The thesis "Eco-Aesthetic Approach to Kālidāsa's Poetry" is divided into five chapters. The first chapter 'Ecology and Eco-Aesthetic Criticism: an Introduction' deals with the basic concepts of ecology and eco-aesthetic criticism. Eco-aesthetics the study of the beauty of earth with all its principles is relatively a new field of aesthetics. Applied to criticism, it is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment. In this chapter the concept of eco-system, the branches of ecology, importance of bio-diversity, man's relation to nature, problems of use and abuse of Nature, pollution, deforestation, the life of Tribal people and the destruction of natural environment, etc., are discussed.

The 2nd chapter titled 'The Treatment of nature in ancient Literature; Eco-Aesthetic Concerns' examined briefly how the ancient sages and poets looked upon the nature and lived with the nature acknowledging its importance. The intimate relationship between man and nature, between the elements of nature and living-beings, is reflected in the Vedas, Itihāsas and Purāṇas. In Vedas ecological ideas are illustrated by religion and mythology. Many Vedic hymns mythologies the natural forces. The
Purāṇas also make comprehensive attempts to place humanity in a meaningful position in relation to the mythical universe and cosmology depicted in them. The Itihāsas Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata give importance to nature. In Rāmāyaṇa, Rāma who lived in the forest for a long time with his wife had a strong intimacy and affection with the nature surrounding him. Vālmīki was a forest-saint and Sītā was the daughter of earth. In Mahābhārata the Pāṇḍavas thought that the forest was their rightful resource and it existed to fulfill their needs. Compared to Mahābhārata, Rāmāyaṇa presents life more in harmony with nature.

The 3rd Chapter is titled as 'Eco-Aesthetic Elements in Kālidāsa’s Kāvyas’ examines Kālidāsa’s two Mahākāvyas- Raghuvamśa and Kumārasamītha. In addition his two Khaṇḍakāvyas namely Ritusamhāra and Meghadūta are also dealt with nature is the theme of his Khaṇḍakāvyas. In Ritusamhāra, the presence of the six seasons namely Grīṣma, Varṣa, Śarad, Hemanta, Śiśira and Vasanta on earth and their influence on humans and other living-beings has been described. The change of seasons and transformation of elements in nature initiates peculiar reactions, links, life-styles and behaviour patterns in the living being. Kālidāsa makes diversity of nature a subject of his special study
and gives vivid pictures of life in harmony with nature, adjusting to heat and cold, etc., throughout the cycle of seasons.

In *Meghadūta* beautiful landscape, plants, animals and human life related to them are described. In this poem everything in nature is endowed with life. The cloud messenger travels from central India to Himālaya and the change in nature and human beings that the rain causes is depicted by Kālidāsa using a unique poetic form.

In the opening part of *Raghuvaṃśa*, Kālidāsa presents the journey of king Dilīpa and his wife Sudakṣiṇā to the forest. Their life in the Himalayan forest at the hermitage of Vasiṣṭa looking after the cow Nandinī gives enough scope for Kālidāsa to create pictures of natural life in the forest. Dilīpa learns the lessons of humility and unselfish service to the living-beings. He is ready to sacrifice his own life to protect the helpless cow from the clutches of a lion. Here a Devatāru tree is described which is loved by Śiva as his own son Skanda himself. Pārvatī gives it water with her own hands. Trees and plants are treated by Kālidāsa’s gods and goddesses as their own sons/daughters. After worshipping the cow, King Dilīpa grazes her daily in the valleys of Himālaya. The king follows her wherever she went as a shadow. In the forest near the hermitage of Vasiṣṭa, the strong animals did not oppress the weak. The wilderness is
full of different creatures. Holes of bamboos when filled with air produce sweet music. Deers squat on green meadows near the hermitage. This world is free without fear and hindrance. Different rivers Śona, Gaṅgā, Tamasā are also mentioned in it.

In RV, Kālidāsa portrays many life situations, which reveals his attitudes towards nature and the importance of ecology, which gives perfection to life. Man studies great things from nature; co-existence, co-operation, mutual assistance, harmony etc... are some of the principles that man learns from the eco-systems in natural surroundings. Earth is a common abode for endless living beings. Such ideas are found in some of the verses of Raghuvamśa. The king Dilīpa is compared to Sun that forms rain clouds and distributes water which is needed for the existence of life on earth. The king was like a Sun in his collection and distribution of wealth around people for their prosperous life. This reveals that Kālidāsa was aware of the existence of the principles of interdependence, co-operation and ethics of mutual assistance (Paropakāra) in nature and society.

Kumārasaṃbhava opens with a description of the mountain Himālaya which personifies has all the greatness and sublimity of nature. The description of the beauty of his daughter Pārvatī also contains several
aesthetic images taken from nature. The identification of Pārvatī with the
Himalayan spring time, the penance of Pārvatī in different seasons,
changes occurring to her body and the portrayal of the surrounding
nature, etc., are impressive. Even though she was doing severe penance,
she watered the plants near the hermitage by her own hands. After her
marriage with Śiva life's happiness prevails in mount Gandhamādana; the
dancing of peacocks, sunset, sunrise, plants and flowers, etc., are
described very beautifully.

