Interesting and Amazing Creations in Sanskrit

There is in Sanskrit a whole body of literature that is based on a play with the language. This is not great literature or inspired poetry, but more in the nature of linguistic acrobatics. These writings are often obtuse and not very easy to understand because they require a great mastery over all the complex grammatical structures. Therefore, they are known as adhamakāvyas, meaning ‘poems of a lower quality’. However, far from being worthless, they demonstrate the amazing possibilities inherent in the language, along with the originality and creativity of the writers.

Several great poets, including Kalidasa, Bhartrihari, Magha and Sriharsha have made use of the adhamakāvyas, sometimes even in their major works, in a spirit of playful indulgence. There are instances where entire epics have been written in this style. These are known as citrakāvyas and are part of the alaṅkāraśāstra or Sanskrit rhetorics. Some of the creations border on the unbelievable and would perhaps be impossible in any other language. Here we will look briefly at a few examples to enjoy their flavour and taste.

Varnaściras

The varnaściras are ślokas written with certain constraints on the
use of consonants. For example, here is a śloka where all the 33 consonants in Sanskrit come in their natural order.

कः खरोधाहि विच्छौजा ज्ञाति ज्योति जादु
तथोद्धीनुष्पर्वर्भीमयो अरित्वाशियां सहः।

Who is he, the lover of birds, pure in intelligence, expert in stealing the strength of others, leader among the destroyers of the enemies, the steadfast, the fearless, the one who filled the ocean? He is the king Maya, the repository of the blessings that can destroy the foes.

And here is a śloka which uses only three consonants out of the 33 — द (da), व (va) and न (na).

देवानां नन्दनो देवो नोदनो वेदनिन्दिनम्।
दिबं दुदाव नादेन दाने दानवनिन्दिन:॥

The God (Vishnu) who causes pleasure to the other gods and pain to the opponents of the Vedas, filled the heavens with a loud sound as he killed Hiranyakashipu [a demon who forbade his son to take the name of Vishnu.]

This is a śloka which uses only two consonants, भ (bha) and र (ra).

भूरिभिभीरसर्पाभूभापौर्भुरिरिमिरिः।
भृद्धिरभिभापौर्भीभुरिरिरिनिरिः।॥

The fearless elephant, who was like a burden to the earth because of its heavy weight, whose sound was like a kettle-drum, and who was like a dark cloud, attacked the enemy elephant.

Most amazingly, entire ślokas have been written using a single consonant. Here are two examples — one using न (na) and the other using द (da) :
न नौनृत्रो नृत्रेनो नाना नानानना ननु।
नृत्रेनो नृत्रेनो नानेना नन्दननुमु।॥⁴

A man is not a man who is wounded by a low man. Similarly, he is also not a man who wounds a low man. The wounded one is not considered to be wounded if his master is unwounded. And he who wounds a man who is already wounded, is not a man.

दादो दुद्रदुद्रदादी दादो दुद्रदादो।
दुद्रद दद्रे दुद्रे दादददददददो।॥⁵

Sri Krishna, the giver of every boon, the scourge of the evil-minded, the purifier, the one whose arms can annihilate the wicked who cause sufferings to others, shot his pain-causing arrow at the enemy.

And here is a śloka, where each quarter is written using only one consonant. The first quarter is formed of ज (ja), the second of त (ta), the third of भ (bha) and the fourth of र (ra).

ञञञञञञञञञञञञञञञञञञञञञञ
ञञञ�性�性�性�性
ञ�性�性�性�性
ञ�性�性assage: ॥⁶

Balarama, the great warrior and winner of great wars, resplendent like Shukra and Brihaspati, the destroyer of wandering enemies, went to the battle like a lion stopping the movement of his foes, who were endowed with a four-fold army.

**Sthānacitras and Svaracitras**

The *sthānacitras* are formed either by using the consonants of only one group or avoiding certain groups. This is a śloka using only the gutturals:
O you (the traveller of many countries), who bathes in the tortuous current of the rippling Ganga; you have no acquaintance with the sorrowful sound of the suffering world; you have the ability to go till the Meru mountain; you are not under the control of the crooked senses. You, being the dispeller of sins, have come on this land.

In the svaracitras the restrictions are on the use of vowels. This śloka uses only the vowel Ṛ (i*) in the first line and the vowel ṛ (a) in the second line.

