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# Tenets of *Nāṭyaśāstra* on *Abhijnānaśākuntalam*

Churamoni Kandel

Department of English, Vinuwasini Sanskrit Vidyapeeth (Campus), Pokhara

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**Corresponding Author** : Churamoni Kandel, **Email** : [churamoni39@gmail.com](mailto:churamoni39@gmail.com)

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### Abstract

*This paper examines and unveils the tenets of Nāṭyaśāstra postulated by Bharatmuni in Kālidāsa's play, Abhijnānaśākuntalam. Kālidāsa invokes Lord Śiva through his eight embodied forms – water, fire, priest, the time setting sun and moon, earth, sky and air. This is the pattern of Nāndī (benediction) as developed by Bharatmuni. The play also implements Bharatavākya as a concluding part of the play where Duśyanta extends wishes for the welfare of all. The dramatist divides the play in seven acts which is the parameters of Anka proclaimed in Nāṭyaśāstra. He exploits the paradigm of Prāsangika, which is known as the sub plot of the play. It revolves around the characters like Anasūyā, Priyamvadā, Mātali, Menakā, and so on. Likewise, there are five Sandhis (junctures) in the play like Mukha, Pratimukha, Grava, Vimarśa and Nirvahana. The eight rasas (sentiments) like Sringāra, Hāsya, Karunā, Raudra, Vira, Bhayānaka, Bibhatsa, and Adbhuta consolidate the essence of the play. All these tenets are so integrated in the play that they elevate the readers carrying them to the plenum of aesthetic pleasure. This play, in this regard, becomes the perfect exemplification by blending the tenets of Nāṭyaśāstra as propounded by Bharatmuni. The paper applies the dynamics of qualitative approach, applying the interpretive design to expose the dynamics of Nāṭyaśāstra.*

**Keywords:** *Abhijnānaśākuntalam*, dramaturgy, *nātaka*, *Nāṭyaśāstra*, tenets



## Introduction

This article explores the tenets of *Nāṭyaśāstra* (*NŚ*) on *Abhijnānaśākuntalam* (*AS*). Kālidāsa employs them in his play to give a dramatic taste to his audiences. This researcher attempts to find whether the playwright employs those tenets as per Bharatmuni's *NŚ*. *Nāṭya* means 'theatre' and *śāstra* means 'science'. The title literally means 'dramatic science'. It is a fundamental text for the *nāṭaka*. It is a compilation of work by numerous sages but the tradition offers its authority to sage Bharatamuni. He analyzes the systematic arrangement of theories and practices in the art of drama. It comprises verses and chapters. A Board of Scholars asserts:

*NŚ* of Bharatmuni contains about five thousand six hundred verses. There is a shorter version with a reduction of nearly two hundred verses. Both the recensions possess great antiquity; which one is the earlier we cannot say for certain. The problem of the relationship between different recensions of all ancient works cannot be solved this way or that way in an offhand manner. The very fact that the longer recension has more verses need not make us think that there are interpolations. (ix-x)

*NŚ* contains thirty-six chapters and five thousand six hundred verses. They highlight the aspects of a drama like plot construction, stage setting, characterization, dialogue, song and dance performances. Recensions of long or short verses hardly bring any effect in its contents or meaning. *NŚ* analyzes the secrecy of its composition to noble soled sages, with its methodology of narratives, symbols and dialogues. Rājan asserts, "*NŚ* claims a divine origin of itself. It styles itself as a fifth *Veda*" (29). The background of *NŚ* is framed in a situation where in the lead by Indra, *Devas* submit to *Pitāmaha* (Brahmā) to create something to have a pastime, *Driśyakāvya* (visual as well as auditory). To instruct and entertain the *Sūdras* and women, *Brahmā*, the creator of the fifth *Veda* has borrowed elements from all the four *Vedas* to create the new fifth *Veda* known as *Nāṭyaveda*. To accomplish his task he takes the elements of *Pāthyam* (recitation) from the *Rigveda*, *Gītam* (music) from the *Sāmaveda*, *Abhinayas* (gestural representation) from the *Yajurveda*, and *Rasas* (sentiments) from the *Atharvaveda*. He propounds the three *Vṛttis* (dramatic style) viz. *Bhāratī* (verbal utterance), *Sāttvatī* (grand conception of the mind) and *Ārabhatī* (vigorous physical activity).

