

THE POETICAL TRANSMUTATION OF SOME PHILOSOPHICAL  
CONCEPTS IN KUMĀRASAMBHAVA

When we want to study critically a poem, we find that it is a complex of many interrelated strata. There is, firstly, the sound-stratum, *śabda*; the next stratum which arises from the first is that of meaning, *artha*. The combination of these two gives rise to a syntactic structure which is the poetic world. The ultimate goal of the study of poetry should be, as Sanskrit poetics discovered long ago, enjoyment, aesthetic delight, *rasa*. However, there is often a long way to go between the first encounter with a poetic text and the final experience of *rasa*; this experience is not altogether gratuitous. There is first the problem of textual criticism, i.e. study in the stratum of *śabda*; then the study of the various problems of the units of meaning, *artha*, as those of semantics, imagery, diction; as a result of which the literary critic arrives at the stratum of the poetic world.

The realities that fill the poetic world can be either imaginative realities or conceptual realities — philosophical ideas.

Poetry cannot exist without the imaginative realities; philosophical ideas are not essential to it. Yet even in poets who are said to be the least philosophical, we often find a substratum of ideas. Literary analysis either neglects to explore this substratum, or else remains content with the finding of evident philosophical aphorisms which are embedded in poetry.

One may pick up from the works of Kālidāsa, for instance, verses which embody a certain idea. A study of these verses can lead us to the so-called « philosophy of Kālidāsa ». But it is not such an intellectualist search which we are going to undertake as a literary critic; this philosophy does not form an integral part of the poetic world, — for even if we take the philosophical verses out of their context, they do not lose their philosophical value. They lie, indeed, only in the borderland of the poetic world.

In this paper we are not interested in the surface-philosophy of Kālidāsa. There is, we believe, a whole substratum of philosophical ideas

which has contributed to the making of his poetic world. As it is not possible, within this brief survey, to make a thorough analysis, we shall just take an instance from *Kumārasaṁbhava* (KS) and try to reveal one such philosophical element transmuted into the poetic fabric of the Kālidāsian *kāvya*.

The problem that should preoccupy us in our critical quest for the philosophical substratum is the manner in which a certain concept has become transmuted into a living reality, the manner in which the poet has given it body and life. In poetry, writes Georges Cattaui, « l'Idée se fait Verbe »<sup>1</sup>. And in this connection he uses words and expressions such as « become embodied », « become perceptible », « transsubstantiation ». Other critics too have spoken of this sea-change, and have pointed out the difference between the use of idea in philosophy and its use in poetry or artistic creation. Newton P. Stallknecht speaks of the « mutations that ideas most usually undergo as they pass from thinker to artist »<sup>2</sup>. The poet and the thinker may have the « same » idea but the poet's treatment of the idea is « imaginative, figurative, or metaphorical ». The thinker has to elaborate an argument; he has to be logically consistent. He even sacrifices aspects of reality which do not fall within the given limits of a system. But the poet knows that life is vaster than thought, he mocks at logical consistency, and does not hesitate to entertain contradictory doctrines, for life is multifarious and complex. And he also knows intuitively that what is contradictory within a closed system is self-existent in an open world. Poets make use of philosophical ideas but they transmute or transsubstantiate them.

We have seven works of Kālidāsa, three plays, two shorter poems, and two literary epics or *mahākāvya*s. Of these two epics *Kumārasaṁbhava* is the earlier, a work perhaps of his early manhood. *Raghuvaṁśa*, « The Dynasty of Raghu », is a work of his full maturity. Keith, like almost all other historians of Sanskrit literature, recognizes the presence of philosophic ideas in his works, but he writes: « Youth and manhood are no time for deep philosophic views, and the Kālidāsa of the *Rtusamhāra*, *Meghadūta*, and *Kumārasaṁbhava* remains within narrower limits »<sup>3</sup>. According to Keith, his philosophic views find fullest expression in his later *kāvya*, the *Raghuvaṁśa*.

