think, for they are against helping the poor, who are considered to be sinners. The members go in for dancing, but Jaya remains with Prakash, because she feels the company of Prakash to be far amusing than dancing. Jaya feels that Prakash is a genius and being a genius, no one will understand him. This feeling of Jaya comes to Prakash as manna because that is what he is looking for in his life. He needs a companion who can understand him better. She is also sympathetic towards him. She feels proud of her association with him. Jaya slowly gets into his' personal matters and wants to know about him. Prakash did not feel like revealing and excuses himself from her company.

Jaya makes him understand that her enquiry is to make him come out with his thought so that, as a useful citizen of their country he may not wither away. She wants to make his mind a happier place for his imagination to work better and achieve creativity. Prakash is taken aback by such an intellectual talk by a woman who can understand every nerve of a person. He feels that he has everything but a woman, to understand him and give him happiness.
He sadly tells how his marriage has become a failure because he had married at a very early stage, not knowing that marriage is more than fun. They depart by promising to meet each other again.

At Jaya's house she is in a happy mood and Prakash enters with more papers in his arms. She looks at the poems and is happy to see him flourishing as a poet. Prakash tells her that the reason for his poetic imagination to shoot up is Jaya's company. She feels happy and they lose themselves in total happiness when, they are disturbed by a servant. Prakash feels embarrassed and he promises Lalita that he will inform his wife about their love. Prakash's psychic needs a place to wander beyond his earthly existence, and Jaya triggers his imagination. He tells Jaya that he will go according to legal rights, because he has an obligation to his moral deeds towards society. He has to set an example to his people and only then his writings will have a standing in society. They feel that their life is full of expectancy, where pleasure and pain has to be accepted with moderation. She calls him a great genius for understanding his society and life so well.

**Jaya:** But life is an intricate affair. It offer us happiness and promises a brilliant future and then withholds us from enjoying. It almost tantalizes us. We never know what's going to happen.

**Prakash:** Yes it's true. But that's in fact the beauty of life. It is full of expectancy and surprise. And one
A quarrel starts between Prakash and Lalita. Prakash is restless and wants to tell about his love for Jaya without wounding his wife. Prakash opens the topic by telling Lalita that he is not able to love her anymore, but he confesses that it is his duty to live with her, because she is his wife. He is not attracted to her physically, because for Prakash the physical urge is linked with the intellect also. He calls their physical urge as animal instincts because their hearts have no link with each other. Prakash slowly tells Lalita that except for another woman in his life, he would have ended his life. Lalita abuses Jaya of running after married men, because they are educated and free to do, as they liked. She leaves him, throwing a book at his face.

A few months later in the city club, Sarojini, Suseela, Sundari and Laxmi are talking about Prakash and Lalita having fallen in love and their discussion is mainly on how their attraction is justified. They wonder whether it is physical attraction or intellectual attraction. They are of the view that, the intellect without beauty cannot have an attraction. The women are envious towards Prakash and Lalita for they seem a delightful pair. Prakash and Lalita forget themselves and talk of so many things, forgetful that the city club members were watching them. They are also anxious to get married.
soon. Lalita has gone over to her parents and Prakash is ready for separation.

Prakash has invited Jaya to his house and is waiting for her. He is in a dreamy mood expecting to have a wonderful day with Jaya. Lalita enters and touches him. He thinks that it is Jaya and he speaks to Jaya thinking that she has come. Lalita, without losing her temper tells him that his wife has come back. Prakash is shocked and asks her to go away and not to spoil his happiness. But Lalita is submissive and humble in her talk and she tells him that he can marry Jaya and live in the house with her. Lalita is ready to live in the same house as a slave and not claim anything from him. Prakash is surprised. This attitude is typical in the Indian system of marriage, where the wife claims herself to become the slave of her husband.

*Lalita:* (Humbly) You need not treat me as your wife. You may love anyone you like but let me live in your house, if not as your wife at least as slave.

*Prakash:* (Annoyed) Don’t talk of slaves. It is against my conscience to treat you as my slave. (With surprise) But why do you humiliate yourself? Where is your pride, your arrogance and haughtiness?  

