THE TREATMENT OF NATURE
IN
Sangam Literature
(Ancient Tamil Literature)

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PREFACE

An attempt has herein been made to set forth the several aspects of the world of Nature that made appeal to the Tamil poets of the Sangam Era, the part they played in Sangam Literature and their treatment in extenso by the poets in consonance with time, place and action as a vehicle of their best thoughts and highest sentiments so as to constitute a literature for all times with a characteristic freshness and fragrance reaching the highest watermark of Tamil genius and literary excellence.

The term Sangam literature, as generally accepted, denotes the literary works included in the anthologies Ettuttokai (the Eight Collections) and Pattuppāṭṭu (The Ten Idylls) belonging to the earliest period in the History of Tamil Literature, a period earlier than 200 A. D. beginning perhaps from 500 B. C. or still earlier. The Ettuttokai consists of the eight great collections, Narraṇai, Kuruntokai, Amkurunuru, Patirruppatu, Pampāṭu, Kalittokai, Akanāṇuru and Puranāṇuru, each of which has verses of a certain type in length or in metre or in matter. The ten long idylls of Pattuppāṭṭu are Tirumurukāṟṟuppāṭai, Porunarāṟṟuppāṭu, Ciriṟpatu, Perumpāṇāṟṟuppāṭai, Mullaippāṭu, Maturaikkāṇci, Neṟunavāṭai, Kurinciippāṭu, Pattinappāḷai and Malaippatukāṭūm. Many of these works have commentaries by scholars of great reputation, among whom the well-known commentator Nacciṉūṟkkūṟiyar has done a great service to the study of Kalittokai and the idylls of Pattuppāṭṭu, though he sometimes seems to mislead the reader through his unnecessarily indirect and circumlocutory
methods of exposition. Parimēlaṇakar has a brief but incomplete commentary on Paripāṭal, while in the case of some other works Aṅkūrunūru, Patirūppattu, Akanānūru and Puṟanānūru their commentators are unidentified. Some of them have given brief but very useful notes on the stanzas, while some have left their works incomplete, as in the case of Akanānūru and Puṟanānūru.

All these notes and commentaries have been of great help for the present study, besides those on Tolkāppiyam, particularly the third part of that great grammar called Porulatikāram, a treatise on literary criticism. Most of the authors of the critical works in Tamil and English have been indented upon for guidance and, wherever necessary, the literary works of the English Nature-poets have been brought in for comparative study.

The purpose throughout has been not to discover all that has been said by the Sangam poets about Nature, but to dwell on the general obvious qualities, the typical features of their works in regard to their treatment of Nature so as to portray their attitude and appreciation of Nature which they chose to employ in their proper and appropriate setting. Illustrations are drawn from all the works constituting Sangam literature with a view to serve as the basis for generalisations and in many cases the references given in the footnotes are such as to serve as outstanding examples for the types referred to, while in some exceptional cases two or more examples are cited to illustrate the variety of descriptions under consideration. The authorities consulted are indicated in the body of the work itself or in references given in the footnotes.
Free translations are rendered wherever necessary and sometimes the important phrases and epithets are transliterated and then translated. The plants and animals are described by their names as identified and known in English, but wherever such identification is vague or defective, the Tamil term itself is transliterated and used throughout. The index at the end of the book explains such terms as well as other important names employed.

The first part is on the treatment of Nature from the point of view of the poetry and the poets of the age. The first chapter explains the place of Nature in Sangam literature; the literary conventions of the age are illustrated; how Nature was assigned an important place in the verses on the esoteric themes of love is pointed out and indicated; the occasions that literary conventions permitted the poets to describe Nature in the verses on the other themes are also set forth. It is also shown that the treatment of Nature has long ago been appreciated by scholars of the succeeding period to such an extent as to lend the most catching phrases of descriptions for titles of the verses concerned. The second chapter deals with some of the poets with particular references to their copious employment of Nature’s material to embellish their themes. Only such features of their descriptions as are dominant have been brought out; and the poets who have earned remarkable distinction by their artistic pictures of Nature and those who have been baptised in Nature’s own language are included in the list.

The second part is devoted to study the subject from the point of view of Nature itself. It deals with the predominantly characteristic aspects of Nature’s
The Treatment of Nature

beauty observed on earth, in the sky and among the flora and fauna and portrayed by the different poets in their literary compositions. The three chapters of this part discuss them and the purpose has been to determine how such aspects have been treated by them. The outstanding features have been analysed and presented in a cogent and continuous form.

The third part deals with the methods in which Nature has been described in Sangam literature. The portrayal of Nature in similes of different types forms an important and useful study by itself. The next chapter presents the feelings and experiences of co-existence with Nature and the last is devoted to derive conclusions and bring out together the characteristics of Sangam literature in its treatment of Nature.

This book was in its origin a thesis submitted by me to the University of Madras for the Ph. D. Degree in 1947 and I am thankful to the authorities of the University for their kind permission to publish this.

While editing this in the present form ten years later, I had scope to make some corrections and improvements but restrained myself lest this work should appear in a different form altogether.

I am grateful to my friend and colleague Sri. C. Subbaian, M. A., Assistant Professor of English, Pachaiyappa's College for his valuable help in reading the proofs. My thanks are also due to the publishers, The South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Tinnevelly, Ltd., Madras.


M. Varadarajan
Note on Transliteration and Diacritical Marks

The system here adopted is the same as in Tamil Lexicon of the University of Madras, Vol. VI, p.IXVIII.

Tamil alphabets and their English symbols with diacritical marks:

Vowels

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Consonants

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Aytam: க

To avoid clumsiness, the transliterated words are not indicated by marks of quotation except in the case of some which need distinction. In all other cases, the diacritical marks easily distinguish them as transliterated words.

Some of the words like Sangam and Madurai which have already found place in many works in English, have been given in their familiar forms to avoid confusion.
List of Works Quoted and Authors Cited

Tamil

Aiṅkurunūru, Old commentary.
Akanānūru, Old commentary.
Cilappatikāram, Aṭiyārkkunallār’s commentary.
Kalittokai, Naccinārkkiṇīyar’s commentary.
Kūruntokai, Dr. Swaminatha Iyer’s commentary.
Nāṟṟiṇai, Narayanasami Iyer’s commentary.
Paripāṭal, Parinēḷalakar’s commentary.
Pattuppūṭṭu, Old commentary.
Pattuppūṭṭu, Naccinārkkiṇīyar’s commentary.
Puṟanāṇūṟu, Old commentary.
Sanga Ilakkiyam, Saiva Siddhanta Samajam.
Tirukkōvaiyār, Māṇikka Vēcakar.
Tirukkuṟaḷ, Parinēḷalakar’s commentary.
Tolkāppiyam, Mutarcuttira-virutti by Civanāna Muṇivar.
" Porulpatalam Akattinaiyiyal with new commentary by Dr. S. S. Bharathiyar.
" Porulatikāram, Ilampūraṇar’s commentary.
" Naccinārkkiṇīyar’s commentary.
" Pērāciriyar’s commentary.

