

Kalidasa On Environmental Conservation, Consciousness & Nature Portraiture

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Abstract

For humanity, the relentless matter of concern around the globe is pollution prevention and environmental protection. Hazardous results of rapid industrialization and scientific research corroborate fatality issues for humankind. Society requires to protect and save the environment with sustainable development. The problem is a matter of discussion and concern in today's advanced and developing community, for humans are still busy exploiting the forest wealth rapidly for self-interest and self-progress, causing the life-sustaining air to become impure and poisonous; the nectar-like water is polluted, creating a natural imbalance. The hazardous mixture of chemical fertilizers, garbage waste, and scientific fluid is deteriorating and eroding the earth's fertility to encounter horrible results. The escalation of deserts due to deforestation, earthquakes, the slides, lack of rains, the uncontrolled flow of water resulting in floods, draining of the fertile soil, and continuous decrease of birds are vivid examples of environmental destruction. Thus, moil on ecological protection and preservation is the sine qua non in the current scenario. Indian ancient literature and philosophy are exponents of establishing stability, tranquility, and solidarity with the natural world, promoting environmental conservation and consciousness. The ecological outlook has been rife since the classical era of Vedas and Puranas. Indeed, the living picture of nature vibes humans and jeweled them with peace and serenity, tranquility, but the picture portrayal of the same is no less than the peace giver. The present paper illustrates how Kalidas, one of the finest gems of Sanskrit literature, conveys serenity and solidarity with the environment through his portrayal of protecting the animals, birds, flora-faunas and his unforgettable portrait of love for nature.

Keywords: Environmental Protection, Nature Portraiture, Environmental Outlook, Tranquility, Solidarity, Serenity

Indian culture has flourished and burgeoned in the loving lap of the environment as described in the ancient classical Sanskrit literature. Narratives of the classical literature, the Smritis, the Puranas, The Samhitas, The Ramayana, and the Mahabharata, all are crowded with references to the sacrifices for environmental protection and environmental illustrations. All the Vedas teach to conserve the five elements; water symbolizes gravitas and the river is a powerful life source, a pollution-free environment. The long-established literature assembled with the umpteen authorities to save trees and water, consider them the deities and worship them with a message to purify the human conscience, prevent environmental exploitation, and blockade pollution. The ancient era was so into nature that the humans used to serve and worship the nature forces as divine beings like the Surya Dev, Agni Dev, Varun Dev, Jal Dev, and Vayu Dev. The environment is the direct or indirect usufruct of all the natural elements like earth, water, light, air, and sky. In addition to these five elements, Shri Krishna considers the entire universe to be toted covered by out n out eight parts of the environmental nature, appending mind, intellect, and ego in the classical text Shrimad Bhagwat Gita. Inclusion of land, water, and air in and the interrelationship among and between humans and other living creatures, along with the plants, water, land, and philosophy, is summarized as Environment as per the definition released by the Environment Protection Act (1986). Classical literature is prosperously teaching the ways of environmental protection for ages through multiple environmental illustrations and personifications. Moreover, in this series, the great Sanskrit poet and scholar Kalidas's works manifest that environmental protection can be spontaneously accessible and achievable for humans through continuous efforts.

Kalidas is an eminent poet the dramatist who has honestly depicted the interrelationship between and among humans, water, air, land, other creatures, plants, micro-organisms, and property. The prodigious and stupendous lord of the poets, Kalidas was a great lover of environmental protection. His work reflects the vivid nature of the environment that the poet has displayed in his depictions. For Kalidas, it is utterly true that God bestows power and knowledge, endows him with Holy power, and makes him a sage or a seer to the one he loves. Like a sage or a seer Kalidas, with sublime and precise vetting, unequivocally presents environmental protection in a new way for the present-day generation. Kalidas has arrayed the heartfelt affection of humans towards nature with season description, ocean description, tree and vine description, garden description, creeper description, beauty description, cloud description, mountain description, compassion for animals, flowers, and description of wild animals like peacocks and antelopes. His depiction echoes the hermitage situated at the foot of the sacred mountains of the Himalayas, the deer sitting on the top of the hill, Shakuntala watering the trees, the Malini River flowing nearby, natural beauty augments the human beauty, and many more reflections that pave the way and encourage the humans to protect the environment. The natural beauty with flower-scented breezes, enchanting moon jeweled twilights, breeze lotus association to wipe tears of dew-drops, seasonal flowers, and forest fires, all these portrayals kindle passion in humans to save the environment. Kalidas displays his affection for the environment in every whit or bit of nature. He kens and perceives that preserving and protecting wildlife lies in environmental conservation as the environment accommodates the natural, physical and cultural cover around us.