Kālidāsa's *AS* is popularly known as *Śakuntalā*, after its heroine's name. As per *NŚ*, it is an *nāṭaka* in seven acts. The common elements of *nāṭaka* comprise of "Dance, gesture, music, poetry, costume, masks and decoration" (Gupt 12). The play contains all these elements. It further demonstrates emotional reactions of legendary heroes or heroines. Kale adduces,

"this single play has so much of the poet's genius displayed in it that we need not to go his other works to establish the superiority of Kālidāsa's muse" (52). It employs the heroic or the erotic or a combination of these two major *rasas* (sentiments), which is termed broadly as 'heroic romance'. Edwin Gerow terms *Śakuntalā* "the *nātaka* par excellence" (Miller 60). The language, comparisons, poetical forms, expressions, style, etc. make it a canonical work of art. This work of antiquity attracted the critical insights and commentaries since the day of its translations. William Jones translated it in English in 1789 A.D. and later on it got it translated in German in 1792. Ryder finds it "enthusiastically received in Europe, and most warmly by the greatest living poet of Europe" (xv-xvi). He hints at Goethe. Kriśnamoorthy analyzes the play as *kavyesu nātakam ramyam/tatra ramyam sakuntala* (66). In other words, 'among literary genres the drama is the most charming and among dramas *the Śakuntalā* is especially charming'. Goethe makes *Nāndī* (benediction) a model for his prologue in *Faust*, a tragic play of the eighteenth century. He analyzes *AS* as:

If you want the bloom of youth and fruit of later years,  
If you want what enchants, fulfills, and nourishes,  
If you want heaven and earth contained in one name-  
I say *Śakuntalā* and all is spoken (Miller vi)

Goethe explores the beauty of the play in its imagery, in the complexity of its structure, and the unity of art and religion on which it is based. He finds it a combination of youth, old age, heaven, and earth in one place.

The date of creation of *NS* is a question of debate amongst scholars. Bhattarāi finds its creation "before the *Purānas* and the *Rāmāyana*" (6). If it was created after it, it would be called *Nātyapurāna*, and not *Nātyaveda*. Keith finds its creation not of great antiquity. He asserts, "Its compilation cannot be before the third century B.C." (13). Gerow finds it "roughly contemporaneous with Kālidāsa" (Miller 42). Chandra Rājan adduces, "it seems more plausible that a critic and theorist would draw upon the work of a great writer to formulate his theories" (29). These instances help this researcher to assume the creation of *NS* contemporary to Kālidāsa. Various critics have interpreted the play in various ways. Some of them highlighted its time and context while others noted about its aesthetic value. However, the play has been explored and examined from the point of view of its integrative quality that it binds with all the tenets and parameters of *NS* garnished by Bharatmuni. This is one of the fundamental issues that demand a fresh revisiting. This is the point that this study intends to expose by answering the following research questions:

- (a) What are the tenets of *NS* that Kālidāsa employs in his *AS*?
- (b) How do these tenets justify the play, *AS*?

This paper examines these aspects with the lens of Bharatmuni's *NS*. It uses the tenets of *NS* like *nāndī*, *Bharatavākya* and so on to interpret the tenets of *NS* in *AS*. To meet its objectives, it implements the qualitative approach to research. Kālidāsa's *AS* becomes the source of primary concepts. Book reviews, commentaries and other related online resources have been considered as the supplementary resources to prove the claim.

