CHAPTER II

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THEME
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Poets and playwrights of Sanskrit literature do not attach much importance to the originality of the themes of their literary creations. Of course, there are some plays whose plots are the creations of the playwright's own imagination but generally they, unhesitatingly draw upon the two great epics the Mahābhārata (1) and the Rāmāyana (2). This, however does not denigrate their individual standard as authors of excellent literary specimen. Because, in the case of a dramatist the plot is not of primary importance. His ingenuity lies in the way in which he erects the monument on the foundation of a plot. Even the greatest dramatist of the world, Shakespeare did not care to invent the plots for his plays; rather contented himself with selecting stories which were current and well-known in his days. The selection of the theme, already known to the public has certain advantages:

1. It makes an effective appeal to the audience due to the familiarity of its theme and the character of the plays. It becomes more appealing to the less educated mass of the audience which does not like to get into the complexity of the totally new plots invented by the playwrights but is happy to witness the acquainted characters.
appear in new situations created by the ingenuity of the playwright.

2. The magic spell of the playwright is more prominently realised by the spectators when it is displayed through the characters of their acquaintances than when a new plot is invented with altogether new characters. In the latter's case the audience is more likely to be captured by the novelty and complexity of the plot by which the main purpose of literary creativity i.e. RASANUBHUTI is lost.

3. Our playwrights were perhaps further induced to dramatise the lives of Puranic Deities or deified personages of antiquity or national heroes by the consideration that the singing of the marvellous deeds of such great souls would lead to the acquisition of religious merits.

4. Such plays were expected to attract a large audience. This is because dramatic spectators are always possessed of emotional curiosity which they sincerely desire to fulfil through visualising scenes of their acquaintance. On these occasions playwrights also get an opportunity to earn a recognition for their inventive and creative genius, they have displayed through deviation, alteration and modification in the previous sources.

KALIDĀSA:

As regards the determination of chronological order all the scholars agree on the point as discussed in our previous chapter that Mālavikāgnimitram is the first creation of Kālidāsā's plays which is respecti-
velly followed by Vikramorvāsiyam and Abhijñānasākuntalam due to following reasons:

1. Position of Heroine: In the Mālavikāgñimitram Kālidāsa has introduced three heroines with almost equal prominence. As a result of this, the real heroine of the play does not get the full attention of the audience, and the position of the hero becomes precarious in front of his heroines. But in Vikramorvāsiyam, two heroines have been introduced in the play, and comparatively more emphasis has been given on the real heroine of the play Urvashi. But in the Abhijñānasākuntalam, even though the name of the queen of the hero is introduced, practically she is behind the screen almost throughout the play, and Sakuntalā alone attracts the full attention of the audience throughout the play. This treatment of heroine clearly reveals a process of evolution in the minds of the playwright towards the position of heroine in the play.

2. Position of Vidūṣaka: In Indian dramaturgy Vidūṣaka, though an indispensable character in some of the plays, has been treated to be a second-grade character. In Mālavikāgñimitram Vidūṣaka has been given more than due emphasis. He has been the pivot of the play. In the Vikramorvāsiyam, he has been given much more importance for the reconciliation and union of hero and the heroine. But in Abhijñānasākuntalam Vidūṣaka has been given comparatively less importance. Even if the purpose of the introduction of the character of Vidūṣaka is unchanged, his position as a helping agent for the materialisation of the
love affairs of Dusyanta with Śākuntalā has not been honoured. So comparing the position of Vidūṣaka in all the three plays it may be deduced that out of the three plays Mālavikāgnimitram and Abhijnānaśākuntalam might be the first and the last play respectively keeping Vikramorvāśiyam in the middle.

Mālavikāgnimitram:

Unlike his other two dramas which are based on mythological story, Kālidāsa has invented his own story for the Mālavikāgnimitram which centres around a historical personage. No other works in Sanskrit literature gives any more detailed account of Agnimitra except the fact that he succeeded his father Puspamitra on the throne. The Mālavikāgnimitram is perhaps the first of the three dramas written by Kālidāsa to focus on the point. Though possessed of all the essential characteristics of his works, this drama presents them only in a crude form, the refinement and perfection of which have been clearly visible in his subsequent and final creation of plays i.e. Vikramorvāśiyam and Abhijnānaśākuntalam respectively.

The Mālavikāgnimitram is mainly an invention of Kālidāsa's imaginative mind though a skeleton of the plot may be traced in the Kathāsaritsāgara of Somadeva in the form of the love of king Udāyana of Vatsa and Bandhumati (1).

1. KSS-II-6,67,72-
There is a striking resemblance between the love theme of Bandhumati and the story of Mālavikā on certain aspects, a list of which may be given as follows:

(i) Both the heroines belong to the royal family by birth.

(ii) Both remain in disguise till the discovery of their identity at last.

(iii) Both serve as maids to their respective queens.

(iv) Vasantaka (Vidūṣaka) is as helpful to his king Udayana as Goutama (the Vidūṣaka) is devoted to his king Agnimitra in matters of their secret unions with their respective beloveds.

(v) The incident of imprisonment is common to both the works.

(vi) The Parivṛtikas assist their heroines and bring about the happy union of the lovers, in both the cases.

(vii) In both the cases the heroes are under the clutches of their queens and they seek permission from them for their union with their beloveds.

(viii) In both the cases the love affairs end in happy wedlock.

(ix) And finally in both the works after the recognition of the heroine as princess the lovers obtain permission of the chief queens for their happy union with their beloveds.

The Mālavikāgnimitram is a light comedy of five acts depicting the love theme between Agnimitra and Mālavikā within the narrow sphere of royal harem.
But any way the theme is historical and the characters are drawn mostly from real life. The hero of the play 'Agnimitra' is a historical figure who belongs to the post Mauryan Sunga Dynasty, which ruled in 185 A.D with his capital at 'Vidisa'. Pusyamitra, Agnimitra and Vasumitra are historical persons. Yajnasendra, Madhayasena, Sumati and Virasena too appear to be historical. Among the female characters Nalavika, Dharni and Iravati may be historical ones. Behind this speculation one most important point is that Agnimitra's conquest and the performance of horse sacrifice are the facts of history. So, it may not be an exaggeration to mention that Nalavikagnimitram is a historical play.

In this backdrop of historical background Kalidas presents the characters on a romantic setting. Due to uncommon genius he has carved a beautiful love story around the theme. Agnimitra falls in love with a beautiful maid of his harem. Due to the fascinating and extraordinary beauty of the maid, the queens, being aware of the voluptuous king, try to take precautions in hiding Nalavika from the lustful eye of the king. But love grows in secrecy and becomes deep in separation. King Agnimitra became a prey to this crisis. The heroine Nalavika becomes a target of queen's jealousy because of king's attachment towards her. At the same time the king also does not like to offend the queen by introducing Nalavika forcibly into his harem. At this crisis Vidusaka plays the role of an intermediary and creates a conducive atmo-
sphere for a happy union of Malavika and Agnimitra. Malavika causes the Ashok tree to bloom before the expiry of five nights and is, thereby, rewarded by Dharini to choose Agnimitra as her husband. Her identity is disclosed and her marriage with Agnimitra finds a justification due to her royal birth.

Kālidāsa might have been influenced by previous works for his theme and plot of the drama but his originality was displayed in ample measure in inventing the dramatic scenes like depicting the rivalry between Ganadāsa and Haradatta, the two dance masters of the royal court; Malavika's performance of dance before the royal audience where the king was present; the introduction of Vidūṣakawith his unique role in materialising the love affairs of the king with Malavika; the snake-bite to release the imprisoned maid over-shadow any sort of influence on him. Throughout the play, the dramatist takes maximum care in handling the plot. In his subsequent creations Kālidāsa no doubt, has exhibited his maturity and perfection but this play is also not devoid of the flavour of his genius. According to A.D. Singh, "The Malavikagnimitram bears testimony to Kālidāsa's budding genius which developed in the Vikramorvāṣīyam and ripened in the Abhijñānasākuntalam" (1).

VIKRAMORVĀṢĪYAM:
For the theme and plot construction of
1. Kalidas, A critical study By Singh A.D.-P-37,
Vikramorvašiyam easily one can deduce that Kālidāsa is highly indebted to his predecessors. This is because the story of love of Pururava and Urvasi is so common a theme that a poet cannot escape its influence on him. A list of literary works containing the love story of Pururava and Urvasi may be given as follows:

(i) Rgveda X-95,
(ii) Satapathabrahmana XI.5.1-17
(iii) Brhatādīvata VII-140,
(iv) Ramayana VI-56
(v) Brahmapurana I.10,1.101,
(vi) Padmapurana II
(vii) Vishnupurana IV, 6,
(viii) Bhagavatapurana IX,14.
(ix) Devibhagavata 1. 13,
(x) Kathasaritsagāra, III-4.
(xi) Matsyapurana XXIV-25.