After being separated from her husband, Lalita has realized her mistake, and she wants nothing else from her husband, but to stay in the same house with him. Young girls in India, married
young, prefer to go to their parent’s home regularly and when they evince the danger of separation, are ready to adjust according to the husband’s wish. The only thing Lalita wants is to keep her husband happy. Prakash wonders how Lalita can become so humble and accept sacrifice. He had thought Lalita to be selfish but understands that she is prepared to sacrifice anything for his happiness. This shows Prakash, his selfish qualities rather than Lalita’s negative aspect.

Prakash caresses Lalita’s hands when Jaya comes into the room. Jaya is taken aback when she sees Lalita. Prakash introduces his wife and he tells Jaya about her wish. Jaya is nervous and upset but she is not able to show her mind but be polite. Jaya understands that she will not be able to cope up with Lalita living under the same roof with her. Prakash is not ready to lose Jaya. Lalita talks with Jaya, requesting her to be with Prakash because he is happy only with Jaya. Jaya is moved by Lalita’s sacrifice and she replies saying that Prakash wants a little more of sophistication in life. He needs a person like Jaya to arouse his imagination. So Jaya is ready to be his friend in future. She asks Prakash to come down from his ethereal plane to become a better human being and husband.
When Prakash prompts her saying he loves her, she answers that, their love is based on intellect, while the physical love can be transcended into a spiritual one or into the pursuit of beauty. Prakash praises Jaya for her wonderful thoughts, which gives a good reasoning to his love of Jaya, as well as his duty to his wife Lalita. She gives him the right to call her as his wife or friend or in any other term. Now Jaya has become his friend, and Lalita his wife again. Love means sacrifice and man cannot expect to have everything in life.

This play shows how in the first stage of youth, husband and wife are so much attracted towards each other physically, which happiness is only for some time. The physical attraction between man and woman is so intense that they do not find any differences intellectual or temperamental existing between themselves. Life affirms that youth has no power of thinking or acting according to the mind. It works according to the sensations of the body. Like a stream, the flow of the water acquires force only in the middle of its course. Like wise youth in a man’s life acquires force, where any intellectual thought misses its intensity.

Gradually husbands and wives find their differences that lead them to divorce as in the western countries. Though divorces are there in India, most of the families try to maintain a sort of harmony
by living together though they have lost the love that is the linking force for a happy married life. In India marriage is an inviolable bond. The husband and wife disagree all the time but when it comes to sensual pleasures they agree and have children, who grow up in a family full of misunderstandings. This cannot be found in western countries. Sacrifice in life is minimum for those living in a country where divorce is a word often used. The intensity of living together is necessary in a marriage and this intensity of feelings within each character, is brought out exactly by Rama Sarma.

The choice of partners must be left to the parties concerned and they should understand that the physical part of life is only a secondary thing in life. This is the main thought stream in every work of art that takes life as a beginning with little forces of action and later entering into a deeper transcending thought, the spiritual end. The primary factor must be the understanding of each individual's likes and dislikes. They should understand each other sympathetically and not critically. Undue importance to temperamental differences will lead to divorce. As long as they are willing to accept marriage with certain limitations, they will enjoy the bliss of life. This is the real concept of life that asserts its truth in every individual's life in its past, present and future.
Through marriage a man has to crush his ego, and try to understand other’s views of life. For any problem in life, there is always a smoothening touch that sets everything in its proper place. In Towards Marriage Jaya compromises with Prakash and Lalita by saying,

**Jaya**: - - - - - - But tell me why you can’t love me even if Lalita comes back to you. We are both of us are intellectuals and our attraction for each other is not based upon pure and simple physical needs. No doubt the culmination of all earthly love is physical union. But we can’t be so debased as that. Ours will be a sublimation of desires in the pursuit of Beauty. You are essentially imaginative and I know how to please you.\(^{16}\)

The next play of Rama Sarma that deals with the next form of marriage is The Carnival. This play deals with the love marriage of this age. This play presents, as its background the cosmopolitan life of Delhi, its gaiety, colour and sophistication. There is a question in every reader whether life is a fiesta, a Carnival or a merry – go – round. In his preface to The Carnival, Rama Sarma remarks:

*Man is often interested in knowing himself and the peculiar atmosphere that prevails over him during his stay in this world. At times he feels that there is no possible explanation for the enigma of life. But surely life is not indefinable. In the earlier formative years man is drawn towards beautiful objects, but as he grows into youth and manhood he gets entangled in the strong current of love. This is a stage of passionate longings, but gradually the storm and stress is overcome.*\(^{17}\)
In India, there is a slow movement away from marriage arranged by parents towards more freedom of choice. Though this change is nowhere near the total freedom of choice that exists in western society, the pace of change is significant enough. Youngsters represent the vanguard of change and therefore their attitudes will have some effect on the future of marriages. This change will demolish the caste system of India to some extent.

The Carnival opens with the first anniversary of the Progressive Youth Association. The President of the club is Suresh and the secretary is Ramesh. Both of them are very close friends. The man behind the party is Suresh who is a man of confidence and gives the impression of being a leader. He is shy and reserved. He works as a secretary to Shiv Lal, the industrialist.

Ramesh is almost of the age with Suresh, but he exhibits more of 'animal spirits.' Both the friends are watching the crowd leaving the hall. They are happy by the success of the meeting and they are tired by the arrangements. Rekha who is a friend of Ramesh, nears them and she congratulates Suresh for the grand success of the meeting. She invites her friend Prem and introduces her to the two men. Prem is found to be an elegant woman highly educated and cultured. She has a form and beauty that most poets wish to write about. The four of them sit together and talk for
sometime having time to take drinks also. In between their talk, Suresh is found to have great ideals in life. Ramesh and Rekha are teasing Suresh and Prem because their ideals seem to attract each other.

Suresh always talks about the beauty around him and is a dreamer. But Ramesh is always a practical sort of person who thinks the world to be a place of ugliness and being sordid. Ramesh does not wish to think of women as ‘angelic, phenomenal and ethereal.’ Prem says that beauty can only mean perfection. Anything admirable proofs that God is admirable. His workmanship is often reflected in the physical appearance of a woman, the beauty of a landscape or in the attitude of man towards others.

For Ramesh the activity of workers and the thrill of production is the only beauty in life. From their conversation, the aspect of life on various angles defines itself. Each one of them has their own understanding of life around them. In the next scene, Suresh and Prem enjoy the beauty of the Moghul gardens. The spring has showered flowers all round the place. They were admiring the roses around them. For Suresh the mingling of colours mean harmony and peace in this world.
Prem wants to talk about Suresh’s life and his personal feelings. She keeps asking him about how he feels about his future. Suresh gives her evasive answers and she is a little irritated by his generalized talks. He feels happy to talk about his club but Prem does not wish to discuss about his club matters.

Prem prompts him into a romantic mood by showing him how a creeper needs some support to live. Her indication is to show him that they have to join together as the creeper. She teases him to be a saint, and not feeling any warmth towards women. Prem makes him to give his views about his future bride to be. He confesses to Prem that he has fallen in love with her from the first day onwards. He has been waiting to find out his own feeling about her. He at last accepts that he loves her. Prem feels extremely happy by his confession and both of them are in ecstasy. Suresh feels that the moment of togetherness is their marriage and their union needs no ceremonies at all. They forget their surroundings and find that all the people have left the garden. Suresh is quite practical in his views about marriage. He says, “- - - This very moment we are married. Marriage doesn’t necessarily mean ceremony. It is enough if two persons sincerely love and promise to be true to each other. I will always stand by you.”

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The next scene opens with the birthday party of Shiv Lal's daughter. Her name is Shobha. She is celebrating her 23rd birthday. Suresh supervises the party and people of the upper strata of society have come to the function. The arrangements are so perfect that everyone in the party appreciate Suresh, who is the secretary to the industrialist Lal. Women are dressed in all sorts of dresses and men are in their usual wear.