### ***Nāndī and Bharatavākya***

Bharatmuni's *NS* explores the benediction and prologue as introductory items of *AS*. It begins with *nāndī* (benediction). It is a kind of opening prayer consisting of several lines of verse that acknowledge the divine authority over the space and time. Kālidāsa's conception of *Śiva*'s creative mystery is to identify Him with *prakṛiti* (Nature). His invocation to Him is examined in these lines:

*Yā shrīti: straśturādhā vahati vidhihutam yā haviryā cha hotri*  
*Ye devye kālam vidhatta: śrutiviśyegunā yā isthitā vyāpya viswom*  
*Yāmāhu: sarvabijaprakṛitirīti yeyā prānina: prānavanta:*  
*Pratyechhabhi: prapannastanuviravatu vastābhirastābhirīś: (AS, Act I)*  
'Eight forms has Śiva, lord of all and king:  
And these are water, first created thing;  
And fire, which speeds the sacrifice begun;  
The all-embracing ether, path of sound;  
The earth, wherein all seeds of life are found;  
And air, the breath of life: may he draw near,  
Revealed in these, and bless those gathered here.' (Ryder 3)

The worshipping of *Śiva* for its eight manifest forms like water, fire, priest, moon, sun, ether, earth, and air; demonstrates how Kālidāsa uses images of nature. Barbara Stoler Miller finds the working of nature not merely as a static landscape but as a dynamic force, with *Śiva* as an example of unity. He asserts:

Kālidāsa's poetry and drama are influenced by *Śiva*'s existence. Nature functions not as a setting or allegorical landscape but as a dynamic surface on which the unmanifest cosmic unity plays. This unity is *Śiva*; his creative nature is expressed through the eight essential principles of empirical existence; the elements, (water, ether, earth, air, fire) the sun and the moon, and the ritual sacrifice, who is integrated into this cosmic system. In

the sustained interplay of these basic constituents of nature, the creation and destruction of life occur. Śiva is present in each aspect of life and fulfills all the functions that the eight forms collectively perform. (7)

Ryder examines *nāndī* (benediction) as an address to Śiva, having his eight *Rudras* (forms), "eight forms have Śiva" (3). These constitute water, fire, priest, moon, sun, sky, earth, and air. These elements possess eight different qualities. A prologue follows *nāndī* where stage manager and an actress introduce the title of the play, its theme, in the form of a conversation. These rituals set the tone for the opening scene and serve as a bridge between the audience and the world of the play. The performance of the play ends with the final speech of Duśyanta, *Bharatavākya* (wishes) wishing welfare of all:

*Pravartatām prakritihitāya pārthiva*  
*Sarasvotī śrutamahatām mahīyatām*  
*Mamāpi cha chhyepayatu nīlahita*  
*Punarbhavam pariḡataśaktirātmabhū: (AŚ, Act VII)*  
 'May kingship benefit the land,  
 And wisdom grow in scholars' band;  
 May Shiva see my faith on earth  
 And make me free of all rebirth.' (Ryder 94)

Kālidāsa uses prologue and epilogue to break the illusion and incorporate the audience into the event. The sense of make-belief, as in child's play, pervades the experience so that nobody ever quite forgets that the play is an imaginative effort to create a fictitious reality.

### **Anka**

NŚ analyses *Anka* (Act) as the smallest unit of composition. It portrays the change in the hero's basic situation and thus causes the plot to develop. It is made up of a series of incidents directly related to the hero, heroine, or a person of similar importance and not of the minor characters. A Board of Scholars asserts, "There shall be more than five and less than ten *Ankas* in an *Nātaka* and a *Prakarana*" (276). Kālidāsa's *AŚ* contains seven Acts. The first three Acts focus on minor events in the lives of the chief characters. Duśyanta falls in love with Śakuntalā at first sight. They make a secret marriage. He goes off to attain his kingship's duties, leaving her pregnant. He promises her to fetch her to his kingdom soon. The remaining four Acts mentions the major events in the play, beginning with Act IV. Duśyanta's long absence compels Śakuntalā to march to Hastinapur, to get united with him. However, Durvāsa's curse falls upon her. The king fails to recognize her as his wife. However, they have their reunion in

Act VII, in Mārīcha's hermitage. Thus, Kālidāsa divides his play into Acts to analyze the subtle and delicate human emotions of the central characters.