The oldest record containing the love story of Pururava and Urvasi is the tenth mandala of Rgveda. According to Rgvedic story Urvasi, a divine nymph lives on the earth for four years and she vanishes from this earth as soon as she conceives. After a frantic search she is found in a lake and after a discussion and dialogue Urvasi rejects the earnest request of Pururava, telling that the heart of the woman is like the heart of a cruel hyena. So, Pururava as a mortal should not long for the love of Urvasi, who as such is unattainable. Thus Rgvedic legend presents a tragic end to the love
affairs between a mortal king and a divine damsel.

According to legend, presented in SatapathaBrahmana Urvashi agrees to accept Pururavas as her husband on three conditions. On the violation of any one of them she would repudiate him for ever. Accordingly she lives with Pururavas and becomes pregnant. The Gandharvas, deprived of the lovely glances of Urvashi, became jealous of Pururavas and thus wanted to violate the conditions applying their divine power. One dark night they steal her pet rams and as a result, Urvashi cries for a help. Hearing the cries of Urvashi, Pururavas, who was sleeping naked by her side, rushes out in hurry. At that moment instantly the Gandharvas produced a flash of lightning by which the dark night became bright like a day. Urvashi could visualise naked Pururavas which was the violation of one of her conditions of her stay with Pururavas on earth. At this violation of her condition Urvashi repudiates her husband and proceeds towards heaven. With this background the king wonders about at Kuruksetra in her quest. He frantically finds her in a pond in the form of a swan playing with her playmates. Somehow Pururavas could recognise her and approaches her for a return. Some dialogue begins and Urvashi finally refuses to accompany him but the pitiable approach of Pururavas melts the tender heart of Urvashi and being moved Urvashi advises him to come on the last night of the year for their union. In the mean time she bears a son to the king. After a year Pururavas comes and is blessed with
the union of Urvaśī. In course of the event of their union Urvaśī informs him that next morning, he was to be blessed with a boon, by the Gandharvas. Next morning the king prayed the Gandharvas for their lifelong union. They offered him a sacrificial fire which turns a mortal into Gandharva. Then he came to his capital and after celebrating the prescribed sacrifice he became a Gandharva.

In this legend there are certain striking aspects of which we may observe a reflection in the theme and plot construction of Vikramorvaśīyam and Abhijñānaśākuntalam also. The striking points may be listed as follows:—

I. Temporary union due to reciprocal lustful attraction.
II. Their separation due to curse.
III. Birth of a son.
IV. Lastly, eternal union by religious performances and subsequent removal of blind passion.

According to Brhaddevatā, there is a slight variation in this legend. Pururavas and Urvashi lead a hymeneal life. Indra becomes jealous and orders his thunderbolt to disunite them. After the departure of Urvashi, Pururavas laments bitterly for her. He finds her in a lake with her five mates. Then he requested her for a comeback she replies that she is attainable only in heaven. Thus the legend stops here, without any mention of their future union.

According to Vishnu Purana, the love sto-
ry of Pururavas and Urvasi, drawn upon the Satapatha Brähmana, moves in a deviated path. Here Urvasi, a divine damsel is cursed by Mitra and Varuna. She is enamored of the king and agrees to accompany him on this earth. Of course, putting three conditions before him(1)

Conditionally they enjoy each other's company for sixtyone thousand years. Gods and Gandharvas are depressed over her absence. Viswāvashu manipulates separation between lovers. Pururavas wanders here and there and frantically he finds her with her four playmates in a lake. Pururavas pitiably requests Urvasi for a comeback, but she denied. Finally out of her kindness she suggested that Pururavas should come to her on the last night of the year. Accordingly Pururavas also appeared on the stipulated date. On the occasion of their union, Urvasi offers him a son named 'Ayu'. He begs Gandharava for Urvasi and the Gandharvas also in stead of offering Urvasi to him straight-way, give him an Agnisthāli to perform sacrifice which would bring about him lasting union with his beloved. On the way to his abode from the heaven he leaves the sacrificial fire-plate 'Agnisthāli' in the forest. When he goes back to fetch the same it turned into two grown-up trees. He performs a sacrifice with the churning sticks of these trees and attains heaven for perpetual union with Urvasi.

Here we come across a striking point that eternal union between the earthly lover and the heavenly beloved has been materialised in the next world.

1. VP.IV-6.
Bhāvavata Purana also agrees with the story of Vishnu Purana though a negligible variation is seen. Matsya Purana also contains the love story of Pururavas and Urvasī which bears a close resemblance to that of Vikramorvasīyam. According to this Purana Pururavas is an intimate friend of Indra. On his way to heaven he sees Urvasī and Chitralekha being kidnapped by demon Kesin in the aerial region. By his extraordinary prowess, Pururavas overpowers the demon and rescues Urvasī. Matsya Purana records an old event in the context of Urvasī's character. According to this event, under the direction of Bhagvata a drama called 'Lakṣmīswayamvar' was being staged in the heaven, where the role of 'Lakṣmī' was being played by Urvasī. Pururavas was one of the spectators of the drama. At the dramatic performance Urvasī became absent-minded and forgot her dialogue due to her passion at Pururavas who was a spectator of her performance. As a punishment to her blunder the sage cursed her to become a creeper and the king to become a devil for fifty five years. Urvasī on the earth chose the king Pururavas as her husband and at her association with the king she bore eight sons to the king. Differing from the conventional love story of Pururavas and Urvasī supplied by all other sources, the Matsyapurana introduces the dramatic performance at heaven of which we find a close resemblance in Vikramorvasīyam.

Vaṭṭasāritisagāra too records the legend
which has considerable effect on Vikramorvaśiyam of Kālidāsa. According to Kathāsaritsāgara (1) King Pururavas is a devotee of Vishnu. He can move freely on earth and in the heaven. Urvasi is enamoured of the king when she beholds him for the first time in the forest of Nandana. Both get together. Vishnu was aware of the true love existed in them. So, he appoints Narada as messenger to Indra with a message demanding Urvasi for the king. In obedience to the direction of Vishnu, Indra bestows Urvasi upon Pururavas and both of them lived happily on earth as couple.

As Urvasi was the favourite nymph of the Gods, in her absence the glory of heaven disappears. So, again the Gods tried to create impediments in their life and became successful in separating them from each other. Then the king pleased Vishnu through practice of penance and at the command of Vishnu the Gods released Urvasi. As a consequence the king was again reunited with his beloved for a pretty long time on this earth. Almost all the materials of the theme and plot construction were present before Kālidāsa. It was the dramatist himself to decide how to design the structure and infuse life into it, so as to produce an art of originality. Beginning from the Rgveda upto the Kathāsaritsāgara, wherever the story of Vikramorvaśiyam has been preserved,

1. KSS.-III-3-4.-

आशोतिः पुरुरवसा नागा राजा परमेश्वराः
मनाह नामी भास्करम् मस्या प्रत्यक्षता जितिं ||
the humanity of Pururavas and the divinity of Urvasi have been missed. It is because the authors of the episodes had an intention to establish a cordial relation between men and Gods. As the true representative of Indian culture Kalidas also strictly followed the idea of combining humanity and divinity. But, in this context it may be observed that Kalidas has been thoroughly moved by the tragic character of the theme. Probably he has been realising the pitiable cry of the lover from the period of Rgveda to the period of Kathasaritsagara and that is why instead of demonstrating any tragic event he made his play a comedy which begins with emotional union, proceeds with sweet separation and ends with happy union. Kalidas has been able to transform the arrogant and cruel Urvasi of Rgveda into a loving and obedient partner in the play by the magic touch of his poetic imagination. He did not eliminate the event of curse; rather he has introduced it twice in such a way that in stead of being a cause of separation it worked like a magic stick for the perpetual union of the lover and beloved.

Kalidas mainly depended upon two sources for the theme of Vikramorvashiyam, namely, Matsya Purana and Kathasaritsagara. From Matsya Purana Kalidas might have derived the following aspects for his play.
1. Pururava's friendship with Indra and his frequent visit to heaven.
2. Kidnapping of Urvasi by the demon Kesin and her protection by the king.

3. Bharata’s curse to Urvasi for her blunder in dramatic performance in heaven.

4. As a consequence of curse transformation of Urvasi into a creeper.

From the other source, i.e. the Kathasaritsagar our playwright might have derived the following aspects for the theme and plot construction of Vikramorvasiyam.

1. Reunion of lover, i.e. Pururava and Urvasi on this earth and in this life.

2. The union of love through a sage as a medium. In Kathasaritsagar Vishnu is kind enough to make necessary arrangements for their union whereas in the play Kalidasa introduces a sage to hand over the Sanga-man-yamani (Gem) to Pururavas for their union.

3. In Kathasarit-Sagar, the sage Narada serves as intermediary between lovers and Gods. In the play also Narada plays the same role of intermediary.

4. In Kathasaritsagar the heroine is presented as a generous and kind maiden who suffers great anguish in separation for her lover of which there is a straight-way reflection in the play as opposed to her character as a cruel hearted rude countessan as depicted in other legends.

Apart from the above resemblance found in previous works Kalidasa has also introduced certain dram-
tic aspects into his play by which this piece of his play does not look a prototype of its previous works. The newly introduced deviation of the play may be illustrated as follows.

