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## The Experience of Tranquility in Kalidasa's *Meghadutam*

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### Abstract

This paper aims to elucidate *santa rasa* as the predominant primary sentiment through a close textual analysis of Kalidasa's narrative poem, *Meghadutam*. In the framed narrative of the poem, the protagonist and speaker (*yaksa*) of the poem simultaneously acts as a spectator to his own dramatic monologue resulting in a split in the poem's topography which neatly divides the poem into two realms viz. the real/substantive and the imaginary. Coinciding with these two realms, two different sets of emotions are produced, that is, one for the speaker-as-spectator and the other for the reader/spectator. In the poem, the journey that the cloud as a messenger undertakes to inform the *yaksa's* beloved of his well-being is an internalized process in the mind of the *yaksa*, so that the *rasa* as derived from the *yaksa's* mental experience emerges as a suspect category which cannot be pinned down in either of the sentiments of *sringara* and *karuna*. It becomes difficult to predict whether a substantive reunion of the *yaksa* and the *yaksi* will take place because the poem is open-ended without a mention of the actual reunion between the lovers. The focal point of the poem is the journey that the cloud-messenger undertakes in the speaker's imagination. In this sense, the monologue of the speaker assumes a lot of importance in the poem and by expressing his

innermost desires and anxieties to the cloud, the *yaksa* is partly purged of his pain. By relating his aesthetic accounts of the twin worlds of the earthly and the paradisiacal, the *yaksa* experiences a process of mental penance and gradually grows wise with the culmination of his reverie. What emerges in the end is an acceptance of his situation with a new-found understanding that explains the arbitrariness of life. The ultimate *rasa* which then emerges in the text is neither *srngara* nor *karuna*, but *santa* or the tranquil because it is precisely a tranquility which the speaker develops after a period of eight months of suffering on Rama's Hill (a symbol of penitence and purification). By spending a troubled time on earth, devoid of all superhuman powers, the *yaksa* is punished for his transgressions and molded into a sagacious observer who philosophizes about the inexplicability and absurdity of life. On a superficial level and as a matter of narratology, the curse-and-fall motive of the poem serves as the source (seed) of the journey of the cloud-messenger (*meghadutam*) and its consequent erotic and aesthetic experiences on the Indian landscape. The journey of the cloud-messenger assumes a celebratory tone which enjoys the cultural and topographical vagaries of the subcontinent and gradually turns mournful on entering the mythical city of *Alaka*, where a sorrowful heart weeps at separation from a beloved. At the very end of the poem, when the journey of the cloud-messenger terminates with a focus on the speaker, the tone of the speaker (*yaksa*) becomes controlled and peaceful, so that he seems to have grown wiser through the pain of separation from his beloved and developed patience to tackle life as it unfolds as its own pace. Therefore, in the end, the reader/spectator experiences the predominant sentiment of tranquility in the narrative of the poem, which is established through a new-found peacefulness in the speaker of the poem.

### The Paper

Kalidasa, a renowned Classical Sanskrit writer, is widely regarded for his literary masterpiece, *Meghadutam: The Cloud Messenger*. Like William Shakespeare, Kalidasa too borrowed ideas from the realms of history and myth, and fleshed out a minute thought into a full-fledged plot. The source of the current poem, *Meghadutam*, is alleged to be a legend of a certain *yaksa* who was cursed and banished into exile by his master, *Kuber* (God of wealth in Indian mythology), because the *yaksa* was smitten by his beloved to the