### ***Ādhikārika* (plot) and *prāsaṅgika* (sub plot)**

Sanskrit *nāṭaka* draws 'plot' as one of the components, either from the great narrations, popular tales or from the imagination of the poet. The objective of the 'plot' is to show the hero struggling for and finally attaining the object of his desire. Subsidiary incidents may contribute to this aim but should not divert attention from it. Sanskrit drama has *ādhikārika* (plot) and *prāsaṅgika* (sub plot). The *ādhikārika* concerns with the main characters that are the hero and the heroine. The *prāsaṅgika* concerns with the subsidiary characters other than the hero and heroine. There are three elements requisite for the development of the plot. These are *beeja* or the seed, *bindu* or the drop and *kārya* or the final issue. The plot employs scenes of introduction in the play for events to be reported. For instance, Act III of *AŚ* introduces *Viśkamvaka* (prelude). A pupil enters with sacred grass and asserts:

*kā kathā bānsandhāne jyāśabdenaiva durata:  
hunkāreṇaeva dhanuśa: hi vighnānapohati (AŚ, Act III)*

'He does not need to bend the bow;  
For every evil thing,  
Awaiting not the arrow, flees  
From the twanging of the string' (Ryder 26)

The pupil informs the audiences Duśyanta's power to keep away evil forces from the hermitage. The prelude implies his staying at the hermitage. Similarly, in Act VI, *Praveśaka* (an introductory scene) introduces an event to take place next in the scene, *Tat:pravishakti nāgrīk:Śyam: pashchadwondha purūshamdāye rachhchhinaucha (AŚ, Act VI)*. In other words, 'Enter the chief of police, two policemen, and a man with his hands bound behind his back' (Ryder 63). The scene demonstrates a law of theft prevailing in the state. Keith adduces, "what occurs next in the play gives the episode of the fisherman and the police" (32). The episode portrays a reminder to the king through a signet ring, his love with Śakuntalā in the past.

*NŚ* prescribes five conditions/stages in the development of the action in the plot. These are observed in *AŚ*. Duśyanta's motive /desire of seeing and knowing about Śakuntalā in Act I is the *ārambha* / beginning. His objective is to wed Śakuntalā. His eagerness to find some device to meet her again to express his love in Act II and III is the 'effort'. He is confident of winning her in love. Durvāsas' curse on Śakuntalā, which is lessened with the aid of her friends, and hence, a possibility of reunion of the lovers in Act IV, is assured if only a difficulty

is overcome. The loss of ring and repudiation of her by the king, in Act V, is the obstruction for the reunion. The recovery of the signet ring and Duśyanta's restoring of his memory in Act VI is the certainty of the lovers for their reunion. The object is attained in Act VII, when lovers meet at Hem-kūta. This is the *phalagama* (the attainment of the fruit). Mātali adduces, *distayā dharmapatnisamāgamena putramukhadarśanen chāyusmān vardhate* (*AŚ*, Act VII). In other words, 'I congratulate the long-lived one on reunion with his lawful wife, and on seeing the face of his son' (Devadhar 237). Duśyanta meets Śakuntalā as well as his son. It is the reunion of the separated lovers. Thus, it is the fruit of their separation.

### **Sandhis (junctures)**

Kālidāsa applies five *sandhis* (junctures) of *NŚ* in *AŚ*. These comprise of the *Mukha* (mouth) of the play, where Duśyanta has a passion for Śakuntalā; *Pratimukha* (the reflection of the mouth) when he confesses his love of her to Vidūsaka; the *Garva* (womb) where lovers are separated; *Vimarśa* (confrontation) where repudiation of her by him leads her to withdrawal to heaven; and *Nirvahana* (conclusion) where lovers get united. Kālidāsa employs a device of *Antarasandhis* in the play.