1. The fourth and fifth Acts are absolutely his own invention. The reason behind the introduction of the scenes, particularly the 4th, Act. is that he wants to delineate the erotic sentiments in separation (Vipralambha Sṛṇyāra).

2. Kālidās has used curse twice in the play. He has used curse for both the purposes i.e for the purpose of separation and union as well. Through this type of utilisation he wants to justify that the cause which is for the separation and sorrow may also be for union and happiness. Because God's creation are not meant for revenge but for a correction.

3. The scene of Abhisāra of Urvasi is his invention by which the playwright gets an opportunity to delineate the sentimentality of the heroine as a contrast to her reverse image reflected in other legends including Rgveda.

**ABHIJNANASĀKUNTALAM**

The love story of Duṣyanta and Śakuntalā, which is universally accepted to be one of the interesting episodes of Mahābhārata also occurs mainly in the Padmapurana and Kathāhāri Jātaka. It is not an easy task to produce a definite deduction as to which work was the main source of theme and plot construction of Abhijnānasākuntalam, but basing on the chronological importance
we feel it proper to deal with the episode of Mahābhārata at first and Kathāhāri Jātaka and Padmapurana later on.

The story of Dusyanta and Sakuntala occurs in 89th to 100th Adhyayas of Adiparva of the Mahābhārata. The story was in a crude form with many lapses, but by the magic power of his ingenuity, Kālidās has made it refined and glorified through certain alteration and modifications. In order to have a clearcut idea about the mastery of Kālidās as shown in his masterpiece, we must know, in brief, the story of Sakuntalā episode in the Mahābhārata.

According to the epic story Duṣyanta of Puru Dynasty once went on a hunting expedition with large army. In the hour of hunting he came to the penance grove of Kāśyapa in pursuit of wild deers leaving his army at the entrance of the grove. He discarded his royal badges and entered the grove with his ministers and purohita. But to the hermitage proper he went alone. Kāśyapa’s beautiful daughter Sakuntalā, welcomed him and told him that her father had gone out for collecting fruits (1) out of surprise, Duṣyanta asked her as to how she could be the daughter of Kāśyapa who was a celebrated all along his life. Sakuntalā also narrated the story of her birth as she had heard from Kāśyapa himself on the occasion of a similar question put to him by another sage.

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In the meantime the king was deeply moved by the beauty of the celestial nymph's daughter and on learning her story of birth he told her that she was really a princess and hence quite fit to be his partner. So, without maintaining any ceremonial formalities, Dusyanta proposed her to become his wife. Sakuntalā suggested to materialise the marriage only after Kāśyapa's arrival, but Dusyanta persuaded her to contract a Gandharāvī metrimonial alliance on her own responsibility and the young girl 'Sakuntalā' consented to marry him on condition that her own son would become Yuvarāj and succeed the king(1). Dusyanta readily agreed to this condition and there by the marriage was duly consummated and the king left the hermitage, promising his newly wed wife to send an army to take her to his palace with royal pomp and magnificence. At the same time all along he was apprehensive to the reaction of the sage on the issue.

After a while the sage returned back to the hermitage with fruits. Sakuntalā out of shame could not appear before him immediately, but gradually she could gather courage and confidence and observing his calm attitude slowly she disclosed everything that had occurred. Kāśyapa there upon expressed his pleasure at the marriage and blessed to the effect that she would be the mother of a universal emperor; for, the sage Kāśyapa could

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1. MBH.-Adi-32-13-नुरुःत्तमं राजपुत्रीं हि यथा काशिपी गापसे ग्राम्यम् बलमसे सुमन्धिणि नाहि निः कहलाणि से ।

2. MBH.-Adi-34-22-23-रेलिः मे प्रतिशास्त्रींसे यथा तासनािहर्दः श्रेयो योत्तम मुद्रा म स उन्मेलितकालाः युनारयं महाबल सामेखकं करिंसि दे गणी सतहल सुरेष्य कृः साहलं सुप्रस्तलं
Days rolled on. Months after months elapsed and Sakuntalā eagerly waited for the king's army to appear before her. At the end of three years she gave birth to a son, who was greeted by a shower of flowers from the sky and whom Indra proclaimed to be future Chakravarty. The boy grew in the Kanva's hermitage and duly his Jātakarma and other Samskāras were performed by the sage. Six more years elapsed from the birth of the child. The child became too turbulent for the peaceful hermitage. He used to curb the tigers, lions, bears and wolves and easily tie them to trees and play with them. He killed demons and goblins by the more stroke of his fist and delighted the ascetics in the hermitage who rightly named him (Sarvadamana) (Subduer of every one). Kāśyapa then thought it proper for Sarvadamana to go to his father along with his mother and assume the position of Yuvarāj. When the sage informed both the mother and son of his intention both of them were reluctant to leave the hermitage and miss the association of the sage. Sakuntalā even went to the extent of misunderstanding her father for having driven Sakuntalā along with her son out of the hermitage due to Sarvadamana's mischievous activities(1). Kāśyapa told that it is not proper for a woman to stay long at her father's abode and at last they were somehow induced to depart for Dushyanta's capital. The
parting proved to be quite pathetic. As Sakuntalā begged forgiveness of her father for all these unconscious wrongs she might have committed, Kāsyapa bowed down his head and could not utter a single word due to brimming of tears in his eyes. Kāsyapa asked all the sages of his hermitage to accompany Sakuntalā to Duṣyanta's capital 'pratisthāna'. At about mid-day, the party reached Vardhamāna, the other name of Pratisthāna, and was welcomed by a concourse of citizens who thought Indra's wife "Pulomī" herself had arrived with her son 'Jayanta'. But some of the citizens ridiculed at the lean, ill-clad, matted and barbarian looking ascetics. As a consequence all the ascetics returned to the forest leaving Sakuntalā alone with her son on the high way of the city of 'Pratistāna'. The citizens were amazed at her splendid beauty and Sarvadamana's resemblance to king 'Duṣyanta'. With a sign of surprise Sakuntalā somehow managed to present herself before the royal court and introduced her son to Duṣyanta. She remained him of their previous contract and demanded its fulfilment also. But, Duṣyanta, being merged into the world of enjoyment, was oblivious of his state of affairs with Sakuntalā. Though Sakuntalā's presence with her son enlivened his feeble memory and delighted him yet he did not show any sign of his past acquaintance and repudiated them straight.

1. MBH.-Adi-96-47-
Sakuntala felt ashamed. Her eyes grew red with anger. Her lips began to tremble and she seemed to burn Dusyanta with her side glance, yet she restricted her emotion and delivered to the king a long lecture on the importance of a wife and a son, on the value of truthfulness and the sanctity of solemn contracts. She deplored that she had been abandoned by her parents in her infancy and now also she is being abandoned by her lawful husband. She was willing to come back to the hermitage, but requested the king to accept her son. When Dusyanta refused her prayer and charged her a liar and a low unchaste woman Sakuntala also crossed the limit of her tolerance and said that he was not worthy of being her husband and that her son would become Chakrabarti even without the king. This is because what Indra had proclaimed would not prove in vain. When she started back towards the hermitage a flame of fire, born of her anger was visible over her head, but she absorbed it in her body.

At this critical juncture an aerial voice was heard from the Gods declaring the truth and lawfulness of the relationship of Dusyanta and Sakuntala as couple and Sarvadamana as their lawful offspring. At the same time the aerial voice advised the king to accept his chastewife and son with a shower of flowers. Dusyanta was very happy with the aerial dictation and asked his ministers and Purohitas to take note of the aerial voice. He openly confessed that he was sure of Sarvadamana being his son, but he was apprehensive of public
scandal on the act of his acceptance simply at the words
of Sakuntalā. He then received the boy with all paternal affection and conciliated Sakuntalā by telling that what he had done was to obtain a public sanction to their secret union. Sakuntalā was made the Chief Queen and Sarvadamana, the Yuvarāj. Thus, the episode of the epic ended with the fulfilment of the contract.

In this story of Sakuntalāpākhyānam no less than 588 stanzas have been utilised and it is characterised by unnecessary, irrelevant description and long tedious speeches with contradiction, improbabilities and so to say absurdities. This is probably due to various interpolation, expected to have been crept there in ever since the days of Kālidāsa. If one goes through the original text of the epic one might be very much in doubt on its capability of supplying the greatest Sanskrit dramatist with the necessary plot for his most outstanding play, that is Abhijñānaśākuntalam. Of course, the fact is that into the dry, rough and unromantic skeleton, Kālidāsa has infused the life of animation and romanticism.

If we focus our attention to the changes, Kālidāsa has introduced into the simple narrative, we find that the whole story has been so completely metamorphosed by the poet's ingenuity that we observe a distinct stamp of his individuality at every stage. The author of the epic wanted to describe the incidents that had happened in the past as a result it became only matters of historical importance. The total attitude of the author
was more presentative than artistic, but Kalidāsa had an altogether different attitude. He wanted to create a drama which, depicting the human feelings and emotions, would hold the place of a mirror of nature and be a perennial source of interest and appeal for the entire human race. The rough and simple story of Mahābhārata was not at all suitable for the purpose. Therefore, Kalidāsa had to overhaul it completely, create new situations, introduce new character and incorporate fresh life. It may be observed that what Kalidāsa found in Mahābhārata was just a simple unsophisticated theme of love affairs of a typical monarch, but what Kalidāsa presents before his audience is a complex whole of life, feeling and emotion; which is an outcome of the magic touch of his artistic genius. Keeping the original story of the epic as stated above, in view we will try to illustrate the important changes, Kalidāsa has introduced in his masterpiece the Abhijñānaśākuntalam.