श्लेष्मित्वर्तमात्रितक्षिष्टप्रियित्विनिर्धारितिसिद्धिलिंद्।
मम विश्व नमदः हर स्मरहर स्मर।

O Lord Shiva, the possessor of three eyes, the knower of existence, measurer and destroyer of the earth, enjoyer of the eight-fold superhuman power and nine treasures of Kubera, you who killed Daksha and Kamadeva. O Lord, do remember me.

Next is a śloka formed entirely with the vowel Ṛ (u).

उरुणं व्रुणु यत्सु चक्षुयुक्तं तदः पुरु।
लुल्लुः पुष्पस्वरसु मुलकुर्म महुः।

*Sanskrit vowels retain their full forms only in the beginning of a word; in the middle or at the end they are used in their respective symbolic forms, e.g. ṛ for ः (a), ṛ for Ṛ (i), ṛ for Ṛ (i),  for Ṛ (u),  for Ṛ (u), for Ṛ (r),  for Ṛ (r), ṛ for Ṛ (e), ṛ for Ṛ (ai), ṛ for Ṛ (o), ṛ for Ṛ (au); anusvāra is marked as a dot above a letter; visarga is marked as two vertically aligned dots on the right side of a letter.
The gods took refuge in Brihaspati, the lord of speech, the preceptor of the gods in heaven, when they went for the battle. They prayed so that he would remain happy and strong, and not withdraw into unconsciousness, again and again.

And this unbelievable śloka of 32 syllables uses only one consonant and one vowel in the entire verse – य (ya) and आ (ā).

यायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायā ।
यायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायायā ||

To enable the reader to understand this difficult verse, we give the anvaya or the arrangement of the words of the verse in their proper prose order.

यायाय (yāyāyā), आय (āya), आयाय (āyāya), आयाय (āyāya), आयाय (āyāya), आयाय (āyāya), आयाय (āyāya), आयाय (āyāya), आयाय (āyāya), आयाय (āyāya), आयाय (āyāya), आयाय (āyāya), आयाय (āyāya), आयाय (āyāya), आयाय (āyāya), आयाय (āyāya), आयाय (āyāya), आयाय (āyāya), आयाय (āyāya), आयाय (āyāya).

The meaning of the verse is as follows:

The sandals (pādukā) which adorn the Lord, which help in attainment of all that is good and auspicious, which give knowledge, which cause the desire (of having the Lord as one’s own), which remove all that is hostile, which have attained the Lord, which are used for going and coming from one place to another, by which all places of the world can be reached, these sandals are for Lord Vishnu.

Amitā Compositions

There are many other possibilities in the interplay of consonants, vowels and syllables or the words resulting from them. This śloka has an interesting sound effect through the use of क (ka) and
र (la). This type of composition is called *amitā*, where the same letters are used frequently.

बबुकालकोल्कालकालमनि कलकण्ठीकलकालाकुळे काले।
कल्या कलावतोंपि हि कल्यति कलिताक्रः मदन: ॥ ¹¹

Madana, the god of love, uses even the spots of the moon as his beautiful weapon at the time when the *bakula* plant shines with new buds and when the cuckoos and women with melodious voices fill the air with their enchanting sounds.

Here is another interesting example. The *śloka* is formed of four *pādas* or parts. The letters and their sequence in each quarter are exactly the same. But because they are broken and combined in various ways, different words and meanings emerge.

सभासमानासहसासपरागात् सभासमाना सहसा परागात् ॥*
सभासमाना सहसासपरागात् सभासमाना सहसासपरागात् ॥ ¹²

*1. सभा मान-आस: - हस (ऐि: सह वर्तत इति) सभा समानासहस (यति) अपरागम, अति *sabhā māna-āsah-hasa* (etaiḥ saha varata iti) samānasaḥasā, (yataḥ) aparāgam atti

2. सभासमाना (भासमानि: सह वर्तत इति) सहसा (मार्गशीर्षेण हेतुना) परागात् (काँति: अति) अति (प्राप्तिति - परागात्) *sabhāsamānā* (bhāsamānaiḥ saha varata iti) sahasā (mārgaśīrṣena hetunā) parāgāt (rajaḥ kaṇān) atati (prāpnoti-parāgāt)

3. भा (कांति:) समाना (सर्वा: , तैः सह वर्तति) सभासमाना ॥ (स्फूर्ति परात् इति सा , तैः सह वर्तत इति) सहसा। अपरागात् (अपरागमु पवतात्) bhā (kāntiḥ) samānā (sarūpāḥ, taiḥ saha varate) sabhāsamānā. (syanti parān iti sāḥ, taiḥ saha varata iti) sahasā. aparāgāt (aparasmāt parvatāt)

