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KANNADA AND TAMIL POETICS

(*Kaviraja Marga and Tolkappiyam*)

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Abstract : This article is a comparative study between Kaviraja Marga, the earliest available work on rhetoric, poetics and grammar in the Kannada language, and Tholgappiyam, the first grammatical work in Tamil. Kannada Shastra literature, influenced by Sanskrit decorators like Bhamaha and Dandi, but it has retained its own desi character. He talked about the desi literary genres like Chattana, Bedande, Onakevadu, which were famous in Kannada at that time.

Many Kannada scholars (including Prof. Venkatachala Shasthry renowned Grammarian) have discussed that, the Tamil language has retained as much of the Proto Dravidian elements as possible. So the purpose of this article is to identify the many similarities between Kaviraja Marg and Tholgappiyam. Comparing this kind of two completely different language poetics may contribute to critical thinking.

Index Terms: *Chyutha yaatha sankhya, Dhosha, Apakrama, misapplication of words, nativity, Emphasis, Vishanke.*

Introduction

In Poetics, the poet, the poem and literary friends who share the interests of poetry and the features of poetry are very important. These are commonly discussed in the poetics of any language. In this context, one has to study the poetics of Tolkappiyam and compare it with other Dravidian languages. In this article, I attempted to compare a Tamil grammar, 'Tolkappiyam', and Kannada's first Alankara Grantha 'Kaviraja Marga'.

Tolkappiyam has three parts, namely, ELuthadikaram, Solladikaram, and PoruLadikaram. Similarly, Kaviraja Marga is divided into three sections: Dhoshanudosha Varnana NirNaya, Shabdalkara, and Arthalankara. Leaving Eluthadikaram aside, the other two parts have certain features that are comparable with Kaviraja Marga. A close study of certain sutras of Tolkappiyam and Kaviraja Marga is intended to be carried

out in this paper. Hitherto unknown similarities are brought out. Although there is not much conceptual comparison, the close study of certain sutras of both Tolkappiyam and Kaviraaja Marga, will enable one to go for a conceptual study in the future. The English translations are very technical. Thus, taking note of the aim of this paper, I limit myself to focusing only on the technical comparison of sutras in two books of cultural importance.

Kannada shares largely the Sanskrit ideas of poetics. But Tolkappiyam does not imitate the poetics of Sanskrit. The independent poetics of traditional Tamil poetry forms the basis of the ideas of poetics of Tolkappiyam. So it's a unique book of Tamil poetics. This book protected the fundamental Dravidian identity.

Tolkappiyam seems to be the first to pave the path of mixing grammar along poetics. (let us not, here, consider poetics from the viewpoint of Sanskrit alone, and let us think of poetics in general as, ideas on the composition of poetry.) As Tolkappiyam forms the first grammatical work in Tamil, Kaviraja Maarga is the first Alankara Grantha in the Kannada language. On the surface, it looks like an Alankara work. It gives information about the Kannada language, grammar, poetics, land, etc...That is the reason why important thinkers of this century say that this book is of greater importance. We have to compare the encyclopedic Tolkappiyam with Kaviraaja Marga in order to reconstruct the Dravidian poetics and Dravidian prosody.

Kannada literature, in spite of having an asset of literature was following the Sanskrit poetics for almost 2000 years. Now it has begun to search for poetics of its own in recent years. We need the study of Tolkappiyam to go further in this direction and this is my understanding.

I will explain why the Kannada poetics has to travel in this direction. Quoting Kaviraaja Marga line "Kaveriyindamaa Godavarivaramirda..."(starting from Kaveri and going till Godhavari) and comparing it with the line "Vadveengadathilirundu Ten kumara varai.."of Tholkappiyam, the eminent scholar M.M.Kalburgi says: "The root of these lines goes in the Dravidian direction."¹

According to K.V Subbanna, "This kind of linguistic boundary is not marked in any ancient literature including Sanskrit".²

M.M.Kalburgi when speaking at a conference he says as follows: "We have to compare Kaviraaja Marga with Tolkappiyam and these books have some similar thoughts. Tolkappiyam is different from the Aryan method and it represents a Dravidian method in its structure. It is very different from Bharathiya Kaavya Meemamse (Indian Poetics). The structure of Tolkappiyam is different from the composition of all other books of poetics. We have to make a comparative study of Tolkappiyam, Kaviraaja Marga, and Dandi's Kaavyadarsha. Kaviraaja Marga follows Dandi when he describes Arthalankar in the third part of his text. He differs lightly with respect to Shabdaalankaara. When pointing out the mistake and merits of poetry (Doshanudosha Varnana) he does not resemble Dandi."³ Kaviraaja Marga has acquired an important role in the development of Kannada poetics. This

has three divisions (Parichedas) with 536 sutras. The first division includes 149 sutras. Actually, Kaviraaja Marga's strength lies in accounting for the first division namely Dhoshanudhosha Varnana Vibhaga.