1. Characters:

In the epic the story contains only four characters namely Duṣyanta, Sakuntalā, Sarvadamana and Kāśyapa, the sage. For the purpose of dramatic action some more characters are indispensably necessary; but the type of characters, Kalidāsa has introduced, is really unique. He has introduced Priyamvadā and Anasūya the heroine's two friends and confidants; Sārnyarāva and Saradvatā, two pupils to Kāśyapa who accompany Sakuntalā to Duṣyanta's palace; Goutamī, the elderly matron in Kāśyapa's hermi-
tage and Mādhavīya the king's Viḍūṣaka. He has also created minor characters like charioteer, the Vaikhānasa, the doorkeeper, the senapati Karabhaka and Vātāyana etc. At Act. VI and VII were entirely the invention of Kālidāsa's imagination for which the original story of epic has nothing to do. These two acts are necessary for the successful implementation of the event of curse of Durvāsa which is one of the most important innovations of Kālidāsa and the ultimate aim of which was to elevate the earthly love to the level of heavenly love.

2. Dusyanta's expedition:

In the Mahābhārata Dusyanta goes to Kanva's grove along with his army, ministers and Purohita. While he stations the former at the entrance of the grove and asked it to wait till he returns after paying his respect to the sage, the latter accompanies him to the further development of the story and hence the Mahābhārata represents the king as leaving them outside and entering the hermitage alone. This looks very very awkward. Kālidāsa skillfully presents Dusyanta as having strayed away from his army. He does not let ministers and purohita to accompany with him on his hunting expedition. The way Kālidāsa's Dusyanta is invited by the sage "Vaikhānasa" to visit the hermitage is quite natural.

3. Sakuntala's modesty:

In the epic Sakuntala herself relates to the king the story of her birth. This may not be incompati-
ble with the character of a plain, outspoken forestbred Tapasi. But still it looks indicent for a grown up spin-ister to relate the incident so straight. But Kālidāsa's Sakuntala is a daughter of household, with her sense of bashfulness and daughterly decorum. She is not expected to disclose herself the account of her birth, as her birth was of a kind normally unspeakable by a spinister in front of a youth. So, accordingly Kālidāsa makes Anasūyā tell the story. He does not allow even Anasūyā to cross the limit of feminine modesty. As a result Anasūyā morely suggests the romantic character of the event and does not even go to the end of her account; instead, skillfully leaves the consequence of the event on Duṣyanta to understand by himself. Kālidāsa's temperament in guarding the feminine modesty is really praiseworthy.

4. Union between hero and heroine :

According to the Mahābhārata, when Duṣyanta goes to the hermitage, Kanva is out for collecting fruits. In his temporary absence so many things happened which looks very much unnatural and impossible. During this short span, Duṣyanta is attracted by Sakuntala's beauty and in an immodest way proposes her for a union. A long dialogue between two continues and at last Sakuntala consents to marry him on condition. When Duṣyanta agrees to the condition, kept by Sakuntala, the marriage between the two is duly consummated and Sakuntala conceives. All these happen within the short time that
Kanva is out for collecting fruits and while Dusyanta’s ministers and purohita are waiting outside the hermitage and his army at the entrance of the grove. This looks quite impossible and unnatural and to a certain extent absurd. In order to avoid this apparent absurdity skillfully Kalidas has improved in the technique of plot construction. Deriving pleasure out of this type of absurdity may be possible in pretty old age. But modernity wants something concrete, something reasonable what Kālidāsa has tried to feed through the process of elimination and modification. Kālidāsa’s Kanva is out on a long pilgrimage to Somatīrtha to pacify the adverse fate of Sakuntalā and hence is not likely to return for months together. By sending Kanva out for pilgrimage, the playwright creates a congenial atmosphere for the free union of lovers. In order to prolong the period of their association Kālidāsa has introduced the request of the ascetics to Dusyanta for a stay in the hermitage to protect the sacrifices of the ascetics from the disturbances caused by the demons. Besides, the charming scene of the forest Act where the young girls are watering the trees, their innocent jokes and delightful free talks, the incident of bee’s attack and the introduction of the king at a critical time and the whole of the II and III Act, which are necessary for the gradual development of love between Dusyanta and Sakuntalā are the original outcome of the dramatic ingenuity of Kālidāsa. It gives a highly romantic effect to the play of which no
origin is traceable in the Mahābhārata.

5. Amorous conversation between Kanva and Sakuntalā:

When Kanva returns from collecting fruit, according to the Mahābhārata, it is Sakuntalā who informs him of what had happened in the hermitage in his absence. It looks quite unnatural for a daughter, however rustic she may be, to narrate the incident of her sexual activities before her father. In order to avoid this unnaturality, Kālidāsā introduces into his play the incorporeal voice to reveal the secrecy of Sakuntalā's total affair with Dusyanta inclusive of her pregnancy. Kālidāsā even did not like to utilise Anasūya for the purpose with a view to safeguard the maiden modesty. Another unnatural aspect in this context is that in the epic Kāḍyapa could know the pregnancy of Sakuntalā, of course, through his divine power just after his return from collection of fruit when her marriage was not then even few hours old. But in the play deliberately Kālidāsā sends Kāḍyapa out for a few months. In the mean time Sakuntalā shows clear symptoms of her pregnancy. As a result of which there was no occasion for Kāḍyapa to utilise his divine power for the knowledge of Sakuntalā's pregnancy. Through out the play the character of Kanva has been depicted as household and nowhere he has been depicted as a repository of divine power due to his rigorous penance.

6. Sakuntalā's stay at hermitage:

In the Mahābhārata Sakuntalā delivered a son after the expiry of three years from her conception.
This looks very much absurd. Besides, Kāśyapa takes long six years for his mental preparation to send Śakuntalā to her husband. Long nine years elapsed between Śakuntalā's marriage with Dusyanta in hermitage and her appearance in the royal court. Though Kāśyapa knows pretty well that it is undesirable to keep a married daughter at home for a long time yet he kept Śakuntalā and her son with him for such a long period, i.e. nine years without any sound justification. This abnormality has rightly been observed and eliminated by Kālidāsa and in stead, remarkable worldly wisdom has been introduced in the play by sending Śakuntalā to her husband on the very day, on which her marriage is known. By the by, the poetic sentiment he has delineated in the IV Act. on the occasion of Śakuntalā's separation from the lap of nature is a precious literary specimen which is possible due to his masterly inventive genius.

7. Reciprocity of love.

In the Mahābhārata while Dusyanta is captured by the ravishing beauty of Sakuntala and induced with a passion for her; Sakuntala, on contrary does not show any sign of her being moved emotionally. She calmly, gives him a detailed account of her birth and conditionally gives his consent for marriage on approach. Emotion and sentiment have nothing to do with Śakuntalā. She is possessed of a rough, rude and raw approach to matter which is never expected of a maiden of normal sensibility and modesty. She does not even show any shine of her usual attraction and weakness towards...
This is quite evident from her attitude: in putting condition to her marriage before him and her unwillingness to leave the hermitage for Dusyanta's capital. When she appears before the royal court she does not hesitate to deliver a long lecture before the king in an open conference and demand justice for his son. To sum up, the Mahabharata's Sakuntala is a typical barbarian girl who was yet to acquire the art of living.

But, when we cast our glance at the Sakuntala of the drama, we, at once, arrive at an abrupt conclusion that the two Sakuntalas resemble only in the name. Kalidasa's Sakuntala represents the Indian womanhood in its full glory because she has been presented as an obedient daughter, virtuous and devoted wife and a loving mother. All the three qualities are combined in one. Her bashfulness as a daughter, her uncommon eagerness to see Dusyanta and her regard and devotion for her husband as a wife and her filial affection for Sarvadaman as a mother mark in her a distinct stamp of individuality which is conspicuously absent in the Sakuntala of the Mahabharata. Only a selfish and prosaic passion over-shadows the epic Sakuntala right for her appearance. Really Kalidasa's Sakuntala is a truly feminine model.