Sobha is looking extremely beautiful and she is with her friend Asha. Manohar, Ravinder and Shiv Lal are talking together. Manohar is not placed well but Ravinder is a capitalist. He is extremely rich. All the guests wish happiness to Sobha. She is very happy to have such a grand celebration for her birthday. Sobha admires Suresh for the way he has conducted the function. She sees Prem and Rekha along with Ramesh and Suresh. She is having her doubts about Prem's association with Suresh. Asha finds Ravinder quite attractive in looks as well as in his wealth. Ravinder also showers compliments on Asha and she falls in love with him.

Pratima, a woman with grace and beauty comes to the party and she is welcomed with pleasure by Lal. She is immediately attracted towards Manohar who is very friendly towards anyone. She offers him a place in her estate as manager. He is pleased by
her offer. They leave the party in a happy mood. The others too take leave and go off satisfied by the success of the party.

Sobha is waiting to meet Suresh in her house. Suresh comes over to meet her but he maintains a reserve and cool in his attitude. Sobha wants to know the reason for taking pains in arranging the party. Suresh replies, stating that it is his duty to arrange whatever his employer orders and also states his respect for Sobha. She is much pleased by his reply. She provokes him by asking if he wishes to marry a rich woman. He says that he has no time to bother about women. Suresh has a purpose in living in this world and he wishes to be a person with ideals. For him riches mean nothing at all. He considers life to have a unifying force, that is, Beauty, Love and Justice. When questioned about the negative forces like ugliness, hatred and injustice, he replies that they are the disruptions of the three positive forces.

**Suresh:** - - - - I wish to explain to myself the riddle of life and then interpret it for others. To many, life is a big gamble. To others it is just a matter of 'cursed fate'. And all these persons accept life in a blind, unthinking manner. To me it's plain that life is based upon a system – a great plan of Beauty, Love and Justice. In other words it is a synthesis of these three dynamic forces that keeps men and women balanced and righteous.¹⁹

According to Suresh, man's noble heritage is muddled only by circumstances. Even a criminal, according to him is not a bad man,
but he realizes his mistake one day and will realize his fault and even commit suicide. All men have a sense of justice imbibed inside him. Even the talk about injustice is not proper because any man who is unjust has to pay for his deeds one day or other. What ever a man does in this world will be repaid to him back. That is why Suresh feels that any revenge is not necessary because man will reap for his deeds.

This talk of Suresh is quite a fascinating thought, for so young a character. Life's essence and its stay in this world are very aptly given to the readers through the younger generation of India. This shows life's affirmation to anchor itself in the minds of youngsters who not only know how to love a girl but also to understand the minute realities of life. Rama Sarma exhibits his brilliance by selecting a youngster to reveal such heavy thoughts about life. It is the beginning for Suresh, but he understands life much better than the older group of people.

Sobha admires the talk of Suresh and she gets drawn towards him as being a new personality altogether. She proposes to him and shows her love that blossomed the very day he came into service. He thinks that their worlds are quite different, and he is not able to imagine it to be true. Sobha wants to make Suresh rich by giving herself to him in marriage. But Suresh tells her straight that
he loves Prem. She is not able to believe a man to throw away millions and still talk about his love for a woman. She gives him time to consider her proposal. Sobha’s exaltation while talking to Suresh, is felt as:

Sobha: (Cheerfully) You mean I could be your disciple even now. How wonderful! You know, as you talked to me of life I felt a mysterious elevation from a purely physical existence to an ethereal one. (Highly emotional) Men are such stupid creatures that they never conceive of women in any other respect except as toys meant for their sport. Isn’t it disgraceful to take women as dolls, pretty dolls? Like a peevish child you throw them away once you are satisfied.  

Sobha reveals to her father the love episode of Asha and Ravinder. He is spell bound to hear their story but is enraged with Ravinder to spoil the rich people’s tradition and status. Lal tells his daughter that the rich people have to stand strong in their choice of marriage and not degrade themselves. He tells her that Asha is only after money and any talk of love is only foolish. Sobha could not accept her father’s talk about the upper class tradition and culture of the rich. She slowly tells her father about her liking towards Suresh. Lal is enraged by the news.