This statement is true if we take into consideration only the surface philosophy. If we look deeper we find that behind both these poems there is the same metaphysical world from which the poet draws his idea-objects. But he uses these idea-objects differently in the different poems. In the KS the ideas are concretized; conceptual realities have merged in imaginative realities.

1. GEORGES CATTALUI, *Orphisme et prophétie chez les poètes français 1850-1950*, Paris, 1965, p. 12.

2. NEWTON P. STALLKNECHT, *Ideas and Literature*, in « Comparative Literature: method and perspective », Southern Illinois University Press, 1961, p. 123.

3. A. B. KEITH, *A History of Sanskrit Literature*, London, 1920, p. 99.

In order to grasp the process of this concretization we shall take a modern example which lies perhaps, intellectually and spiritually, nearer to many readers. We are thinking of Paul Valéry's *La Jeune Parque* which Georges Mounin has called « a Bergsonian allegory »<sup>4</sup>.

*La Jeune Parque* shows us how Valéry has transmuted concepts of philosophy into poetry. Here there is a mythological figure through whom ideas are changed into symbols. Marcel Raymond commenting on this poem says<sup>5</sup> that we see here a figure half-girl, half-goddess, walking down to the sea. « La mer, explains Raymond, symbolise (...) le mouvement, la vie inconsciente et créatrice; elle symbolise aussi l'âme, vivante, désirante, obscure, informe »<sup>6</sup>. It does not fall within the purview of our study to analyse the whole poem. We shall only say that Valéry has changed into concrete symbols the different elements of the philosophy; the poem is therefore not versified philosophy but symbolic, where every object, every metaphor creates to the eye what would otherwise remain abstractions only. The separation that man feels from the universe to which he is fatally bound body and soul, is a dualism which man can hardly endure. One solution would be annihilation, return to the sea of primal chaos, but Valéry finally sings the triumph of life. The girl returns to life, to sunshine:

... malgré moi-même, il le faut, ô Soleil,  
Que j'adore mon coeur où tu te viens connaître,  
Doux et puissant retour du delice de naître,  
Feu vers qui se soulève une vièrge de sang  
Sous les espèces d'or d'un sein reconnaissant.

We see that there is no metaphysical pose; everything is object, concrete, palpable; but these objects are fraught with suggestive evocations. We can again quote Marcel Raymond who has caught very clearly the spirit of this symbolical transmutation:

« Etranger à tout didactisme, jamais le vers ne se laisse dépouiller de sa pulpe, se ne laisse traduire. Le poème entier invite à la réflexion philosophique, sans cesser de cheminer dans le clair-obscur des images et de la musique, sans jamais perdre contact avec les sources qui l'animent et sans briser les doux liens qui le tiennent suspendu »<sup>7</sup>.

In Kālidāsa's poetry too, many a reader feels the underlying thinking, the substratum of philosophic ideas, but the immediacy of the poetic shock and pleasure moves him so profoundly that he has no time, nor inclination, to examine the poem intellectually. We feel, however, that an exploration into the world of ideas which were at the base of the poetic structure as influences will not hinder our appreciation; it will

4. « une allégorie bergsonienne », Georges Mounin, *La communication poétique*, Paris, 1969, p. 189.

5. MARCEL RAYMOND, *De Baudelaire au Surréalisme*, Paris, 1966, p. 163.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 163. On this subject one will read with profit pp. 157-169.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 165.

add a new dimension, even if that be only an intellectual dimension, to our approach. We believe that poetry is not just a « criticism of life », a philosophic view enunciated as poetically as possible, but the seizing of the « presence » that is there at the origin of all « concepts ».

When we read carefully the *KS* we feel indeed, like many other readers of the poem, that the marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī typifies in some way the union of Puruṣa and Prakṛti, the supreme soul and the dynamic Nature by which the world is created. But when we try to disentangle the thoughts from the poetry we find it extremely difficult. For the structure of the poem is very complex, the poem unfolds itself on different levels. On the mythological, narrative level we have a simple story of the marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī for the birth of the war-god Kumāra. This surface meaning is evident. And although it is beautifully narrated we cannot remain satisfied only with this. It is the total structure we have to look for; and this structure, we believe, is an orchestration of several themes, of which is central the theme of puruṣa-prakṛti.