From the perspective of environmental protection, *Rtusamharam*, *The Gathering of the Seasons*, and *Meghadutam or The Cloud Messenger* trace the paramount poetry of Kalidas. Kalidas's *Rtusamharam*, a poem, conveys the message of environmental protection, environmental consciousness, and nature portrayal to illustrate Kalidas's love for nature. The title complements the importance of nature and environmental concern in the oeuvre. The world of nature has been observed with significant idiosyncrasy with all its diverseness in *Rtusamharam*. Kalidas's depiction of the falling of the leaves of trees parched under the burning sun, the burning of the huts of thatch due to the wind's rapid velocity, humans and birds sacrificing their lives due to water scarcity engender the environmental consciousness. The keen observation of nature and the rich detail echoes of rain with bright colors scattered around, the abundance of golden autumn, the splendor of bountiful autumn, the icy glow of wintry moon and stars, beguiling deep-water lilies, the flower-scented breezes, enchanting twilights jeweled by the moon. His depiction voices the similar celebration of love and grief, sorrow of man and nature, and the relation of nature to the human world in diverse ways. *Rtusamharam*, a keen observation of nature with an evocative word picture of each season, accords the Vasant season, the King of the seasons and very dear. On the arrival of this season, the natural beauty increases with the nature of mango trees, Ashoka, and Jasmine flowers and paves the way for happiness for all human beings. Kalidas says that the air becomes very intoxicating in the spring due to the fragrance of mango trees, the drunken cuckoo starts chirping loudly, and the bumblebees start making sweet musical sounds. During this season, the extraordinary mild odor of Malayachal blows. He commences the poetry with the summer season and ends it with the spring season, as a good ending for Spring is a renewal, delightful, and bestows good happiness to all.

Meghadutam, a *duta-kavyam* or the messenger poem by the title itself, displays his creativity, intellect, immense imagination, poetical fluency, supreme nature depiction, and the central role of the cloud. *Meghadutam* hardly distinguishes the emergence of the poet of human emotions from the dawn of the poet of nature because the former half is a gleaming description of the natural beauty of human emotions. At the same time, the endured portion visualizes the human heart encased with the natural beauty. Exhibits accomplished commingle of contrasting features of nature with that of human emotions. The journey of the messenger cloud from Ramgiri to Alkanagari covers forests, rivers, and mountains, for Kalidas presents all forms of nature, primarily the cloud as a messenger, the hills, the birds, the trees. All the characters imbue the beauty of the forest world, like the description of forests laden with ripe berries and village temples full of birds' nests. Kalidas commences the lyrical piece by showing Yaksha addressing a petition to the cloud, claiming that the people sorely affected by love cannot distinguish between sensitive or insensitive objects. The cloud is the refuge to convey his message to his separated beloved. Kalidas, in his work, aesthetically presents and delineates the thunder, the cloud as a fecundated force for nature, the trees and shrubs to bloom to their fullest, the royal swans, lake Mansa, lofty mountains, lotus stalks, breeze, and singing chatakas skilled in catching the rainwater drops. Depiction of the garden of the Mahakaleshwar temple, fragrant with the lotus pollen of Gandharva, the beauty of the famous groves called Vaibhraj outside the Alkanagari, the buds automatically grown during the rainy season to fertile the land and eaten by the deer with fervor flaunts the magical impact of Kalidas on the readers to protect the environment. Beautiful depiction of the cloud and wind relation when the King narrates the way to his beloved's place that when the cloud ascends to the path of the wind traveling men wives

cheer with the confidence of their husbands return. (8) The bees, deer, and elephants indicate the path to the cloud. Peacock's cries serve as words of welcome with eyes full of tears of joy; a cool breeze blended with the crust delights' aroma and blew gently with the proceed. The river Reva, rugged with stones, resembles decorations on an elephant's body (37); and the Spring is serving the time of unendurable pain for the separated ones like Yaksha and his beloved; are few picture portrayals out of the multiple descriptions given by Kalidasa in *Meghadutam* delineating the journey of messenger cloud carrying the message unfortunately sad King to his beloved. Numerous references, whether of trees like Jamun, Mango, Udumbar, Kadali, Mandar, Ashoka, Devdaru, Kalpavriksha; rivers like Nirvindhya, Sindhu; flowers like Kutaja, Kadamba, Ketaka, Jasmine; mountain Kailash, Amrakuta, Vindhya and Nichesis bespeaks of his environmental consciousness in the works of Kalidas. A poem of itch, desire, and segregation with a rapturous natural word picture.

