

Stylistic Study of Malavikagnimitra: An Attempt of Establishing Similes

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A creative figure is always conscious to make his work interesting and perpetual with the apt use of language. One gives one's message precisely and effectively employing proper linguistic devices such as Allegory, Alliteration, Anastrophe, Anecdote, Antithesis, Assonance, Cacophony, Epithet, Euphemism, Euphony, Hyperbole, Inversion, Irony, Metaphor, Metonymy, Onomatopoeia, Oxymoron, Paradox, Rhyme Scheme, Rhythm, Simile, etc. Since antiquity, a few literary devices are regularly used and being commented on for their richness and effective handling. They provide language with lucidity, euphony and simplicity and make the piece to be interesting for ages. The present article 'Similes in Malavikagnimitra' endeavors to find out skillful handling of the figure of speech 'Simile' by Maharshi Kalidasa.

Key Words: Metaphor, simile, linguistic devices, Malavikagnimitra, euphony, simplicity, etc.

Literary devices are stylistic tools that explain speech beyond its ordinary range. Such language is called figurative language that makes it different from ordinary communications maintaining beauty but affecting the clarity through ambiguity. Simile is one of the principal figures of speech in which words do not give their literal meaning. The origin of the word 'simile' is the Latin language where it means 'resemblances.' Simply speaking it is a comparison between two dissimilar objects with some similarities. Metaphor is covert comparison whereas simile is overt. Gibbs rightly observes, "Simile is fundamentally a figure of speech requiring overt reference to source and target entities, and an explicit construction connecting them."

Both metaphor and simile typically comprise an exaggeration in comparison. One more specialty of it is the imagery and metaphorical concept. The Western linguists have classified figures of speech into two categories- 'meaning form' and the 'trope.' The first changes the ordinary pattern of words, like antithesis, hyperbole, etc. The second gives change to the general meaning of the words like simile, metaphor, paradox, irony, etc. Both simile and metaphor enhance the effect and beauty of language. Simile is used in all literary genres and in day to day conversations which overtly and specifically explains the object conveying the

message beautifully. Even common folks also use it collecting material for comparison from their daily businesses and geographical areas and make their communication beautiful and effective. But more investigation by linguists is made in the field of metaphor than Simile. In this respect Bredin rightly observes, "Like metaphor, it is a semantic figure, a mental process playing a central role in the way we think and talk about the world, which often associates different spheres." The comparison can be negative or positive as it denotes the mode of comparison. Maharshi Kalidasa operates it effectively in his play while juxtaposing two dance mentors, Ganadasa and Hardatta who quarrel over their superiority as a dance mentor. Ganadasa looks down upon Haradatta in the following manner- "This man is not as good as the dust on my feet." The comparison of Hardatta with 'dust' presents before us his low standard as a dance tutor. There are many instances of affirmative similes in the present text for example Hardatta while complaining about Ganadasa says to the king, "in truth, there is the same difference between your reverence and myself that there is between the ocean and a puddle" According to Shankar Pandit that this said ironically of Ganadasa.

Similes function differently such as they communicate precisely and effectively, and extend the available resources as Kalidasa beautifully

employs Myth to describe Malavika's greatness as a student. As per the notion when the drops of water fallen into sea- shells under the influence of Arcturus, they are turned into pearl. By the way, he makes her body as sea-shells and whatever it produces in the form of dance is the pearl i. e. highly valuable and exceptional.

"I am certainly destined to become famous, for the skill of the teacher, when communicated to a worthy object, attains greater excellence, as the water of a cloud, when dropped in to a sea-shell, acquires the nature of a pearl."

Similes also function as the perceptive tools of thought which heighten the effect of the language. As a reader, one can see many instances of this function in the play Malavikagnimitra. The example of it can best be seen in the following dialogue of the king-

"I see her, who indeed, decked with the auspicious ornaments, accompanied by Kauciki in the dress of an ascetic, shines like the three Vedas incarnate accompanied by the knowledge of the Supreme Soul."

Kauciki is a Pitamardika (match-maker) means one who helps the Nayika (heroine) in attempt to gain her lover. The term 'auspicious ornaments' refers to a type of golden ornament that a Hindu woman wears it at the time of her marriage and takes it off after his death which is of highest importance and is compared to Vedas, the most sacred scriptures of Hinduism. Kalidasa gives such deep meaning using the smallest object in comparison.