English


Arnold, Mathew: Essays in Criticism, Second Series, 1918.
Brandes, George: Main Currents in the Nineteenth Century Literature, Volume IV, 1905.
Cowper, William: Letters.
Hazlitt, William: Essays, Lectures on English Poets & The Spirit of the Age,
Keats: Ode to A Nightingale, To Autumn.
Lyon, P. H. B.: The Discovery of Poetry, 1941.
Palgrave, Francis T: Landscape in Poetry, 1897.
Richards, I. A.: Principles of Literary Criticism, 1925.
Shakespeare: The Two Gentlemen of Verona; The Merchant of Venice.
Shelley: A Defence of Poetry; The Skylark; Ode to the West Wind.
Smith, Vincent: Early History of India, 1921.
Spenser: The Shepherd's Calendar.
Tennyson: In Memoriam; Enoch Arden: The Brook.
Thompson, James: Seasons.
Wordsworth, William: The Wanderer; Ode to Duty; Miscellaneous Sonnets.
Young, Edward: Conjectures on Original Composition. 1928.
## List of Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ain.</td>
<td>for Ainkurunurru</td>
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<td>Aka.</td>
<td>Akananuru</td>
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<td>Cirupān.</td>
<td>Cirupānārruppatāi</td>
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<td>Iḷam.</td>
<td>İḷampūraṇar’s Commentary</td>
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<td>Kali.</td>
<td>Kalittokai</td>
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<td>Kurincip.</td>
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<td>Kuru.</td>
<td>Kuruntokai</td>
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<td>Malai.</td>
<td>Malaipatukaṭām</td>
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<td>Maturaik.</td>
<td>Maturaikkāṇci</td>
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<td>Mullaip.</td>
<td>Mullaippattu</td>
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<td>Nac.</td>
<td>Nacciuṅkkiniyar’s Commentary</td>
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<td>Nar.</td>
<td>Narriṇai</td>
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<td>Netu.</td>
<td>Netunalvāṭai</td>
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<td>Pari.</td>
<td>Paripāṭal</td>
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<td>Patirrup.</td>
<td>Patirruppattu</td>
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<td>Paṭṭinap.</td>
<td>Paṭṭinappālai</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perumpān.</td>
<td>Perumpānārruppatāi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Per.</td>
<td>Pērāciriyar’s Commentary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Por.</td>
<td>Porulatikāram (of Tolkāppiyam)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Porun.</td>
<td>Porunarārruppatāi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pura.</td>
<td>Puranāṇurru</td>
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<td>Tiru.</td>
<td>Tirumurukārruppatai</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tol.</td>
<td>Tolkāppiyam</td>
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</table>
References in the footnotes

The numbers given in the footnotes refer to the stanzas or lines or pages as noted below:

In the case of the works of Eṭṭuttokai, the number refers to the stanza:

In the case of the idylls of Pattuppāṭṭu, it refers to the line:

In the case of the grammatical work Tolkāppiyam it refers to the ‘cūttiram’:

In the case of other works, it refers to the page and is preceded by the letter p:

In some cases, both the stanza and the particular lines in it are noted, e.g. 5: 64-70 means lines 64 to 70 in the fifth stanza.
Part I
THE PLACE OF NATURE
IN
SANGAM LITERATURE

The Literature of the Sangam Age is a bouquet of blossoms of variegated kinds in form and fragrance and colour and complexion. There are two thousand three hundred and eighty one verses varying from small lyrics of three lines to an idyll of seven hundred and eighty two lines. There are four hundred and seventy three poets known either by the names they bore or by causal names culled from their works, and the authors are unidentified in the case of hundred and two poems.

Each of the poets treats the orchestra after his individual fashion; yet, on the whole, from the most popular Kapilar and Nakkīrar to those whose names are not known, a general harmony prevails. The tone and temper of the age is reflected in all their poems with a singular likeness. Be it a small verse in Aiṅkuṟunūṟu or a long idyll in Pattuppāṭṭu, the characteristic literary qualities of the age are clearly portrayed. They are moulded according to certain literary conventions or traditions which Tolkāppiyantār, the ancient grammarian denotes by the phrase
pätal cänra pulaneři valakkam.¹ There are differences, but they are minute and subtle, not at all fundamental. Despite these differences, they reveal their blending into an oneness which is characteristic of this age in Tamil literature.

In Sangam literature there are poets like Wordsworth who paint pictures of the hills, the lakes, the rivers and the rustic folk of Tamilnad, though, like Wordsworth, they never inscribe the word Nature on their banners; there are poets like Scott with descriptions of Nature, based upon close observation, so accurate that a botanist might acquire a correct idea of the vegetation in Tamilnad; there are also sensuous poets like Keats who gifted with the keenest perceptions see, hear, feel, taste and inhale all the varieties of glorious colour, of melodious song, of silky texture, the flavour of fruit and fragrance of flowers which Nature offers. Their love of Nature is so powerful as to permeate the themes of love as well as of war in their poems. Yet, no word, analogous to Nature ever occurs, either as a brief synonym for the external aspect of things, or, as commonly used, for a kind of abstract medium between God and the universe.

These ancient poets do not treat of Nature alone, but resort to it always to describe human life in its varying aspects, chiefly love and war. In short, they knit together the feelings of man

¹. பலை காற்று புளை ரே பலைகள் வலங்கம். —Tol. Por. 53
and the beauties of Nature in closest bonds and warmest associations.

The world of Nature and the world of Man are, according to J. C. Shairp, the two great fields in which the poet works. The Sangam poets work in both the great fields, and it is, therefore, that the reader finds in their poems what Palgrave would characterise as the marriage of Man with Nature. These two subjects are interwoven as warp and woof in the fine tapestry of ancient Tamil poetry. The ancient poets have united the power that observes the phenomena of external Nature with an insight into human feelings as either influenced or affected by them. For example:

“Just now I had a look at that mountain of his where the rain poured in such heavy showers that the peacocks screeched in flocks and the grey-faced langurs with their young ones trembled with fear. Is my forehead still of the same old state? Let me know it, my companion!”

This is the gist of a passage by Kapilar. It is the reply of the heroine to her lady-companion when she asks her how she will bear the separation of her lover for a short period before marriage. Her reply is that she will console herself and bear it up by looking at his mountain as often as possible as she does even now when he

1. Aspects of Poetry, p. 70. 2. Landscape in Poetry, p. 29
3. கூரின் பாடல்கள் பிறப்புக்கு முன்னர் நான் பாடியதை மேலேவே பட்டியல் பாடல்களில் உள்ள நோக்கங்களை கூறுவது முன்னர் வரவு பெற்று பாடியதை மேலேவே பட்டியல் பாடல்களில் உள்ள நோக்கங்களை கூறுவது முன்னர் வரவு பெற்று பாடியதை

Kuru, 94
The Treatment of Nature

departs from her after clandestine meetings. Here the great poet Kapilar depicts the passion of the heroine and at the same time paints a mountain scenery with rain and peacocks and langurs.

Most of the poems in Akanānūru, Narriṇai, Kuruntokai, Aiṅkurunūru and Kalittokai teem with the feelings and passions of men and women depicted along with pictures of natural scenery. Some of the idylls in Pattupāṭṭu also conform to this type. The rest are with or without descriptions of Nature, and even those with descriptions of Nature are of no such fixed pattern as this. The five anthologies quoted above deal with love esoteric called ‘akam’ and therefore it may be said that most of the poems on this theme (called akappāṭṭu or love-lyrics) depict passions of love set with pictures of Nature.

The poems classified as ‘akam’ or dealing with love in Sangam literature constitute dramatic monologues since they present situations of love through the emotional utterances of the interlocutors, the hero, the heroine, the lady-companion and others. The emotional experience is called uripporul¹ (the conative aspect). The description of Nature accompanying it serves as the stage for action in dramatic poetry and consists of two parts called mutalporul² (the place and time) and Karupporul¹ (the objects of environment).

1. portlet. Poru. 14
2. ₐᵢbd. 4
These three components complete the dramatic poetry called 'akappāṭṭu.' While explaining these three in his famous treatise on grammar, Tolkāppiyar clarifies their relative importance. According to him, karupporul is more important than mutalporul and uripporul is more important than the other two.² In other words, in such poems, the emotional experience of the lovers is the most important, the objects of environment come next in importance and the region, the season and the hour are less important.