Kalidas's compositions are replete with messages for environmental protection. Kalidas's uniqueness lies in his indescribable, natural, and eternal expression of values in which he profoundly establishes the identity of nature and man. In the play *Abhijnanashakuntalam*, as soon as the archer king Dushyanta was ready to shoot an arrow at the deer, suddenly a sound is heard for not killing the deer of the hermitage claiming that an arrow from the bow aesthetically is as terrible for its soft body as fire for an object made of cotton. Shakuntala, the female protagonist, is described as one with lotus-petalled eyes and slender vine-like arms; she and jasmine are siblings to mother nature. Similarly, Shakuntala, likened to being the daughter of Nature, lives in the green world, tells her friends that she is not taking care of trees, plants, and other living things only to obey her father, but she too loves them as her brothers and sisters greet them such. This way, the love of siblings on the trees of Shakuntala gives a memorable message to the human beings of the modern age to have sibling love towards them. Not only this, the Lady of nature Shakuntala herself possesses nature's merit and divinity. Her affinity and endearing affection for environmental protection are worth appreciating. She never consumes water herself without giving water to the trees and prioritizes their needs, hunger, and thirst before her requirements. The tapo-vana or the hermitage is the dwelling place of tranquility. All the hermitage's trees, animals, and birds became intimate and kindred with Shakuntala. Shakuntala's farewell to her husband's house confounds the deer and the peacock; the vines withered, a deer cub, to stop her, draws Shakuntala's lap from behind on her departure.

Considering the richness of the plant world as his prosperity, he yearns to incentivize human society towards divine altruism, tree plantation, and their safety. Portraying the animal, bird, and root consciousness as brothers and sisters, Kalidas eloquent the point of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam. Kalidas presents the omnipotent supreme being, the almighty, in every particle of the world. Kalidas aesthetically considers the blossoming of the first bud in the plant and the birth of a human child equal to a poet's heart. Thus, the magical poet Kalidas treats humans as his progeny, and through his portrayal of Shakuntala's joyful dance on the arrival of new nuggets of flowers, festival celebrations with joy, and despite the desire to adorn herself with flowers, Shakuntala not even plucks a single leaf of plants; giving the message of environmental protection. He has personified the Jyotsna Forest as a sister, Sarayu River as a mother, deer cub as a son, and mountain king Himalaya as a father. Further, the poet has shown the system where Shakuntala seeks permission from all living beings before going to her husband's house, as

ordered by sage Kanva, considering them a family. Thus, not only paving the path for environmental protection but also confronting humans with the philosophy of life in view.

Kalidas presents the magical world, the natural world with its minuscule detail of the blossomed trees, pairs of geese on river banks, vines, full-flowing river. Plantation of trees and the harvesting and preservation of trees portray the importance of environmental protection by the great poet Kalidas. Like *Abhijnanashakuntalam* displays King Dushyant's wife Shakuntala watering trees with a pitcher, not giving up watering even after having a sweat-soaked body with blood-soaked palm. Similarly, *Kumarasambhavam*, or *The Birth of Kumara*, delineates the great benefactor of heaven, Shiva's wife Parvati, shown watering the vines; in *Raghuvansham*, Sita, the wife of King Rama, is, established irrigating the mango trees in Panchavati, these and many more magical representations of Kalidas teach protection of trees by nourishing them like a child. The great poet Kalidas edifies this message to everyone irrespective of their status, being a king, a poor or a wealthy class, Shakuntala, Parvati, or Sita; everyone should irrigate the trees while being sympathetic towards them.

Kalidas's interweaving of the natural/environmental world with the human world is to inspire humans for ecological conservation. Kalidas considers not only vegetation but also water, plants, and mountains suitable for environmental protection. He not only has leveled environmental concerns to emotions but also rendered it with administrative protection and has interwoven the King's chore realm with nature protection.

In *Raghuvansham* or *Raghu's Dynasty*, King Raghu asked sage Kautsa about the welfare of the trees of the hermitage. Kalidas has portrayed the tree and the King as father and son, the father asking for his son's well-being; King Raghu queries sage Kautsa about the purity of the river water employed for his daily routine works, whether the water of those rivers is pure or not, explaining the importance of pure air and pure water for human beings. On account of the depiction of the King asking for water's welfare, Kalidas tries to persuade a message that the high administrative officials were so concerned for the environment that they heed attention to environmental conservation in the ancient period and encourage today's officials to protect and make people preserve the environment. Not only this, Kalidas has discussed the confirmation of the north Kausalya kings with the sweet water of Sarayu at the time of Ram's return to Ayodhya in *Raghuvansham* and described the Sarayu River as the mother of Ram. Kalidas is a genius in his craft; through his artistry, he holds the capacity to make humans psychologically believe in never polluting the rivers by depicting them as a synonym for mother. Depictions, where King Raghu asks for the deer's well-being, sages feeding the deer cubs by holding them on their lap and keeping them for the sacrifice even after the Kush grass was cut, serving the Nandini cow by King Dileep, are few of the multiple dynamic, heartwarming depictions of Kalidas where he skillfully teaches environmental protection. *Raghuvansham* displays the mother-child propinquity by depicting the way blocked by the deer of his hermitage for the fodder brought by the sage wives.