The intensity of the function of similes changes on the basis of the type of text, for instance the scientific texts employs mostly comparisons and analogical reasoning. It also changes on the basis of the mood of the character and situation. If the situation is somber, the playwright has to use the same objects. AS the present play is a comedy, it seldom employs such similes. For instance, Queen Iravati uses such simile when she comes across her husband

engaged in another woman falsifying his two wives. So, she compares herself to a deer and the king to the hunter who is eager to kill and eat it.

"Oh the faithlessness of men! I indeed relying upon your deceitful speech- unsuspecting like the deer that is attracted by the whistle of the hunter-did not anticipate this."

Here it becomes necessary to state the difference among simile metaphor and analogy. Simile includes two objects and analogy four. Similes also differ from metaphors on the basis of cause, target idea and literal judgments. They are figurative and compare ideas which are seemingly incomparable and thus indicate the unexpected connection between source and target.

Simile:

Vakulavalika: Your foot shews like a red lotus.

Metaphor:

King: (to himself): My eye has perceived in its full splendor, its appropriate object, since it has seen the smiling face of the almond-eyed one.....

Parivrajika: Oh moon- faced one!

Analogy:

Parivrajika: Ah! I consider also that you have a right to the title of queen. While the fire attains extreme brilliancy from the assistance of the sun, on the other hand the moon also acquires greatness when favoured by the night.

Similes are classified into the most stereotyped or the conventionalized and fixed similes and the most creative similes. These are the two excesses of comparison. Between the two, normal (ordinary) and novel (fresh, but not unexpected) similes can be settled. The comparison of 'woman' to 'deer' and 'king' (man) to 'hunter' in the above dialogue is the example of stereotyped simile whereas the 'skill' of teacher compared to 'rain' and the 'skill' of a pupil to 'pearl' is the example of creative simile in the following dialogue by Ganadasa while explaining the beauty of Malavika's dance :

“I am certainly destined to become famous, for the skill of the teacher, when communicated to a worthy object, attains greater excellence, as the water of a cloud, when dropped in to a sea-shell, acquires the nature of a pearl”

Ortony classifies similes into two types on the basis of semantics- literal and non-literal similes. Non-literal similes handle topic and vehicle non- symmetrically and can drop the similarity markers, but in literal similes, the terms can be reversed and the similarity markers can't be dropped. We can find Kalidasa using such similes also.

Literal Similes:

Vidushaka: “Inform the king that I am favored by having that duty entrusted to me. But that unfortunate girl being guarded by the queen more carefully than before, like the jewel guarded by a snake.”

Non-literal similes:

Haradatta: King!.....He said, “ in truth, there is the same difference between your reverence and myself that there is between the ocean and a puddle.”

Fromilhague (1995) has classified similes between objective and subjective, and explicit and implicit similes. Objective similes initiate from real physical experiences and subjective similes from individual connecting devices. The explicit simile states a sense or point of similarity directly using the structure 'as...as.' The implicit simile states a sense indirectly using words 'like, just like,' etc. The explicit and implicit similes which are the basis of this article can best be noticed in the play Malavikagnimitra by Kalidasa.

The Subjective Simile:

King.-Though I endeavour to be calm, the sound of the music of the drum makes me hasten, like the noise of my own desire⁴ descending the path of fulfilment.

The Objective Simile:

King: She is like the moon-light obscured by clouds. As for your majesty, you amuse me by asking that your wishes may be accomplished, having become quite distressed like a bird hovering round the shop of a butcher, desirous of meat, but afraid to venture.

The Implicit Simile:

King: (to himself). My eye has perceived in its full splendor, its appropriate object, since it has seen the smiling face of the almond-eyed one, with the brightness of its teeth half displayed, like an opening lotus with the filaments of the flower partially visible.

The Explicit Simile:

Irawati (spitefully): Ah! My husband has a heart as soft as fresh butter.