KS gives more importance to nature, than Raghuvamśa because
the story happens on the premises of Himālaya mountain. In KS,
Kālidāsa's approach to nature exhibits given certain specialities. Kālidāsa
is more mythical and imaginative, in his descriptions and he is not
contented with giving more objective descriptions of natural phenomena.
Kālidāsa does not try to separate the object of description from its natural
environment. The poet tries to convey the beauty of Himālayas to the
readers through brilliant pictures of the landscape and organic life of the
Himālaya forest. The changes of the forest environment during the sunset
and the behaviour of forest animals etc. are keenly observed and
beautifully portrayed.
In the fourth chapter titled as 'Eco-Aesthetic Elements in Kālidāsa's Nāṭakās', Kālidāsa's three dramas: Vikramorvaśīya Mālavikāgnimitra and Abhijñānaśākuntalā are examined in the light of eco-aesthetic ideas.

In Vikramorvaśīya Kālidāsa portrays the love between king Purūravas and the heavenly apsaras Urvaśī. Urvaśī is attracted by the earthly king Purūravas and she comes down to the earth to live with him. Nature becomes an integral part of their love. Kālidāsa describes the beauty of Himālayan landscapes during the love-tour of the king and Urvaśī. The King misses Urvaśī who is turned to a creeper by curse as she enter to a forbidden forest. The king searches for her everywhere in the state of madness addressing all the living and non-living things and asking them to show his Urvaśī. Here some sort of eco-spirituality is found in the unity of man, divine and nature. Much time he feels one with the nature and speaks to the objects of nature. Urvaśī when appearing on earth does not use her divine powers so that she can suffer the pains of Love. In the Fourth act of the play, the relations of nature are given a detailed treatment.

The drama Mālavikāgnimitra tells the story of love between king Agnimitra and Mālavikā, originally a princess but living as a dancing girl of his harem. Unlike Abhijñānaśākuntalā and Vikramorvaśīya this drama is
devoid of forest scenes. Instead most of the action takes place in the palace and in the garden near the palace. The organic nature and innocent love which Kālidāsa is always interested to present, is substituted by the Urban taste for relaxing in artificial gardens and depicting a courtly romance. The plants of the royal garden are intimately related to the King and the queen. The flowerless Aśoka tree bursts with flowers by the soft touch of the feet of Mālavikā the most beautiful girl of the palace. The spring season arrives like a girl who is ready to receive her lover showing all the beauties of youth. In this play the protection of plants of garden and their timely nourishment are also given importance. Here also nature is not indifferent to human beings. It reflects the mental conditions of man. It is influenced by love and care and it also takes part in the well-being of man.

Abhijñānaśākuntalā deals with the love story between Duṣyanta, the king of the city of Hastinapura and Śākuntalā, a virgin girl of āśrama of sage Kaṇva. The first four acts of the drama deals with the incidents that take place in the Kaṇva āśrama situated on the Himālayas. Śākuntalā and her friends Anasūyā and Priyamvadā are brought up as daughters of nature. They have real sisterly affection towards the plants, animals, birds and all other living-beings. The inmates of āśrama are full of love and
compassion the qualities that are shared by all the living-beings inhabited in the āśrama.

In the fourth act Śakuntalā prepares to go to his husband's palace in the city. Then she asks permission of all the inmates, and all living-beings including animals, birds, plants and creepers. All the sages and the deities of nature bid farewell to her and give her blessings and offer gifts. Sahakāra, Dīrghāpāṅga, Vanajyotsnā, Navamālika, etc., shows how human, animals and plants are chemically blended in the Abhijñānaśākuntalā. This emotional blending is essential for a peaceful existence of life on the earth.

In Abhijñānaśākuntalā Duśyanta hunts in the wilderness. He tries to conquer the wilderness by his strength, but is stopped from killing animals by the hermits. From the wild forest he enters into a tapovana which is a forest for penance. The wilderness is extreme in its form and contents but tapovana is having a tamed, calm and settled environment. The nature in tapovana is beautiful, pure and without any conflict. This area of forest is shared by sages and the animals and birds of the forest, which are loved and cared by the dwellers of the hermitage. The physical power of the king or other human being is irrelevant in the āśrama, which is a place for meditation and other spiritual practice. The environment of
āśrama is filled with non-violence, love and compassion. Nature is not left alone in the tapovana. It is loved and seen as the part of the community life practiced by the hermits. The outburst of natural and raw instincts and emotions if uncontrolled often cause harm to the harmonious flow of life. In the āśrama the wilderness is without its dark sides. The physical or material features are always directed by spirituality. It gives balance and rhythm of life to the tapovana.

In the fifth chapter titled as ‘Kālidāsa’s Concept of Nature: Ecological Inclinations’ we have tried to understand whether Kālidāsa’s view of nature is influenced by the traditional literature and philosophy of Vedas, Upaniṣads and Purāṇas. Each natural phenomenon is interpreted and related to human life weaving mythological stories around it. The elements of nature is considered as the physical form of the supreme deity Śiva. Thus nature is pervaded by the principle of life energy. The aspects of anthropomorphism and pantheism are other features of Kālidāsa’s works that relates human beings and his environment. Kālidāsa believes that life on earth is precious and life becomes fruitful when it joins with nature. In these aspects Kālidāsa is influenced by the Śaiva Philosophy.