*NŚ* analyzes the events of an *Anka* (Act) to take place in the course of a single day. But a Sanskrit play reports some events which take longer such as battles, through a clever device. The rules for establishing and changing locations in it are flexible. An Act might begin in one spot and simply by performing a symbolic movement, such as by walking around, the actors indicate that they have moved to another location. In *AŚ*, the king and his charioteer travel in the sky on a magic chariot, in pursuit of a deer. The description of the landscape below by the actors during their chase helps the spectators to imagine the rapid change of places in the play. A Board of Scholars adduces:

In the Indian Dramas there is no undue restriction on the length of the period that extends between the events in the beginning and those in the end, except of course the stipulation that longer periods should be indicated through the interludes such as *Praveśaka*, *Viśkambha*, etc. (xvii)

There is no restriction as to the place also where the events should take place. The whole action of *AŚ* is spread over a period of six years. Tagore asserts, " *AŚ* spans the journey from the early union of the first Act, earthly, various, full of changing beauties to the final union in a celestial forest retreat, full of eternal joy" (qtd. in Chaudhary 238). The setting of the play vary according to actions occur. The first four Acts are laid at the hermitage, known as 'green world of nature', at the foot of the Himālayas. The next two Acts occur at Hastināpur, in the world of

Duśyanta's palace. The final Act occurs at Hema-kūta Mountain, in the hermitage of Mārīcha and Aditi, which is inaccessible to ordinary mortals.

### Characterization in *AŚ*

*AŚ* analyzes characterization as per the prescription of it in *NŚ*. They are just, powerful, handsome, benevolent, beautiful, virtuous, witty, proverbially hungry clown-companion, trusted and loyal, charming and witty, etc. The *Nāyaka* (hero) of the play, Duśyanta is *dhirodatta*, young, handsome, majestic, polite, noble, and dutiful and a polygamous king. The *Nāyikā* (heroine) of the play, Śakuntalā is daughter of the sage Viśwamitra and celestial nymph, Menakā. Rājan adduces, "she belongs to two worlds, sharing in the qualities of her parents who belonged to two worlds" (49). She is firstly fed by *Śakunta* birds. In Sanskrit, the term *Śakuna* means the name of a bird. *Śakunta* is plural form of *Śakuna*. *Śakuntalā* is the derivative from *Śakuna* and its meaning is "one who is brought up by birds" (Pāndey 1247). Sage Kanva adopts her, later. He brings her up in the environment of the hermitage.

*Vidūsaka* (clown) in Sanskrit plays shows his talents by manipulating the king's love affairs, and bring it to a conclusion. He is traditionally a privileged jester, who belongs to the world of the court. Rājan asserts, "apart from the aged chamberlain, he is the only male permitted entry into the inner and private apartments of the palace" (100). Mādhavya in *AŚ* is not only the jester but is equally the king's companion. He acts as a surrogate son in the Queen mother's rites, to ensure the succession. He has seen Śakuntalā only in the portrait done by Duśyanta.

Kanva is the foster-father of Śakuntalā. He has "divine insight" (Ryder 93). He goes to Somatirtha to avoid the possible dangers she may come across in near future. He moves to tears at the departure from her. Anasuyā and Priyamvadā are her two friends with whom she has grown up in the hermitage. They act as intermediate in seeking Duśyanta's love for her. Durvāsas is an irascible sage who curses Śakuntalā for a small girlish fault. Śārngarava, Śāradavata, Gautamī, etc. are other characters in the play to assist to the major characters.

### Language and Diction

Kālidāsa employs 'language' and 'diction' in *AŚ* as per the tenets of Sanskrit dramaturgy. It contains over two hundred verses, uttered mostly by major characters. He makes use of the Sanskrit language for the king, the sages, and the ministers, generals to the elite and educated. Keith asserts, "Kālidāsa represents the highest pitch of elegance attained in Sanskrit style of the elevated *kāvya* character" (100). Soldiers, merchants, townspeople, women, etc. are



made to speak a variety of colloquial languages known as Prākritis. Miller adduces, "with the exception of the buffoon and other comic characters, like the policemen, the male characters in Kālidāsa's play generally speak Sanskrit" (26). Characters occupy the stage together, carry on conversations, and often speak different languages. Therefore, it appeals diverse audience. The dialogue of *AŚ* consists of both the verse and prose. Within a single, unified speech, a character may slip out of prose and into verse, and back into prose several times.