extent that he failed to perform his duty of guarding *Kuber's* beautiful groves and gardens (one of his nine treasures). This failure of the fulfillment of duty and the consequent curse as inflicted by the master upon the *yaksa* serves as the *bija* (seed) of the journey of a cloud in the *yaksa's* imagination. However, Kalidasa's narrative poem, *Meghadutam*, departs from where the legend ends and embarks upon an aesthetic journey as created by the speaker's imagination. This imaginative journey of the cloud initiates when the *yaksa*, crestfallen and pining for his beloved, 'observes' a "cloud embracing the crest of the hill" (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 137) from Rama's Hill, in the last month of summer, *Asadha* (which heralds rainfall and the union of lovers). In the original text the word used to describe this act of observation on the part of the *yaksa*, is *praksaniyam*, which suggests double meanings. The first meaning of the word pertains to the act of viewing something spectacular with eagerness and attention. The second meaning of the word suggests the viewing of a spectacle or a play. It is the second meaning of the word, *praksaniyam*, which is emphasized in the paper, corroborated by the argument that the journey of the cloud as internalized by the speaker (*yaksa*) becomes the spectacle which is viewed by the speaker himself. In this sense, the reader/spectator is presented with two scenarios in the poem – the first is the substantive scene in the text viz. that of the *yaksa* talking to the cloud and urging it to embark upon a journey from Rama Hill's (in the Vindhya range) to the *Alaka Nagari* (in *Kailasa*, Himalaya); and the second is the imaginary expedition of the cloud as desired and fantasized by the *yaksa*. It is precisely this journey which forms the subject matter and major portion of the poem. However, in the poem, a schism between the two worlds of the real and the imaginary prompts one to take recourse in the rules expounded in Bharata's *Natyashastra*.

*Meghadutam* has certain features similar to ones in Kalidasa's celebrated play, *Abhijnanasakuntalam*. In *Meghadutam*, between the terrestrial realm of the Vindhya Range and the celestial realm of the Himalayan Range, lies the elemental world of the cloud which makes a detour to the luxuriant cities of Madhya Pradesh before making an entry into the intended destination. This tripartite structure of the worldly domains in *Meghadutam* is quite similar to the natural (hermitage of *Kanava*), gilded (*Dussanta's* capital) and heavenly (Mount *Kailasa*) areas as presented in *Abhijnanasakuntalam*. Again, in both the genres one observes that, as Chandra Rajan puts it, the "curse-fall-

restoration motif" (Chandra Rajan, Introduction to *Kalidasa: The Loom of Time*, 50) plays a major role in the development of the plot. The failure in the performance of one's duty (the *yaksa* in guarding *Kuber's* gardens and *Sakuntala* in serving *Durvasa*) gives rise to an angry indictment in the form of a curse upon the delinquents. In order to rise above such an accursed state, the punished go through a process of severe pain and penance before they can be rewarded in the heavenly world of *Kailasa*. Though these are some of the striking similarities between the poem and the play, there are two major differences too that mark both the texts. In *Abhijnanasakuntalam*, a reunion does take place at the end of the play and, therefore, it emerges as a classic case of a play that exudes *srngara rasa*. However, in *Meghadutam* no substantive reunion takes place between the *yaksa* and his beloved, which is why it becomes difficult to define the predominant *rasa* of the poem in terms of *srngara* or *karuna*. What gets established at the end of the poem is a form of acceptance of fate on the part of the speaker (*yaksa*), who by philosophizing about the arbitrariness of life leads to a tasting of the *santa rasa* by the reader/spectator. Herein lays the greatest difference in the two texts and the uniqueness of the poem.

The speaker-as-spectator hopes to taste *srngara rasa* by uniting with his beloved (*kanta*) and this he does through the faculty of his imagination, because a physical reunion between the lovers is made impossible by the power of the curse. Such an imagination is concretized in the form of a cloud which is deemed worthy and capable of uniting the lover with the beloved in the form of not only delivering one's message to the other but also by tasting the pleasures that the cities, mountains and rivers hold up to it during the course of its expedition. In this sense, the *yaksa* derives a vicarious pleasure from the journey that the cloud undertakes in his imagination and attempts to suck the erotic sentiment from the entire venture. What is unfortunate is that fate even in the *yaksa's* imagination "will not suffer our [their] reunion" (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 162). In this sense, the entire notion of the erotic sentiment is rendered unavailable in the poem and the reader/spectator along with the speaker (*yaksa*) of the poem does not taste the pleasures of the *srngara rasa*. A part of *srngara* is definitely present in the poem, which being *vipralambha srngara* or the erotic sentiment in separation. But there is always the danger of *vipralambha srngara* transmuting into *karuna rasa* in case of a failure of a

reunion between the lovers. Such a catastrophe is possible owing to the fact that the cloud does not undertake a substantive journey in the poem. Even if the cloud-messenger was to undertake such a journey, there is always the danger of “delay while you [it] loiter[s]” (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 142) or the melting of the cloud messenger in the presence of *Mahakala* or of its attaining an eternal station as an attendant to the lord. There is likelihood that the cloud may delay the process of conveying the message to the beloved and the beloved may die of sorrow. In this sense, the hope of reunion between the lovers may turn out to be impossible, so that the erotic sentiment in separation may translate into the pathetic sentiment. Whatever may be the nature of the ultimate emotion that the lovers are fated to experience, it is *srngara rasa* or the erotic sentiment which the speaker aims to derive from his imagination. To prove this point, some of the places which the cloud visits in the course of its journey are delineated below.