Yet it is not this philosophical theme which we shall analyse here. There is another, less evident, which we shall try to disengage: the idea of the cosmic order.

In the *Māṇḍukya-Upaniṣad* it is said that *brahman* is *catuṣ-pāt*, four-footed, i.e. has four statures:

*sarvaṁ hy etad brahma ayam ātmā brahma so 'yam ātmā catuṣ-pāt*<sup>8</sup>.

All this indeed is *brahman*. This self is *brahman*. That which is this Self has four statures.

These four statures are respectively (1) *brahman*, (2) *īśvara*, (3) *hiranya-garbha*, and (4) *virāj*.

This is an ancient idea basic to the Indian thought which was already expressed in the *Rg-veda* (X,90). The Absolute is there poetically represented as the Cosmic Man, *puruṣa*,

*puruṣa evedaṁ sarvaṁ yad bhūtaṁ yac ca bhavyam*

all this is the *puruṣa*, that which has been and that which is to be.

In the same hymn it is said that he has four quarters, of which three are immortal in heaven, *tri-pād asyāmṛtaṁ divi*, and only one quarter is manifest as all creatures and things, *viśvā bhūtāni*. It is this last quarter which is the World, *virāj*, that which we perceive in our waking state, with our senses and mind.

*Hiranya-garbha*, the Golden-germ, is the World-soul, that which sustains the world, the earth and the sky, *sa dādāhāra pṛthivīm dyām* (*RV* X.121.1).

The next status is that of *īśvara*, Lord, the personal God, *saḥ*, He. In the *Purāṇas* it is he who assumes the names Śiva, Viṣṇu.

8. *Māṇḍukya-Upaniṣad*, 2.

Finally we have the fourth status, *turīya*, which is the status of undifferentiated *brahman*, the Absolute, *tat*, That. Speaking of these four statuses Radhakrishnan writes, « In many passages, the *Upaniṣads* make out that *Brahman* is pure being beyond all word and thought. He becomes *īśvara* or personal God with the quality of *prajñā* or pure wisdom. He is all-knowing, the lord of the principle of *mūla-prakṛti* or the unmanifested, the inner guide of all souls. From him proceeds *Hiraṇya-garbha* who, as Demiurge, fashions the world. From the last develops *Virāṭ*<sup>9</sup> or the totality of all existents. The last two are sometimes mixed up »<sup>10</sup>.

We shall now see how Kālidāsa has transmuted these ideas in *KS*.

### i. *Brahman*.

The highest status of *brahman*, which is beyond mind and speech, beyond time and space, beyond manifestation, cannot be caught in words and has therefore little relevancy in poetry. The ancient sages have tried to give an idea of that Absolute in negative terms, endeavouring to arrive at the attributeless by process of gradual elimination of all attributes. This is the *akṣara*, Imperishable of the *Upaniṣads* and the *Gītā*.

*akṣaram brahma paramam (Gītā 8,3)*

The *akṣara*, imperishable, is the supreme *brahman*.

And again:

« That, O Gārgi, the knowers of *brahman* call the imperishable, *akṣara* » says Yājñavalkya who tries to define It by a series of negations. « It is neither solid nor atomic, neither short nor tall, neither (fiery) red nor moist. It has no shadow, no darkness; It is neither air nor ether; It is without any attachment; It is without taste, without smell, without sight, without hearing, without speech, without mind, without lustre, without life-breath; It is faceless, immeasurable; It has no inside nor outside; neither does it enjoy anything nor does anyone enjoy It »<sup>11</sup>.

If such is the notion of this *akṣara brahman*, immutable and attributeless, how can It be changed into poetry which is by definition a seeing, a concretization? Therefore we find that Kālidāsa took the only course left to him: instead of the Vedāntic *brahman* he has sung the praise of the purāṇic *Brahmā*.

When a form and a name are given to the formless and the nameless we have no more the same *brahman*. No metaphorization or symbolization is here possible. We can symbolize only that which we are able to know. The knowledge may be mental, sensual or it may be mystic, extra-intellectual. But *brahman* being unknowable in its *turīya*, fourth status, it is no use trying to symbolize it. As soon as we name It, we descend to a lower level of consciousness.