8. Durvāsa's curse

Above all the greatest of Kalidasa's innovations and the most important, from the dramatic viewpoint is the curse of Durvāsa. In the Mahābhārata Dusyanta appears to be, more or less, a typical libertine who takes...
everything in a casual manner; even his sexual behaviour with a hermit girl. This is because Duṣyanta of Maha-

bhārata is purely a voluptuary. Of course he is consci-

ous of his wrong he has committed to the sage in seducing his innocent daughter in his absence. That is why he does not even venture to send for Sakuntalā. In course of time, having been engrossed in the world of enjoyment, he absolutely forgets the incidents connected to Sakuntalā. Even he bluntly repudiates Sakuntalā when she, along with her son appears before him. In this case sapiency to the incident of his love affairs is comparatively less im-
portant a cause than the possibility of public scandal. Under this circumstance we are hardly inclined to pay any respect to Duṣyanta either as a husband or as a father. Duṣyanta of the epic does not deserve any sympathy from his readers. Of course, he is saved from a lasting igno-

mony by an aerial voice. But this does not serve any purpose in mitigating the extent of being considered as a man of callousness and recklessness. There is no occa-

sion in the epic which inspires a reader to praise its character, rather some situations, as narrated above, com-

pel the readers to cast at him words of censure for his artificial behaviour, based on blind and selfish passion.

But in the play the curse of Durvāsā has changed the total stamp of his character. No where, in the play, he has been seen guilty. Though poligamous by na-

ture his dealings with Sakuntala are marked by reasonable sincerity of affection. The conflict between conscious
and subconscious mind at the appearance of Sakuntalā and his utter helplessness there make the king's position really pathetic. A powerful emperor becomes pitiable character and draws genuine sympathy from each of his audience. The helplessness and pitiable disposition of Dusyanta have been skillfully depicted by Kālidāsa in the Vth Act, which has been possible by his extraordinary innovation of verse, as a dramatic technique. Thus Dusyanta of Kālidāsa is a highly cultured monarch, a dutyful ruler and a spotless household in the form of a loving husband dutyful son and affectionate father, and hence an ideal character.

The main purpose of the curse of Durvāsā was not only to elevate the standard of Dusyanta's character. It has a significant purpose to serve in the play. Kālidāsa's principal aim was to depict the gradual development of earthly love into divine love. The earthly love of Dusyanta and Sakuntalā, of course, on reciprocal bases, had gone to cross all limits of tolerance. Dusyanta had gone to the limit of dishonouring his mother's call on the occasion of her fasting ceremony and sent Vidūśaka as a substitute to attend the domestic function. On the other hand Sakuntalā had also crossed the limit of tolerance being engrossed in the love for Dusyanta and as a result did not take notice of Durvāsā's arrival; what to talk of her expected hospitality to the sage. So, the curse was a punishment for the senseousness and materialism of their reciprocal passion. The curse was mea-
nt for a correction of both of them. Kālidāsa's aim was to raise the lover from the earthly plane to heavenly plane. So, both the lovers underwent rigorous austerities and exemplary life for their narrow and selfish act, i.e. paragogal vision on life. That could rectify themselves through sufferings which could be possible only through the curse of Durvāsā.

The curse of Durvāsā was not meant for a revenge, rather it was meant for the correction of lapses committed. So it must have an end in a censurative manner. For this reason Kālidāsa has invented the episode of ring of which no origin is traceable in the Mahābhārata. When Anasūyā begged Durvāsā to mitigate the extent of the effect of the curse, the sage repented a little and ruled that the curse would cease to operate at the sight of an ornament of recognition. Provisions for this had already been made by the poet's extraordinary dramatic skill. When Dusyanta took leave of Sakuntala he left his signet ring with her as a token of his love. So, Sakuntala had the key in her hand to cease the operation of curse whenever she liked. But cruel destiny does not permit so much of freedom to any of the persons in the world.

10. **Signet Ring**

The *lost ring* was found in the beginning of the VI Act and then the king's suffering started. By the restoration of the signet ring all the incidents of the past rolled on before his eyes one after another as if scenes. When the king became conscious of the re-
ligious and spiritual aspect of the marriage, recognised Sakuntalā as his 'Dharmapatni' and began to grieve over his act of repudiation to Sakuntalā. His repentance over the act of repudiation, his association with divine beings, his selfless service to the subjects and his sacred conduct completed his spiritual preparation for a sacred union with a purified and refined Sakuntalā on the 'Hemakutal'.

The Abhijnānasākuntalam and the Kathāhari Jātaka;

It is normally believed that the episode of signet ring is an innovation of Kālidāsa as stated above. But an analytical study reveals that one of the Pali Jatakas known as 'Kathāhari Jātaka' might have supplied Kālidāsa with the idea of the ring. Kālidāsa, of course, improved upon the idea of Jātaka to a great extent and made the signet ring serve quite different purpose in the drama. In order to show the resemblance between the two it may not be treated unnecessary to give here in brief the story of the 'Kathāhari Jātaka'.

According to Kathāhari Jātaka King 'Brahmadutta' of Banāras once went into a forest and was wandering about in search of fruits and flowers. Then he happened to see a sweetly singing girl who was collecting wood. The king was attracted by her beauty and married her then and there. Immediately she conceived and felt unusually heavy as it was none but Bodhisatwa inside her womb. She informed the king of her delicate condition. Thereupon the king gave her his signet ring and said,
"If your expected child be a daughter, you can dispose of the ring and spend the money you get out of it, in bringing her up. If, however, the child be a boy you should bring him to me along with the ring (1). In due course the girl naturally gave birth to Bodhisatwa who began to grow freely in his mother's abode. Once the little boy was humiliated by his playmates as having been fatherless. He thereupon went to his mother and enquired about his father. Out of compulsion she told him the story of his birth and took him to the king along with the ring. At the court, when the girl presented the boy to the king Brahmadutta and showed him the signet ring. The king inspite of his proper knowledge of his total affairs with the girl, refused to acknowledge either the boy or the girl as his own because he was captured by a sense of shame (2). The girl thereupon went through a kind of ordeal (Satyakriya) to convince the king of the veracity of her statement. "If this boy has been born of you let him stand in the air without support; otherwise let him fall down and die." Thus having declared this she threw the boy into air. Surprisingly the Bodhisatwa sat crosslegged in mid-air and in a tone of sweetness announced himself to be the son of the king and re-

1. JKS.-Prof.N.K.Bhagwati,Page-4.
2. JKS.-Prof.N.K.Bhagwati,Page-5.
quested his father to receive him with embrace. Hearing these words of love the king's heart was brimmed with ecstasy of filial affection and he extended his arms to receive the young boy. The boy also gladly descended into his father's arms and sat on his lap. The king accordingly appointed him a Yuvarāj and made the girl his chief queen. The prince was, later on known as Kāstha-Vāhana.

It may be observed that the Jātaka story resembles the story of the Mahābhārata mainly in three aspects. A- In both the episodes the faggot-gathering girl conceives immediately after marriage. B- In both the episodes the king, though aware of his love affairs with the girl, refuses to acknowledge her and her son being apprehensive of public scandal. C- In both the episodes some sort of super human intervention is responsible for the acceptance of the lawful wife and the son by the king.

Further it may be observed that the part which the king plays in the Jātaka is different from the part which he plays in the play. The purpose is also different in both. But any way, one most prominent factor similar in both the episodes is that the ornament 'Signet ring' has been used as a means of recognition. By the introduction of curse, the significance of the ring has unimaginably gone up. So, even if Kālidāsa might have been influenced by the episode of Signet ring of Jātaka the way he has presented the idea is really origi-
inal and marvellous. This is because, in case of playwrights like Kalidas, borrowings cannot claim any identity because they lose their existence in the flame of their creative genius. It is not an easy task to ascertain the chronological relation between the Jātakas and Kalidas because a definite date to either of the two is yet to be attributed. But it is generally acknowledged that the origin of the Jātakas can be traced back to about the 2nd and 3rd Century B.C. and as far as the literary evidence goes Kalidas may be placed in the 1st Century B.C. at the maximum. So, according to our opinion there is nothing wrong in holding the view that Kalidas has been indebted to the Jātaka story especially for the episode of signet ring in his masterpiece "The Abhijnānaśākuntalam".

The Abhijnānaśākuntala and Padmapurana:

Scholars like Prof. Haradutta Sharma has tried to prove that Kalidas was indebted to the Śākuntalopakhya occurring in the Swargakhanda of the Padmapurana for his masterpiece 'Abhijnānaśākuntalam'. Of course, the abundance of resemblance found in both the works, has compelled Prof. Sharma to form such a deduction. The most striking among the resemblances are the episode of ring and the curse of Durvasa which are found in Padmapurana. Besides these episodes, incidents like Śākuntalā being taken by Menaka while the former was following the residence of Purohit, the loss of ring in the water and its subsequent restoration through the fisherman, Dusyanta's reaction at the sight of the ring;
Indra's invitation to Dusyanta to go to heaven in order to destroy the demons who were unconquerable by the Gods, Dusyanta's arrival in the hermitage of Maricha in company with Māyā, Dusyanta's meeting with his son who was harassing a lion and his acceptance of Sakuntalā and his learning of the curse of Durvāśa from Maricha occur in both the works. These are the grounds basing on which speculations may be made for one's indebtedness to the other, but it is very difficult to deduce as to which of the two works is indebted to which for its theme and plot construction. This is mainly because the date of neither of the works is definite and no chronological sequence can be made with certainty for determination of one's indebtedness to the others. The striking element in this context is that the Padmapurāṇa of Anandasharma edition as a work of authenticity, does not certain the Sakuntalapaksanam originally formed part of it. Besides, the impression that is imprinted in our mind by the study of Abhijnānaśākuntalam that far from Kālidāsa being indebted to Padmapurāṇa, it is the Padmapurana that is indebted to the Abhijnānaśākuntalam. This is mainly because the invention of curse of Durvāśa and the episode of signet ring are more dramatic episodes than puranic. Moreover, scholars do not attach much antiquities to the Bhāgavata and Padmapurāṇa and they accept later compilation of these Purāṇa."(1). So it is rather reasonable to

1. Purana Vimarsa.-P- 65.
deduce that Kālidāsa might have invented these episodes by the extraordinary power of his poetic imagination and in the foundation of the skeleton of the epic story Kālidāsa has built the magnificent literary monument, that is, the 'Abhījñānaśākuntalam'.