4. एवं भूतः असमाना - सभा - सहसा - परागात् (परागता) evaṁ bhūtā asamānā - sabhā-sahasā- parāgāt (parāgatā)
The beautiful assembly of the people inseparably connected with each other went away quickly from that mountain. This assembly was bright with lustre, pride, jubilation and a will to annihilate the enemies. It was also shining with brilliant people. Because of the month Mārgaśīrṣa the atmosphere was filled with dust caused by the rushing assembly which was adorned by the people of the same lustre who were annihilators of the enemies.

Gaticitrás

The next category of citrakāvyas are the gaticitrás. These are variations of what are known as palindromes in English – words or sentences that remain the same even in their mirror images. For example, ‘noon’ and ‘eve’ are examples of palindromic words and ‘able was I ere I saw Elba’ is an example of a palindromic sentence.

Here we have a verse in Sanskrit where each line is a palindrome; that is, it does not change when read forward or backward. The śloka therefore has an axis of symmetry at the centre.

वारणागङ्गभीरा सा साराभीगगणार्का ।
कारितारिखा सेना नासेधाबरितारिका ॥१३

It is very difficult to face this army which is endowed with elephants as big as mountains. This is a very great army and the shouting of frightened people is heard. It has slain its enemies.

In the following śloka the entire verse forms a palindrome. Therefore the second line is the same as the first line but in reverse.

निशितासिर्तोभीको न्येज्येदुःप्रणण रत्ना ।
चारणा रमते जन्ये को भीतो रसिताशिनि ॥१४
O immortals, indeed, the lover of sharp swords, the fearless man does not tremble like a frightened man in this battle full of beautiful chariots and demons who are devourers of men.

This is a śloka, which if written in reverse creates another śloka with a different meaning. Both the ślokas are given below with their respective meanings.

वाहनाजनि मानसे साराजावनमा तत्तः।
मतसारागराजें भारीहाववजनधनिं।।

And after this, that great army, which is capable of destroying the pride of the enemies and which has never experienced defeat, marched towards the enemy with strong and maddened elephants and people roaring in enthusiasm and jubilation.

निध्वनजजवहरीथा भेरे रागसातमः।
तत्तमानव्यारासा सेना मानिजनाहवः।।

That great army, with majestic and trumpeting elephants of high speed, and people filling the battlefield with their jubilant roar, suddenly became ferocious in anger in that battle of proud heroes.

There are many interesting examples of this variety. Here is an example from a poem where in each śloka the first line describes Rama and the second line Krishna. The striking feature is that the second line is always the reverse of the first line.

तं भूसुतामुक्तिमुदारहासं वन्दे यतो भव्यभवं दयाश्रीः।
श्रीयादवं भव्यवोत्तौयदैव संहारदामुक्तिमुतासुभूतम्।।

The first line addressed to Rama in prose order is:

भूसुतामुक्तिमः उदारहासं भव्यभवं यतो दयाश्रीः तं वन्दे।
I pay my homage to him who released Sita, whose laughter is deep, whose embodiment is grand and from whom mercy and splendour arise everywhere.

The second line addressed to Krishna in prose order is:

भव्यभभोयदेवं संहारदामुक्तिम् उत्त असुभूतं श्रीयादं वन्दे ।

I bow down before Krishna, the descendant of Yadava family, who is the lord of the sun as well as the moon, who liberated even her (Pootana) who wanted to bring an end to his life, and who is the soul of this entire universe.

Citrabandhas

In the citrabandhas, when the śloka is written out, the letters form interesting geometric patterns. In our first example the alternate letters of the first and the second pādas and of the third and the fourth pādas are the same. This design is known as gomūtrikā or the crisscross pattern formed by the urine of a moving cow.

काल्ल्यपुलोमतनयास्तनापिडितानि
वक्षस्थलोलिततरपाणिपिडितानि ।
पायादपायभयोत नमुचिप्रहारी
मायामपास्य भवतोम्बुमुचां प्रसारी ॥

May Indra, who uses the thunder-bolt as his weapon, who disperses the clouds in the sky, who desires to embrace and enjoy the pleasures of the bosoms of his consort Sachi, the daughter of the demon Puloma – may that Indra, having removed all illusions, protect you from the fear of all dangers and misfortunes.
This śloka creates an interesting design of a mūraja or drum.

