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Types of creepers in kālidāsa's works

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Abstract

The emotive level and psychological attributes, are not only, confined to man but also spreads even to rivers, mountains, animals trees and creeper. While depicting the nature in his works, creeper have been given such importance that sometimes the reader gets swayed away and is compelled to think the creeper as human being. He defines the creepers, with the peculiarities, classification and sometimes taxonomy of particular creeper. A detailed and comparative study of the creeper depicted in his different works in Sanskrit are taken into consideration here with all possible minutes. Creepers occupy a distinct place in the Kāvya especially in Kalidāsa's works. The delicate, tender, dancing creepers arouse the reader aesthetically to a higher domain.

They create a special place be motivating and sensualizing the characters according to the demand of the plot. Their stem appear as a dancing damsel artistically climbing the trees and others. The leaves evolve to human beings, being personified, as if calling somebody and the flowers mesmerize each and everyone with their colour, shape, fragrance and what not.

Keyword: Íngudi, elā, śamī, vānīra, vimba, yuthikā

Introduction

Kālidāsa as a poet gives ample emphasis on the plot, technicalities of the poetry as well as on the description of nature. The emotive level and psychological attributes, are not only, confined to man but also spreads even to rivers, mountains, animals trees and creeper. While depicting the nature in his works, creeper have been given such importance that sometimes the reader gets swayed away and is compelled to think the creeper as human being. He defines the creepers, with the peculiarities, classification and sometimes taxonomy of particular creeper. A detailed and comparative study of the creeper depicted in his different works in Sanskrit are taken into consideration here with all possible minutes.

The different types of creeper mentioned in all his works are discussed here with proper examples being arranged alphabetically.

Creepers occupy a distinct place in the Kāvya especially in Kalidāsa's works. The delicate, tender, dancing creepers arouse the reader aesthetically to a higher domain.

They create a special place be motivating and sensualizing the characters according to the demand of the plot. Their stem appear as a dancing damsel artistically climbing the trees and others. The leaves evolve to human beings, being personified, as if calling somebody and the flowers mesmerize each and everyone with their colour, shape, fragrance and what not.

The creepers dear to Kālidāsa are being discussed here.

1. Aśoka

It is depicted as tree and creeper both. In the Ajavilāpa episode, Aja is reluctant to offer it's flower for the last rite as the flower was used as an ornament decorating the careless heir^[1]. of his wife. The famous belief goes that this creeper blossoms only after receiving the kick from a maiden^[2].

The flowers of Aśoka creeper are of round shape resembling the breast of the lady. For which Ram proceeds to embrace the creeper in the forest during his exile, remembering Śita after separation, Looking at this Laxman resists Rām from doing so^[3].

Though the name of the creeper signifies ' devoid of sadness', the young girls coming across the creeper get pain at heart. For it expedites the sentiment of love very soon^[4].

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2. Arjuna

The flower of the Arjuna creeper blossoms in the rainy season. Hence, mention of this plant occurs in the description of the rainy season in RS ^[5].

3. Candana

When taking leave from her parental house śakuntalā feels as if she is being uprooted from her original place like the sandal creeper uprooted by the Malayavāta. She expresses it is very difficult to accept the separation and remain alive in a completely different surrounding ^[6].

4. Drākṣā

Raghu's soldiers took rest under the shade of drākṣā to get rid of the exertion caused during war, where they fought and won. ('drākṣāvalayabhūmiṣu') ^[7] It is famous because of its sweet fruits.

5. ELĀ

The elephants get attracted to the smell of elā creeper. The young leaves of this creeper are also very aromatic ^[8]. The flower blossoms in spring. The south wind coming through the sandal forest is very soothing for the proper growth of the creeper ^[9].

6. Īngudi

Duṣyanta remarks that the place appears as a hermitage from the oily stones where Īngudi fruits are crushed ^[10]. In the fourth act also the oil made out of these fruits is used for curing the injury of the deer. From this it is evident that the fruits of Īngudi are used by the hermits to make oil.

7. Japā

Red coloured flower as it is, it resembles the setting sun. Yakṣa requests the cloud to pay his homage to Śiva holding the japā flowers in hand ^[11].

8. Kakubha / Kūṭaja

Seeing the first cloud in the sky at the advent of rainy season Yakṣa becomes happy. With that happiness he welcomes the cloud with sweet soothing words and offers the 'Kūṭaja' flowers ^[12]. He requests the cloud not to make delay in his journey towards Alakā and enjoy the beauty and fragrance of the Kūṭaja flowers by resting on the peak of the mountain. Even the peacocks will try to make you stay there with their sweet note for their benefit. But remembering my request proceed at the earliest only to save the life of my wife ^[13]. The kūṭaja grows in the hilly region in the rainy season.

