

Canonical Indian Literature and Bhasa: A Study in Texts and their Aesthetics

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ABSTRACT

Indian Knowledge System, the repository of the entire literary and aesthetic corpus of the sub-continent, has a rich repertoire comprising texts like *The Ramayana* and *The Mahabharata* and critical texts like *The Natyasastra*. The former belong to the canon of Epics, they stand representatives of a tradition comprising texts like Chandrabati's *Ramayana*, Jaini *Ramayana*, *Asura: Tale of the Vanquished* by Neelakantan, *Draupadi* by Pattanaik, etc. The genres that the tradition comprises vary from poetry to novel and a long oral tradition, as Nabneeta Dev Sen opines, of songs from these epics. In the list, however, is another writer, belonging to the canon of Sanskrit Dramaturgy, whose works are the oldest surviving extant texts in Sanskrit drama: Bhasa, the father of Sanskrit Drama. Chronologically, Bhasa is placed between the composition of *Natyasastra* and *Malvikagnimitram* and his plays are dramatic representations of the events of *The Ramayana* and *The Mahabharata*.

The research paper attempts to delve into two primary questions: that of aesthetic fidelity of the father of Sanskrit drama, to a tradition of writing that precedes him; and secondly, his literary fidelity to the foundational narratives in the Indian Literary Traditions. Through an interrogation of Bhasa's works on these two parameters, and applying the terminologies of Adoption, Adaptation and Abrogation, the paper shall strive to place him in the canon of Indian Literature and the implications of his positionality, on Indian Literature, especially in relation to contemporaneity.

Keywords: Adopting, Adapting, Abrogation, Sanskrit Dramaturgy

The discourse of resistance in literature, to the standards of language and representation set by the power holders can be categorized under three main categories: Adopting, Adapting and Abrogating. While the first term refers to the use of the structural register of the powerful to project a thematic resistance; the second is a partial use of the erstwhile master's structural register for resistance to thematic paradigms. Abrogation, on the other hand, is a complete refusal to tow the master's register of theme and structure in favour of one's own preferences, even if in the same language and genre. Ashcroft, in *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts* defines it as:

...abrogation has been used to describe the rejection of a standard language in the writing of post-colonial literatures, it can...be used to describe...abrogat[ion] [of] any centralizing notion of the 'correct', or standard, way of doing things and re-define the practice in a different setting. (4)

The entire construct founds itself in the concept of a "re-presentation" of the erstwhile powerless, through the "native gaze" instead of the "master's gaze." The concepts, then, hold validity over any type of "re-presentations," and one name that stands out in this canon is that of Bhasa.

Bhasa, the Sanskrit dramatist of antiquity, is considered to be the father of Sanskrit Drama. He remained a writer in oblivion till his manuscripts were re-discovered in 1913 by Indian scholar Ganapati Shastri. He finds a fleeting reference in Kalidasa's *Malvikagnimitram* and is supposed to have composed his plays after the composition of *Natyasastra*. Bhasa, in his plays, re-models the epics into the dramatic genre. Thirteen plays are today attributed to him and most are re-renderings of the Indian Foundational Epics: *The Ramayana* and *The Mahabharata* and two from the latter place Krishna as the protagonist.

It remains that in the canon of any literary tradition, the father is representative of all that the canon stands for as he is the epitome of what that canon stands for. In other words, he is the wielder of the power the canon holds in the literary paradigm and dissensions, if any, to the norm are ones that are not supposed to be in the canon but have somehow survived, and are invariably not a quality of the works of the father of a canon. A father is the finest specimen of what the canon projects as its mainstream.

Bhasa, the father of Sanskrit Drama, then, 'must' fall under the canonical parameters of, not only Sanskrit Dramaturgy espoused in the *Natyasastra*, but also under the fidelity of the Indian Epics and mythologies, at least on thematic domains, if not generic. In line with the "conventions" of being a father, in *Urubhangam*, Bhasa abides by the dictates of the *Natyasastra* of not presenting violent scenes on stage. The entire war Mace fight (*Gada Yudh*) between Duryodhana and Bhima is presented through a dialogue between two soldiers:

First Soldier: Ah! here has begun the duel with maces between the middle Pandava, Bhimasena, furious at the dragging of Draupadi by the hair, and the emperor Duryodhana enraged at the slaughter of a hundred brothers. Dvaipayana, Halayudha, Krishna, Yidura, and the other worshipful chiefs of the Kuru and Yadu races are looking on. (Bhasa 48)

Moreover, in tandem with the thematic consistencies with the Epics, in *Dootvakyam*, he adheres to the canonical representations of Duryodhana:

Chamberlain: Victory to the king! Here is Narayana, the best of men, arrived as an ambassador from the Pandavas' camp.