With this background I undertake a humble attempt to make a comparative study of Tolkappiyam and Kaviraaja Marga. Let me take up the Shakthipurna section the first part of Kaviraaja Marga.

1. *Chyutha yaatha sankhya:*

Kaviraaja Margakaara in his 90th and 91st sutra of first division explains about this concept. 'Yaatha sankhya' means an 'order'. If this order gets disturbed it is called chyutha (lapsed) yaatha sankhya. For example,

"Alakaanana nayanagalolalinalinothpala vikaashamam"

Here **Alaka** (curled hair), **Aanana** (face), **Nayana**(eyes) all these Upameya's are given separately in one order. Upamana such as **Ali** (dragonfly), **Nalina** (lotus), **Uthpala vikasam** (beauty of Lilly) are given in another order. This defect in order is considered as Dosha.

Bhamaha and Dandi both have called this dosha as 'Apakrama'. Kaviraaja Margakaara here calls it dosha. But while explaining about Arthalankara he added this into alankara and calls the same as "yaathasankhyalankara". Probably like Bhamaha and Dandi even Maargakaara might also have considered this as Dhosha. But In Tolkappiyam this has been just "Moli puNarbu iyal" (nature of words coalescence)

In Solladhikaram's *Olibiyal* division in its 8th sutra, the word **Niral Nirai** resembles chyuthayaatha Sankhya of Kaviraaja marga very much. Kaviraajamarga's example for this comprises only of noun. As we observe above Alaka, Aanana and Nayana are all noun forms. But in Tolkappiyam both noun and verb have been jumbled together. An example of jumbled noun is

"Kodi(creeper), **Kuvalai**(lily), **kottai** (nut), **nusuppu** (waist), **unkan** (Black eyes), **meni** (the body)" There is no order. If it is arranged properly like **"Kodi nusuppu** (waist like a creeper) **Kuvalai Un kan** (black eyes like a lily), **kottai meni** (the body like a round shaped Nut)" then, it gives the meaning of simile. In the same manner, Tolkappiyar gives a set of verbs also in jumbled order.

"udalum(flowing), **Udaindodum** (elapse), **malarum** (blooming), **paarkum** (seeing), **kadal** (Sea), **iruL** (night), **Aambal** (lily), **paambena**(like a snake).."

This should be written as **"udalum kadal** (flowing sea), **udaindodum iruL** (elapsing night) **malarum aambal** (blooming lily), **paarkum paambu** (Seeing snake)" then it will become a meaningful sentence.

2. *Vyavahitha:*

Kaviraaja Margakaara in his 90th and 91st sutra of first division gives a crystal clear explanation of a scattered set of words that obstruct its meaning.

"Manade nenendavara kidugum jinadhiva ninna paapanichya gunamam"

This is a misapplication of words that give an improper meaning. " Jinadhiva, Whoever thinks about you, will be destroyed due to your nature of sins. which is totally wrong. It should be *"jinadhiva ninna gunamam*

manade nenedavra papa nichyam kidugum” it means “Jinadhipa, whoever thinks about you, all their sins will be destroyed. This proper arrangement gives a perfect as well as unblemished meaning.

This very much resembles with “*MoLi maatru*” of Tolkappiyam. “*Chol nilai maatri poruL edir iyaiya..*” means making full meaning by displacing the words. Example, *Kunraththu mela kuvalai kuLaththul Sengottu malar*: this denotes that the ‘lotus is on hill, sengottu malar is in pond; But when we displace the words correctly it gives the meaning. Lotus is in pond sengottu malar is on hill.