Evolution and Development of theme in Bhavabhūti:

On the problem of chronological order of Bhavabhūti's work it is unanimously believed that the Mahāvīracharita is his 1st creation being followed by the Mālati-Mādhava and the Uttararāmcharita successively.

MAHAVIRACHARITA:

In the very beginning of the play we are informed that the play Mahāvīracharita is based on the famous story of Rāmāyana (1). Further, Bhavabhūti clearly says that he has been inclined to the story of Rāma narrated by Śrī Vālmīki (2). From these references it is quite evident that the plot of the play the Mahāvīracharita has been derived from the famous epic The Rāmāyana, of Vālmīki. In this play the playwright has dramatised the early account of Rāma's life, i.e. commencing from Rāma's visit to Viṣṇuśri's hermitage to the coronation of Rāma at Ayodhyā. Bhavabhūti has tried to dramatise such a big account of Rāma's life which is full of miraculous
incidents in a play of only seven Acts. This portion of Rāma’s life has been depicted by Vālmīki in the Rāmacarita covering six Kāndas; of course, in an epic style. Substantially, the playwright does not deviate from the original narrative of the epic, but he has put some incidents in a different way and introduced some new situation with a view to make his work both attractive and effective. In all his new situations we find an original dramatic touch mingled with an ideal poetic justification. Here we shall try to focus at the principal changes occurred in the play with their possible justification as follows:—

1. One of the important changes made by the playwright is the episode of Paraśurāma. This episode of Paraśurāma is found in the epic, but the dramatist has given so much of importance on it that it looks quite different from the original. The encounter and the consequence are of course, same, but the way they have been presented is quite different from the episode of the epic. In the Rāmacarita Paraśurāma is presented as coming of his own accord and challenging Rāma to fix the arrow on the bow of Vishnu when Rāma is coming back to Ayodhya after his marriage ceremony is over at Mithilā. At that time Rāma was accompanied by Dasaratha and other sages. After Rāma’s success in fixing the arrow on the bow of Vishnu, Paraśurāma gets insulted. His arrogance as a peerless
The sudden arrival of Parasurama from his abode of 'Mahendra mountain' in the south to Mithila in the North of India, which is very far away, seems somehow impossible to the poet. Probably it was felt by the playwright as a repelling element for which he wanted to introduce a change into it. Consequently the playwright introduced the character 'Malyavan' the minister of Ravana, to provoke Parasurama against Rama for his crime in breaking the bow of Siva. This minor episode in the epic which covers only two Cantoes (2). But Bhavabhuti has exhausted more than two Acts for the purpose. Bhavabhuti's purpose behind so much of elaboration of the episode is to reveal the elevated character of Rama. It is clear from the incident of Rama's praise towards the heroism of Parasurama (3). Another intention of Bhavabhuti, behind this elaborate depiction is to delineate the sentiment of heroism for which the playwright has a special inclination. It is also quite but natural to give justice to the title of the play 'Mahaviracharita' through delineation of heroic sentiment in bright colour. In this episode the anger of Janaka, Satananda, Dasaratha and Viswamitra seems to be quite natural and psychologically sound. With

1. Ramayana. Balakanda-75, 1.4 and canto 76.


3. MVC.-II-V-19, 23, 24, -5
the association of sages and their anger the encounter of Paraśurāma with Rāma creates a natural dramatic situation which is one of the dramatic innovations of Bhavabhūti.

2. Secondly, a major change is observed in the introduction of Surpanākhā in the guise of Āvantiḥārā(1). the maid servant of Kaikeyē. Bhavabhūti has introduced Surpanākhā as bringing a letter from Kaikeyē demanding the implementation of two boons sanctioned by Dasharatha in favour of Kaikeyē in the past. The nature of the boons was that in the first the exile of Rāma and in the second the kingdom for Bharata.

Bhavabhūti's intention behind the introduction of Surpanākhā probably was to save Kaikeyē from open public scandal of sending Rāma into exile who was so dear to her and the people. Besides, by this act of demanding boons she was also putting her husband, in her ignorance, into the clutches of death. This part of Kaikeyē's behaviour, as depicted in the epic, was probably quite intolerable to the playwright; because it was as if a blemish for the entire womanhood. That is why he introduced the character of Surpanākhā, with whom all evil qualities are usually associated, to perform this heinous act. Another noticeable aspect in this context is that this incident has occurred at Bhitilā which is far away from Ayodhyā staying where Kaikeyē is not expected to know anything about the occurrence of Bhitilā. Keeping Kaikeyē at a safe

1. NVG. IV-40—क्रिराजाः ग्रंदतासी मारुणे नामसंताः या च शाश्वतमनोन्निर्जने राम दिल्लिनिने।
distance Bhavabhūti tries to project Kaikeyē as innocent and thus not guilty of playing any role that may bring any blamish to universal motherhood.

3. Another important change introduced by Bhavabhūti in this play is the way in which Vālī is presented. Here Vālī is presented as being in collusion with Rāvana and being instigated by Mālayāvan, the minister of Rāvana to attack Rāma. According to the epic story Rāma, having made alliance with Sugrīva, kills Vālī with an arrow from a hidden place when he was engaged in a combat with Sugrīva. This act of killing Vālī from a hidden place is altogether a black spot in the character of Rāma, the incarnation of God. In order to eradicate this black spot from the character of Rāma, Bhavabhūti has presented Vālī in different way and thus made the fight between Vālī and Rāma proper; quite reverse to the improper fight depicted in the Rāmāyana. There by the indecent fight between Vālī and Sugrīva could be avoided. This is also obligatory on the part of a playwright to avoid whatever is improper in the conduct of hero.

Apart from the striking deviation stated above there are still some more which may not be ignored altogether. Such as (A) The arrangement of meeting of
Laxmana and Rāma with Sīta and Urmila in the forest has been made by the playwright, probably, in order to depict the love at first sight which is an a widely accepted dramatic technique. (B) The character of Sarvamāya has been introduced in the play in order to make him see the marvellous power of Rāma and accordingly inform his master Rāvana to be prepared both internally and externally for a horrible consequence. This is purely an innovation of Bhavabhūti. (C) According to the story of the Rāmāyana, the event of Rāma's exile occurs in Ayodhyā after merely fourteen years of Rāma's marriage. But in the play Bhavabhūti makes the event occur just after the marriage ceremonies of all the brothers are over at Mithilā. The intention of the playwright behind this deviation, appears to be to create an atmosphere conducive for the delineation of the sentiment of pathos.

MALATIMADHAVA:

According to the rules of dramaturgy the story of Prakarana must be original. As the play Malatimadhava comes under the category of prakarana, one of the six divisions of Rūpaka, it is natural that its story should be original. But at the same time it should be admitted that it is really a difficult task for a Sanskrit playwright to conceive an original story for his prakarana having the Rāmāyana as and the Mahābhārata, the perennial treasure of stories, in front. But it is to be observed that in spite of the presence of such tempting repositories of stories Bhavabhūti has tried his best and chosen a story where he appears to be original.
This, does not mean that he has borrowed absolutely nothing from the existing literature. It is of course, a fact that he has not taken his story verbatim from any single source but his dependance, may be in any form, on his time cannot be denied. But at the same time other available works of his style, and his skill in presenting the story in original cannot be disputed.

In order to form the plot of this prakarāṇa Bhavabhūti has mainly been indebted to the Brhatkathā of Gurnādhya. Originally this was written in paisachi prakāśa which is now lost, but some of its renderings are now available in Sanskrit in the shape of Brhatkathāmāndavari of Khemendra and the Kathāsaritsāgara of Somadeva. It may be supposed that Bhavabhūti has arranged the plot of this play basing on the story of 'Mādirāvati' available in the works of both Khemendra(1) and Somadeva(2).

We, now feel it necessary to present, in brief, the story of 'Mādirāvati' and subsequently illustrate the corresponding similality present in the play Mālatimādhava.