Duryodhana: Nay, not so, Master Badarayana. What? Is Kamsa's serving-man Damodara your best of men? Is that cowerd thy best of men? Deprived of lands, reputation, and wealth by Brihadratha's son, is he thy best of men? What conduct is this for an attendant on the 'sovereign's person. What insolent words. Ha! to hell with you." (Bhasa 5)

The inordinate pride of Duryodhana, at display when Krishna comes to the Kaurava Camp, in the *Udyoga Parva* of *The Mahabharata*, with offer of negotiations and peace, is re-created identically by Bhasa, in his play. The process of Adopting, hence, is adhered to in *Dootavakyam*.

The tracing of "tradition" as Eliot says in "Tradition and Individual Talent", however, leads to the demonstration of "Individual Talent" with other plays of his. The very character of Duryodhana has its binary shades in *Pancarattram (The Five Nights)*:

Chatioteer, tell me, who has carried off Abhimanyu? I will myself set him free. For I began the family dissension with his kin, and so in this the wise will lay the blame on me. Moreover, I hold him for my son, and afterwards of the Pandavas. And though there be a feud in the family the children are not to blame. (Bhasa 136)

Pancarattram, a three-act play, is based on the Fourth Book of *The Mahabharata*, the *Virata-Parva*. The character of Duryodhana, in the play, is representative of a fair and just person, in complete command of his *dharma* and duties. The principle is re-affirmed when, towards the end of the play, he

persists with his promise of returning the share of kingdom to the *Pandavas* if news about them be provided in five days:

Duryodhana: Very well, I grant the Pandavas the realm they had before. For if troth be dead all men are done; as troth stands firm so do they. (Bhasa 139)

His act eliminates all propositions and possibilities leading to war, the *Mahabharata*, thereby presenting an absolute Abrogation from the epical canon. Moreover, the virtuous Duryodhana finds an extension in *Urubhangam* where Bhasa calls him *Suyodhana* and this foregrounds the character delineation of Duryodhana in the play, as the Hindi prefixes “du” and “su” are elaborately referential of badness and goodness respectively: while words prefixed with “du” carry a negative representation, those with “su” as prefix highlight positivity.

The deviations are also evidently explicit in his re-rendering episodes from *The Ramayana* and *The Mahabharata* in the dramatic form. One major work, *Pratimanatakam* is a seven-act re-rendering of *The Ramayana*. While the generic variation from Epic to Drama is evident, there are striking thematic deviations in the text from the original. A striking instance is Bharat’s awareness about the abduction of Sita and his readiness to move his army, led by him, to assist Rama.

In addition, in *Madhyama-vyayoga* Bhasa deviates partially from the structural nuances of Sanskrit Dramaturgy, thereby indulging in Adapting. One of the ten dramatic types, enunciated in *Natyasastra*, this dramatic kind has certain traits: It is a One-Act Play covering events of a single day with one well-known personality, generally a saintly-king, as the hero and a few female characters. In addition, there is no divinity to deal with the challenges presented before the hero. Bharata Muni, in *Natyasastra* says:

The Vyayoga should be constructed by experts with one well-known Hero as its basis, and it should include a small number of female characters and [the events related to it] will be of one day’s duration only...It should have a royal sage as its Hero and not a divine personage, and it should include battle, personal combat, challenge and angry conflict. (370)

In the play, while the dramatic term *Vyayoga* is used and it is a one-act play dealing with events unfolding in a single day, there are two equally important characters in the text: Bhima and his son Ghatotkacha. In addition, divine weapons are used by Ghatotkacha, to hold Bhima captive.

Striking deviations in the dramatic canon are visible in some of the other plays like *Karnabharam* which is a re-rendering of the scene from *The Mahabharata* in *Aryanya Parva* where Karna gives his *kundala-kawach* to Indra who is disguised as a Brahmin. However, warned by *Suryadev*, Karna offers his *kundala-kawach* for an exchange of Indra’s spear. Indra obliges with the condition that Karna shall be able to use it only once and at a time of dire need. In *Karnabharam*, however, Karna, in full knowledge of the deceit of *Indra*, does not ask for the spear and is reluctant to receive it as a gift that the angel brings:

Angel: Karna, Indra is grateful to you and regrets taking your armour and ear-rings. So he sends this spear, named *Vimala*, an unfailing weapon to slay one of the Pandavas. Pray accept it.