3. *Vachana Dhosha (Idiviison-sutra118)*:

means mistake of sentence. If the subject is singular, verb should also be in singular. If the subject is in plural, the verb should also be in plural. Ex: “*AanegaLu ee pradeshadalli Nindadu*” is a wrong sentence a plural noun is given a singular verb here. It should be like this: “*Aanegalu ee pradeshadalli nindavu*”

In the 11th sutra of Solladhikaram “*Mayangal kooda tam marabinave*” denotes that tradition should not be confused. He gives the example ‘*avan vandana*’ here *avan* is singular *vandana* is plural. **Avan vandana** here *avan* is masculine gender; the verb *vandana* is indicating a feminine gender. These are considered as mistakes.

4. *Jaathyeka Vachana (Idivision -sutra119,120)*:

Margakaara says ‘when we categorize the division of animals plural verb combines and correlates well in the singular noun.’ For example “*Kudure thaguLdavu, Aane mettidavu*”. *Thaguldavu, mettidavu* are plural verb forms while *Kudure* (Horse) and *aane* (Elephant) are singular nouns. Here singular noun combines with plural verbs. It is not a mistake but a kind of quality of the language. *Shabdamani Darpana* also says the same in the name of nativity (*desi lakshana*).

We can observe the same thing in Tolkappiyam (Suthra 656) “*teri nilai udaiya agriNai iyar peyar orumaiyum panmaiyaum vinaiyodu varine*”. When ‘*KAL*’ doesn’t come at the end of *Agrinai iyar peyar* (Non-human class), the verb denotes whether it is singular or plural. Ex: *AA vandadu* (singular), *AA vandana* (plural).

5. *Different verbs*:

Kaviraaja Margakaara in his 124th sutra says ‘*Mugilu* (cloud), *Permale* (Heavy rain) all these nouns come along with different *visheshanas* like *negedu* (jumped up), *suridu* (poured out). But ends with a single verb “*Thori*”. In Tolkappiyam “*Veru vinai poducchol oru vinai kilavar*” gives almost the same meaning. One should not give a single verb for different nouns. “*yaaL* (Lyre), *kuLal* (Flute), *Parai* (Drum), *iyambinar*” it should not end with one verb which is applicable to either one of the three. So it should be “*YaaL Meettinaar, KuLal uudinaar, Parai Adiththar*”.

6. *AvaDharane(Emphasis):*

Kaviraaja Marga says this Avadharane depends on cast, cult, character, and action. If we need to stress a person's quality, we should use 'e'and 'ee' letters in the end. ex: Pandithaneethane, Kulajaneethanee. In Tolakappiyam (Suthra 742) “Tetram vinaave pirinilai eNNe eetrasai ivvaindu ee kaaramme” (neeyee seydaay- You only did yourself) says that emphasis should be marked by “ee”.

7. *Vishanke(1-138):*

when we doubt about a person we should use ‘Oo’. The same factor is mentioned in Tolkappiyam(Suthra 917). “pichchaikkOo vandaan”(did he come for begging purpose) here it also denotes the doubt.

We have to make a note of such similarities between Tolkappiyam and Kaviraaja marga. Both these works speak about how Sanskrit words must be used in their respective languages. Kaviraaja Marga says “When Sanskrit words are taken into Kannada hard consonants should be avoided”. Tolkappiyam says: “Sanskrit words have to be adapted according to the characteristics of Tamil alphabets.”

In conclusion, we may say that the Sanskrit poetics is born out of written classical literature. It takes note of text alone; it doesn't look at life. But Tolkappiyam considers the subject of poetry as very important. The relation between nature, environment, fauna and flora along with the human sentiment is very dear to Tolkappiyam. That's why Prof. G.S Shivarudrappa says that: Long ago, Tamil literature embodied its own poetics which is different from Sanskrit, in a work called Tolkappiyam. ⁴

Comparing this kind of two completely different language poetics may contribute to critical thinking and hence I have undertaken this venture. So far, Kaviraaja Marga is approached from the point of view of Sanskrit. A few might have thought of approaching it from a different angle. In this background this close study of the sutras of Tolkappiyam and Kaviraaja Marga from a particular perspective is necessary.

Foot notes

1. Kaviraja Marga Samskruthika Mukhamukhi (Ed) Rahamath Tharikere (page 15-16) Prsaranga, Kannada University, Hampi, 2000
2. same book page-12
3. same book page – 62
4. same book page-68

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