

## Tracing Poetic Elements of Classical Tamil in Indian English Literature: Reflections of the Sangam Age

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**Abstract** The study looks at the links between old Tamil poems from the Sangam Age and how it shows up in Indian English literature. The famous literary styles started by various writers from the Sangam period have had a big impact on the work of Indian English writers today. The paper shows that Sangam aesthetics, which uses vivid nature, complex poetic structures, and excitement about human feelings, has had an impact on literary traditions around the world today. In Indian English literature, there are many different kinds of postcolonial identities, and Sangam ideas are added to talk about the past and present situations of the culture. When English styles are mixed with Sangam styles, old and new ideas come together. This makes stories about identity, connection, and nature more interesting. Not only does the mix of people from different backgrounds honour the past, but it also changes how Indian English works show the voices of people from different parts of India.

So, the focus of this study will make it clear that this kind of literary exchange is a big part of how globalization connects old and new societies. Sangam poetry continues to help Indian cultural wealth be recovered and reinterpreted in world literature. It makes readers and scholars to think of literary history as a cycle instead of a straight line, and it shows how society changes and moves its forms around over time. This paper also further shows that strong classical Tamil verse influences, pushes, and transforms Indian writing in English. This shows that old art is still very important for the future of writing.

**Keywords:** connection, globalization, reinterpreted, transforms.

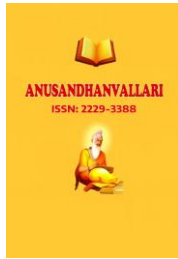
### Introduction

Many unique poetic forms, motifs, and topics had made their way into Tamil literature during the Sangam Age (300 BCE to 300 CE), which is known as the “golden age” of classical Tamil. People really like the Akananuru, Purananuru, and Kuruntokai of the Sangam corpus because they use nature, human emotions, and go into great detail about human experience and society. Indian English literature today uses old themes in new ways to show different Indian cultures and customs. In this paper, I am to look at the literary styles of the Sangam Age and compare them to those used in modern Indian English works. This shows that the old and the new are always interacting with each other.

Tamil writing from the past, especially from the Sangam Age, is a great example of Indian culture. When it comes to the Sangam literature, its main style and character has complex poetic structures, vivid images, and in-depth looks at the human internal world and the external world. Tamil classical elements have had an effect on the culture in many areas, and one can find them in a lot of different literary traditions around the world, including Indian English writing.

Since the beginning of Indian English literature in a postcolonial and multilingual setting, writers have focused on the customs and culture of their area. Poets often change and use old ideas and styles from traditions, like those used by the Sangam poets. Not only do these contents make Indian English works more detailed, but they also make it possible for readers from a wide range of backgrounds to connect with the old poetry in part of their story.

### The Sangam Age’s poetry on nature



The Sangam Age lasted from about 300 BCE to 300 CE and had a big impact on classical Tamil literature, which is known for its beautiful poems and wide range of topics. The special way that akam and puram are used in Sangam poetry is what makes it stand out. On the inside, akam poetry is about feelings like love and personal relationships. On the outside, puram poetry is about things like bravery, ethics, and the outside world. So, the poets' work includes both private and public events, which helps one to understand life and the world fully.

In Sangam poems, the tinai system is a unique way to arrange pictures of the countryside that show the background of many emotions and life events. Even some places are connected to nature are attached to certain feelings and ideas. This is called tinai. Kurinji, which means rocky areas, is often associated with marriage and a loving relationship. On the other hand, marutham, which means land full of crops, is associated with married life and a relationship. Also, tinai called mullai (forest and pasture lands), neythai (seashore), and palai (desert) are linked to rituals, patience, being apart, hunger, and running away or hiding (Venkata Subramanian, 2008). Poets used powerful natural images to make the world an important part of their work. Also, Sangam poetry is known for having well-organized lines and strong, beautiful language. A lot of the songs have strict rhythms that make them sound great and be easy to remember. Faulkner's writing is lyrical and deeply affects both readers and viewers because he uses meter and vivid metaphors. A well-known verse from Kuruntokai 31 shows how environment and feeling are linked.

"The mountain flower blooms where you walk,

Its fragrance carries the song of our love."

- Translated from Sangam poetry (Hart, 1975)

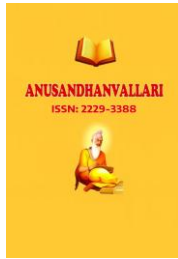
In this case, the flower stands for love and its presence. Besides the smell, the mental and emotional bond between lovers is also shown by the scent. People can tell a Sangam style piece by how the setting and people's feelings are mixed together.

Sangam writers use symbols and verse forms carefully, along with many other interesting poetic techniques, to connect nature and our own lives. Tamil literature is still affected by tinai and the story of love and separation. These ideas have also made their way into modern Indian English writing, though they are expressed in different ways. This stands as an example as how traditional Tamil poetry has used nature imagery, feelings, and rhythmic language which has helped Indian English writers to culturally connect and use such ideas in a new way in their Indian English Writing.

### **The Development of Indian English Literature in the Postcolonial and Multilingual Setting:**

India's rich past, many languages, and the effects of colonialism have all had an impact on the Indian English literature. England used English as its official language in India while it was a colony. This language is still used today because of colonialism. Writers used to write in English a lot like the British did, but over time, it became a powerful way to show how Indians lived and what their society was like after they were colonized. Post-colonial times forced people to balance their colonial and traditional identities, which led to the growth of Indian English writing. During this time, authors wrote about the different cultures that come from living with people of different languages, faiths, and races. English both controlled and let people free people because it came with British colonization. To put it another way, Indian English writing bridged the gap between the past and the present by exploring issues of history, culture, and the ongoing process of decolonization.