Karna: O fie! I do not take a return for a gift. (Bhasa 39)

The glory that the character of Karna garners in the process becomes more foregrounded in his awareness of the fact that devoid of the *kundala-kavacha* he might not return alive from the battlefield. Though the text does not end in the death of Karna, it does end with a tragic note evoked by Karna’s knowledge of his impending doom. The drama, then, albeit not a typical tragedy, carries the shades of being one through an overpowering sense of approaching death:

Karna: Be not dismayed, King Salya. Slain, one goes to heaven, victorious one wins glory. The world thinks much of either, so one must win something in a battle. Besides—These steeds as swift as Garuda, born of splendid Kamboja stock, though they have no hope of returning from the war, shall protect me, albeit past protection. (Bhasa 36)

Dnyansagar P. Gadre, in his thesis, mentions that *Natyasastra* asserts: “There should be only a single main plot, the end should be happy and no scenes that are vulgar, fear-generating or inciting should be included” (66) and yet *Karnabharam* hints at approaching death. The structural variation, inducing a death at the end, is also evident in *Urubhangam*, and is more poignantly expressed with the death of *Duryodhana*:

Duryodhana: Death has sent an aerial car, the wain of heroes, drawn by a thousand swans to fetch me. Here I come.

[Expires.] [They cover him with a cloth.] (Bhasa 58)

Urubhangam, then, becomes the epitome of a tragedy as it acquiescences with the register of a tragedy. However, in the process, it deviates from the register of Sanskrit dramaturgy as it does not accede to the concept of a tragedy. In addition, the death of Duryodhana is graceful and calm:

Duryodhana: Ah my heart's desire is now fulfilled. My life is slipping away. Here are my revered ancestors Santanu and the others. There rise my hundred brothers with Kama at their head. Here too is angry Abhimanyu seated on Indra's elephant, scolding me. See his side-locks and how Mahendra supports him in his palm. Urvashi and these other nymphs have come for me. Here are the great oceans manifest. There are the great rivers, Ganges and the rest. (Bhasa 58)

Also, the reactions of the characters to the death of Duryodhana mark a distinct digression, abrogation of the rules of Sanskrit Dramaturgy. *Utsrstikanka*, a dramatic type is defined by the reactions of the male and female characters in *Natyasastra*:

...will treat women's lamentations and despondent utterances at a time when battle and violent fighting has ceased; it should include bewildered movements [of mourners], and it must be devoid of the grand, the energetic and the graceful styles and its plot should relate to one's fall.... (Bharata Muni 371)

However, in *Urubhangam*, in spite of it being the sole representative of *Utsrstikanka*, the female characters do not adhere to the norm strictly:

Gandhari: Suyodhana, my child, are you tired? (Bhasa 54)

Malavi: I am but a girl, your wedded wife, and so I weep. (Bhasa 55)

Pauravi: My mind is all made up where I shall go, and so I weep no more. (Bhasa 55)

Gandhari, Malavi and Pauravi are sorrowful yet not despondent at the death of Duryodhana and carry themselves gracefully, unlike the norm. Moreover, abrogating the norm is Dhritrashtra, a male character, as he is distraught and despondent, much unlike the dictates of the *Natyasastra*:

Dhritrashtra: Alas! Is this the king? In stature he was like a golden pillar, the sole overlord of kings in the world, and now my miserable son lies on the ground no better than the broken bolt of the door. (Bhasa 54)

The composure of the female characters stands in direct contrast to the despondency of male characters and is extremely unlike the dictates of the *Natyasastra*. The entire construct of *Karnabharam* and *Urubhangam*, then are Abrogations from the canonical Sanskrit Dramaturgy.

