**Kalidasa**



Kalidasa is known to bethe greatest repository of our national heritage. The serenity of his artistic accomplishment has earned for him a high place in the galaxy of world poets. Kalidasa’s imagination holds in perfect fusion the two elements of natural beauty and human feelings. In his case, both Eastern and Western critics, applying not exactly analogous standards, are in general agreement. He has always been held in high esteem.final hai test

Kalidasa has continued to display his relevance through the centuries. Surcharged with  wider human sympathy and universal appeal, his character has remained truly Indian. He has influenced the mentors of the middle ages, as well as the pioneers of Indian renaissance like Vivekananda and Tagore. Kalidasa continuous to shine throughout the world as one of the greatest exponents of Indian culture. The keen interest of the Western Orientalists made Kalidasa studies more popular in modern times. Kalidasa has thus gone a long way to help develop a deeper understanding between India and the other countries.

**Popular legends on the life of Kalidasa**

1. Kalidasa, who was first quite a blockhead and was married to a princes, being stung  by the scornful words of his wife, determined to secure the favour of Gauri by penance with the result that the goddess conferred upon him high poetic genius. On his return Kalidasa was asked by his wife -… and the poet taking each of the three words as the beginning of three different works composed the Kumara, Megha and Raghu.
2. It is said that Kumaradasa, the king of Ceylon, the author of the Janakiharana threw himself on the funeral pyre of his friend Kalidasa who was murdered by a courtesan of Kumaradasa (6th century A.D.) in Ceylon. The story is that Kumaradasa had written the following line –

https://www.kalidasacademy.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/shlok1-300x19.gif

on the wall of the mansion of the courtesan, and had promised a handsome reward  to one who would complete the samasya. Kalidasa who happened to see that line immediately wrote-

https://www.kalidasacademy.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/shlok2-300x19.gif

Then, the courtesan murdered him and wanted to secure the reward by claiming that she had completed the Samasya the king, however discovered the fraud, but overwhelmed with grief consigned himself to the funeral pyre of Kalidasa.

**Kalidasa’s Profile –**

**Place & Date**

It is known to all that Kalidasa is completely silent about himself regarding his date of birth and also the place. Peoples all over India praise to Mahakavi for all the time due to his poetical excellency. Therefore, people from particular place claim that Kalidasa belongs to their area. But if we go through his works thoroughly, we may find that Kalidasa belongs to Ujjain. In Meghaduta, he describes about Ujjain so beautifully where we may find his personal attachment to Ujjain can not be ignored. Scholars of Kalidasa are of the opinion that Kalidasa belongs to Ujjain during between the period of second century BC. to 5th century AD.

**Impact on India and abroad**

Kalidasa is unanimously admitted to be the greatest sanskrit poet and dramatist. In India he is praised by all his followers such as post dated poets and critics namely Mammta, Anandavardhancharya,Abhinav Gupta etc.

His poetical style influenced to all the post dated poets to the modern poets of this 20th century also.

In the same manner, we may also find in abroad. It was Sir William Jones who introduced the Shakuntalm to the westerners for the first time in the eighteen century; since then almost all the works of Kalidasa have been translated into various Languages and made known to peoples of different countries, and they have been greatly appreciated by them. There can be no doubt that Kalidasa can justifiably take his seat along with Shakespeare.

**Works of Kalidasa –**

**Lyrics**

**Ritusanharam**  
Ritusamhara is a small lyrical poem of 144 stanzas in 6 cantos, mostly in vamshastha metre (cantos i, ii, v, vi), the variation being vasantatilaka (canto iii) and upendravajra (canto iv). The poem gives a graphic and poetic description of the six seasons of India.