### **Supernaturalism in *AŚ***

*AŚ* explores supernatural elements in its every Act. Dramatic romances incorporate supernatural beings, improbability of actions, magic or miracles and fairy tale elements. Its success "inevitably requires the assistance of miraculous events or supernatural powers" (Scholes 792). The world of the play is the world of enchantment. Duśyanta is not only a king but equally the friend of God Indra, who ascends to heaven frequently for his aid, to fight against the demons. Mātali as a charioteer of God Indra, descends to the earth to fetch Duśyanta to heaven. He equally fights with the earthly demons to protect the hermitage of ascetics. Menakā descends to the earth to break the penance of Viśwamitra. Śakuntalā is born out of their unions. The curse of Durvāsas falls heavy on Śakuntalā. Trees provide gifts of ornaments, and birds and animals feel sad at her departure from Kanva's hermitage. She is taken to Mārīcha's hermitage, on Hem-kūta Mountain by Menakā, at her repudiation by Duśyanta. She gives birth to Sarva-daman (all tamer). Duśyanta and Śakuntalā descend to the earth.

### **Forbidden Grim Realism in *AŚ***

*NŚ* forbids laying down grim realism in Sanskrit drama because that would not exalt the mind. It avoids screening of painful, disgusting and demeaning scenes. It does not permit to stage long journeys, murders, fights, revolts in kingdoms, deaths or other calamities, sieges, eating, bathing, kissing and embracing. This researcher examines such prohibitions in *AŚ*. Sanskrit drama is not totally devoid of tragedy. It excludes the direct depiction of death as an incident and insists on a happy ending. In Hinduism, everyone has an infinite number of chances to achieve enlightenment and liberation from the wheel of rebirth. A life that ends badly is only a prologue to another opportunity. Hence, the basic premises on which tragedy is based are lacking. The union of Duśyanta and Śakuntalā bring resolution of crises in *AŚ*, a separation that has taken place because of a curse she incurs from Durvāsas.

### **Rasas (Sentiment/Emotion)**

*NS* expresses *nātaka* as a representation of both virtue and vice. Production of *rasa* (sentiment/emotion) is one of its main functions. Kālidāsa's *AŚ* is repository of various *rasas*. *Rasa* theory finds its root in late *Vedic* period, in *Atharvaveda* (200 B C-100 B C). Bharat classifies the *rasa* under eight categories and gives the corresponding *bhāva* which gives to the *rasa*. These are known as *sthāyi bhāva* or pervading stable emotion. They comprise *rati* (love), *hāsa* (mirth), *śoka* (grief), *krodha* (anger), *utsāha* (heroism), *bhaya* (fear), *jugupsa* (disgust), and *vismaya* (wonder). The corresponding eight *rasas* are *srīngāra* (amorous), *hāsyā* (humorous), *karuṇā* (pathetic), *raudra* (furious), *vīra* (valorous), *bhayānaka* (horrific), *bibhatsa* (repugnant), and *adbhuta* (wondrous). King Duśyanta's coming to the hermitage to pay respects to the sage is the *ālambnā vibhāva*. The girls talking to the bee, their attire, the flower garden, etc. are the *uddīpanābhāva*. Kālidāsa explores *vibhāvas*, *anubhāvas* and *vyabhichāribhāvas* in his plays. Its union with *sthāyibhāvas* produces *rasa* which is relished till today. *Srīngāra*, love in its many aspects is a perennial theme of lyrical poetry. *AŚ* explores the love of Duśyanta and Śakuntalā, hence *srīngāra* is the *rasa* that ornaments the play. In each successive acts and scenes, the characters play their roles through variety of *bhāvas*, but the dominance of *rati*; *śoka*, *utsaha*, and *vismaya* make the play receptive. Simultaneously, *veera* and *adbhuta rasas* play their subservient role.