"The bees buzz and the frogs croak; the pastoral region is cool and fragrant with blooms of mullai; the pleasant season accosts; and I have returned as promised. Be not downcast and dejected."³

This is the gist of a stanza by Pēyaṉar in Aiṅkurunūru. The heroine anxiously awaits her lover as the season in which he had promised to return has begun. The hero arrives and with overflowing joy announces that he has come. This is the uripporul, the theme of this love-poem.
The background of the pastoral region in early winter is the mutalporul and is relevant to the region to which the heroine belongs and the season is a sharp reminder of his promise to return. The references to the buzz of the bees, the croaking of the frogs and the blossoming of the mullai constitute the picture of the region and the season, and these form the karupporul and serve as the background of the situation of love depicted in the poem.

It must be noted in passing that there are a few verses which have no mutalporul but only the other two, and a few have neither karupporul nor mutalporul but only uripporul, confirming what Tolkāppiyānār says as to their relative importance.

The literary conventions of the age are seen not only in such gracious blending of the human passions with the beauties of Nature but also in the classification of the sentiments of love in accordance with the different regions and assigning them to particular seasons and hours.

The regions are five, the kuriṇci, or the mountain region, the mullai or the forest or pastoral tract, the marutam or the agricultural region, the neythal or the coastal region, and the pālai or the arid desert tract. Each of these has its own peculiar flora and fauna and other aspects

1. மற்புளை தேர் தால்கறை மற்றும்
   தீப்புருண் மற்றும் தால்கறை
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   —Tol. Por. 5.
which are included under what has been referred to as karupporul. The ancient poets have found out that in a particular season of the year and in a particular hour of the day, a particular region appears most beautiful and most influential, that every landscape is seen best under the peculiar illumination of a season and a period of it when its influence is powerful on human impulses and activities. Thus are also the different stages of love correlated to the different aspects of natural environment.

The geographic control of life and growth is an idea recently reached by science and newly expounded in treatises on Anthropogeography. But the ancient Tamil poets have somehow understood this influence of natural environment on the life of men and have established conventions in their works especially on love and its various aspects.¹ These conventions prove that ancient Tamil poetry was inspired by acute observation of Nature and its influence on human life in its different aspects.

In accordance with the conventions, the love-aspect of the mountainous tract is the meeting of the lovers in late winter (beginning with the middle of October and ending with the middle of December) at midnight.² The season of early dew (the two months following late winter) is also the period for this.³ The commentators try

2. Tamil. 3. Tamil.

² Tamil.
³ Tamil.

—Tol. Por. 6
—Ibid. 7
to explain the peculiar influence of Nature on romantic approaches and according to Naccinārk-kiniyar, the dreadful hour of midnight with the constant showers of late winter with its attendant discomforts would render the union of lovers most difficult and thereby serve to heighten their longing in suspense. Then is every beast in its lair and every bird in its nest with its loving mate. The stealthy wooing and union of the lovers in spite of watch and ward round the village and the care of mothers at home would be highly exciting. Rough and frowning steeps, foaming floods, wandering beasts, darkness and cold make up the terrible but dramatically appropriate environment.

The early winter and the dusky evening are the proper season and hour for the forest region, and its love-aspect is patient waiting of the heroine during the period of separation of her lover. Naccinārkkiniyar explains that the atmosphere then is pleasant and cool and most favourable for the return of the lover from his camp, and, as he returns, he notices all the birds and animals wooing their mates with great joy on account of the pleasant fresh showers. The mullai and other fragrant flowers of the season

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1. Naccinārkkiniyar explains that the atmosphere then is pleasant and cool and most favourable for the return of the lover from his camp, and, as he returns, he notices all the birds and animals wooing their mates with great joy on account of the pleasant fresh showers. The mullai and other fragrant flowers of the season

2. Naccinārkkiniyar explains that the atmosphere then is pleasant and cool and most favourable for the return of the lover from his camp, and, as he returns, he notices all the birds and animals wooing their mates with great joy on account of the pleasant fresh showers. The mullai and other fragrant flowers of the season.
spread their new ambrosia far and wide and his heart is moved and drawn towards his longing partner at home.  

The region of fields or plains has sulking love-quarrel for uriipporu. There is no particular season assigned to it, perhaps because all seasons equally allow it. But it has the early dawn as its suitable hour, as the lover turns a gay libertine and, spending a festive night with a courtesan, returns home at this period and the wife reproaches him and denies him admission and ultimately forgives his wrongs after hearing his pleadings and regrets either in person or through her lady-companion and others.  

As for the coastal region, the afternoon is the appropriate hour and no season is specially

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1. The Place of Nature.  
2. Ibid.  
3. Ibid.  
4. Ibid.  

The term ‘orpatu’ is interpreted as the period of sunrise, but
mentioned. Its love-aspect is the lady’s bewailing over the long absence of the lover. The hot sun sinks into the west and the birds fly to their nests anxiously seeking their mates and young ones. The maritime region in the evening rouses feelings of desolation and despair in her afflicted heart.¹

The most frequently depicted aspect of love is the parting of lovers and their pining in separation. Its region is the arid desert tract which is either the hills or the forests that have become dry and waste on account of the continued absence of showers and the hot burning rays of the sun.² The noonday hour of hot summer profoundly influences loneliness and solitude.³ The season of late dew is also ascribed to it.⁴ The hottest part of the day in scorching summer in a desert tract without shady trees is the period when not a single beast is free from suffering. The parted lover goes through untold hardships

¹ ‘sunset’ seems to be the appropriate meaning; vide S. Soma sundra Bharathiyaar’s Tol Porutpatalam Akattinaiyiyal, New commentary, pp. 18, 24. The old commentator of Ainkurunuru is also of this view; vide Ain. 116-note.

² Tol. Por. 8. Nac.

³ Cilappatikaram, Katukan-katai, 11.

⁴ —Tol. Por. 9

—Ibid. 10
and the feminine imagination of the lady renders the tract abound in fancied dangers. The words of consolation addressed by the lady-companion are of no avail and instead of consolation, the good lady turns disconsolate.¹

These are the conventions called *pātal caṅra pulaneri valakkam* ² found in the poems in the five anthologies referred to above as well as in the idylls Mullaippāṭṭu and Kurinçippāṭṭu in Pattuppāṭṭu which are all termed as Akappāṭṭu or esoteric poetry.

There is in them a remarkable blending of external Nature with the feelings of joy and sorrow in human life and these conventions remind one of Spenser’s “The Shepherd’s Calendar” in which the moods of the various verses are made to correspond to the seasons represented, or conversely outward Nature in its cycle throughout the year reflects on and unifies the emotions, thoughts and passions of the shepherds. Greg appreciates this as a perfectly legitimate artistic device and as one based on a fundamental principle of human nature, since the appearance of objective phenomena is ever largely modified and coloured by subjective feeling.³ Even in Tennyson’s “In Memoriam”, the out-

¹. Walter W. Greg, Postoral Poetry and Pastoral Drama, p. 91.
². *Ibid.* 53
³. *Ibid.* 53
ward scene and the inward feeling are woven together with an intensity which makes them single and inseparable. Sangam Literature contains numberless stanzas in which the Tamil poets, like Tennyson, make the reader feel that the storm of the human heart blows stronger than the storm of Nature depicted in them.

As J. C. Shairp says, Nature is always wooing man's spirit in manifold and mysterious ways, to elevate him with its vastness and sublimity, to gladden him with its beauty, to depress him with its bleakness and to restore him with its calm.¹ This quick interchange of feeling between the world without and the world within, though subtle and mysterious, has been recognised as a fact in the literary conventions of the Sangam age.