Kālidāsa’s poetry shows that the emotional and material life of human beings are enriched if his approach to nature is positive. Due to
the traditional or pagan concept of nature Kālidāsa believe that nature is full of life. Instead of harming nature for the sake of human satisfaction he advocates that love is the unifying force of all life in the universe. His anthropomorphism and the concept of pantheism could be compared with some of the concepts of deep ecology and the theory that earth itself is a living theory. Respect for nature and the ideal of peaceful co-existence of living beings are evident in Kālidāsa's poetry. According to Kālidāsa, nature is a continuous process and everything stands related with one another. This propagates the concept of togetherness of man and nature. Further Kālidāsa's works shows that many different approaches are possible towards nature. Forest is a place for hunting but the poet does not favour violence caused by humans as in the case of Daśaratha who is cursed by his assassination of an innocent man during hunting. He believes also in the dictum of Manu that all trees and plants are full of consciousness and they do have the feelings of pleasure and pain. Such a poet could not advocate violence and exploitation towards nature. Moreover the principles of ahimsā and restrain were considered as in high esteem in his work. Like all other human beings man also is a child of nature. Man according to Kālidāsa should always aspire for the status of a peace-loving tapasvin who lives in the forest hermitage controlling his
senses but always full of compassion towards life without selfish involvement. For an ordinary man of today this ideal is difficult to attain but it urges him that, the restrain of mans greed may stop the man-made disasters on nature. Gandhiji rightly observes that human greed is the root cause of exploitation by the imperialism and industrialism, which leads to the depletion of resources. Kālidāsa is not against the human pleasures and the aesthetic values but he always relates them with mental control and balanced consummation. Through his delineation of life tapovana Kālidāsa underlines the value of love, the values of love compassion and non-violence which enables man to lead a life in harmony with nature.

Kālidāsa's works, when read within the context of modern ecological disasters give us valuable insights about the relation between man and nature. He teaches us that nature is not an object for human exploitation but a lovable interactive and caring being. He also shows the great pleasure that we attain by a proper harmonious life with nature. Thus Kālidāsa’s poetry enables a modern man who lives in a dying world how to survive on earth with compassion towards nature and its living beings.
Kālidāsa is one of the great souls who made Indian culture what it is. In the shaping of Indian culture and making it a unique one in the world, the properties of 'nature' of India has played an important role. The diverse elements of culture are shaped by the forests, mountains, sea, rivers, lakes, climate, seasons, form of agriculture, etc., for example, spirituality flows from the cool Himālayan hermitages. The poetry of Kālidāsa contains all these components of culture. Through the description of images of touch, smell, sight, taste and hearing, the Kāvyas and Nāṭakas of Kālidāsa establish aesthetic contact with nature. Kālidāsa's poetry has the ability to suggest the real beauty of nature in its totality, which creates peace and happiness in the minds of readers.

Kālidāsa links man's body and emotions with nature. He worships mother nature and this aspect is revealed through his mythical narration of nature. He seeks enormous pleasure from clear springs, gentle breeze and the green woods but at the same time is interested in royal gardens, etc., in the cities.

For Kālidāsa nature is full of life, so he does not describe nature's objects as non-living things. In his poetic world all live obeying the rules of nature. But some great sages try to rise above the rules of nature by spiritual practices. This spirituality controls the violent aspects of nature.
and the nature becomes sublimated or divine. Kālidāsa gives great importance for living in harmony with nature. Therefore his Kāvyas and Nāṭakas portray the soft and refined aspects of nature and avoid the horrible aspects. Kālidāsa is not against man’s using of natural resources to fulfill his needs in a controlled manner. But he always cautions against the breaking of nature for selfish needs.

Kālidāsa describes nature taking into account of the several shades of relationship between the living beings and depicting the mode of life of the concerned beings within a suitable natural network of relations. He focuses man’s interactions with nature and the physical and mental reactions caused by the natural phenomena on human beings in a positive manner.

Kālidāsa’s poetic world is constituted by humans and other living beings including plants and animals that commonly share a world of feelings together. Celestial or mythical beings also take part in this. Nature to him is a ceaseless process of mutual relationships, diversity and interdependence. The basic laws of life is relevant to all life forms on earth. The poet illustrates this with the technique of personification of nature. He imagines a hidden sprit or soul existing in all beings in addition to their material body. He attributes a life story to the otherwise inert
material. In this story there are no boundary lines between life forms and nature. The internal being is positively united with the external and the beauty of an individual is compared and valued within the context of the cosmic beauty. About Pārvatī, Kālidāsa concludes:

ब्रह्म, देवसम्पन्न यथाप्रदेशं विनिवेशितेन

सा निर्मिता विभव्यज्ञा प्रयज्ञादेवस्तथा सौन्दर्याविद्यक्षयेः [KS. I. 42]

Brahma, the creator of Universe was given birth to her by arranging all the standards of comparison in her proper places with desire to see all of them in a single place.