**Meghadutam**  
The meghaduta is smaller in extent then Ritusamahara, the first of the Purvamegha having 66 stanzas and the second half or Uttaramegha is having only 55. This is a poem describing the message of departed Yaksha to his wife, to be conveyed through a cloud.  
A Yaksha, servant of lord, Kubera, made some mistake in his duty; Kubera punished him with a curse, banishing him from Alaka in to exile for a period of one year. Therefore, Yaksha sent his message to his wife through a cloud.  
Epics

**Kumarasambhavam**  
Kumarasambhava, a classical poem of 17 cantos, is based on the mythological myth of love and marriage of Shiva and Parvati, found in Indian epics. The deputation of Kamadeva – the cupid of Indian mythology – by the gods, to tempt the divine ascetic Shiva, to fall in love with Parvati, the destruction of Kamadeva by Shankara,Parvati’s resolve to win by renunciation and penance, what her beauty and charm failed to achieve by seduction, Shankara’s meeting with Parvati in the garb of an ascetic, their marriage and the birth of son Kumara, who destroyed the god’s’ enemy, the demon Taraka, are the highlights of this classical poem.  
According to A.B. Keith, the well-known British historian of Sanskrit literature, “….to modern taste, the Kumarasambhava appeals more deeply by reason of its richer variety, the brilliance of its fancy and the greater warmth of its feeling”.

**Raghuvansham**  
Raghuvansha, a long classical poem of 19 cantos, contains a brilliant account of the illustrious kings of Raghu Dynasty. It is indeed a gallery of brilliant kings – Dilipa, Raghu, Aja, Dasharatha, Rama – painted exquisitely by Kalidasa in which the picture of Rama is undoubtedly the best.  
Writing about Kalidasa and his work, Raghuvansha, the reputed western scholar and critic, Monier Williams says “No (other) composition of Kalidasa displays more the richness of his poetic genius, exuberance of his imagination, the warmth and play of his fancy, his profound knowledge of the human heart, his delicate appreciation of its most refined and tender emotions, his familiarity with the workings and counter workings of its conflicting feelings – in short, more entitles him to rank as the Shakespeare of India”.

**Drama**  
**Malavikagnimitram**

Malavikagnimitra is a five-act drama based on king Agnimitra’s love for a beautiful girl, Malavika. It is a lighthearted comedy of court life, and depicts the progress of king’s desire for the lovely maiden, through various hindrances. Malavika’s ultimate discovery as belonging to a royal family and the magnanimity of the elder queen, lead to the fulfillment of Agnimitra’s desire. According to the famous critic. R.D. Karmarkar, “Malavikagnimitra is on the whole, an enjoyable play. The plot is a very simple one and the action develops in a surprisingly swift manner and the reader finds that his interest is kept up right to the end”.

**Vikramorvashiyam**

Vikramorvashiya (Uravashi won by valour), a drama of five acts relates the romantic story of the mortal king Pururava and the divine nymph Urvashi. The king, through remarkable display of valour, saves the nymph from the clutches of a demon and falls in love with her, at first sight. The fire of love is fueled by the nymph’s separation as a result of her unavoidable return to heaven. However, in view of the consideration that God Indra, the lord of heaven, had for Pururava, his ally in his wars against the demons, the lovers are united in wedlock; but fate intervenes to separate them again and it is only a miracle that reunites them. The inevitable tragedy of love between the mortal and the celestial being is obvious, but again Indra’s indulgence brings to the royal couple, the lifelong pleasure of living together.  
According to M. Winternitz, the reputed German scholar of Indology, the great popularity that this drama has enjoyed in India, is proved by the fact that there are several versions of its text. It has several times been translated in to German and other European languages. Attempts have been made for adapting it for the stage too.

**Abhijnanashakuntalam**

Abhigyanashakuntala, a drama of seven acts is based on the old legend of Shakuntala, described in Mahabharata. It is the love story of the king Dushyanta and the hermit girl Shakuntala. Their mutual attraction leads to their marriage by the Gandharva form of marriage in the hermitage. The curse of the sage Durvasa makes the king forget all about his wedding but the discovery of the sign ring given by Dushyanta to his bride reminds him of the happenings in the forest grove, leading to his ultimate union with his wife and son in the abode of divine beings.  
Abhigyanashakuntala is, in every respect the most finished of Kalidasa’s dramatic compositions. The play is universally recognised as the best specimen of dramatic art in the entire Sanskrit literature. The reputed German poet Goethe, after reading a translation of the play had exclaimed,  
“Wouldst thou the young year’s blossom and the fruit of its decline, And all by which the soul is charmed, enraptured, feasted, fed?  
Wouldst thou the heaven and earth itself in one sole name combine  
I name thee ‘Shakuntala, and all at once is said”.