Usage is the source and origin of conventions, and convention in poetry is, according to Lowes, only the costume in which emotion attires itself.² The conventions of the poetry of the Sangam age are the mould which gives to the very age its form and pleasure. They represent the ways along which beauty in Nature and in human feelings has in the past been sought and known. Any enjoyment of the poetry of that age demands a sympathetic understanding of its conventions, whether current or obsolete. For example, tradition has so closely associated the sloping hills and the winding streams with adventures of the lover coming to his sweetheart at midnight that

¹. On poetic Interpretation of Nature, p. 2
². Convention and Revolt in Poetry, p. 32
the name ‘kuriṅci’ is itself enough to strike the keynote of this aspect of love. The tone or colour that human experience had once given to the scenery was carried on by that scenery, so that in course of time it became the appropriate background for a new tale of that type.

As expressed by Abercrombie, the rules of art which the ancient poets obeyed were not imposed on Nature but were drawn from Nature; they were “discovered, not devised”. Even apart from the ancient conventions or rules of art, no one can ignore the power of Nature over man’s thoughts and feelings even now, after winning a civilization slowly and to a certain extent in spite of it. The dark woods rouse him to solemn awe and the gay landscapes with blue skies and silver clouds give him joy and pleasure. This was noted by the Tamil scholars thousands of years ago, especially in the Sangam age when Tamil and was a nest of singing birds as England in the golden age of Elizabeth. They have minutely observed how the climate of a region and its natural resources lend something of their own energy to the character of its inhabitants and how their manners and modes of life undergo an imperceptible change owing to their influence. Those were days when man was more dependent upon Nature and therefore his habits and tastes were moulded by his environment in the world of Nature, and he himself was more or less a product of Nature’s handiwork. The poets of the age have made this fact evident in their compositions, especially the

1. Principles of Literary Criticism, p. 141
passages on love. Tolkāppiyāṅar who deals with the literary conventions of his age, himself admits that he has based his observations on the usages honoured by the practice of the great poets- pāṭalut pāyippuravai nāṭun kālai.'

The influence of Nature on man is not so much clear in the exoteric poems called ‘puram’, the poems dealing with subjects other than the esoteric aspects of love. Yet there are in them, descriptions of Nature, in brief and sometimes in detail, but not so frequently as in the poems on love. The following are the contexts in which such descriptions are found:—

1. When the poets, as bards seeking patronage or gifts, praise their patrons, kings or chieftains, they also praise the territories in their jurisdiction for their beauty and fertility and also sometimes in contrast to them despise those of their enemies invaded and destroyed by the patrons which were once in an equally beautiful and fertile state. While they approach their patrons, they find this an easy, elegant and honourable method of pleasing them. The poet Moci Kīraṅār openly expresses his feelings that he would rather sing in praise of the Koṅkāṇam hills rather than beg of the chieftain of the hills to help him. Even Kapilar, who was

1. "पातलुत पायिपुरावै नाटुं काल।" — Tol. Por. 3

2. "कालुप स्त्रियाँ आवृत्तं आय आयामथा आरूः आरुत कालुपात आरुत मुहुर्त आरुत आरुत कालुपात।" — Purā. 154
more a friend than a poet to the great patron Pāri, has many lines in praise of his Parampu hills but only a few on the patron himself. Most of the passages in Patirruppattu are of the type of appreciation of the rich fertility of the patron’s home and deprecation of his enemy’s lands which were also equally fertile before his invasion. Among the idylls, Maturaikkānci and Paṭṭinappālai are of this type, devoting hundreds of lines to such descriptions.

2. There is a form of poetry in Sangam Literature called ‘āṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛṛpéri

1. Patirrup. 13; 25-29
2. Maturaik. 80-130; 152: 194; 238-240
3. Paṭṭinap. 1-110; 240-270
4. अट्रटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटटट�ी... Tol. Por. 91
beneficiary-traveller. Generally, there are pictures of all kinds of regions in such descriptions. There are five long idylls of this type in Pattuppāṭṭu, viz., Tirumurukārruppaṭṭai, Porunārārruppaṭṭai, Cirupāṇārruppaṭṭai, Perumpāṇārruppaṭṭai and Malaiṇaṇaṭṭuṇam or Kuttaraṇnārruppaṭṭai. Of these, Tirumurukārruppaṭṭai, also called Pulavarārruppaṭṭai, is an exception since it is the experience of a devotee of the God Muruga and there are very few lines describing Nature, leaving alone the picture of a mountain scenery in the beginning and that of a cataract in the end. All the other four idylls depict Nature in detail, devoting only a less number of lines to the experience of the happy bard with the patron and the guidance given to the other as to how to approach him and the unfailing and positive help expected from him. There are also verses of this type in Puranaṇūru¹ but in them descriptions of Nature are rare and brief.

3. Paripāṭṭal consists of verses altogether different from those of the other anthologies, and, consequently, their descriptions of Nature are also of a different type. There are invocations to the God Muruga or Tirumāl and in them their hills Tirupparaṇkuṇram² or Tirumāliruṇkuṇram³ respectively are eulogised and described with pictures of their natural scenery. There is another class of poems, in which the river Vaiyai

². Pari. 8, 9, 14, 17 - 20.
³. Ibid. 15 and 1 of Tirattu.
THE PLACE OF NATURE

is depicted in detail in connection with the sentiments of lovers celebrating the new flood in it.¹ Of them, two are apostrophes to the river in that context.² Thus in Paripātal, one meets with pictures either of the mountain scenery or of the flood in the river.

4. Another context in which the pictures of natural scenery occur is the very common use of them in comparisons. For example, when the Cēra king Peruṅcēralātana undertook fasting unto death to save his honour from the wound accidentally sustained on his back with the weapon aimed at his chest while fighting with the Cōla king Karikālaṇ, the poet Kaḷāttalaiyār felt great anguish and compared him to the sun setting and disappearing in a mountain on one full moon day just after presenting an attractive scene in the sky in which the moon rising in the east and the sun setting in the west seemed as if greeting each other.³ The (imaginary) begging bowls of the poor bards are said to be turned towards their munificent patron just as the neruṇci blooms always incline towards the sun in the sky.⁴

1. 6, 7, 10-12, 16, 20, 22 and 2 of Tirattu.
2. Ibid. 11, 12.
3. Purar. 65
4. Pura. 155
Similes of this type are numerous not only in the verses on exoteric themes but also in those on esoteric ones and are sometimes elaborate and detailed, sometimes brief and pointed.

The Sangam literature with its poems on 'akam' and 'puram' aspects of life sets forth the truths of Nature and human nature inextricably intertwined as the concomitant influence of Natural philosophy on human psychology implicit in most cases. Both man and Nature have a place in it, but there is a greater emphasis on man. Nature is the stage on which man plays his part and man is set in the zodiac of creation - human and non-human, lithosphere and atmosphere, the sun and the moon, the clouds and the stars; but these have never been loved and described for their own sake, except for portraying some phases of life in poetry. External nature is only illustration, or background for the human emotions that they depict. Descriptions of Nature are neither evocative nor revelative but are only frames for bright pictures of love or war or any other subject.

Though the central theme in Sangam literature is man, and Nature is made subservient to the human theme, yet there is effective as well as abundant use of Nature and the poets have no reserve in the treatment of accessory landscapes. They are so wrought into the themes sometimes, that they cannot be separated and thought of apart. Yet, it may be said in general that, quite apart from the context, the pictures of Nature have their own intrinsic beauty and cannot pass
unnoticed by the reader. This can easily be seen from the titles of many of the verses which are sometimes arresting phrases of descriptive touches of Nature embodied in them, or from the numerous apostrophes to the objects of Nature.