The Abrogations in the plays of Bhasa extend into his flouting of the norms of *Rasa* propounded by Bhasa. Bharatmuni describes *bhava* as the essence of literary and dramatic art and *bhavanukirtana* as the function of *natya*. Amongst the *bhavas*, *Krodha Bhava* emerges from insult, abuse, quarrel, dispute, etc and is represented by swelling of nostrils, elevated eyes, etc. Accordingly, it should have emerged in Karna when he was wronged and abused with his property taken away. But, in the contrary, it is the audience that is angered at him being wronged. This primarily happens because Karna is ok with the abuse. Moreover, the *Raudra Rasa* for which *Krodha* is the *sthayi bhava* should emerge from falsehoods, neither does it emerge in Karna, nor does it lead to any of the subsequent representations, like red eyes, on stage. To add to it, *Raudra Rasa* is a quality of haughty humans (*danavas*), but Karna not haughty, rather he is one who is humble and at peace with himself. Karna, rather than evoking the ‘right’ *bhavas*, evokes the ‘incorrect’ *Vira Rasa* when wronged, through *Vinaya* (humility).

There are, then, adoptions, adaptations and abrogations in the dramas of Bhasa. A critical and comprehensive overview becomes visible when these are assessed in relation to the delineation of the character of Duryodhana, within the purview of his original character in *The Mahabharata* and also without it, as an independent character. While Duryodhana is the proud and haughty character from the Epic, in *Dootvakyam*, the one who ill-treats Krishna and does not allow him his position; he is also a caring uncle who takes it on himself to free Abhimanyu when he is taken captive in *Pancarattram*; and is the person who accedes half the kingdom to the *Pandavas* in the same text.

The entire corpus and register of the character delineation, of Duryodhana, is representative of the independence he took as a writer and composer; to take Duryodhana out of the Epical compulsions and create him in his plays, ‘negligent’ of the lack of consistency in the process points at two directions: first, that the character drawn and the episodes may be a re-rendering of the *Epic*, it is not necessary fidel to the original; and secondly, owing to the first, the character of Duryodhana, in a work, is independent, from the Epic and from the character therein; and from the Duryodhana in his other texts. The entire corpus of Bhasa’s writings, then, is an abrogation of the Epic; albeit individual texts can be placed under one of the three terms of adoption, adaptation and abrogation.

In addition, concerning the adoption, adaptation and abrogation at the dramatic level, from the nuances of Sanskrit Dramatic Aesthetics, it is evident that Bhasa did use Poetic License in abundance and at will, in order to produce a corpus of works that need to be seen as one, in spite of their independent existence. The very use of all the three types is indicative that Bhasa did not intend to create the aura of fidelity around his works, but strove towards a canon verging on “writer’s pleasure”, a pleasure less aesthetic and more thematic. In other words, in Bhasa, there seems to be an ideal Dostoevskian hero, one who relies on the principle of “free will” and the “most advantageous advantage.” This is defined by Dostoevsky in *Notes from Underground*:

One’s own free unfettered choice,...however wild it may be, one’s own fancy worked up at times to frenzy—is that very ‘most advantageous advantage’, which comes under no classification and against which all systems and theories are continually being shattered to atoms...What man wants is simply INDEPENDENT choice, whatever that independence may cost and wherever it may lead. (33-34)

The “independent choice” of Bhasa is explicitly evident in his delineation of the character of Duryodhana, on binary parameters in different texts, an exercise for which it is hard to find a parallel in literature. Alike example is found in his fidelity and non-fidelity to the Epics in different texts.

Consequently, the works of Bhasa can be evaluated, both, as individual texts, and also as a corpus of works together. As the former, we see the individual texts as re-renderings of the Epics, as adopting, adapting or abrogating them; the latter highlight the poetic license that Bhasa uses in his plays leading to the creation of a style of writing that, though deriving from the Epics, stands as representative of a new paradigm of writing, Alternative Literatures.

Alternative Literatures are an extension of the Canonical Indian Literature that is represented through two major texts: *The Ramayana* and *The Mahabharata*. Traditionally, Alternative Literatures are considered to be a new literary genre, a product of the 20th Century. These epics and myths have been, in Alternative Literatures or Re-presentations, accepted or interrogated. The canon has its practitioners in writers like Anand Neelakantan who has written *Asura: Tale of the Vanquished* and a two-volume re-rendering of *The Mahabharata* called *Ajaya* and *The Rise of Kali*; Amish, the author of *The Shiva Trilogy*, *The Ram Trilogy* and *The War on Lanka*; and Devdutt Pattanaik who has authored *Draupadi*. The trend however, is not limited to writings in English and there have been works in Marathi like Shivaji Sawant's *Mritunjay*; in Hindi, like *Shakuni* by Ashutosh Nadkar; and in various other languages. In addition, there have been generic variations too with plays like *Thus Spake Shoorpanakha*, *So Said Shakuni*, written by Poile Sengupta.