The cloud’s journey begins from Rama’s Hill which is now identified as Ramtek in Nagpur, Maharashtra. From this hill, where the *yaksa* is confined to a year’s banishment, the cloud wanders to the city of *Alaka* via Maikhil Hills (a part of the Vindhya Range in M.P.) to *Citrakuta* and *Amrakuta*, where the cloud floats above the river *Reva* (Narmada), to *Dasarnas* (in modern Bhopal) and *Vidisa* to the river *Vetravati* (Betwa) to *Ujjayini* to *Nirvindhaya*, *Sindhu*, *Avanti*, *Sipra*, *Candesvar*, *Gandhavati*, *Mahakala* (Ujjain), *Gambhira* (a river in Malwa), *Devagiri*, *Carmanvati* (Chambal), *Dasapura* (modern-day Mandasor), *Brahmavarta* (West of Jamuna and modern Delhi), *Ganga* near Kanakhala Hills to, finally, the Himalayas via Krauncha Pass to mount *Kailasa* wherein is situated the *Alaka Nagari* near the *Manasarovar* lake. We see how the cloud travels all the way from Maharashtra to Tibet. The direction that this journey takes is from central and western India to the northern part of the subcontinent. Hence, the journey is divided into two parts as corresponding with the central-western and northern terrains. This division is not presented in the English translation used for this paper. The two sections as originally devised in the poem are called *Puroamegha* and *Uttaramegha*, where the first means the former cloud and, the second, the subsequent cloud. It is in the first part of the journey where *sambhoga srngara* or the erotic sentiment in union foregrounds. The second part of the journey begins with a description of the city of *Alaka*, where resides the beloved who is pining in

sorrow at the separation from her lover. Therefore, the second section of the poem swells with *vipralambha srngara*. In spite of a presence of both the integrated states of the erotic sentiment in the imaginary journey of the cloud, the aesthetic experience of the erotic sentiment is rendered incomplete in the poem because even in his imaginative rendition, the *yaksa* does not make a mention of uniting with his beloved. Instead he requests the cloud to inform his lover of his well-being and console her that he will be back in no time, so that she takes heart and lives to see the *yaksa's* homecoming.

In both the sections of the journey, nature assumes a status of a living entity and becomes instrumental in dramatizing the voyage of the cloud. The mountains as *nayaks* (heroes) and the cities and the rivers as *nayikas* (heroines) engage with the main actor, *meghaduta*, in culling out *sambhoga srngara* in the first half of the text and *vipralambha srngara* in the second half of the text. But the second half of the poem, as had been pointed out before, has all the probability of changing the entire mood of the poem from Eros to Pathos in case of a failure of the reunion of the lovers. Till the time the cloud lingers over Madhya Pradesh, it dallies with mountain peaks that are "breathing out burning sighs born of long separation" (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 140), rivers that display "women's first statements of love" (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 144) and welcome the cloud with "dazzling upward leaps of glittering white fishes bright as water-lillies" (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 147), and cities that "put on a new beauty at your [its] approach" (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 142). The lover-beloved concept works at various levels in the text, which being *yaksa* and *yaksi*, clouds and mountains, clouds and rivers, clouds and cities, clouds and women, men and women, and, finally, clouds and lightning. The cloud is conjoined with all of these natural images, so that the theme of the erotic sentiment is underlined in the poem. The cloud-messenger is allowed to flirt with all and sundry, so that the long-awaited desire of the speaker to unite with his beloved is partially fulfilled through a vicarious pleasure that he derives from the spectacle of his imagination. Let us focus on the *Puroamegha* section of the text where the first part of the erotic sentiment, namely, *sambhoga srngara* gains prominence.