The anthology called Aṇkuṇūru consists of five hundred lyrics, every hundred belonging to each of the five regions; each is again subdivided into ten tens, each ten being denoted by an appropriate title. Most of these titles refer to the themes or contexts of love dealt with in their respective tens, as Tōlikkuraitta-pattu\(^1\) (the ten addressed to the lady-companion) or Varavuc-cirappuraitta-pattu\(^2\) (the ten dealing with the pleasures\(^3\) of the return of the hero). The rest refer to Nature. Of them, three are on what is termed mutalporul; two on the desert and pastoral regions (Iṭaiccurap-pattu\(^4\) and Pṟavaṇip-pattu\(^5\)) and one on the season of early summer (Iḷavē-nil-pattu).\(^6\) The remaining tens have brief references to the flora and fauna of the regions included under karupporul and are indicated by them as Vēlap-pattu, Nāḷal-pattu,\(^8\) Neytal-pattu,\(^9\) Kaḷaṇapattu,\(^1₀\) Erumaip-pattu,\(^1₁\) Vellāṅkurukup-pattu,\(^1₂\) Ciruvenkākkaip-pattu,\(^1₃\) Valaip-pattu,\(^1₄\) Kēḷal-pattu,\(^1₅\) Kurakkup-pattu,\(^1₆\) Kiḷaip-pattu,\(^1₇\) and

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1. 4th ten. 2. 50th ten.
4. 33rd ten. 5. 44th ten.
6. 35th ten. 7. 2nd ten.
8. 15th ten. 9. 19th ten.
10. 3rd ten. 11. 10th ten.
12. 10th ten. 13. 17th ten.
14. 20th ten. 15. 27th ten.
16. 28th ten. 17. 10th ten.
Maññai-puttu¹ (the tens on the reed, the nāḷal tree, the neytal flower, the crab, the buffalo, the crane, the crow, the conch, the wild pig, the monkey, the parrot and the peacock respectively).

Each of the stanzas in Patirruppattu shines with a particular phrase as the very core of the description in it and is consequently named after it. Among eighty such stanzas of this anthology, twentyseven have for their titles felicitous phrases² describing various objects and scenes of Nature. An unidentified old commentator of the work has given scholarly interpretations and explanations for these titular phrases of these stanzas and has made evident the imaginative keenness of their authors in observing and describing Nature.

Among the idylls of Pattuppāṭṭu, Neṭunalmāṭai and Malaiṭukaṭām attract the reader by their imaginative titles. In the former, the vāṭai or north wind is depicted to intensify the wintry landscape forming the background; it appears to be tedious and distressing to the heroine in the palace, whereas the hero seems unaffected by it and is engaged in accomplishing his duties in his war-camp. The two epithets netu (tedious) and nal (good) suggest the sentimental attitudes of the heroine and the hero towards this wind and hence the importance and appropriateness of the title.³ In the latter idyll, the title is the keyword of the poem and is born of the imaginative picture in the

¹ 30th ten.
² Patirrup. 18, 15, 19, 23, 28, 31, 32, 40, 41, 50, 53, 59, 60, 66, 69, 70, 72, 82, 84, 85; 87.
³ Netu. Naccinarkkiniyar’s Commentary.
heart of the work. In about fifty lines the poet describes the various sounds heard in a mountain. When his imagination extends and compares the mountain to an elephant, the whole noise becomes the rut of the elephant and hence the arresting and artistic phrase *malai*paṭukaṭām meaning ‘the rut of the mountain’. It shines as the very life of the description of Nature in the idyll and, therefore, aptly serves its title.

As referred to above, the ancient poets’ love of Nature is also evident from the numerous apostrophes to the objects of Nature found in their works. The *nocc* tree, the *tiṇai* crop and the *vayalai* and the *mullai* creepers are addressed in some passages. Among the birds, the parrot, the owl, the cock, the swan, the crane and the crow have apostrophes. The crab is addressed in one stanza and the bee in three. There are also apostrophes to the pastoral region, the mountain, the river, the sea, the rain, the north wind, the sun, the moon and also the evening personified. But even in these apostrophes only three addressed to the Parampu hills, the mullai and the sun are autobiographic, and in the rest it is the

hero or the heroine or the lady-companion or the foster-mother that addresses the birds or other objects and expresses his or her sentiments in the drama of love.

All these prove the fact that Sangam literature deals directly and primarily with the passions and feelings of man, and Nature has an equally prominent, though not the primary, place in it and serves to illustrate or stand as the stage for the role man has to play in pleasure or in pain.
THE NATURE-POETS OF THE SANGAM AGE

If poetry is the incarnation of the spirit of a people, then the poetry of the ancient Tamils is only the form taken by their love of Nature as a background for the manifestation of their own inner feelings and passions. Every poet of the Sangam age has the mind that observes and receives; and there is, in their works, a fuller and mere accurate knowledge of Nature than in the literary works of the later periods. The pictures are so accurate that it almost seems as if the poets were walking from flower to flower, from bird to bird and so on all the while taking notes. So minute is the characterisation, so exact each epithet in the representation of the various colours, forms, sounds, odours and ways of growth and life of the entire plant and animal kingdoms as well as their habitations and sojourns. The poets feel the beauties and influences of the tangible world mostly through the eye which has the advantage of having the receptor, the retina, as a part of the brain, instead of being a separate thing connected with the brain more or less remotely by a peripheral nerve as in the case of the other senses. Next to the eye, the senses of sound and smell have some prominence. The sense of taste comes next and the least important is that of touch.

A study of some of the poets enables one to conceive the treatment of Nature by the poets of the age in general. Among the selected poets,
Some have verses with extensive and elaborate descriptions of Nature, while some others have one or a few verses each, which constitute a kaleidoscope, as it were, of the scenes amidst which they lived, moved and had their being, for posterity to see through, visualise and enjoy those things of beauty which remain a joy for ever.

A. Poets who have depicted Nature in detail:

Antar Makan Kuruvaluṭiyar

Aŋṭar are a tribe of shepherds and the poet seems to belong to this tribe. But the name Valuti denotes that he had some connection with the Paṅtıyiar. One may expect pastoral poetry from this poet; on the contrary, his poems are on mountains and coastal regions. What is characteristic of his poems is that he treats of mild aspects of Nature; though sharks¹ and elephants² find place in his stanzas, they are not ferocious and are comparatively harmless. His seashore and his mountains are full of flowers sweet in fragrance and with a wealth and variety of hues.³ The sand dune appears like a mountain and the backwaters ripple with a melodious sound and are adorned with the screwpine trees on the banks.⁴

1. Aks. 150
2. Ibid. 928
3. —Aks. 150
4. —Kuru. 345
Ammuvanar

Most of the descriptions of Ammūvaṉār are of the maritime region. In Aiṅkuruṇuru, the second hundred dealing with neytaltinai (the love-aspect of the maritime tract) is of this poet.

Ammūvaṉār has described the flora and fauna of this region so accurately that his portrayal proves his intimate knowledge and keen observation of their ways of life. There are also apostrophes to the sea and the evening personified.

In spite of his masterly contribution to the literature on the maritime region, it has to be observed that all his descriptions are restricted to the seashore, the backwaters and the groves adjoining it. Beyond mentioning the roaring waves dashing against the sandy shores and referring to the life of the fish and the aquatic birds he has not extended his description of the sea to the gales and the tempests thereof. There is not a single line on a sea voyage or its attendant dangers, perhaps due to want of such experience by the poet. Even the poems referring to the waves and the fish are very few compared to those on the trees like punnai and nālal, the cranes and other birds perching on their branches and seeking food in the backwaters and the different kinds of flowers blossoming there.