That army was very efficient and as it moved, the warrior heroes were very alert and did their duties with great concentration. The soldiers in that army made a loud sound. The army was adorned with intoxicated and restive elephants. No one was there with any thought of pain.

Let us now see how the drum is formed. First the four pādas are written in their normal order. Now the first of the two major strings of the drum (ABC in the following figure) are created by starting from the left-hand corner and then moving to the centre of the opposite side and then back to the right-hand upper corner. Then the second major string (DEF) is created by following a similar movement starting from the lower left-hand corner. It is interesting
to observe that the syllables lying on these two strings form the first and fourth lines of the śloka. Then there are the two minor strings of the drum forming two squares (GHIJ) and (KLMN) which form the second and third lines of the śloka.

Here is an amazing verse that creates a type of magic square. When each syllable is written in one box of the square, one can read the pādas horizontally, vertically, and in many other ways, even in reverse order, and always get the same verse. This type of verse is called sarvatobhadra (valid in all ways), and is a complicated mixture of syllabic palindromes and acrostics. Each quarter-stanza is a palindrome; the first four syllables of the first quarter are formed by taking the first syllables of each quarter in the same order; the first four syllables of the second quarter are similarly the same as the second syllables of each quarter, and so on.
O man who desires war! This is that battlefield which excites even the gods, where the battle is not of words. Here people fight and stake their lives not for themselves but for others. This field is full of herds of maddened elephants. Here those who are eager for battle and even those who are not very eager, have to fight.

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Our last example in this category is exceptionally beautiful. It is based on a well-known problem in mathematics. The challenge is to place a knight in one corner of the chessboard and to cover all 64 squares with the knight, without landing on any square twice. The French mathematician Euler found the answer to this problem in the 17th century. This is why this is known as Euler’s chess and knight problem.
In India a manuscript called *Pādukāsahasram* has been found, written by a Tamil saint Shri Desikan, in which there are a thousand verses written in praise of the wooden sandals of Lord Rama. In one of the chapters the saint has written the verses in various *citrakāvyas*. In the example given here, there are two *ślokas*, one after the other. The syllables of the first *śloka* are written out in the squares on a chessboard. Then, beginning with the first syllable, if the second *śloka* is read among the letters of the first *śloka*, one finds that the letters follow the movement of the knight on the chessboard, giving simultaneously a solution to the chess knight problem. In fact the writing of the verses in this fashion is far more difficult than the original chess-knight problem. One is even more amazed when one realises that the manuscript is of the 10th century and the saint lived 700 years before Euler.

स्थिराग्सा चदराष्या विहताकाँततामता ।
सत्यादुके सरसा मा रक्षराजपदं नय ॥

O sacred sandals (*pādukā*) of the *Brahman*, you are always adored by those who have committed unpardonable sins; you remove all that is sorrowful and unwanted; you create a musical sound; (be pleased) and lead me to the feet of Lord Rangaraja (Rama).

When this verse is read as per the movement of a knight on the chessboard, it creates the following *śloka*.

स्थिराता समयराजयागतरा मादके गवि ।
दुरंहसा सत्रतादा साध्यात्मकरागसरा ॥

The sandals (*pādukā*) which protect those who shine by their right attitude, whose place is in the centre of the blissful rays, which destroy the melancholy of the distressed, whose radiance brings peace to those who take refuge in them, which move everywhere, – may those golden and radiating sandals of the Brahman lead me to the feet of Lord Rangaraja.
Samasyā

We now come to some other varieties of citrakāvyas. There is a variety known as samasyā. Here the last pāda or the fourth quarter of a śloka is given to a poet, but this pāda does not seem to make sense or appears to be absurd. The challenge for the poet is to create the remaining three quarters in a matching metre, giving meaning to the last quarter. For example, the last quarter given to a poet was मृगात् सिंहः पलायते (mṛgāt sīmhaḥ palāyate), meaning ‘the lion runs away from the deer’. The verse created by the poet in anuśṭup-chanda was:

तिष्ठार्जुनाद्य सहङ्ग्रामेऽत्रा हनिष्यायम्याहं शैरे।
तिष्ठामि कर्णं किं मृद मृगात् सिंहः पलायते॥ ॥

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Karna says: O Arjuna, stand (there)! I will kill you today in the battle by my arrows. Arjuna replies: O foolish Karna! Look, I am standing here. Does the lion run away from the deer?