9. Nom. sing. of *virāj*.

10. RADHAKRISHNAN, *The Principal Upaniṣads*, London, 1953, p. 698.

11. *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka-Upaniṣad*, III, 8.8.

This highest status is beyond the grasp of human knowledge, therefore Kālidāsa takes *Brahmā* to represent this status; this he does by proclaiming him as the origin of all the other statuses. He is *īśvara*, lord of the world but he has no lord above him: *jagad-īśo nirīśvaraḥ* (2.9); he is also *hiraṇya-garbha*; from his infallible seed cast in the womb of the primordial waters is the phenomenal world born; he is the source and origin of the world.

*yad amogham apām antar uptam̄ bījam aja tvayā  
ataś carācaram̄ viśvam̄ prabhavas tasya gīyase* (2,5)

You cast, O the Unborn One, your supremely potent seed in the womb of the waters; from there arose the world of moving and unmoving objects, of all that you are proclaimed the Source.

He is also the origin of humanity; Man and Woman are fractions of himself, *ātma-bhāgau* (2,7), he is all the elements, fluid and solid, gross and subtle, light and heavy (2,11); he is *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*, Spirit and Nature (2,13).

Kālidāsa speaks therefore in terms of religion and mythology about That, *tat*, which is beyond speech, mind, mystic or poetic intuition. Here the transmutation is not poetic and not something that Kālidāsa has imagined. It is the general purāṇic notion of the creator *Brahmā* which he has taken wholesale. Although there is here hardly any poetic invention or creative imagination at work yet it fulfils an artistic purpose: it gives perfection to the fourfold divine plan.

## ii. *Hiraṇya-garbha and Virāj*

We now come to the double status of the world and the world-soul, *virāj* and *hiraṇya-garbha*. Radhakrishnan says that these two aspects are sometimes mixed up<sup>12</sup>. In Kālidāsa's poem too we find that the poet has very skillfully represented these two aspects as a homogenous whole in his conception of *Himālaya*. The very first verse leaves us in no doubt whatsoever about this universal double aspect; *Himālaya* is at the same time the world on which the divine play is to be enacted, and he is also represented as sentient, the divinity that is hidden in the world.

*asty uttarasyām̄ diśi devatātmā Himālayo nāma nagādhirājaḥ  
pūrvāparau toya-nidhī vagāhya sthitaḥ prthivyā iva māna-daṇḍaḥ* (1.1)

In the North stands the god-souled *Himālaya*, sovereign over the Mountains; lain down his sides bathed in the eastern and the western seas, he appears to measure the earth.

The cosmic dimensions that the poet gives to the mountain-range indicates that it is not just a portion of the world but the world itself. And *Himālaya* has a self which is divine, *devatātmā*, god-souled; when

12. Vide note 10.

personified he becomes the world-soul. This identification of Himālaya with *hiranya-garbha* on the one hand, and *virāj* on the other will become more evident if we compare Kālidāsa's description of Himālaya with the Ṛgvedic hymn to Prajāpati (X,121), another name of *hiranya-garbha*. It almost seems, when we read the hymn side by side with the different passages about Himālaya in the poem, that Kālidāsa had this hymn in mind while writing; for even the style has one very striking similarity which, in my opinion, is hardly fortuitous. After having introduced the god-souled Himālaya the poet proceeds to describe him; and this description is grammatically joined to the first verse with a series of subordinate clauses introduced by the relative pronoun *yad* (who) in its various declensional forms like *yaḥ* (nominative), *yam* (accusative), *yasya* (genitive), *yasmin* (locative) or its adverbial form *yatra* (where). In the Vedic hymn too we find the same procedure used. The difference in style between the two is that which exists between Vedic poetry and classical poetry. In the Vedic poem the relative clauses are short and simple, in Kālidāsa's they are more elaborate. Nevertheless one cannot but be struck by this stylistic resemblance.