In the present scenario, the environmental education of Kalidas sensitizes human responsibilities. He gives the essential cognizance to human beings towards the family and the society, nation and environment protectors, wildlife, mountains, water, air, are part of our nation's wealth and society. In his works, he has mentioned Himalaya, Malyavan, Malayachal, Chitrakoot, Ramgiri, Amrakoot, and the Kailash. In *Kumarasambhava*, the poet has described the mountain king Himalaya as rich in deodar, keechkadi trees, and lotus flowers, with great medicinal traits and the

power to hold the earth. Kalidas indirectly perpetuates this element of nature to human beings by making them aware of valuable services. The contemporary situation manifest is the external environment pollution and the environmental problem polluting human nature. The benevolence, generosity, altruism, adore, and endearment have become vestiges under the dark shade of modernity. Unless the morals of human beings are as pure as the driven snow, the environment cannot be sterile, Kalidas conveys.

Kalidas has uniquely described the environment-protected mountains, rivers, and animals in *Vikramovrashiryam* or *Urvashi Won by Valor*. In describing Urvashi's beauty, the male protagonist refers to the Kandali plant that this Kandali with red lines and surcharged with rainwater on its flowers, reminding the wife's eyes full of anger with tears. (5) Kalidas has shown King Pururava praying to the birds; "Oh peacock! have you seen my lost beloved somewhere while roaming in the jungle? Please inform; remember that her face is like the moon, and her gait is like a swan." Furthermore, the King requests dear cuckoo, the messenger of love, an unfailling weapon in taming a woman's pride, either quickly bringing her to or taking him to her. Then onward, pointing towards the elephant, "My lady in perpetuity in youth, O lord of the herd of elephants, have you ever encountered her in your way? If so, please communicate. Query the mountains, "did you notice a beauteous lady exquisite in all her limb." Beautifying peacock's beauty, " Big-eyed, dark neck and white cornered peacock, have you seen my beloved wife with a prominent neck and far-stretching eyes. Requested the peacock to take him to her if he saw her somewhere in this Nandan forest. He has depicted Urvashi and Pururava in the mountains and playing with sand on the banks of the Mandakini River. In this way, the poet has described and portrayed the environmental concerns and necessity of the environment through peacock, swan, cuckoo, chakva, bumblebee, elephant, mountain, and river.

In the play *Malavikagnimitram*, Kalidas has cherished his love for nature through spring, flowers of Kurbak, river Varda, and Pramad Forest portrayal. Peacock looks up, considering the drum sounds to be thunder; in a dancing posture, Malavika's other hand is hanging like a branch; to the King, Malavika's teeth look like blooming lotus; a court wit is asking, "had I become a cuckoo hoping to quench the thirst of roaring sun and King under the same frame like the sun is shining with all its rays, the King is glowing with all his royal attributes. The golden Ashoka tree, laden with bunches of flowers, likes as if adorned and decorated by someone. Kalidas's environmental protection commences by describing the Ashoka tree as a sign of spring and the flowers of this tree as a joy to the mind. The great poet Kalidas, through his works, has inspired human beings to perform a yajna during the evening time from King Dushyanta in *Abhijnanashakuntalam* for environmental protection, self-purification, and the diagnosis of monstrous elements and the purification of the atmosphere of the Yagya and the destruction of many kinds of diseases. Not only this, the great creator Kalidas in the *Raghuvansham* epic inspires King Dileep to perform a yajna to attain purity of mind and happiness.

The unrivaled, esteemed, revered, acclaimed poet Kalidas's love for nature and the assets of the environment; trees, vines, animals, birds, seasons, wildlife, mountains, and umpteen word pictures secure the conservative expressions in his works. He teaches that the more firm, faithful, and close human beings' relationship with nature, the more nature nurtures them. The overall social and cultural literature of poet Kalidas manifests the spirit of environmental protection and environmental portrayal. Through his work, he has tried to teach the thinking of tolerance, coexistence, and sensitivity in humans to protect the picturesque, cultured, elegant, and pure

environment. The painting of nature gives comfort and contentment to the human to the same extent as nature itself. Thus, the picture portrayal of the character in the works of Kalidas succeeds in sensitizing humans to save the environment.

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