The next example is from Kalidasa. He was given as the last pāda just the sounds ठंठंठंठठंठठंठ (thaṭhaṇ thaṭhaṇ thaṇ thaṭhaṭhaṇ thaṭhaṇ tha). Kalidasa came out with the śloka in Indravajrā metre, which describes a scene in the palace as Ayodhya was getting ready for the coronation of Rama. The verse is:

रामाभिषेकेके मदिविहलया हस्ताच्चुयते हेमघटस्तरण्या:।
सोपानमासाध रोपित शब्दं ठंठंठंठंठंठंठंठ।।

During the coronation ceremony of Rama a golden pot fell on the staircase from the hands of a young maiden, excited and happy. While rolling down the steps the golden pot made the sound ठंठंठंठंठंठंठ (thaṭhaṇ thaṭhaṇ thaṇ thaṭhaṭhaṇ thaṭhaṇ tha).

There are some ślokas that appear to be absurd or strange in their meaning. But a more careful study reveals another hidden meaning. Here is an example of one such śloka:

हनूमति हतारमेव बानरा हर्षनिर्भरा:।
रुद्वैन्निर्देशः सर्वेः हा हायरमी हतो हत:।।

At the first reading it gives the meaning that when Hanuman killed Rama, the monkeys started dancing with joy and the demons cried. But the real meaning of this verse is:

When the garden (of Ravana) was destroyed by Hanuman, the monkeys started dancing with joy and the demons cried saying that ‘the garden is destroyed, the garden is destroyed’.

There are also verses in the form of riddles. For example, the
following verse asks one to name an object such that:

“It is black-faced but it is not a cat. It has two tongues but it is not a snake. It has five husbands but it is not Draupadi. What is it? He who knows it is a great scholar.”

कृष्णमुखी न मार्जरी द्विजिहा न च सर्पिणी ।
पञ्चभर्त्री न त्रीपदी य: जानाति स पणिह्व: ॥ २५

The answer to this riddle is ‘a pen’.

Some Interesting Verses

The devotional movement in India gave rise to different types of poetic expressions. Here are two interesting dialogues. The first is a charming episode between the little Krishna and a gopi, the milk maid. Once, a Gopi caught Krishna stealing butter from her house. Here is the little Krishna replying to the Gopi’s questions:

कस्वच बाल बलानुजः त्वमिह किम मन्नदिराश्च्चुन्या
बुद्ध तत्र नवनीतकुम्भविवरे हस्तं कार्यं न्यत्सिः ।
कर्तुं तत्र पिपलिकापनयन्यं सुताः किमुद्वृढिहिताः–
बाला वत्सगति विवेकसुमिति सज्ज्वलनं हरि: पातु व: ॥ २६

Gopi: Who are you little boy?
Krishna: I am the younger brother of Balarama. (The allusion is that Balarama had a good reputation, just the opposite of Krishna)

Gopi: Why are you here?
Krishna: I thought this is my house.
Gopi: But why have you put your hand in that butter-pot?
Krishna: To remove the ants from there.
Gopi: Then why did you wake the sleeping calf?
Krishna: To know how it moves.
The Poet: May this babbling Krishna protect you all.

The second dialogue is between Krishna and Satyabhama. Once Krishna went to Satyabhama’s room when she was displeased with him. Finding the door closed he knocked. Satyabhama pretended that she did not recognise him and asked her companion Vishikha to see who it was. Krishna, hearing the voice of Satyabhama told his name. But Satyabhama gave a different meaning to the word. Krishna gave another of his names but each time Satyabhama teased him in the same manner pretending not to know him.

अहुःल्या कः कपार्ट प्रहरति विशिष्टे माधवः किं वसंतो नों चक्री किं कुलालो न हि धरणिग्रहः किं द्विजिज्ञः फणिन्द्रः।
नाहं धीराहिमताः किमुत्क खगपतिनाः हरिः किं कपार्णः
इत्येवं सत्यभामा प्रतिवचनजितं पातु वशक्रपणि:॥ २७

Satyabhama: O Vishikha, just see who knocks on the door.
Krishna: I am Madhava (a name of Krishna).
Satyabhama: Is it spring season? (Madhava also means Spring).
Krishna: No I am Chakri, the holder of the disk.
Satyabhama: Is it a potter? (Chakri also means a potter).
Krishna: No I am Dharanidhara, the one who holds the earth.
Satyabhama: O, then you are the serpent king. (Dharanidhara also means Sheshanaga, the serpent king who carries the earth on its head.)
Krishna: No, I am not the serpent king. I am the one who killed the poisonous snake (Kaliya).
Satyabhama: O, then are you Garuda, the king of the birds? (It is Garuda who kills snakes).