Indian English writing was full of complex meanings and connections to other cultures because Indian people spoke and wrote many languages. This created a new type of literature that mixed cultures, in the novels written in English that used native idioms, folklore stories, and customs. Often, Indian English writing dealt about identity, being away from home, and feeling connected. This is because Indian writers know a lot of languages. Further, it is important to note that postcolonial Indian English literature re-explored the native literature of the



area on purpose. As a way to keep cultural heritage alive and bring it up to date, current Tamil writers used poetry, fiction, and folk stories from the past. Indian English literature occupied a great place to learn about culture and came up with new ideas because it used native history in its writing, which helped to break the dominance of Western literature. A lot of different cultural and linguistic aspects were skillfully linked in Indian English literature written after colonization and helped both Indian readers and readers from around the world.

### **Evidence of Sangam poetics in Indian English writing:**

Sangam poetics has a big but smooth effect on Indian English writing. It shows up in the form of shared themes, vivid images, and creative language rhythm. Indian writers use poems from the Sangam era to help shape their own work. Sometimes they do this on purpose, and sometimes they might not. This spot where old Tamil literature and new English literature meet brings together language, time, and culture.

There are a lot of tinai symbols from Sangam poetry in Indian English writing. These symbols are mostly made up of references to nature. In Sangam poetry, places that make people feel a certain way are given meaning. One can see this idea in Indian English writings as well, where nature often affects the tone or mood of the work. Kamala Das often uses nature as a metaphor to talk about feelings that were popular in writings from the Sangam period. For an example, Kamala Das in her poem "The Old Playhouse" writes as,

"The hills are my lovers,

The rivers my sighs."

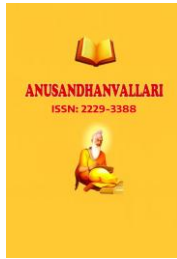
The reflection or influence of Sangam literature is evidential in Kamala Das writing. According to Sangam poetry, certain parts of nature, or tinai, stand for different feelings and parts of a love connection. In this way, rough mountainous areas (kurinji) in Indian literature are a sign of unity and couples, just like the hills in Kamala Das's writing. On the other hand, rivers and seas are known to mean separation and strong feelings, as writer's poetry shows. In this way Kamala Das honour's the Sangam heritage while using it to write about love, loss, and longing in a way that fits with modern times. It shows that Indian English literature uses traditional poetic elements in new ways, even though it is written in a different language and society.

Aside from the vivid pictures they use, Sangam poetry's deep feelings about love, loss, success, and life in general have a big impact on many Indian English writers. Ramanujan, who was famous for translating Sangam poems, said, "*What is remembered survives. What is forgotten dies.*" (Ramanujan, 1973). He further stated that poetry always keeps and passes on the stories of a society over time, in this way Ramanujan's poets show that he was influenced by Sangam literary ideas, especially by the way he wrote about his thoughts in a serious but subtle way.

Some writers, like R. Parthasarathy, have tried to copy the Sangam style in his English verse, even though Indian English poetry is not written in strict Tamil meters. Parthasarathy notices that songs from the Sangam period are stylized, rhythmic, and lively. He uses this style in his own writing by combining old forms with new words. Also, Many Indian English literature writers used akam and puram themes to talk about both private and public life, just like it did in the Sangam period. This is because it looked at how people see themselves in the setting of society.

### **Early Modern English's effects on society and literature**

During colonialism, local languages were often not taken into account, and English was seen as superior to all others. So Indian writers took effort to show their pride, culture and desire to keep cultural identity by using Sangam symbols, themes, and feelings in their English writing. This is what Bhabha in 1994 calls "the third space", which means, when different cultures come together it makes new identities. Hence the use of old Tamil Sangam poetry in Indian English literature created a big impact on both society and literature. In fact, Indian



English literature and Sangam poetry did not agree with colonial efforts to erase Indian culture. At this stake, Indian English literature wanted to show a new way of understanding and expressing Indian culture, customs to replace western ideas to the world. So, Indian English literature used tinai landscapes, varied symbols and meters of Sangam, in a new patterns, styles and forms.

Indian English poets R. Parthasarathy and A. K. Ramanujan have translated Sangam poems and used parts of the style in their own work. When one mix classical and modern styles, one can get a complex look that shows off both peoples' past and present views. When akam and puram themes are put together in Sangam writing, they let Indian English writers look at how personal identity is connected to the cultural and social worlds.

Here, Sangam takes a two-pronged method, where Indian English literature can connect with readers who are dealing with many parts of their own identity. The way Sangam poetry shows up in Indian English literature basically shows how society and imagination change over time. Their point is that old traditions are not just old tools, but also active sources of new ideas for modern art. People talk about cultures in a lively way, breaking down the barriers between custom and modernity or East and West. As a reader, one can thank both the Sangam poetics for giving sources and Indian English writers for connecting and making to rethink of the past, the present and the future in many layers.

### Conclusion

Indian English literature still follows the rules of Tamil poetry from the Sangam period. This helps connect people who speak different languages and countries. Indian writers of English use nature images, strong emotions, and a unique rhythm like Sangam poetry to make writing that is both grounded and new in the field of literature. Putting Tamil tradition and English writing together renews both of them and opens up new ways to look at identity, memories, and traditions in a global setting. Some parts of Sangam poetry are still important because they show that literary forms can change and continue to encourage creativity. Indian English literature uses traditional literary themes to show how old stories and techniques can be brought up to date for modern viewers. It also helps bring back indigenous perspectives to culture discussions and includes their voices around the world. Indian writers who write in English use the emotional and symbolic parts of Sangam poems to show their different cultural identities by writing about both local and universal issues. Overall, Indian English literature takes us back to the Sangam era and shows how poetry can bring people from different times, countries, and languages together. This shows that traditional arts are always important to new literary works.

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