Naturally only a stylistic similitude cannot be considered as sufficient ground for identifying Himālaya with *hiranya-garbha*. We have to look deeper in the semantic field. There too we find several clear indications of this symbolism<sup>13</sup>. Let us take a few instances.

The Vedic poem says that *hiranya-garbha* « supported the earth and the sky » *dādḥāra pṛthivīm dyām*; that « by him was made firm the lofty sky and the earth », *yena dyaur ugrā pṛthivī ca dṛḷhā* (st.5). And Kālidāsa says that Himālaya's strength is able to support the earth *yasya sārāṇi dharitri-dharaṇa-kṣamarāṇi* (1,17), « he bears the burden of the world », *dhuram udvahaṭā bhuvah* (6,30); he is also said to support the earth from the bottom of the nether world, *ā rasātala-mūlāt tvam avālabhisyathā* (6,68). Thus the idea of Himālaya carrying or supporting the earth is very explicit; in fact in classical Sanskrit the epithets *bhūdhara*, *bhu-vṛt*, supporter of the earth, had become synonymous to the mountain. But Kālidāsa never uses a word casually; he gives back to the words all their original vigour and metaphorical value. Thus in the previous example we find that he lays a great deal of emphasis on the idea of the Mountain as supporter of the earth. As to the idea of the supporter of the sky or heaven, we have also several allusions. On the one hand Kailāsa, the abode of Śiva, is situated on the Himālayas according to the mythological accounts. The heavenly beings, Apsaras (1,4) Siddha (1,5), Vidyādhara (1,7), Kinnara (1,8) live on the mountains. On the other hand we find that Kālidāsa has poetically expressed the

13. In the verse of the Vedic hymn there is explicit mention of the mountains which exist by the might of *hiranya-garbha*: *yasyeme himavanto mahivā*, by whose might are all these snowy mountains ». However here there is no personification of the mountains, neither identification with the World-Soul. The word is in plural and points evidently to the created world, to aspects of *virāj*.

idea that Himālaya supports the sky. The peaks rise high; the colour of the red minerals of the peaks is reflected on the clouds, *balāhaka-ccheda-vibhakta-rāgām... dhātumattām* (1,4). The summits rise far above the clouds; this is very beautifully expressed by saying that the Siddhas, afraid of the rain, run higher towards the sunny summits: *udvejitā vṛṣṭibhir āśrayante śṛṅgāni yasyātapavanti siddhāḥ* (1,5).

*Hiranya-garbha* is called in the RV, the sole lord of the world, *bhūtasya... patir ekaḥ* (st.1) This idea is again implied by making Himālaya the king of all the mountains<sup>14</sup>. On his material body roam animals, men and heavenly beings; minerals are found on his body; all herbs grow there; he is by his double nature all this world of moving and unmoving things. He is the Supreme incarnate in the form of inanimate thing; he is the source, the womb of all things moving and unmoving:

*sthāne tvāṁ sthāvarātmānaṁ Viṣṇum āhuṣ tathā hi te carācarāṇāṁ bhūtānāṁ kukṣir ādhāratām gataḥ* (6,67)

You in your immovable aspect are rightly called Viṣṇu<sup>15</sup>, for your centre has become the recipient of all creatures movable and immovable. This verse confirms further the identity of the World-Soul and the world with the two aspects of Himālaya.

The Vedic poet says next that the arms of *hiranya-garbha* extend between the extreme limits of the sky

*yasyemāḥ pradiśo yasya bāhū* (st.4)

and he measures the space in the atmosphere

*yo antarikṣe rajaso vimānaḥ* (st.5)

This notion of vast extension and of measure is also clearly expressed by Kālidāsa. Himālaya stands like a measuring-rod, spanning the earth between the Eastern and the Western seas.

*pūrvāparaṁ toya-nidhī vagāhya stitaḥ pṛthivyā iva māna-daṇḍaḥ* (1,1)

*Pūrva* and *apara*, the east and the west, correspond to the *pradiśam* of the *Veda*, the image of the outstretched arms is also here well suggested, so also the word *māna-daṇḍa* reproduces the word *vimānaḥ*. Elsewhere Kālidāsa says that the limbs of Himālaya stretch to the extreme limits of space, *vyāpta-dig-antāni... aṅgāni* (6,59).