Lal is quite harsh and scolds his daughter who is considered foolish. He wants his daughter to enjoy life as a Carnival and fiesta and not suffer as an ordinary woman would live. His view is that, the
rich are born to enjoy life. Lal’s thought is that everyman wants only money to live happily and nothing else in the world matters. He wants Sobha to marry Ravinder who is their equal in status and belongs to their class of people. Lal’s statement about their class of people is considered as:

\textbf{Lal:} Of course, there is everything wrong about it. We, the rich have our own tradition, our own culture and our own attitude towards life. We can’t possibly think of demeaning ourselves by all sorts of alliances with persons below us in status.

\begin{quote}
In almost all the countries we find differences of caste or class. But the underlying idea behind these differences is always the same. It is to preserve and cherish our culture.\textsuperscript{21}
\end{quote}

The upper class families in India are of the view that no mingling of class should occur, in the name of marriage. Money is their supreme power and they give little importance to love or affection. They have no value for subtle emotions and feelings. Sobha is a soft and sensitive woman who hates the show and pomp behind the rich families. She feels these qualities of the rich to lack truth and reality of living a life.

The industrialist Lal is quite restless and moves along his room when Manohar enters and enquires about his daughter Sobha and her problem. Manohar promises Lal that Ravinder does not love Asha as Sobha is thinking to be true. Asha is attracted towards
Ravinder only on the monetary side. Manohar suggests to Lal that he could as well marry Asha and give her the luxury she is after. Lal did not like this idea because he has a daughter of Asha’s age. He thinks of a different idea. He asks Manohar to marry Asha, and for money he is ready to offer them enough for a luxurious life. At that moment Ravinder enters and the men have a discussion about the turn of events. Ravinder gives his assurance that he did not love Asha as she is only after his money.

Lal and Manohar reveal their plan and he gets convinced. He is worried about Sobha’s admiration on Suresh. But Lal promises to change her mind soon. Ravinder on his part is ready to reward Manohar if he withdraws Asha from him. This talk within the men shows how the upper class society has no ideals regarding life and the wonders of love. They treat their life as a business transaction. This is shown with all intensity when they try to shuffle the characters according to their whims.

The ladies are asked to come in and Asha tries, at first to get back Ravinder. As soon as the news of Ravinder wishing to marry Sobha comes out, she keeps quiet. She is happy to accept Manohar because they are getting enough compensation from both sides – Lal and Ravinder. She is happy to reconcile to anyone for the luxuries in life. Sobha is quite stubborn. She is irritated by the
way Lal is pairing the people around him in order to get back Ravinder for his daughter. Lal gets offended with his daughter for being rude to him. Sobha is not perturbed and she is willing to leave her house. This vehemence jolts Lal a bit.

Ravinder comes over to Sobha and requests excuse for his behaviour towards her. He realizes how silly he had been, when flirting with Asha. He wants time to woo her back to him. He advises Asha and Manohar to understand each other before getting married. This attitude of Ravinder is a revelation to Sobha and she softens her attitude towards Ravinder. She also pleads excuse from her father. Lal becomes happy again. Sobha promises to be a dutiful daughter once again.

Suresh is with Prem in his drawing room. Rekha comes in with the good news of her marriage with Ramesh. They are happy and Suresh states that he has been ousted from Lal’s concern. Suresh does not have any ill-will against Lal’s family. He is quite confident of acquiring a good job with his qualification. Suresh gives them the reason for losing his job, and his friends admire him for his broad outlook and smooth manner in overcoming any difficulty. For the injustice faced, Suresh gives an explanation of how a man will have to answer for any injustice done to another man. While explaining about life’s mission for everyman Suresh explains as:

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**Suresh:** - - - - - - But let me tell you that life is not a holiday. It has a purpose, a mission and every one of us is expected to fulfill that mission. We can't take life easy. We have to fight and struggle even to the last day of our lives. It is rather dull to have the same unbroken chain of thrills and joys. We have to accept life with its shortcomings and make the best of it through our individual efforts.

Ramesh teases Suresh for throwing away the offer of marriage by a millionairess. Suresh chides him and tells that money and fun is not the only ultimatum in life. Life is not to be a fiesta or a Carnival. It has its own mission. There must be a fight and struggle for the ultimate in one's life.

