

Topic Page: [Kālidāsa \(5th century AD\)](#)

Definition: **Kālidāsa (lived 5th century AD)** from *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*

Indian epic poet and dramatist. His works, in Sanskrit, include the classic drama *Sakuntalā*, the love story of King Dushyanta and the nymph Sakuntala.



Summary Article: **Kalidasa**

From *The Columbia Encyclopedia*

Image from: [Sanskrit in The World's Major Languages](#)

(kā'lidā'sa), fl. 5th cent.?, Indian dramatist and poet. He is regarded as the greatest figure in classical Sanskrit literature. Except that he was retained by the Gupta court, no facts concerning his life are known. His three surviving plays are *Sakuntala* (or *Shakuntala*), *Vikramorvasi*, and *Malavikagnimitra*.

These court dramas in verse (*nataka*) relate fanciful or mythological tales of profound romantic love intensified and matured by adversity. *Sakuntala*, which is generally considered his masterpiece, tells of a maiden, Sakuntala, whom King Dushyanta marries. The king is bewitched so that he forgets his bride until a ring he gave her is discovered in the body of a fish. In Kalidasa's two epics, *Raghuvansa* and *Kumarasambhava*, delicate descriptions of nature are mingled with battle scenes. The other poems of Kalidasa are shorter and almost purely lyrical. *Meghaduta* [cloud messenger] is a description of the regions of India crossed by a cloud traveling between a tree spirit and his wife. *Ritusamhara* describes the course of pastoral love through the six seasons into which Indians divided the year.

See Miller, B. S. , *The Theatre of Memory* (1984); studies by M. B. Harris (1936) and K. Krishnamoorthy (1972).

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Kalidasa. (2018). In P. Lagasse, & Columbia University, *The Columbia encyclopedia* (8th ed.). New York, NY: Columbia University Press. Retrieved from <https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/k%C4%81lid%C4%81sa>



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