In the first segment of the journey, all the *vibhavas* or determinants of *sambhoga srngara* are enumerated. The first and foremost indication for the

development of the determinant for the *sthayibhava* (permanent state of being), *rati* (love), is the rainy season, which gets accentuated in the poem. The rainy season serves as an archetypal cause for all that is bright, beautiful, joyous and lovable. It is a pleasurable season owing to the fact that rain results in a bursting of “early buds along the edge of every pool” (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 142); the harvest depends on it which makes the rustic women’s eyes “moist with happiness” (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 140); peacocks, hens and *catakas* swell with pride at its approach and call for mating; men and women grow restless and amorous for each other, so that men travelling far and wide hurry homes to their wives; women adorn themselves with flowers and gems, and rub their bodies with unguents; Siddhas obtain a “flurry of unexpected embraces from their beloved wives” (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 142); women grow tired “after passion’s ecstatic play” (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 145); young women venture for a midnight tryst and young lovers enjoy a “fleeting together-ness” (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 143); earth’s thirst gets quenched; the temple-dancers obtain “pleasure as from a lover’s nail-marks” (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 146); and all grows resplendent like “Visnu’s [body] in his cowheard guise, lit up by iridescent peacock-plumes” (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 140). All of the above-mentioned states serve as typical causes for love to develop and blossom. As a consequence of love, its effect or *anubhava* shows in the form of “trembling at the sound of your thunder”, “eyes moist with joy” (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 142), “knitted brows of tremulous wavelets”, “thrilling with delight at your touch” (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 143), “tremulous eyes of the city’s beautiful women that dart in alarm”, “charming unsteady gait” (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 144), “piercing cries of love-maddened saras-cranes” (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 145), “sidelong glances streaming like a line of honey-bees” (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 146), the garment of the river, Gambhira (which also means a kind of *nayika*), “slipping off the sloping bank of her hips, still cling to the reed-branches as if lightly held up by one hand” (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 147), etc. Similarly, the *vyabharibhavas* (the transitory mental states of being) are also present in the form of suspicion at “Philandering husbands” (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 146) and consequent jealousy, anxiety at the arrival of husbands, pride, recollection, contentment, shame at being caught with one’s lover, unsteadiness, joy, excitement and impatience. In the light of the above-mentioned *vibhavas*,

*anubhavas* and *vyabharibhavas*, one can claim that till the time the cloud floats above the cities of central India, it derives immense erotic pleasure which is not only voyeuristic but also experiential in nature. Thus, the cloud as an alter ego of the speaker seeks to enjoy the implications of love, and in the process of doing so, simultaneously, absolves the *yaksa* of his sins by observing all of its appointed duties and rituals.

Duty plays a crucial role in Kalidasa's texts because it serves as one of the components of *dharma*. By neglecting one's *dharma*, *Sakuntala* and *yaksa* are cursed with repudiation and banishment respectively. *Sakuntala* is relieved of her repudiation only when *Dussanta* performs his duty of a righteous king by fighting with the forces of *Kalanemi* and, in the process, incidentally unites with his beloved, *Sakuntala*, and their son, *Bharata*. The cloud-messenger, on the other hand, can only hope to release the *yaksa* of his sins because only by performing its duty of a rain cloud, that brings relief to the distressed, and by-the-by paying homage at the shrines of *Siva* and his emanation, *Skanda*, can it release the *yaksa* from the anxiety of separation (if not the banishment because there are four months still to go before the *yaksa's* curse dissolves). In this sense, a deviation from duty on the part of the protagonists gives rise to anger (the furious sentiment) on the part of sage *Duravasa* (who curses *Sakuntala*) and *Kuber* (who banishes the *yaksa*), and an adherence to the same leads to a substantive or imagined reunion of the lovers and a fuller realization of *srngara rasa*. Conversely, if such duties are not fulfilled, there is always a danger of a failure of a reunion between the lovers which then prompts the predominant emotion of the text towards the pathetic sentiment. Such a peril is hinted at in the second half of the poem, namely, *Uttaramegha*, where the tone of the speaker, as opposed to the celebratory tone used in the first segment of the text, becomes mournful.