In the town of Sobhavati there lived a Brāhmaṇa named 'Jasāṅkara' having a son who was staying with his Guru for pursuit of Knowledge. He had a classmate who was Vijayasena by name. Vijayasena had a sister called Mādirāvata, after whom the story has been designated. On the occasion of her visit with her brother to

1. Brhatkatha-XII.-9-88-

2. KathaSaritSagara-XIII-1-
the house of the Guru she fell in love with the son of Jasaskara at the first sight. The love grew in them in its natural course. Once Madirāvatī sends through her nurse a garland of Malati flower as a present. The nurse also intimated the Brāhmin boy the intense love Madirāvatī had developed for him. After spending some days with her brother at Guru's house Madirāvatī returns home. In the mean time Madirāvatī's father decides to give away Madira in marriage to a wealthy youth. The poor brahmin boy, out of frustration decides to end his life and attempts to hang from a tree. But he is saved from that danger by a young man who himself is a disappointed lover, who relates his own pathetic story. According to his pitiable story he was an inhabitant of Nisāda country. In the course of his wondering he went to Sankhapura where he saw a young girl with whom he fell in love, even without any knowledge either of her name or parentage. When the girl started for home she was attacked by an elephant. The boy rescued her from the animal, and she went away. The young boy, being disappointed, wonders here and there in her search and thus reaches at a place where Madirābatī's lover was about to commit suicide. While they were talking Madirāvatī came to the temple of Kāmādeva to worship deity. The two friends conceal themselves to watch the proceedings. Madirāvatī praised to God that she might be united with her lover in the next birth. She attempts to end her life by hanging herself. Her lover, the brahmin boy, discloses himself
and escapes with her through the back door of the temple. His friend with whom the friendship was established afresh, disguising himself, as Madirāvati and taking her veil, joins the party outside, awaiting the return of Madirāvati. On reaching the house of Madirāvati he is surrounded by her friends. Fortunately, the girl whom he had rescued from the elephant, happens to be a friend of Madirāvati. She comes to bid farewell to the bride and has a pleasant surprise when she lifts the veil and discovers her own lover. They escape by the side door and get secretly married.

We shall now try to illustrate some of the corresponding similarities of the above story in the present prakaraṇa.

1. Jasaskara's son may be compared to Debaratā's son, 'Madhava' who had gone to Padmavati for pursuit of knowledge in philosophy.

2. Madirāvati may be compared to Malati, the heroine of the play.

3. Madirāvati's nurse may be compared with 'Lañgikā', Malati's foster sister.

4. The garland of Malati flower for the lover may be compared with the 'Vakula garland' in the play.

5. The wealthy youth, with whom the father of Madirāvati wanted to give away his daughter in marriage may be compared to Nandana, the King's favourite.

6. The young man, who saved the life of the poor Brahmin boy may be compared to Makaranda in the play.
who as a friend of Mādhava, wanted to commit suicide being intolerent of Mādhava's sufferings.

7. The impersonation of Mādirāvati by her lover's friend may be compared to the impersonation of Mālati by Nakaranda, Mādhava's friend.

8. The meeting of Mādirāvati with her lover, the poor brahmin boy in the temple of Āmadeva, bears, a close resemblance to the meeting of Mālati and Mādhava in the temple of city deity.

Besides, there are many other resembling instances which clearly prove the indebtedness of Bhavabhūti to the Kathāsaritsāgara of Somadeva for the construction of plot of his play. But at the same time Bhavabhūti has made certain improvements in the story of the Kathāsaritsāgara which seems to be quite proper from the viewpoint of dramatic justification and thereby has been able to make his work more effective and appealing. The improvements may be pointed out as follows:

1. Instead of the conventional elephant of the Kathāsaritsāgara and the Mrchhakatikā, Bhavabhūti has introduced a tiger in his play. He might have been indebted to his predecessors for the idea of an animal, but introducing a tiger for an encounter with Nakaranda is definitely a sign of improvement which creates thrill.

2. By introducing the character of Mādayanjānālikā and Mālati, which may be thought to be a reflection of the story of Sapnabāsavadattam of Bhasa where Vāsavadutta and Padmāvati who had developed a congenial pre-
merital relationship, really appeals the audience most.

3. By introducing the character of Jalati as an affectionate daughter to her parents, an obedient disciple of Kamandaki, an ideal upspring of her dignified heritage and a true beloved to Madhava; Bhavabhuti has been able to present a model of heroine to the world of drama.

Keeping the above facts in view the plot of the Jalatimadhava may be considered as original one. Even if his indebtedness to his predecessors like Gunadhya and others may not be denied, the credit is due to Bhavabhuti because of his skill in combining the plot into an integrated whole by which it earns a look of novel and unique creation of art.

THE UTTARARAMACHARITA :

By the very title of the play it is evident that this play deals with the later life of Rama. As the story of Rama's later life is found in the Ramayana of Valmiki and Patala Khanda of Padmapurana it is very likely that Bhavabhuti might have derived the theme of his play from these sources, of course with certain deviations, considered necessary from the point of view of dramatic justification. The principal deviations found in his play may be illustrated as follows:

1.(A). In the Ramayana no reference of the departure of Vasistha and queen mothers from Ayodhya is found. But in the play they have lift Ayodhya for Rusyasunga's
sacrifice). The reason behind the absence of Vasistha and queens is to save the advisers and elders from the blame of not advising Rāma to do the needful at crisis.

(B) In the epic we do not come across any messenger from the elders with certain message containing the instruction for Rāma's behaviour towards Sītā and his administration to the subjects, but in the play 'Astāvakra' as messenger comes from Vasistha and Arundhatī and Sāntā directing Rāma to please subjects and fulfill the 'Dohada' of Sītā respectively. The reason behind the introduction of messenger from Vasistha and Arundhatī and Sāntā was to save Rāma from the blame of abandoning Sītā without proper thought.

Vasistha, as the true counsellor, directs Rāma, even staying at a distance, to please the subjects. Sāntā also accordingly promises that he wanted to please the subjects. Rāma also accordingly promises that he wanted to please the subjects at the cost of everything; even at the cost of loosing Sītā.

(C) The message from Arundhatī and Sāntā to fulfill the Dohada of Sītā provides a scope with Rāma, to abandon Sītā when she expresses her desire to revisit the forest of 'Janaśthāna' while witnessing the pic-

1. URC. -I -34
2. Ibid.-I-112
3. Ibid. -I -7
ture scroll at the palace.
(D) Bhavabhūti has changed the name of the reporter of public opinion about Śitā. In the Rāmāyana the name of the reporter is Bhadra. (1). But in the play the poet attributes the name 'Durmukha' to the reporter. The justification behind the deviation of name of the reporter may be due to Bhavabhūti's temperament that a man being instrumental for the act of Śitā's abandonment should not be a Bhadra, rather he should be a Durmukha who acted as a medium for the separation between Rāma and Śitā, the divine couple.

2. The Episode of Sambhuka:

The Rāmāyana describes the penance of Sambhuka in the north. 'Sabala' mountain in the southern direction. (2). But the play of Bhavabhūti places Sambhuka's penance in the Janasthāna of Panchavati. Sambhuka has been placed in Janasthāna of Panchavati to practise his penance for the purpose of providing Rāma with a scope to outburst his emotions. This is because Panchavati is the place where the deepest love between Rāma and Śitā has been experienced. So it is but natural for Rāma to burst into emotion at the sight of the scenes of his previous acquaintance with his wife. As the only intention of Bhavabhūti was to delineate the sentiment of pathos through the character of Rāma he wanted to introduce Janasthāna as a proper place for Rāma to shed tears.

1. Rāmāyana-VII, -43-.
2. Ibid.- VII.-75.-
Due to his act of Sītā's abandonment, his heart was filled with emotion out of repentance. So, it was only the need of a place to give a scope for Rāma's heart-felt emotion to flow in the form of tears. (1). In short the introduction of Sambhuca's episode in Jandisthāna indirectly, creates a ground for Rāma to unfold his double sided personality, i.e. Rāma as a king and Rāma as a man. The human quality of Rāma is also expressed in the same scene when he sanctions Sambhuca the obtaining of Vairājlokas (2). This is evident from the fact that he kills Sambhuca in order to perform the duty as a king, but at the same time, sanctions him emancipations as an act of compensations because he does not like to punish a man who is engaged in an auspicious act like practising penance.

3. Another important deviation from the epic story is the recognition scene found in the sixth Act of the play. In the epic Kuśa and lava were sent by Vālmīki to the aswamedha sacrifice of Rāma to recite Rāmāyana there. During the course of recitation Rāma recognises them to be sons of Sītā(3). In contrast to the epic story, the recognition of two boys is brought about

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1. URC.-III-79

2. Ibid.-II-12-

3. Ramayana-VII-93-94-95.-2-
in a gradual course in the play which is quite dramatic i.e. Act-IV to Act-VI. In the IVth Act Lava appears for the first time when Kausalyā and Janaka notice in him the resemblance of Rāma and Sītā (1). In the sixth Act Bhavabhūti has provided Rāma with an opportunity to see his son and recognise them. It is implied that while returning from Dandaka to Ayodhya, after killing Bambhukka, Rāma saw, from his aerial car, the fight between Chandraketu and Lava and immediately descended to stop the unnecessary fight. Rāma is attracted by the appearance of Lava and feels within a joy of ecstasy on seeing him. Rāma feels immeasurable joy and unbounded filial affection in the embrace of Kusa. Even though Rāma and his sons were nearer to each other for a pretty long time, there mutual recognition was kept under suspense with a view to create a dramatic effect in the mind of the audience till the last Act.