The vehicles used in the variety of similes are as follows:

Sr. No.	Target	Sources/ Vehicles
01.	Ganadasa's mentoring	Water of a cloud
02.	Malavika's skills in dance	A sea-shell, pearl
03.	Haradatta as a dance teacher	Dust of my feet (Ganadasa's)
04.	Difference between your reverence and myself (Haradatta)	Between the ocean and the puddle
05.	Dharini's qualities as a queen	Fire attains brilliancy from the assistance from sun or the moon from night
06.	Dharini's auspicious ornaments	The three Vedas

07	Sound of the music of the drum	The noise of my own desire (king's)
08.	A stupid person becomes clever by association with wise	Turbid water is made clear by contact with the mud-dispersing fruit
09.	The brightness of its teeth half displayed (Malavika's)	an opening of lotus with the filaments of the flower partially visible
10.	Her(Malavika's) disappearance behind the curtain	The obscuration of the prosperity of my two eyes, the end of the great feast of my heart, the closing of the door of joy
11.	Thy princely qualities (king's)	The Sun's rays, The Sun climbed to the zenith, the geese in lotuses with ornamental water, pigeons under sloping roofs of the palace, peacock desirous of drinking the particles of water, flies to the revolving wheel-water
12.	The inside of stomach burns (Vidushaka's)	A cauldron in the market place
13.	Malavika's restless face	The moon light obscured by clouds
14.	King's ecstasy for meeting Malavika	A bird hovering round the shop of butcher desirous of meat but afraid of venture
15.	Malavika's fading face	Worn and thrown jasmine garland
16.	Queen's guarding of Malavika	The jewel guarded by snake
17.	Malavika's fingers	Shoots in spring
18.	Movements of fingers	Beckons to enter the pleasure garden
19.	Southern wind fragrant with mango-blossoms	The palm of hand frequently stroking me (king)
20..	My distracted heart (king's)	A heart of traveller longing for water

21.	Her pale cheeks (Malavika's)	The stalk of a reed
22.	Her a few ornaments (Malavika's)	The jasmine creeper having its leaves developed by spring and with only a few flowers
23.	Malavika's life	Vakulavalika's body
24.	Malavika's foot	A red lotus
25.	Her soft foot (Malavika's)	Young lotus, the filament of lotus
26.	Softness of king's heart	Fresh butter
27.	Faithlessness of men (king's)	The hunter
28	Simple woman	deer
29.	Man's deceitful speech	The whistle of hunter
30.	Malavika's hips	bimba
31.	Bimba-like hips	The Vindhya Mountain
32.	Golden girdle	A row of thunder clouds
33.	Queen Dharini's return	Mars retrogressing to his mansion in the zodiac
34.	Malavika and Vakulavalika's imprisonment	Two snake-maidens (the maidens of Naga race)
35.	The king	Mango tree
36.	Gautama's sleep	Ox in the market
37.	Crooked stick	snake
38	defeat of king of Vidharbha by Agnimitra's forces	A lotus struck with rain drops
39.	Queen Dharini	The Earth
40.	Trembling heart	Water in the leaf of a lotus
41.	Malavika in silk dress and scanty ornaments	A night in the month Chaitra (when the moon about to rise, with the lunar mansions free from mist)
42.	Quiver-sharp	A plum peacock-tails

	wearing of brigands	
43.	Treatment to Malavika during the year	A garment of woven silk used as bathing-cloth

In short, Maharshi Kalidasa uses varieties of similes such as objective and subjective similes; conventionalized/ fixed and creative similes; literal and non-literal similes, and explicit and implicit similes. As already stated, the basic concern of the article is to study similes in the light of explicit and implicit types, the playwright uses them carefully and smartly in the play *Malavikagnimitra*. There are nine examples of explicit simile and thirty one of the implicit simile. It means that the playwright wants to convey his ideas implicitly and indirectly. The use of similes in play heightens the linguistic and stylistic effect making the play extremely appealing and impressive especially while describing the beauty of Malavika, the heroine of the play. Varied objects such as geographical, flora and fauna, birds, seasons, planets, plants, trees, etc. are employed successfully. Even Northrop Frye's contention regarding the archetypal comparisons is also seen in the present study. For instance, the king's qualities are compared to the 'Sun' or 'the rays of Sun.' Equally, Malavika's beauty and skills are compared to flowers, plants, and mountain and so on. Kalidasa gives very deep imaginative and romantic touch to his comedy 'Malavikagnimitra.'

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