The second section of the poem begins with a description of the city of *Alaka* and gradually settles into a depiction of the *yaksa's* home, where his wife lives "mourning like a *cakravaki* her companion far away" (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 156). The *cakravaki* is a classic symbol of a painful separation of lovers. Legend has it that a pair of birds were cursed to spend nights at opposite ends of a pool and wail out to each other throughout the night. An analogy of the beloved with the *cakravaki* immediately draws attention to her passion for the *yaksa*, so that on contemplating upon her



distress, the tone of the speaker grows feverish and pathetic. It is precisely in this section of the poem, namely, the *yaksa's* home, that the erotic sentiment in separation assumes full force and leads to a climax in the narrative. It is precisely at this moment when a detailed account of the lover's disheveled state is recounted by a delirious *yaksa*. The *visaya alambana* for *vipralambha srngara* is the obvious separation of the lovers, where as the *uddipan vibhava* is the rainy season and the fantastical setting in the city of *Alaka*, one from which the *asraya alambana*, namely, the speaker, is so far away. The *anubhava* of the same manifests in the form of mourning "With the passing of these long days, racked by intense longing" (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 156), weeping passionately till "her eyes would be swollen and her lips withered by burning sighs", forgetting so that the beloved "forgets again and again the sequence of notes even though she composed it herself", remembering by "savouring imagined pleasures of love treasured in her heart" (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 157), "longing for sleep, hoping in dreams" (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 158) that at last she would be with her lover. But, here again, "a sudden torrent of tears might wash away these hopes" (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 158). Hope of reunion is continuously washed away in the poem, which makes one wonder whether the beloved "seeming like the last sliver of the waning moon in the eastern horizon" (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 158) may disappear into darkness forever; meaning to say that the beloved may die before an actual reunion takes place.

One can argue that death can also be considered as a part of *srngara rasa* because there is a possibility of the lovers reuniting in death just as *Aja* unites with his beloved, *Indumati*, in Kalidasa's epic, *Raghuvamsham*. One can also claim that an analogy of the beloved with the waning moon can render the entire question of death unsuitable because the moon after waning, waxes, and so there is hope of reunion of the *yaksa* and the *yaksi*. But there is a flip-side to this argument. The hill on which the *yaksa* is banished is fabled to be the place where *Rama* lived in exile with his brother, *Laxman*, and his wife, *Sita*. Besides, the beloved is likened to *Sita* and the cloud messenger to "the Son of the Wind", *Hanuman* (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 161). These analogies hint at an impossibility of the lovers' reunion because *Rama* and *Sita* are symptomatic of a chaste couple which exhibits extreme forbearance through a series of trials and tribulations but, unfortunately, despite a reunion,

they are eventually forced to separate from each other. In this sense, though, the "news of husbands brought by a friend are to women the closest thing to a reunion" may prove to be transient (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 161).

Furthermore, the only empirical reunion with the beloved that the speaker seeks to achieve is in the forms of "syama-vines", "gazelles's startled eyes", "face in the moon", "tresses in the peacock's luxuriant train" and "the stream's small waves". However, such a union is again apparently incomplete because the speaker gives an anguished cry saying, "O cruel one! I see not your whole likeness anywhere in any one thing" (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 162). The fractured image of the beloved as presented in the above-mentioned lines becomes analogues with the individual consciousnesses as present in the individual spectators. A union of the lovers can be metaphorically read as a realization of the ultimate consciousness that expands from the individual consciousnesses. This idea links with the concept of "Brahmasvadanahodarah" which was formulated by Abhinavagupta. The concept of "Brahmasvadanahodarah" can be translated as, in Princy Sunil's words, "Rasa is akin to the realization of Brahma". Thus, at a deeper level, the desire of the speaker (*yaksa*) to become one with his beloved (*yaksi*) can be interpreted as a desire akin to the realization of a higher consciousness in the form of the eternal principle. This eternal principle can be tasted by either a physical tasting of the orgasmic pleasure that stems from the sexual act or by a tasting of the *sringara rasa* in all its fullness and complexity. Sadly, none of these tastings is materialized in the poem, so that in the end, all one is left with is a hope of reunion and not an actual meeting between the lovers. Therefore, the open ending of the poem balances on two opposing possibilities of Eros and Pathos, and any of these possibilities is probable owing to the uncertainty of the rain cloud, which may at any point in time dissolve in its elements of "mists and light, winds and water" (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 138). Hence, the *rasa* that emerges in the imaginative world of the poem is incomplete and a suspect category, and most probably, it is not as important as the *rasa* which the reader/spectator tastes in the substantive world of the poem.

