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## An introduction to Sandesakavya

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### Abstract

In Sanskrit lyrical poems are broadly classified into two. The Sandesakavyas mostly come under the erotic type. The earliest lyrics stanzas are found in the Rigveda. Rigveda, Ramayana and the Mahabharata which are specimens of excellent lyric poetry. Kalidasa's Meghasandesa may be the first work of considerable length of a purely lyrics style. Many later poets who were inspired by the lyric work of Kalidasa have written sandesakavyas imitating Kalidasa in their content, style etc.

**Keyword:** Parallelism, tranquillity, inanimate, portrayed

### Introduction

Lyrical poems are known as Khandakavyas in Sanskrit. In these type of poems, plants and animals are treated with great charm. Lyric poems are divided into two classes, they are erotic lyrics and devotional lyrics. The stotras belong to the devotional type. Sandesakavyas belong to the erotic type. These erotic lyrics contain beautiful poems describing nature's beauty and the feelings of human beings. Rigveda, Ramayana and Mahabharata are the specimens of lyrical poetry. In the Puranas and Ramayan we have the message of Rama through Hanuman, and Nala through the Swan. All these might have given a poetic inspiration for Kalidasa. Thus came a new branch of literature namely Sandesakavyas. The present paper is an attempt to explain Kalidasa's meghaduta as an introduction to Sandesakavya.

The idea of Rama's message was the source of Kalidasa's inspiration. Theme of the poem is a message sent through a cloud by a separated lover Yaksha, to his beloved wife, who was far away in Alaka. Various attempts have been made to get at the source which my have suggested the central idea of sending a message. Kalidasa is trying to present a picture universally true, at the same time realistic and idealized clearly conceived and combined into one of a love-in-separation and his mental anguish, emotions and moods during the helpless period of separation. It is the first creation of the Poet's fancy to invest the inanimate cloud with the feeling of the animate.

The story of Rama included in the Kishkinda kanda and Sundarakandas constituted the main source and basis for Kalidasa's Meghduta. The idea of the cloud as a messenger has the parallelism in the great epic Ramayana, where Rama sends a message to Sita through Hanuman from Kishkinda to Lanka. We can see the words in Rama's message and the Yaksha's message are in a same manner.

The commentators of Meghasandesa have the view that the idea of representing the cloud as a messenger came to Kalidasa at the period of the great epic Ramayana.

“Kave yakshavrthantha Sitharaghava Vrthantha Samaadhi asthi ithi, Kechith”.  
(Purna Saraswathy)

“Sitham Prathi Ramasya Hanumatsandesam manasi nidhaya meghasandesam Kavih krthavaan  
ithi aahu”

(Mallinatha)

Many of the situations of Kalidasa's Meghduta as compared with Ramayana and identical. Kalidasa provides a touch of similarity between the Ramayana and his own kavya, also his close respect with Valmiki ramayana. Many such similarities could be seen and compared as in Meghasandesa sloka 1 and sloka 12<sup>th</sup>.

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The embassy of Hanuman, conveying Rama's message to Sita, the words of the message etc are... in the same manner. The two poets came very close to each other in the use of ideas and expression and the depth of love in separation etc. The mountain described by Kalidasa in Meghaduta is identical with that which is mentioned in the Valmiki's Ramayana, where Ramainhabited during his exile. The tell-tale expressions Ramagiryasrameshu and Janakathanaya Snanapunyodakeshu which come in the formerly mentioned stanzas.

The main characters, the emotional background as well as the physical environment and many incidents along with the details appear distinctly to have been taken over from the great epic. In the first chapter of Sundarakanda Hanuman is described mahameghasankasha, vidyutganavibhooshitha, pavanayoni, vayusoonu, kamaroopa etc... Hanuman flying over the ocean to Lanka has been repeatedly compared with a big cloud. Hanuman travelled through the sky to communicate the message of Rama to Sita. Description of the way and the flying Hanuman, most probably is likened to big roaring and attended with lightening cloud.

Meghaduta is the first creation of poet's fancy to invest the inanimate cloud with the feeling of the animate. This work shows a clear picture of love in separation. At the same time we can see the beauty of nature. The creation of the poet is highly imaginative. The poem is beautiful, glorious, lovely and sweet. The theme of the poem is an image of the beautiful land. It is a love romance of the newly married lovers. Young Yaksha out of passion for his recently wedded wife, neglects his duty. Then he is banished from the heavenly city for one year to the lovely life at Ramagiri. His unhappy and gloomy time passes on. After a few months, on the first day of the rains he saw a dark cloud. The Yaksha loses tranquility of his mind. He cannot discriminate between animate and inanimate objects. Kalidasa shows this picture through the fifth stanza of Meghasandesha.

In Ramayana also we can see Rama in the same state of mind. To find out Sita Rama asked about her to each and every plants and creatures around him. He requests the cloud to convey his message of consolation to his beloved.

The lyric poem Meghasandesha consists of one hundred and fifteen stanzas. All the stanzas are composed in Mandakranta metre of four lines of seventeen syllables. The poem is divided into two parts. The first part is called Purvabhaga or Purvamegha. In Purvabhaga, the poet describes the path of the megha from Ramagiri to Alaka. This part is the description of the eternal nature. The second part is uttaramegha or uttarabhaga. In this part the poet describes the city of Alaka, the beauty of Yaksha's wife her changes in separation and lastly the message of Yaksha. In this part the poet mainly describes the human feelings.

Kalidasa is a poet of Nature. Nature and man are closely related. It plays an important role in human life. The poet's characters have close communication with nature. In his works nature may either be animate or inanimate. Kalidasa also says that he chooses the inanimate megha as a messenger, one of the reason is that it belongs to a noble family and is generous.

Kalidasa presents a charming picture of the Narmada River flowing on the feet of the Vindhya. It is running up and down due to uneven passes in the mountain with white water around the mountain the river looks like a white line of ash on the body of an elephant when seen from the height. This vividly portrayed in the nineteenth sloka of Meghasandesha.

In this poem Kalidasa draws beautiful pictures of evening. Then he suggests the cloud to worship Siva through which his life will be fruitful. Siva is worshipped in the temple of Mahakala. At the evening worship in the Siva temple the poet suggests the cloud to serve as a drum. During the thaandava nirtha, Siva stretches his arms upwards. The cloud over his arms bears red lustre of lightning due to the reflection of the setting sun. At that time Siva seems to wear the elephant's skin from which the drops of blood is trickling. Thirtyeight sloka of Meghasandesha beautifully exemplifies the scene.

### Conclusion

The success of Kalidasa's Meghasandesha can be seen in the origin of a number of Sandesa Kavyas in Sanskrit and in other languages.

'Hamsadesha' of vedandadesika is a beautiful Sandesakavya. In this work Sri Rama sends message to Sita at Lanka through a Swan. 'Kokilandesha' is a Sandesakavya of Uddanda Sastri. This work composed in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Khatakarpara was one of the nine gems in the court of Vikramaditya. This Khatakarpara wrote a small poem in twentytwo verses known as Khatakarparakavyam. This poem describes a love message sent by a young wife to her lover through a cloud. Pavanaduta is another work of ghoyee. Ghoyee was one of the court poet of king Lakshmanasena of Bengal. Sukasadesha, Bhanga Sandesha, etc. are some other Sandesa Kavyas. As mentioned above we have a number of Sandesakavyas still the rank of Meghasandesha has not yet changed to the second or third place.

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