These sentiments of Suresh are contrary to the sentiments of Lai. Suresh has given life a beautiful angle, whereas Lai has no mission in life, but only to enjoy it and feel bored always. Man according to Suresh has an inevitable urge to love someone one day - to annihilate selfishness and this is bound to come out in the shape of children. No one can be free from this ultimate love. Even a robber has his feeling and emotions. It may be on an animal on any other pet of his. Just then they hear a knock and Asha enters bringing the news about Suresh getting his job back again. It is Sobha who fights for Suresh to be called back again. Suresh and his friends feel very happy for the sake of their friend and they dance in happiness. As Suresh had already predicted, life has given him his reward for the good thoughts he possesses.
The Carnival of Rama Sarma very explicitly reveals the nature of the rich and the middle class society in India. Even Ramesh and Asha crave for money and they belong to the middle class. It is Suresh, Prem and Sobha who are quite different in thoughts and feelings. For the rich, life is a Carnival but for the middle class life stood for struggle and a mission to live. Even great saints, attained realization after struggling to attain their mission of life. Life may seem to be a bed of roses to the rich and wealthy but they do not realize that roses have thorns too. The philosophic heights to which Suresh enters, is purely because of his education and the path he has chosen for himself. All educated beings do not choose the right path, (like Ramesh) but a friend like Suresh will definitely lead his friends to a better path in life.

The younger generation has a better view of thinking, and they definitely understand the value of love in ones life. Though money ensnares the minds of the young people, they have a good reasoning capability in leading their life.

The women characters are shown to have greater views of life and they have their freedom of selection, though their parents force them. The qualities of sacrifice is seen in Sobha who accepts the inevitable, when she learns that Suresh loves Prem. She loves her father and this respect and affection, makes her reconcile to her
fate. The love marriage concept, shown in this play of Rama Sarma, will have its impact on the future of Indian Society. Changes in society will have its force from the younger generation. They will accept changes easily. The older generation has their ideals and believes to stick on to. They will never change their views. For them change will mean losing their respect and dignity in society. Our Indian society has a lot of value for its culture and tradition. This value will not be loosened for any kind of change. For a broader view within our society, the love marriages of recent times may bring about changes in caste, creed and religion.

Any form of marriage, whether gandharva, arranged or love marriage, the basic foundation in these types is the understanding and compatibility within couples. Their mission in life is to live a harmonious life starting from the rapturous youth, to the mellowing of sensual emotions and finally to the realization of the spiritual being – the final stage in everyman’s life. Only with the help of a soul – mate can man find out his deeper feelings and understanding of life. A single man cannot exist to ripen into a man of quality. He has to shape himself and to get a full shape he needs a person to unfold himself. The sacred value of marriage is shown in the three types of marriages. The marital relationships of a man will make or mar a man’s life. It can be a heaven or a hell; according to the way he accepts its successes and failures.
These aspects of marriage, shows the evolution of the affirmation of life, in one's life span. The concluding chapter will also deal with marriages on a wider spectrum of view and give an insight into the harmony of marriages, within Rama Sarma's novels. To quote from the Holy Bible about the sanctity of man and wife will be as the saying goes, “For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh. Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.”

These lines are proof for the moral laws fixed by all religion on marriage. The relationship between husband and wife is God ordained and this is the affirmation of life, from birth, in this world. This law has its root from the beginning of creation itself. Only the forms of marriages have different according to the changes in society. A very brief study of all the chapters to form a concise conclusion will form the last chapter.
3. Ibid, P.72
4. Ibid, P.89
5. Ibid, P.97
6. Ibid, P.63
8. Ibid, P.510
9. Ibid, P.596-597
10. Ibid, P.541-542
11. Ibid, P.369-370
13. Ibid, P.14
14. Ibid, P.32
15. Ibid, P.47
16. Ibid, P.174
18. Dr. G. Nageswara Rao, ed., *M.V. Rama Sarma – Collected Plays*, P.194
19. Ibid, P.209
20. Ibid, P.211

21. Ibid, P.217

22. Ibid, P.239