3. Aka. 10. 4. Aīn. 179.
5. Ibid. 106; Aka. 280. 6. Kuru. 393; Nar. 307, 315.
9. Aīn. 170, 183, 189; Aka. 280.
The poet depicts interesting pictures by means of artistic epithets, for example:

*ollinarc cerunti*¹ (the *cerunti* with blossoms of bright colours)

*akal ilai*p *punai*² (the *punai* tree with broad leaves)

*nër kotip pācatumpu*³ (the tender *atumpu* creeper with slender stems)

*tutikkāl aṇṇam*⁴ (the swan with pointed legs)

*nālal ciriyilai*p *peruṅ cinai*⁵ (the *nālal* tree with small leaves and big branches)

He notes with artistic interest not only the colours⁶ and forms⁷ of flowers, but also details like the tubularity of the *neytal* stems.⁸

His sympathy with the birds is of an unusual type. He depicts a crane sleeping on the branches of the *nālal*⁹ and the ripples of the backwaters singing a lullaby to the crow there.¹⁰ The ignorant crow is frightened by the cowries spread there which appear like a net.¹¹ It lays eggs under the planks of a boat.¹² A crane is said to be too old to go in search of its food; it is longing for the fish

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1. *Aka* 280  
2. *Ibid.* 370  
3. *Ain* 10:  
5. *Ibid.* 145  
9. *Ain.* 144  
10. *Ibid* 163  
11. *Ibid.* 166  
caught by the fishermen. Another crane which has lost its strength to fly, perches on the branch of a tree that stretches low towards the waves. A sympathetic and at the same time humourous picture is of a beetle that approaches a nāval fruit. The crab closeby mistakes it for the fruit itself and seizes it. The beetle then makes a cry of suffering, hearing which a crane rushes to the spot and relieves it from the clutches of the crab.

The poet's sympathy extends even to the flowers in the backwaters. He pictures a crane walking over a neythal but causing it to open its petals and shed its honey. The feeling of sympathy increases when the poet informs us that the crane walked over it to go and see the pathetic scene of death of the young one of another bird of the region. The crow is also depicted as crushing and spoiling the blossoming neythal flower with its legs.

The golden pollen of the ānuna flowers shed in the blue neythal blossoms suggests to the poet the picture of gold kept in a casket of blue gem.

1. ānuna nārā beḷānu dēdisē
    pātānu jōkānu ṣīnān

2. ānuna nārā beḷānu dēdisē
    pātānu jōkānu ṣīnān

3. ānuna nārā beḷānu dēdisē
    pātānu jōkānu ṣīnān

4. ānuna nārā beḷānu dēdisē
    pātānu jōkānu ṣīnān

5. ānuna nārā beḷānu dēdisē
    pātānu jōkānu ṣīnān

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Ain. 180
Kuru. 125
Nar. 85
Ain. 151
Ibid. 185
The poet’s art unfailingly induces imagery in the reader as much as it rings in his ears. The rise and fall of the waves is melodious and sweet to his musical ear especially when it accompanies the harmonious sounds of the drum called mulavu.

The incessant roar of the waves adds to the pathetic plight of the heroine pining in the absence of her lover; and in such poems, nature is set to affect the passions and emotions of the heroine. In the apostrophe to the sea, the heroine sympathetically enquires whether it has also been deserted by its companion as she herself is forlorn.

The sea has also been used in similitude as the birds and the flowers of the coast are made use of. The pining hero compares himself to the sea which spends sleepless nights. In an emotional state the heroine utters that the ramifications of her love to her lover are great, nay, greater than the great sea itself.

Allur Nan-Mullaiyar

The poems of this artist are eleven in number and none of them describe the pastoral region

1. *Allur Nan-Mullaiyar* (Ain. 171)
2. *Allur Nan-Mullaiyar* (Ibid. 106)
3. *Allur Nan-Mullaiyar* (Kuru. 163)
4. *Allur Nan-Mullaiyar* (Ain. 172, 186, 188)
5. *Allur Nan-Mullaiyar* (Ain. 172)
6. *Allur Nan-Mullaiyar* (Ibid. 184)
called 'Mallai'. Perhaps the word mullai in the name is the proper name and does not refer to the poet as belonging to, or singing of, the forest region. On the contrary, Allur may be a village of the agricultural tract as it ends with the suffix 'ur' meaning the village of this region. There are two poems which deal with the marutam (agricultural) region as background. The pictures of a buffalo plunging into the water in a tank and eating the lotus blossoms therein and a parrot having a neem fruit in its curved beak are attractively painted. The common neruvchi that blossoms first and then yields thorns does not escape the keen observation of the artist and is painted in an appropriate context.

Alankuti Vankanar

Four of his poems have very beautiful pictures of the agricultural region: all these pictures deal with tanks full of clear water. There are either lotus or ampal blossoms in them, and mango or marutu trees adorn their bunds. Both the lotus and the ampal flowers are very attractive to the artistic eye of the poet who notes their bright colours in particular. According to him, the lotus

1. Aka. 64; Kuru. 157.
2. —Aka. 48
3. —Kuru. 67
4. —Ibid. 202
5. Aka. 106; Kuru. 8; Nar. 230, 330.
flower is like the kindled fire\(^1\) and the āmpal just blossoming in the blue waters is like the Venus of brilliance just rising and dispelling darkness in the blue sky on the east.\(^2\) The poet is not content with painting such pictures in a calm, serene, passive atmosphere. He makes the small fish play like sparkles and paints an old kingfisher carefully watching to catch them.\(^3\) Or, he pictures a vālai fish leaping over, so as to catch the bunch of mango flowers hanging above the water.\(^4\) In another picture, a buffalo jumps into the deep waters and scares away the flight of cranes and then comes to the bund and takes rest there under the shade of the marutu tree.\(^5\) Or, the liveliness is kept up by artistic comparisons to the leaves and flowers in the water. In such a poem in Nārīnai there is the very simple but highly artistic picture of the blossoming āmpal mentioned above.\(^6\) There is no animal or bird in the picture, but the comparison given suggests both. The leaves of the āmpal are like the ears of the she-elephant and the white āmpal buds like the cranes with closed talons.

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1. Aka. 106
2. Nar, 230
3. Aka. 106
4. Kuru. 8
5. Nar. 330
6. Ibid. 230
In a stanza in Puranānuru, a picture of a scenery of a mountainous region is drawn. The boys of the village gather round a very young calf of a wild cow and tether it to a rope as if it is domesticated.

Alamperi Cattanar

The arid desert tract has been painted by this poet in four stanzas, the sea coast in two and the mountain scenery in one.

The scorching heat of the sun on the desert tract and the wild fire spreading among the dry bamboos and bushes are twice described. The wild fire is accompanied by peculiar sounds caused by the bursting of the nodes of the bamboos or by its entering into the clefts there. In both the descriptions the wind fans the flames. The poet would have observed it from a distance below the mountain and hence his description that the spreading fire appears in the forms of long bright creepers. The west wind blows away the dry

1. Purānānuru 117. 1. Parthasarthi. - Pura. 319
2. Aka. 47, 84, 143, 175.
4. Ibid 255.
5. Aka. 47, 143.
leaves of the tall teak high into the sky.¹ The bear searching for its food in the anthill and the kite calling to its mate from the high marāam tree complete the picture of the desert region.²

In a poem in Akanāñūru, a fine contrast is drawn between three pictures, one of an arid tract another of a quiet home in which the heroine lights up the lamps when the doves call to their mates, and another of a small fertile hill with kūtalām flowers of fragrant smell and a canopy of clouds.³ In another poem there is a contrast between the desert region which is arid and where the kites gather round the dead body of a wayfarer killed by the highwaymen and the fertile land wet with fresh showers ushered by a rainbow and lightning and thunder.⁴

In the picture of the mountainous region also, there is the description of the heavy rain at night when the thunder strikes at and kills the cobra yet searching for the disgorged gems and the tiger fights and kills the elephant⁵.