9. Kaṅkeli

Kaṅkeli is said to have attractive flower of white colour and is compared with the set of white teeth ^[14]. The flower blossoms in the autumn season. The leaves are of dark green colour.

10. Kimsuka

The flower of kimsuka looks like fire because of its copper colour ^[15]. It is stated in the spring description of RS.

11. Kunda

Being attracted the bees sit on the white kunda flower blending the white and black colour of each other. The mingled colour matches the grey clouds. And the ladies of Daśapura when look up to see the cloud out of curiosity and happiness the image of cloud gets reflected in their eyes. But the poet imagines, very cleverly, it is not the cloud but the

kunda flower, with bees on it which is reflected in their eyes ^[16]. This beautiful imagination proves the power of observation of the poet. He had a great understanding of the colour also.

The flowers coming on the branches of Kundalatā are so attractive that it enchants the heart of the hermits, who are devoid of worldly feelings. And what to say of the youth who is charged with the love sentiment ^[17].

The love lorn people feel elated seeing the white flower, which brings a mild smile on their face. And the poet feels the teeth look more white because of the reflection of white Kunda flower. Even the cuckoo coos knowing its presence ^[18].

When Śakuntalā shows her face in front of all the royal officers in the court, Duṣyanta is surprised to see her stunning beauty with innocence but is reluctant to accept her thinking Śakuntalā to be some other's wife. Due to the curse of Durvāsā he is unable to recognise her. Kālidāsa could not resist himself from writing that as the bee can not drink the honey when the flower of Kunda is covered by the dew drops, so also Duṣyanta can not accept the beauty which is not to be touched by a man other than her husband ^[19].

In winter, as kunda is having a few flowers and Madhavi is devoid of the leaves, so also the heroine with limited ornaments looks like both Madhavi and Kunda ^[20].

12. Mallikā

The bees are so tempted that they try to drink honey from each and every flower of Mallikā, blooming in the evening in the forest ^[21].

The women folk look very pretty when they decorate their hair with the fragrant flowers of mallikā in the spring season ^[22]. But in Śakuntalam Kālidāsa writes about navamallikā.

Anasūya gives her logic that the plants are more close to Kāśyapa than Śakuntalā, for which she is engaged to take care of the plants of the hermitage in his absence ('tvameteṣāṃ ālavālapuraṇe niyuktā.') ^[23].

Even Priyamvadā decides not to tell Śakuntalā, the curse by Durvāsā for she is absent minded because of the separation from the king. For more impact, Kālidāsa writes at this point that it is the same thing as if someone waters the navamallikā with hot water. (Ko nāma Uṣṇodakena navamallikām siñcati.) ^[24].

13. Mādhavī

The king Vikram looking at the heroine compares her with Mādhavī creeper ^[25]. This creeper is also mentioned in the third act of MA.

14. Mālatī

Yakṣa asks the cloud to sound heavily with lightening to awake his wife who is having a long depression due to the separation from her husband. Before giving this starting reaction the cloud is requested to awake her with the shower and cool air for she is very delicate like the mālatī creeper ^[26]. Mālatī is said to blossom twice, in autumn and again in rainy season. The fragrant and attractive flower comes in the rainy season ^[27]. The garden looks white because of the white flower of Mālatī in autumn ^[28]. The beauty of autumn season increases when on one side mālatī of white colour blossoms and on the other Kaṅkeli gets the dark green leaves ^[29].

15. Nīpa

Nīpa is otherwise known as Kadamba also. The time of blossoming of Nīpa is autumn season. The white flower looks

very enchanting along with the sweet fragrance.

16. Pāṭla

In the summer this creeper helps to get rid of the heat. Even the love sick people become free from the pangs of love because of the smell^[30]. And in spring the red coloured pāṭala flower makes the sahakāra look beautiful as the leaves³ of Sahakāra fall down in the winter. It appears as if the red tender young leaves come out in the sahakāra before time. Pāṭala helps the sahakāra maintain it's beauty with the red flower though, in real, the tree is devoid of young red leaves. Even Naṭī in the prelude of AS sings about the pāṭala flowers which grow in the summer and make the surrounding fragrant^[31].

17. Punnāga

The flower is mentioned for it's smell. It is also named as nāgakeśara.

18. Priyaṅgu

The wife of Aja herself makes arrangements for the union of priyaṅgu creeper with the Sahakāra^[32].