This comparison shows quite clearly the closeness between the concept of *hiranya-garbha* and that of Himālaya. There are other sug-

14. *nagādhirāja* (I,1); he subjugated the earth under his feet which were heavy due to his very substance, *sāra-guru*:

*namaṣyan sāra-gurubhiḥ pada-nyāsair vasundharām* (VI, 50)

Here we should also notice the double-entendre of *sāra-guru*. Physically he subdues the word under his rocky feet, but *sāra-guru* can also mean « mighty because of his essence », i.e. his all-pervasive divinity.

15. Mallinātha points out the reference to the *Gītā* (X, 25) where the Lord says: « I am Himālaya among unmoving things », *sthāvarāṇāṁ Himālayaḥ*.



gestions too which point to this resemblance and justify the assumption of Himālaya as the symbol of the World-Soul. *Hiraṇya-garbha* it is said was cast in the waters by *Brahman*; we may also say that the World-Soul rises from the waters of Chaos into creation. This is again suggested by the second line of the verse (1,1) quoted above. The extreme ends of Himālaya are plunged in the oceans; this evokes the image of the mountain rising from the ocean of infinite waters, like the World-Soul from the undifferentiated primal chaos.

*Hiraṇya-garbha* is also called *Prajāpati*, in the Ṛgvedic hymn (X,121) and elsewhere. Later in the mythology we find that *Prajāpati* is the son of *Brahmā*, the Creator. The mythological aspect of *Prajāpati* too is reflected in the conception of Himālaya. The poet has made the association between Himālaya and Dakṣa, — one of the former *Prajāpatīs*; this indicates that Himālaya too is to be regarded as *Prajāpati*.

*athāvamānena pituḥ prayuktā Dakṣasya kanyā Bhava-pūrva-patnī satī Satī yoga-visrṣṭa-dehā taṁ janmane śaila-vadhūm prapede* (1,21).

Now, the virtuous Satī, Dakṣa's daughter, was in a former birth the wife of Bhava (Śiva); driven by her father's scorn she, by the power of yoga, left her body and resorted to the Mountain's wife for rebirth. The reincarnation of Satī, daughter of the *Prajāpati* Dakṣa, is clearly narrated; and this suggests by association the reincarnation of *Prajāpati* as Himālaya.

As we read the poem, god-souled Himālaya appears more and more intensely as the Soul of the World. But in his static aspect he is also *virāj*, the World which we perceive as the form of *brahman* with out outward senses, in our waking consciousness. We shall now try to see how Kālidāsa uses the material form of Himālaya as the World, the body of *hiraṇya-garbha*.

Once we have assumed the aspect of the World-Soul, the aspect of *virāj* is self-evident; it is the material, physical aspect of Himālaya. Kālidāsa has on several occasions laid stress explicitly on this double aspect. Poetically this aspect has a greater importance. For it is in this world, the body of *brahman* as *hiraṇya-garbha* that God, *īśvara*, manifests himself with his *śakti*; it is here that the divine drama is enacted. This world is the stage, the playground, *līlābhūmi* of the God of Love, Śiva. *Virāj* is also the visible form of *brahman* where all the beauty and delight is expressed. And the highest function of poetry, we know, is to reveal to the eye this beauty and this delight. Kālidāsa, supremely gifted with the power of poetic seeing, has created this world; *virāj* in all its magnificence. Himālaya in his physical aspect is the stage of this cosmic play.

Here is life in all its teeming beauty. Beings, divine, semi-divine and human, animals and birds move on the mountain slopes; here grow all kinds of trees, herbs, reeds; here flow the rivers, the cascades fall; everywhere there is the play of life, love and light. Death and darkness are also there but the overall impression is one of *ānanda*, joy. There

is death: the lion has killed the elephant, but the impression of blood does not last for the snowy streams have washed the blood away: *tuṣāra-sruti-dhauta-raktam*<sup>16</sup>. Kālidāsa has evoked this perceptible form of the world in all its richness and grandeur; he makes us grasp it with all our senses.