4. The most striking change Bhavabhūti has introduced in the play is the union of Rāma and Sītā. According to the epic story Rāmāyana comes along with Sītā to the court of Rāma(2). Rāma wants Sītā to give proof of her chastity, Sītā prays to mother earth to give her shelter if she has never thought of any other person ex-

1. UR8.-IV-22- वसाईत्रवन निर्माणमन न यःशवासनस्वरूपेण्यातो भुजपृक्ष्याम्। प्रतिबोधितं निभिष्ण नोजुः परातः सदृश्याम्।
   सा अवस्था निपुणम् रघु नाहुम जानिष्ठ जानिष्ठाय गुणम् निपुणं निपुणार्ज्जुम्।
   द्वारा तेन विगमी यद। चानन्यान्तः शृङ्गः न् चतुर्भुजाः।

2. Ramayana- VII-96-10-
   द्वारा विमोच्यते सर्वं प्रभुविविधिनिर्माणं।
   अनुसारः तस्मात् सत्यमणकामनायाम्।
cept Rāma(1). Her prayer is heard and a divine throne emerges out of the earth and Sīta, sitting on it, enters into the bosom of earth (2). But we see that the union of Sītā and Rāma has been materialised in the drama through the introduction of a drama inside the drama. The reasons behind this novel technique of making the union of the hero and the heroine may be the following:

1. Indian dramaturgy normally does not entertain tragic end for a drama.

2. The poet tries to depict a picture of ideal love in his drama and by this union the playwright shows the ultimate victory of true love. Through this union the playwright proves that despite inevitable hurdles and impediments it is the true and sincere love which finds a way for perpetual union after a thorough inward reformation and reconciliation. Apart from the major changes, new changes are introduced by Bhavabhūti into his play. Such as the character of Santa, who, according to the epic, was the daughter of Ramapāda (3). But according to the play she was the daughter of Dasaratha who gave her over to Ramapāda in adoption (4). Besides, in the

1. Ramayana.-VII-97-14-अजस्रोत्सवं रामने लगेत क्रियारंगमः प्रस्थितम् व निविर्यानि नवनिविर्यानि॥

2. Ibid.-VII-97.17.20-

3. Ibid.-I-9-13-नवसन्नुन्ति राजस्व- जाटवीं देवस्तानम् प्रस्थितम् व निविर्यानि नवनिविर्यानि॥

4. URC.-IV-4-नवसन्नुन्ति राजस्व- जाटवीं देवस्तानम् प्रस्थितम् व निविर्यानि नवनिविर्यानि॥

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1. "Ajāsra Utsavam Ramane lagate kriyāraṇaṁ prasṭhitam v niṇiyamānī niṇiyamānī."  
2. "Ibid. 4- VII-97. 17.20-"  
3. "Ibid.-1-9-13-"  
4. "URC.-IV-4-"
act of abandonment of Sītā we also observe that while in the epic Rāma himself asks Sītā, marking the symptoms of her pregnancy, as to which wish of her should be fulfilled whereas in the play, Arundhatī and Sīntā direct Rāma through Āstāvakrā to fulfill the wish of pregnancy 'Dohada' of Sītā.

Pātālakhanda of Padmapurāṇa:

A. The idea of bringing the sacrificial horse of Rāma, to the hermitage of Vālmīkī and it's being captured by Lava is suggested by the Pātālakhanda of Padma Purāṇa(1). But, Bhavabhūti has presented the scene in an entirely different manner. At the end of IVth Act. of the play Lava is introduced as playing with other ascetic boys and attracting elders like Janaka, Kausalyā and Arundhatī by his pleasing appearance and manner.

B. The idea of Act Vth also seems to have been suggested by Padmapurāṇa. The Padmapurāṇa presents Lava as a warrior who has destroyed the army of Rāma. Kālajit(2) the commander of the army and Satrughna(3) notice in him the resemblance of Rāma. Sumantra, The character of Chandraketu is depicted struck at Lava's resemblance with Rāma. This idea of Padmapurāṇa has been dramatized in the Vth Act of Uttararāmcharita in an absolutely

1. P.P.-54.25-

2. Ibid.-60.-13-14-

3. Ibid.-62.-3-4-
different way with artistic skill. The reciprocal intuitive inclination of Lava and Chandraketu, while fighting with each other, is really a remarkable scene of psychological delineation. Chandraketu admires Lava's valour even though the later was inimical to the former. So, through Lava's speech Bhavabhūti has presented his own criticism of Rāma.

C. Above all, the description, given by Viyādhara, of the fight between Lava and Chandraketu in the play is undoubtedly more effective and appealing than the puranic description. Long and complicated compounds and harsh letters, employed by Bhavabhūti in this description, present a loving picture of the battle field before the audience and readers by their effect of sound.

Apart from Bhavabhūti's indebtedness to the existing sources his innovation introduced in the play may not be ignored rather they deserve a special mention as follows:-

1. The picture gallery scene found in the first Act. of Uttararamacharita is one of the innovations of the poet. Bhavabhūti has introduced the scene to cheer up Sītā who is sad on the departure of the elders after Rāma's coronation. The scene hints at the early life of Rāma and thus connects this play with the earlier one the Mahāvīracharitā. Outwardly the picture gallery was meant for cherring up Sita for her depression, but the inword intention of the scene was to depict the
character of Rāma before the audience. Because the attitude of Rāma towards all characters associated with him in the past, is revealed through his feeling expressed during witnessing the picture scroll. Such as (a) his attitude towards the integrity of Sītā is revealed when he gets enraged at Lakshman's reference to the fire ordeal, (b) his attitude towards Parasurāma, who was absolutely enmical to not only Rāma but also to Kṣayati-riya race as a whole, is revealed when he salutes the Brāhmin hero and asks Lakshman to proceed to the next picture avoiding the discussion of defeat of Parsurāma, the great hero. This incident depicts the modesty of Rāma because he does not like to be praised at the cost of denigration of any such personage like Parasurāma, (c) Rāma's attitude towards Kaikeyē has been revealed when he does not allow any one present, while witnessing the picture scroll, to pass any adverse remark on the character of Kaikeyē, because Rāma probably believes in the concept of 'Mother and Motherland are superior to heaven' (2).

Besides, the introduction of picture gallery provides a scope with Rāma to abandon Sītā when she expressed her sincere desire to revisit the 'Tapavāna' while witnessing this scroll.

1. URC.-I-13-

2. Ramayana.
2. The introduction of 'Chhāyā Sītā' (Sītā in the form of a shadow) is certainly an innovation of Bhavabhūti. Though it is a supernatural element it has its own justification for dramatic situation. The invisible presence of Sītā has been introduced for reviving Rāma, through her touch, when he (Rāma) fainted out of excessive grief for the act of abandonment of Sītā. Bhavabhūti might have derived the idea of presenting a character in the form of a shadow from VIth Act of Abhijnānasākuntalam of Kālidāsa, where the character of Sānumati has been presented in this manner, but his introduction of Chhāyā Sītā in this play must be considered as a marvellous dramatic technique.

Every Act of the play has its own significance in the play. Act III has a unique place in the play which rouses a pathetic sentiment due to Rāma's lamentation at 'Janasthānā. But scholar like Dwijendra Lal Roy says that Act. II, III, IV, V, and VI only describe Rāma's visit to Panchavati, the meeting of Chhāyā Sītā, the introduction of Lava, Janaka, Kausalyā and Arunāhatī; the fight between Lava and Chandraketu and recitation of Rāmāyana by Kusa do not help in the Union of Rāma and Sītā which is the main aim of the play and therefore they can be avoided(1). But the statement given

by Dwijendralal Ray is not sound. If a thorough analysis is made on the play it may be evident that each of the above acts plays a significant role for the gradual development towards the union of Rāma and Sītā which may be illustrated as follows:

(a) Act II hints at the self-condemnation of Rāma and his deep-rooted love for Sītā.
(b) Act III provides Sītā with a chance to become an eye witness to the revelation of the grief of Rāma, which prepares Sītā psychologically for her reunion with Rāma.
(c) Act IV describes Janaka's criticism on the act of Rāma. This Act also introduces Lava who serves as a means of the reunion between Rāma and Sītā.
(d) Act V presents a scene which is a step towards the recognition of Lava where Chandraketu and Sumantra are depicted to have been attracted by the resemblance of Lava to Rāma.
(e) The VI Act also presents an interlude which brings in a natural way Rāma to the scene of battle. In this Act Rāma, on the basis of various grounds recognizes Lava and Kusa to be his sons. This Act again helps in bringing Rāma to the hermitage of Vālmīki where a play was to be staged as a means of the reunion of Rāma and Sītā.

So, giving prime importance to the picture gallery, it may be unhesitatingly deduced that all the acts of the play are indispensable from the dramatic point of view. In some fields of description, Bhavabhūti might be associated with the lapse of lack of sense of propriety for his natural and spontaneous flow of expres-
sion, but literary blemish like superfluity and redundancy should not be associated with Bhavabhūti, one of the greatest playwrights of Sanskrit literature.