Pictures of midnight are steeped in pathos, especially when the poet depicts the longing heroine who spends sleepless nights in the absence of her lover. The death-like silence prevailing when all are asleep and the shrill cry of the aṅril

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1. Ṛṣṭiśravī Ṛṣṭiśravī Ṛṣṭiśravī
   Ṛṣṭiśravī Ṛṣṭiśravī Ṛṣṭiśravī
   Ṛṣṭiśravī Ṛṣṭiśravī Ṛṣṭiśravī
   —Ibid.

2. Aka. 81.
3. Ibid. 17.
4. Ibid. 147.
5. Nar. 255.
bird in its nest built on the palmyra tree breaking such a silence--these add to her sorrowful feelings.¹

Three of his stanzas dwell upon the cry of the anril at midnight from its nest on the palmyra tree² and he may, therefore, be distinguished as the poet of the anril even as Shelley is often associated with the skylark.

**Avur Mulankilar**

A poet of the agricultural region, he deals especially with its fields, oxen and cows. His contributions are mainly on the scenes of the dewy season and the early summer.³ He describes the changes in the sky in the dewy nights.⁴ It is very rare to meet with such pictures of a sky at night in Sangam literature. The picture here is very brief yet very artistic. The dark clouds pass on from north to south and it seems to the poet that the sky peels off its dark skin.

The rich fertility of the fields is brought out by the description of an old cow which goes to graze the paddy crop, but the peasants watching the field tie it to a kānci tree nearby by means of the pākal and the pakanyrai vines and feed it on the sugar-canes. Thus they are said to save the paddy crop at the cost of the sugar-canes.⁵

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1. Nar: 258, 303, 338.
2. Ibid, 152, 303, 338.
3. Aka, 24, 156, 341.
4. Aka. 24
5. Ibid. 158
The trained eye of the poet has been able to note exactly the colours and forms of the objects of nature and paint them carefully. The white pakuyrai bud is compared to the end of a conch left after cutting bangles out of it, the tender ears of fertile paddy to the crests adorning the heads of the horses of the rich people and the karantai flowers to the cow's udder.

He is one of the poets who depict the Himalayas. He describes the great height of the mountains saying that the clouds have to look up and climb over them.

He has also an unerring ear for sounds natural as well as artificial, as evidenced by his original and interesting comparison of the sound of the mutton frying in oil to that of the hard breath of an elephant.

Itaikkali-Nattu Nallur Nattattanar
(Nattattanar of Nallur of Itaikkali Natu)

He is the author of Cirupanârruppatâi, the third idyll in Pattupâtû. In it, the poet gives brief descriptions of all the five regions. His painting

1. Itaikkalli Nallur Natheer Nattattanar
2. Pururil
3. Pururil
4. Pururil
5. Pururil
6. Cirupan, 4-11; 41-46; 68-78; 146-151; 104-109; 178-186; 262-207.
of the different flowers blossoming in the maritime and pastoral tracts are artistic and reveal his sense of form as well as his sensitiveness to colour. The white screwpine flowers look like swans and are therefore imagined to blossom swans. Similarly the munṭakam is said to yield sapphires and the punṇai and the cerunti to yield pearls and gold respectively. The field-bean blossoms corals, the kāya the peacocks, the munṭtai the small baskets called ‘kottam’ and the kāntal the fingers. The pictures of the buffaloes in the fertile fields of the Cēra country and that of the bees humming melodiously in the lotus blossoms in the tanks of the Cola country are highly interesting. A female monkey in the coastal town Korkai is depicted to place a pearl in an empty sea-shell and to rattle with it in imitation of the young boys playing there.

1. Cīrpan. 144-149; 164-168.

2. 41.4-15.4

3. 70-77

4. ibid. 50-61
Itaikkatanar

The name of the poet itself reveals the fact that he belongs to the region of forests and his poems testify to this effect. Out of his ten poems, nine dwell upon the forest scenery.\(^1\)

The forest region looks most beautiful in the early winter and the poet appropriately describes the fresh showers of the season in picturesque terms, beginning from the darkening of the clouds all over the sky to the lightning and thunder and the final showers pouring over and cooling the earth. The adjectives and epithets employed are so arresting and so appropriate that even the sound of the lines in a stanza in Akaṇāṇūru suggest the various stages in the fall of these showers.\(^2\)

The cochineal insects are depicted to run hither and thither quickly among the faded flowers dropped from the käyā tree and this morning scene in the pastoral tracts is often compared to the beauty of corals mixed and spread with sapphires.\(^3\) This attractive scene on the earth is completed by reference to the top of the mountains where the white clouds move.\(^4\) The deer with their loving

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1. Aka, 139, 142, 194, 251, 274, 284, 304, 310, 374.
2. ibid.
3. Ibid. 139, 304, 374.
4. Ibid. 139, 304, 374.
mates graze, drink of the fresh water in the pools and jump and run through the forests. The peacocks uttering their characteristic cry on the kuruntu trees are compared to the ladies scaring away parrots in the fields. The shepherds are set in the background protecting the sheep, whistling and scaring away the jackals.

There is one description of a river descending from its source in a mountain to the plain and draining into the ocean.

The description of a rabbit's life is just like a page of its diary and it is so interesting. The poet with a keen eye for observation notes the eyes of the rabbit and compares them to the unripe fruits of the nelli, a comparison so happy and so real, revealing the poet's sense of form.
Iraniyamuttattup - Perunkunrurp Perunkaucikanar

He is the author of the long idyll in Pattupi ăţtu called Malaipañkukaţam. Out of its 583 lines, more than 400 lines are devoted to descriptions of Nature. The poem is one stretch of penpictures of Nature beautified by countless similes and shows not only the poet’s keen perception of Nature’s beauties but also his capacity for painting Nature. The poet’s landscape is drawn from experience. Dark hills,\(^1\) swift streams\(^2\) and steep ways\(^3\) appear. Gloomy caves,\(^4\) deep clefts,\(^5\) dangerous slopes\(^6\) and rough tracks\(^7\) are all depicted in detail with the various plants\(^8\) and animals\(^9\) of the mountainous region. The poet has an unerring ear for the various sounds heard in the mountain and describes them elaborately in about 50 lines.\(^10\) These sounds combine together and echo far off. This conglomeration of sounds is likened to the rut of the elephant to which the mountain itself is compared and hence the suggestive title Malaipañkukaţam, the Rut of the Mountain.\(^11\)

Ilankiranar

A poet interested in depicting the pathetic scenes of the desert tract, paints pictures of arid mountains and forests, regions which are waterless and of scorching heat and yet of animals and birds full of tender feelings like human beings.