We find thus that the two aspects of the Cosmos, soul and body, *hiranya-garbha* and *virāj* are mixed up in the conception of Himālaya. Brahmā symbolizes the transcendent status of the eternal plan; and Himālaya the cosmic status in its twofold manifestation, psychic and physical. Now we have to consider the individual or the personal status, that of *īśvara*, Lord of creation.

### iii. *īśvara*

The Indian religio-philosophic tradition which Kālidāsa inherited and in which he lived and worked, had evolved a mode of global approach to the Supreme Reality. The idea of the impersonal transcendental *brahman* was abstract, purely metaphysical, and so also the concept of *hiranya-garbha*. These concepts satisfied the reasoning mind, the intellectual man, but they were unable to satisfy the heart's love, *bhakti*, or emotions, feelings and sensations which yearn also to know the Real. Therefore when man approached *brahman* as a mystic, as a lover, as a poet, he found *brahman* as *īśvara*, not an abstract concept, but an individualized Presence. The One, *ekam*, became *īśa*, lord, *deva*, God. Here philosophy was assimilated to a mystic-poetic vision; the pure concept *brahman* merged into the luminous Presence which was called variously as Viṣṇu, Śiva, etc.

In the early phase of Indian philosophy and religion the distinction between the impersonal *brahman* and the personal *īśvara* was not made clear. *īśvara* was that aspect of *brahman* which acted in the world in relation to the individual creatures. But this does not mean that He is inferior to the Absolute *brahman* or the cosmic *hiranya-garbha*. For the *bhakta*, lover, for the mystic and the poet, it is this aspect which predominates. We have thus a two-fold relation: *brahman-īśvara* and *īśvara-hiranya-garbha*. In the former relation, says Radhakrishnan, « the first term indicates infinite being and possibility, and the second suggests creative freedom »<sup>17</sup>. But they are essentially the same. Both these aspects are above the world. When we consider the relation *īśvara-hiranya-garbha*, we find that *hiranya-garbha* is related to the world. He is therefore, in a sense, the cosmic being created by *īśvara* pervading the universe. « *Hiranya-garbha* », says Radhakrishnan, « is organically bound up with the world. Himself a creature, the firstborn of creation, he shares the fate of all creation in the end. But *īśvara* is prior to the

16. *vide* KS I, 3-16.

17. *The Principal Upaniṣads*, p. 63.

World-Soul. The principle of process applies to God. While he is the expression of the non-temporal he is also the temporal. *Īśvara*, the eternal Being functions in the temporal *hiranya-garbha*<sup>18</sup>.

In Kālidāsa the idea of *īśvara*, represented by Śiva, is far more advanced than that which we find in the *Upaniṣads*. It is the idea as developed in the *Gītā* and later in the great purāṇic literature. Kālidāsa's Śiva has much in common with the Blessed Lord, *bhagavat*, of the *Gītā*. Indeed we see that Śiva is more than *īśvara* of this triple division *brahman-īśvara-hiranya-garbha*; he is the *puruṣottama* of the *Gītā*. Brahmā, in *KS*, says that neither he nor Viṣṇu can measure the extent of his might:

*sa hi devaḥ paraṁ jyotis tamaḥ-pāre vyavasthitam  
paricchinnā-prabhāvarddhi na mayā na ca Viṣṇunā* (2,58).

That God is indeed the supreme light whose abode is beyond darkness; neither Viṣṇu, nor I, can apprehend the extend of his glory.

With the introduction of Śiva, the fourfold philosophical substratum is complete.

We therefore see, at least in the case of *KS*, that there are philosophical concepts which have gone in the making of the very texture of Kālidāsa's poetic world. The poet has not given us a versified philosophy; the idea of the fourfold cosmic plan finds its embodiment in the total organic arrangement of the poem, in imagery, symbolism, diction. We believe that such an analysis can reveal to us many hidden strata of thought and enhance our appreciation and understanding of a poem, and of the poet's complex world.

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18. Ibid. p. 62.