Act III of *AŚ* explores the erotic elements of *Sambhoga- srīngāra*. Its Act V portrays an instance of *raudra- rasa*, where Śakuntalā loses her temper, for Duśyanta repudiates her. Its Act VI portrays an instance of *veera rasa*, where the king shows his readiness to go to heaven, to fight for God Indra against the Titans. Its Act VII expresses an instance of *adbhuta-rasa*, when Duśyanta and Mātali pass over Hem-kūta. Separation of Śakuntalā from her lover creates imbalances in the environment, influencing the emotional response of the audiences. Her longing for her husband (*śoka-bhāva*) moves the audience toward *karuṇā rasa*. Once, she gets united with Duśyanta, harmony is restored. The audience gets the heightened delight. These *rasas* in *AŚ* express Kālidāsa's insight into Bharata's *rasasutra*.

### **Gaits**

The description of gaits in *NS* not only includes dance like movements which reflect a psychological state, they may also be instructions for miming particular actions, in the absence of the props. In *AŚ*, the king must represent riding on a chariot. To show it, he mimes by holding a bow with his one hand and a chariot pole on the other. There are instructions for making masks in the *NS*. The introduction of minor characters is felt to define dramatic

structures and relationships. Notable are the buffoon and Śakuntalā's two companions as well as the policemen, the fisherman, Mātali and Mārīcha. The use of *vāka* (divine voice) with Kanva is to let him know that his daughter is pregnant. This is necessitated by the demands of classical aesthetics.

### Romanticism in AŚ

Sanskrit dramaturgy defines a love drama with a union, separation, and a reunion of lovers. Kālidāsa exemplifies it in AŚ. The first three Acts of the play explore the union of Duśyanta and Śakuntalā. He falls in love with her at first sight. She reciprocates his love. Act III portrays the confession of love between the two. It gets converted into *Gandharva* form of marriage. Anasūyā confirms it in her words, *halā piāmvade, jāē vi gandhavvena vivāhavihinā* (AŚ, Act IV). In other words, 'Priyamvadā, dear Shakuntala has been properly married by the voluntary ceremony and she has a husband worthy of her' (Ryder 39). As this form of marriage is acceptable by all, Kanva does not have any objection to it. The descents begin in the play with their separation. He returns to his palace. "It is a dictum of Sanskrit critic that there is no charm in love unless it is sweetened by separation" (Kale 50). Acts IV, V and VI portray the scenes of separations. In Act IV, Śakuntalā follows Duśyanta to his palace, to get back her marital rights. However, he repudiates her in Act V. It leads the play to express *Karunā-rasa*. He regains his lost memory in Act VI. He repents for the injustices he has done to her. Act VII portrays the union between the two separated lovers.

### Conclusion

This study finds the tenets of NŚ on AŚ. Kālidāsa follows them as have been described in the Sanskrit dramaturgy. AŚ begins with *Nāndī* and concludes with *Bharatavākya*. He employs *Anka* (Act) to develop the plot. His *ādhikārika* (a plot) portrays the major characters and his *prāsāngika* (a sub plot) portrays subordinate characters. He divides the plot of the drama by applying five *sandhis* (junctures) like *Mukha* (opening), *Pratimukha* (progression), *Garva* (development), *Vimarśa* (confrontation) and *Nirvahana* (conclusion). The actions in the plot begin with *ārambha* (beginning) and concludes with the *phalagama* (attainment of fruit). He analyzes characters as well as employs language and diction as per the treatises of Sanskrit *nātaka*. He introduces supernatural agents, magic or miracles, as the dramaturgy illustrates, like Śakuntalā, Mātali, God Indra, Menakā, Mārīcha's hermitage, etc. He exploits eight *rasas* as per the *rasasutra*. The union, separation and reunion of the major characters give a sense

of romanticism in the play. He gives a happy ending to the play as *NS* demands. Hence, the employment of these tenets help to justify *Kālidāsa*'s *AS* as a play based on *NS*. However, the future researchers many look into other tenets of *NS* like *angika* (bodily movements), *vaachika* (speech), *aharya* (costume and make-up), *sattvika* (psychological energy of the actor), *rangpatti* (curtains and scenery), *rangabhoomi* (theatrical space) and *dhwani-prabhava* (sound effects) which this researcher has failed to incorporate.

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