As has been pointed out before, the poem is schematized into the twin worlds of the real/substantive and the imaginary. The real/substantive constitutes the beginning and the ending of the poem, that is to say, it focuses on the present condition of the *yaksa* as one who is "luster dimmed" (Chandra

Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 137) and “love-sick” (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 138), where as the imaginary manifests in the form of the *yaksa*’s imaginary journey of the rain cloud between the earthly and the paradisiacal realms. The imaginative world is what constitutes the major portion of the poem and has been discussed at length in the preceding paragraphs. It is the real/substantive world of the poem which will now be briefly touched upon to explore how the *kami-kamarta* or ‘passionate’ and ‘sick with passion’ speaker grows wise and peaceful through his mental outpourings. The entire venture of the monologue turns into a talking cure whereby the self of the speaker, in Chandra Rajan’s words, “attains to some measure of understanding that is more than resignation or sheer acceptance of the inevitable” (Chandra Rajan, Introduction to *Kalidasa: The Loom of Time*, 72). In the end the speaker devotes an entire stanza to a philosophical musing:

But no more of me; reflecting deeply  
 I bear up, drawing on my own inner strength;  
 you too, lady most blessed,  
 should resist falling into utter dejection.  
 Whom does happiness always attend  
 Or misery always befall?  
 Man’s state on earth like the rim of a wheel  
 goes down and comes up again (Chandra Rajan, *Meghadutam*, 163).

This stanza draws attention immediately to the hope of a reunion as hinted through the image of fortune likened to “the rim of a wheel,” which will, eventually, turn about and pull the fortune of the lovers back to zenith. However, what has been killed by the time the *yaksa* speaks these lines is the anxiety that the state of separation entails. The speaker assumes a stoical stance and abnegates all that is restless, anxious and nervous. In other words, the *sthayibhava* of the speaker transmutes from *rati* to *nirveda*, so that the ultimate *rasa* derived from the poem as a whole is neither *srngara* nor *karuna*, but *santa rasa*. The whole focus of the poem spins around this new-found tranquility in the speaker-as-spectator, so that not only does he draw strength and courage from his inner being, but also resists his lover from “falling into utter dejection”.

Chandra Rajan in the introduction to the text, *Kalidasa: The Loom of Time, a Selection of his Plays and Poems*, explains this ending very efficiently. She states the following:

..a curse is also a metaphor for the arbitrariness of life; it points to that inexplicable, even absurd element that is of the very essence of life and which is not only beyond explanations and justifications, but beyond all comprehension...It concretizes that troubling question which faces every human being at one time or another: Why did this happen? Why does it have to be so? The curse also shapes the answer to that question in the form of that uncertain certitude with which man has to shore up his crumbling faith in order to survive, call it Fate or *Karma* or 'the absurd', or simple acceptance—'This is how things are; this is life.' Sakuntala herself blames her own actions in a former life for her unhappiness in the present: the Yaksa's response is acceptance, with the faith that things have to change for the better (Chandra Rajan, Introduction to *Kalidasa: The Loom of Time*, 50-51).

Thus, the *yaksa's* acceptance of his fate reflects a tranquility which necessarily stems from the pain and the suffering he undergoes on Rama's Hill. *Ramagiri* is a powerful symbol of suffering and penance (*tapasya*), which is established right at the beginning of the poem and becomes necessary in the realization of, in Rajan's words, "learning and growing up; sometimes it is the only way to gain that maturity which is at the bottom the ability to see life steadily and as a whole" (Chandra Rajan, Introduction to *Kalidasa: The Loom of Time*, 72).

Hence, in the framed-narrative mode of Kalidasa's poem, *Meghadutam*, by studying the protagonist, *yaksa*, as the seer or spectator of his imaginative world, the reader/spectator tastes the *santa* or the tranquil *rasa* as the predominant primary sentiment of the poem. Of course, in order to sufficiently enjoy this *rasa*, the mental plane of the reader has to be devoid of all obstacles and correspond with the *sthayibhava*, *nirveda*, of the *santa rasa*. Thus, the overall sentiment that Kalidasa's *Meghadutam* emanates is undeniably that of the tranquil, because in the framework of the imaginary neither a realization

of the erotic sentiment (*srngara rasa*) nor that of the pathetic sentiment (*karuna rasa*) is made apparent. Therefore, the overarching sentiment established in the poem is, undoubtedly, the *santa rasa* or the sentiment of tranquility.

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