Krishna: No I am Hari.

Satyabhama: O, then you are a monkey. (Hari also means monkey).

The Poet: May Lord Krishna, thus defeated by the words of Satyabhama, protect you.

Then we have two verses in praise of Lord Shiva and goddess Parvati. The first verse is very typical of a certain type of devotional movement which, in its adoration for Parvati, does not hesitate to speak in a disparaging tone about Shiva himself. The two verses run:

स्वर्य पश्चमुखः पुत्री गजाननपदान्नी ।
दिगम्बरः कथे जीवेदं अत्मपूर्णां न चेतु गृहे || २८

He himself has five faces; of his two sons, Ganesha has an elephant face and Kartikeya is of six faces. How then would Lord Shiva live, if Annapurna [another name for Parvati as the giver of food] was not there in the house?

स्वर्य महेश: स्वस्वूरो नगेश: सखा धनेश्व: तनयो गणेश: ।
तथापि भिक्षातन्मेव शाम्भि: बलीयसी केवलमीश्वरेच्छा || २९

He is himself the lord of the gods, his father-in-law, Himalaya, is the lord of the mountains, his friend Kubera is the lord of wealth, his son Ganesha is the lord of the ganas, and yet Lord Shiva begs and lives on alms. Indeed, the will of the Supreme is more mighty than all else.

We end this chapter with two interesting anecdotes regarding king Bhoja, whose court-poet was Kalidasa. Bhoja was a great patron of Sanskrit and himself a poet.
It was a common saying that in the kingdom of Bhoja, everyone was a poet. An ambassador from another kingdom happened to be there but said this was an exaggeration and was not possible. So he went out into the kingdom and far away found a poor weaver, working from morning to night to earn his living. He brought the weaver to the court and in front of the king asked him whether he could compose poetry. The weaver replied in all humility:

काव्यं करोमि न हि चारुतरं करोमि ।
यदिः करोमि यदि चारुतरं करोमि ।
भूपालमौलिमणिमणिदतपतपीठ
हे भोजराज कवयामि वयामि यामि ॥ 30

I compose poetry but not very well. If I make an effort I may be able to improve. O Bhoja, whose footprint is encrusted with jewels from the crowns of kings, I compose poetry, I weave and with your permission I am going.

The śloka of the weaver is charming in its beauty and its humility, and its final play with the three words Kavayāmi, vayāmi, yāmi where each subsequent verb is obtained from the previous one by deleting the first syllable.

On another occasion there was a serious discussion in the court. Kalidasa was absent that day and the thought came to Bhoja that what would be the verse that Kalidasa would compose if the king passed away suddenly. Bhoja was so taken up by the idea that he went with his minister to the residence of Kalidasa where he stayed hidden behind the door. The minister went in and very sorrowfully informed Kalidasa that king Bhoja had suddenly passed away. Kalidasa was overcome by grief and the sorrow burst forth in verse:

अद्ध धारा निराधारा निर्जलम्बा सरस्वती ।
पण्डिताः खण्डिताः सर्वेः भोजराजे दिशं गते ॥ 31
Today Dhara [the kingdom of Bhoja], is without a support, even Goddess Sarasvati has no support, the poets, the scholars are all overcome with grief with the passing away of king Bhoja.

The king was so moved that he walked in. Everybody was taken aback and wondered what would Kalidasa do now. Kalidasa realised what had happened and immediately came out with a new verse, echoing the first and yet with a completely new meaning.

अद्व धारा सदाधारा सदालम्भा सरस्वती ।
पण्डिता: मण्डिता: सर्वे भोजराजे पुच्छ गतेऽ || 32

Today Dhara [the kingdom of Bhoja], has gained its support, and also the Goddess Sarasvati. The poets and the scholars are now all adorned with joy with the coming of king Bhoja on this earth.

The literature of citrakāvyas is a veritable ocean. What have been given here are just a few examples, which give merely a fleeting glimpse of the extent, the variety and the richness of its contents. These types of creations demand a great ingenuity and creativity from the writers and reveal the versatility and immense possibilities of this language, which can become a perfect tool and vehicle in the hands of a master.