The texts cater to the post-colonial theoretical framework of being adoptions, adaptations or abrogations of the primary epics and mythologies. One thing, however, that has stood common with all these texts is the humanization of the characters and the events, a feature that is attributed, in the West and in the Orient, too, to the origin of the genre of novels. Moreover, a debate over this 'new', theme-centred, writing has had its opposers as well and the claim is that these need to be treated as independent texts and subjects and hence cannot be called re-presentations. This, however, constructs its register around the presence of certain texts, written as well as oral, which preceded these new texts.

The presence of Bhasa, however, interrogates the "newness" of this canon of writing as he, with his works, dates Alternative Literatures back to antiquity, as remote as the beginning of the *Anno Domini*. He, then, becomes not only the father of Sanskrit Drama but also the progenitor of Alternative Literatures comprising re-renderings of the Foundational Epics and myths.

In addition, his capability to 'play' with his characters and, in consonance, offer them appropriate voices in disparate texts makes him unique even as a practitioner of Alternative Literatures. His corpus of literature predates the concept of polyphony of Bakhtin who defines it in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* as:

The essence of polyphony lies precisely in the fact that the voices remain independent and, as such, are combined in a unity of a higher order than in homophony. If one is to talk about individual will, then it is precisely in polyphony that a combination of several individual wills takes place, that the boundaries of the individual will can be in principle exceeded. One could put it this way: the artistic will of polyphony is a will to combine many wills, a will to the event. (21) Bhasa, through the entire corpus of his plays based on the foundational Indian Epics, generates a multitude of voices, irreconcilable and each independent in its own respect to a degree that it becomes impossible which carries Bhasa's voice. The polyphony, generated by Bhasa, through the character of Duryodhana, that does not follow any set pattern, is reflective of human nature, with all its shades of virtues and limitations: the grey.

Through adaptation and abrogation, Bhasa's plays also foreground their stature as crevices and junctures that assert heterogeneity over the professed homogeneity of the literary order. This literary

order, in case of Bhasa, is of two types: the thematic nuances of the Epics; and the norms of Sanskrit Dramaturgy. Bhasa interrogates both: while questioning the former are texts such as *Pancarattram* and *Karnabharam*; the latter is challenged by texts such as *Madhyam-Viyoga* and *Urubhangam*. These crevices serve a crucial purpose in literature and are referred to as “Anecdotes” in New Historicism. Gallagher and Greenblatt opine, in “Counterhistory and the Anecdote”:

The anecdotes would open history, or place it askew, so that literary texts could find new points of insertion. Perhaps texts would even shed their singular categorical identities. (51)

Bhasa’s plays, too, open-up the apparent history that these Epics have been claimed to be representing. An inclination towards a sacred homogeneity that engulfed the Indian social order in the 20th and 21st centuries, in spite of its register being steeped in a post-colonial, and hence, regional-centred paradigm, generated a facade of historicity around the primary Indian texts, *The Ramayana* and *The Mahabharata*. This historicity around literary texts generates an aura of homogeneity and a unidirectional point-of-view that, then, becomes the standard, the fact. The Bakhtinian notion of the Epics been frozen, though in a different context, is a valid analogy to define the homogeneity and unidirectional point-of-view. In “Epic and the Novel”, Bakhtin says:

We encounter the epic as a genre that has not only long since completed its development, but one that is already antiquated...the life they have in history, the life with which we are familiar, is the life they have lived as already completed genres, with a hardened and no longer flexible skeleton. Each of them has developed its own canon that operates in literature.... (3)

These rigidities are a part of the mainstream literary canon, especially one that derives from the foundational epics of any culture. These works are sacrosanct and unquestionable in their idea and themes. Bhasa’s plays, however, create fissures in these standards through his adaptations and abrogations of the storyline of the Epics and by non-fidelity to the norms of Sanskrit Dramaturgy. In doing this, the plays of Bhasa also de-freeze the Epical Canon, turning it into a fluid, susceptible and open to variations and variegated points-of-view. This de-freezing allows the erstwhile ‘other’ to express himself in literature; and also creates space for re-visiting the Epics from a perspective that is also socially ‘othered.’ In the “Author’s Note” to *Asura: Tale of the Vanquished* Anand Neelakantan says:

Many years ago, I witnessed a spectacle many of my readers would not even have heard about, let alone seen. It was a day of grand celebration. Even the hot tropical sun shining above could not diminish the pervading festive spirit. There were more than 100,000 people assembled to watch the procession and pay homage to the presiding deity of the temple. The devotees belonged to all castes and creeds and the fervour they displayed was bewitching to watch. Strangely enough, the majestic festival was in honour of a man I had always believed to have few admirers, if any. The deity at the Malanada Temple in Poruvazhy village, Kerala, is none other than the most reviled villain of Indian mythology - Duryodhana. (12)

The social presence of Duryodhana as a hero, one different from the traditional image constructed through *The Mahabharata*, validates the alternative renderings of the Epics and myths. As Neelakantan further says:

Once I started viewing the Kaurava Prince through the eyes of the villagers of Poruvazhy, a different picture of Duryodhana began to emerge - far removed from the scheming, roaring, arrogant villain of popular television serials and traditional retellings. Instead, here was a brutally honest Prince, brave and self-willed, willing to fight for what he believed in. Duryodhana never believed his Pandava cousins to be of divine origin;... (17-18)

It is plays like Bhasa's that offer space and voice to this unknown facet of the 'others' in the mainstream. This voicing of the other is also symbolic of an 'aberration' in the literary order, indicating the presence of heterogeneities as inherent in otherwise homogenous orders. Epics, then, emerge as representatives of the literary canons and not history, as Rushdie, in the "Introduction" to *Midnight's Children* says:

...my mother...immediately understood that it was 'just a story... (xii)

These *petit-recits* break the monotony and hegemony of the *grand-recits*, not only in literature but also in history. Hence, even if the Epics are considered historical by nature, the presences of texts like Bhasa's, coupled with the presence of temples as in Poruvazhy village, break the homogeneity of historicity:

...the miniature completeness of the anecdote necessarily interrupts the continuous flow of larger histories; at the anecdote's rim, one encounters a difference in the texture of the narrative, an interruption that lets one sense that there is something—the "real"—outside of the historical narrative. The anecdote thereby exposes history. (Gallagher 50)

The narratives that have been generated, around literature and history, by the mainstream, have been so deeply embedded in the psyche that any 'aberrations' seem incredulous and impossible. Anand Neelakantan, in the "Author's Note" to *Asura: Tale of the Vanquished* says about the temple of Duryodhana:

My first reaction to the story was one of incredulity. Why would a Prince of Hastinapura, located at the northern-most border of the country, have come all the way to a village at the southern tip of India - a distance of more than 3000 kilometres -thousands of years ago? The answer to my question was like a slap in my face. The villager asked me why the Adi Shankaracharya had travelled so many times from a village in Kerala to Kedarnath or Badrinath, in his short lifespan of 32 years? (16-17)

The reply of the villager is a testimony to the *petit-recit* and its significance in the lives of people, literally and socially, and the need to bring it to the fore, adding it to the façade of history, making it more authentic and comprehensible. Bhasa's plays, offer literary complement to this social testimony and in the process become the voice of what Foucault refers to in "Lives of Infamous Men" as:

Lives...that survive only from the clash with a power that wished only to annihilate them or at least obliterate them, lives that come back to us only through the effect of multiple accidents.... (163)

However, looking beyond the homogenizing tendencies that have a recent upsurge, the nation that *Natyasastra* refers to *Bharatvarsha*, when Bharata says, "the place where [Scenes of] all the plays which have celestial heroes, and which [treat] a battle, capture and killing [of enemies] should be laid in Bharata-varsha" (371), has always been, what Nirad C. Chaudhary calls, "The Continent of Circe," the place that subsumes all that enters it, as its own. India socially is, what novel is in literature, something that absorbs everything, and the plays of Bhasa and him being the father of Sanskrit Drama, in spite of all the digressions, are representative of the eclectic nature of India. Bhasa and his plays might not stand the test of fidelity in terms of loyalty to the Epical themes and aesthetics of Sanskrit Dramaturgy, but seamlessly fit into what India, *Bharat-varsha*, has stood for since antiquity, its multifacetedness and acknowledging of the *petit-recits*, in literature and life as Radhakrishnan says in "The Hindu View of Life":

The Hindu thinker readily admits other points of view than his own and considers them to be just as worthy of attention. (19)

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