19. Śamī

This creeper is used in the sacrifice. The smoke coming out of the tender leaves of Śamī along with puffed rice appears as an ornament of the ear of the lady standing by^[33]. The stem of the Śamī is easily ignited. So it is used in sacrificial fire. It is believed that the fire resides within it which is confirmed from the dialogue of Priyaṅvadā. She says to Kaṇva that Śakuntalā's pregnancy is sacred and blessed like Śamī admitting that Śakuntalā is as pure as Śamī The child in her womb is like the fire within the Śamī. Through a simple example Kālidāsa wiped out the blemish of not obeying and observing the rules of hermitage by Śakuntalā^[34].

According to Duṣyarta the ascetism is as hard as Śamī creeper. He says the hermit who has engaged Śakuntalā for watering the plants is surely a rude one for he is trying to cut the Śamī creeper with the edge of the leaf of the lotus. The lotus leaves are very tender and bend easily. They do not have the sharpness or hardness that something like. Śamī can be cut with it's edge. It implies hardness of Śamī^[35].

20. Tamāla

They grow more on the beach, getting the dark blue tinge by which the sea-shore looks like an iron wheel^[36]. Citrakūṭa is said to be main place for tamāla to grow. It is a fragrant flower and looks very attractive even with new leaves^[37].

21. Tāmbula

During the expedition the soldiers took help of the tāmbula leaves to drink water and drank the coconut wine also.³⁸ The southern breeze help the tāmbula to grow and the leaves become ready for use^[39].

22. Vānīra

Reaching near the pampā lake Rām could see the lake completely covered by the Vānīra creeper^[40]. Similarly, on the bank of the river Saraju, the hermits prefer to stay in the creeper house for it is cool. In this context, Kālidāsa comments – 'it pains me for they are not staying in the house made inside the vānīra, discarding the sacrificial rites performed on the sand. Even they are not getting influenced by the local people

23. Vetasa

King Daśarath climbing on a vetasa creeper could see the young boy Śravan Kumar, whom he killed mistaking him for an animal. He became very sad for the boy was taking water for his blind parents^[41]. This creeper grows on the bank of river, which is proved by the dialogue uttered by Vidūṣaka that the joints of vetasa become puffed and crooked because of the flow of the river or it is the characteristic of it^[42].

24. Viṃba

It's fruit is used as an example for describing the beauty of the lower lip of the women. The lower lip of Pārvaṭī looks like the red viṃba fruit^[43]. ('Umāmukhe viṃbaphaladharoṣṭhe') Even the lower lip of the Yakṣiṇī looks like ripe viṃba fruit^[44].

25. Yuthikā

Taking water from the mountains in the hills the cloud will take rest in the Nicaīḥ mountain, thereby watering the yuthikā groves. Yakṣa asks the cloud to proceed after taking rest in the shade of yuthikā groves, enjoying the fragrance of the flowers of yuthikā^[45].

Endnotes		
1. RV.VIII-63	16. MD-50	31. AS-I-3
2. RV.VIII-62	17. RS-VI-18	32. RV-VIII-61
3. RV-XIII-32	18. RS-VI-31	33. RV-VII-26
4. RS-VI-18	19. AS- V-19	34. AS-act-IV-6
5. RS-II-17	20. MA-III act-8	35. AS-act-I-17
6. AS-act-IV	21. RV-XVI-47	36. RV-XIII-15
7. RV-IV-65	22. RV-XVI-50	37. RV-XIII-493
8. RV-IV-37	23. AS act. I	38. RV-IV-42
9. RV-VI-64	24. AS-act-IV-viṣkaṃbhaka	39. RV-VI-64
10. AS-I-14	25. VU-act-II-4	40. RV-XIII-30
11. MD-39	26. MD-v-104	41. RV-IX-75
12. MD-4	27. RS-II-25	42. AS-ACT-II
13. MD-23	28. RS-III-2	43. MD-67
14. RS-III-18	29. RS-III-18	44. MD-82
15. RS-VI-21	30. RV-XVI -52	45. MD-27

Conclusion

Kālidāsa is very judgemental but majestic. The use of colour, shape, temperament, habits in regards to the characters or elements of nature is very accurate. Still he maintains the purity and sweetness very gracefully. The poetical exposition of creeper gives rise to the thought of knowing them with much clarity. The communication of creeper life and human beings is not only poetical but also realistic. After examining all the depictions it is noticed that Kālidāsa has mentioned several creepers of different specie in his works

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