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C. Vijayavenugopal: *Tolkappiyam – a Treatise on Semiotics* 141

"bemoaning the absence of the lover", and *ntal*, "love quarrel/sulking".<sup>34</sup> These will come under the aesthetic code of the semioticians. He also enumerates three more concepts that are found in the poems, viz. *mutal*, "space and time", *karu*, "characteristic regional features", and *uri*, "distinctive erotic mood".<sup>35</sup> These are important in recognizing the themes as well as the particular *tinai*s of the poems. Another concept which was associated with *tinai* is the names belonging to the different regions. This is called *tinai nilai-p-peyar*.<sup>36</sup> But one is not sure whether this formed a basis for identifying the *tinai*. Another basis for identifying the *tinai* is referred to as *silirai unnam*, "indirect suggestion through skilful employment of telling comparisons".<sup>37</sup> These are based on the regional characteristic features, i.e. *karu* except the divinities of the region, as explained by the scholars (on poetics).<sup>38</sup> This indirect suggestion is further divided into five kinds, viz. *utpatti*, "suggestive meaning", *unnam*, i.e. *silirai unnam* already referred to, *ciftu*, "indication in suggestion", *nakai*, "rejoicing", and *crappu*, "emphasis".<sup>39</sup> All these help not only to recognize the *tinai* but also the meaning intended in the poems.

There are certain themes which are common to both *akan* and *puram* themes. These are enumerated in the chapter on *puram* themes.<sup>40</sup> For example, the Vela's possessive dance is explained as common to both *akan* and *puram* poems. There are a few verses which explain the *kaikkilai*, "unreciprocated love" and *peruntinai*, "improper love" themes.<sup>41</sup> All these go to show that Tolkappiyar's primary goal is to identify first the *tinai* of the poem. The next level is the identification of voice, since all these poems are in the form of dramatic monologues. Tolkappiyar uses the terms *kirru*, "utterance", for the *akan* poems and *tuṅai*, "subject or theme", for the *puram* poems. The *kirrus* of the main characters are listed in chapters like *Akattinai-y-iyal*, "chapter on *akan* categories", *Kalainiyal*, "chapter on clandestine love", *Karpiyal*, "chapter on wedded life", for the *akan* division and the *tuṅais* for the *puram* division are listed in the *Purattinai-y-iyal*, "the chapter on exterior categories". Next is the chapter named *Poruliyal*. This really deals with the meaning of the texts along with other conventions followed in literary texts. The first verse explains that the meaning of the text will not change because of metrics and other syntactic deviations.<sup>42</sup> The important verse on *itaicci*, "suggestion", explains that it is attained via the theme of the poem. Another verse states that extended meaning

<sup>34</sup> *Tolkappiyam Porulatikram Akattinai-y-iyal* verse 14.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.* verse 3.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.* verse 20.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.* verse 46, 48.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* verse 47.

<sup>39</sup> *Tolkappiyam Porulatikram Poruliyal* verse 48.

<sup>40</sup> *Tolkappiyam Porulatikram Purattinai-y-iyal* verse 5.

<sup>41</sup> *Tolkappiyam Porulatikram Akattinai-y-iyal* verses 50, 51.

<sup>42</sup> *Tolkappiyam Porulatikram, Ceyyiliyal* verse 1.

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