2. Ibid. 213, 214, 323-4.
3. Ibid. 214-224.
4. Ibid. 255, 324.
5. Ibid. 312, 366.
7. Ibid. 373-4.
8. Ibid 265, 305, 334.
10. Ibid. 294-348.
11. Ibid. Nac.
The male kite which wants to feed its mate suffering from hunger after laying eggs, goes in search of food, and finds the rotten flesh of a wild cow killed and left after being eaten by a tiger;¹ a picture of a female deer denying itself food and sunk in sorrowful thoughts of its mate killed by the hunter's arrow, is really pathetic;² a thirsty stag is depicted to run after the mirage in vain till it finally faints and calls to its mate in a sorrowful faint voice.³

The poet's sense of form and colour is manifest in his comparison of the bark of the omai tree to the skin of an alligator.⁴ The comparisons of the bunch of iruppai flowers to the ends of arrows in quiver and their falling down to the dropping of white pearls, are very appropriate.⁵ The dry teak leaves blown up high into the sky suggest the scene of flying kites.⁶ The poet compares the heroine's pale face to the moon losing its brightness in the morning.⁷ When the hero is on his way home he sees in the desert tract the moon just

1. Aka 3.  
2. Ibid. 371.  
3. —Ibid. 395  
4. —Ibid. 3  
5. —Ibid. 225  
6. —Ibid. 200  
7. —Ibid.
rising above a hill, and is reminded of the beautiful face of his mate.\(^1\) Her tearful eyes look like the *kuvalai* flowers with rain drops on them.\(^2\)

His sense of sound is equally appreciable. The friction - roar of the bamboos is said to be heard like the hard breathing of an elephant tied to its pole\(^3\) and the sound of the west wind passing through the holes made by the beetles in bamboos is compared to the sweet tune of the shepherd’s flute.\(^4\)

**Ilattup Putan Tevanar**

His descriptions are mostly of animals and birds of the mountainous region. He refers twice to the bear seeking its food in the anthill to the detriment of the snake living in it.\(^5\) The elephant in his pictures is rutlish, strong and fierce enough to fight and kill the tiger.\(^6\) The wayfarers are afraid of its fatal attack on them.\(^7\) Its flow of rut attracts bees and their humming sound is musical enough to attract the animal called *acuñam* which listens to it and mistakes it for the tune of *yāl*.\(^8\)

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1. [Text in Tamil]
2. [Text in Tamil] — Aka. 395
3. [Text in Tamil] — Nar. 62
4. [Text in Tamil] — Aka. 225
8. [Text in Tamil] — Aka. 88
The wild pig is wise enough to listen to the tickling sound of the lizard and carefully enters the *tinaī* field during night.\(^1\) This poet has also noted the form of the *tinaī* ear looking like the trunk of the she-elephant.\(^2\)

Among his scenes of the forest tract, the weaverbird’s nest built of the sugarcane flowers is interesting.\(^3\) His epithet ‘*mūtukkuṟai*’ (wise) to the bird is very appropriate and revealing as it implies the instinctive talent of the bird in building the nest. He has noted the fall of the meteor as seen in the sky and used it in a comparison with the wheel of a chariot cutting and destroying the green crops on its way.\(^4\)

It is a wonder he has not dwelt upon trees and flowers in his poems except for a rare mention of the *mullai* flower\(^5\) and of a *vēṅkai* branch,\(^6\) the latter in a simile.

**Uloccanar**

All his poems with one exception in which the picture of a mountain scenery occurs in a simile,\(^7\) belong to the sea coast region; and it is evident that the poet has lived in and loved the region so

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1. Aka. 88
2. Kuru. 360
3. Nar. 366
4. Kuru. 189
5. Nar. 366
6. Kuru. 343
7. Nar. 64.
much that he is able to translate all his experiences into very beautiful word-pictures.

He is endowed with a fine sense of sight and hearing. His expressions are invigorating and his verbs and adjectives are hardly less appropriate.

His taste ranges from the beautiful sandy shore that looks like milk and moonlight to the aerial roots of the screwpine trees that serve as the ropes of a swing for playing on the shore. He seems to express his personal love for the pure white sand on the shore.

The sand heaped by the east wind and by the west wind is pictured. The picture of the west wind heaping sand around the trunk of a tall palmyra tree and making it appear short is really a picture culled from his vivid observation.

Of all the poets of this age, Uloccanār seems to be the most interested in the punnai tree and it is in his poems that we find a number of descriptions of this tree and its peculiar dark shade. The shade of the tree standing on the sandy heap on the shore is pleasant and there is a contrast between the darkness of the shade and the white brightness of the sand. The tree is so near the

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1. —Aka. 20  
2. —Ibid. 400  
3. —Ibid. 20  
4. —Kuru. 248  
   -Aka. 20  
   -Ibid. 200  
   -Ibid. 20  
   -Ibid. 248  
   —Aka. 20  
   —Kuru. 248  
   —Aka. 20  
   —Nar. 354
coast that its branches are wet by the waves dashing against them.\(^1\) The pollen shed over the soft sand that always looks pure and fresh offers a beautiful sight.\(^2\) In a stanza in Naṟṟiṇai the poet devotes almost all the lines to draw an artistic picture of the tree in colourful words.\(^3\) The iron-like branches; the sapphire-like leaves, the silvery flowers, the golden pollen, all these make this a unique picture.

The sight of the coloured earth with the pollen of puṁai flowers on it together with the loud humming of the bees there leads the horses of a chariot to mistake the place as one hiding a tiger and consequently they become very much terrified on approaching the spot.\(^4\) His highly developed sense of colour is evident in these lines. His treatment of smell is clear in the stanzas which describe how the bad stink of fish in the surroundings of the fishermen’s village is dispelled by the fragrance of the puṁai flowers, the screwpine flowers, etc.\(^5\) The fragrance of the neytal flowers crushed by the wheels of a chariot is said to be like that of the unfermented fresh toddy.\(^6\)

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1. Naṟṟiṇai, 175
2. Nar. 74
3. Ibid. 249
4. Ibid.
5. Nar. 63, 208.
6. Aka. 400
The stress laid on the loudness of the humming of the bees in the *punna* flowers is such that the heroine remarks that it is not possible to know in advance the coming of the hero by listening to the sound of the chariot he rides in.¹

Like other Sangam poets who dwell upon this region, Ulōccanār, too, rarely extends his descriptions to the sea proper. There are one or two descriptive touches of the sea² but they are not enough to explain his experience of the sea by a voyage as such. However, his picture of a large shark killed by fishermen is vivid enough.³ The fish is fatally wounded and it leaps over the water sprinkling its blood all over when the scene reminds the poet of a rainbow in the sky.

Amidst the incessant noise of the seashore, the poet observes and appreciates the still silence of the night which the *april* disturbs by its slow shrill cry from its nest on the palmyra tree.⁴ The call of the bird breaking this silence is so melodious that the sorrow of the heroine anxiously waiting for her lover suddenly reaches its climax.

Besides referring to the aerial roots of the screwpine trees from an utilitarian point of view,⁵

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1. *Nar. 311*

2. *Aka. 20 200, 210*

3. *Aka. 210*

4. *Kuru. 177*

5. *Aka. 20*
he describes the thorny petals of the screwpine flowers and compares them to the tusk-like fin of the shark. The white flowers thus blossomed are said to look like the conches lengthened. The waves dash against them spreading their fragrance all over the shore so as to completely clear it of the stink of fish.

The descriptive epithets are very accurate artistic touches as in the phrases viyu vi nālal (the nālal of tiny blooms), irul nirap punvai (the punvai tree of the colour of darkness), ventalai-punvai (the white-headed sea, the sea of waves white in their crests.)

The poet is also interested in describing the havoc of nature as in his picture of a ripe palmyra fruit which falls over a beautiful neythal flower and crushing it plunges into the deep mire of the back waters, scaring away the flock of birds perching on the bank.

Uraiyr Maruttuvan Tamotaranar

The poet describes the forest and the mountain regions, but in their arid and desert-like form.

1. Nar. 372
2. Nar. 372
3. Nar. 372
4. Nar. 372
5. Nar. 372
6. Nar. 372
7. Nar. 372
The poet has a keen eye for emphasising the contrast in colours as seen in his picture of the charcoal-like faded kāyā flowers mixed with the fiery bright ilavu blossoms.\(^1\) The red ground is said to be adorned by the golden vēnkai flowers.\(^2\) The white rat with its small legs, coloured hair and kūrri-like eyes forms a beautiful picture by itself.\(^3\) Apart from this there is also another picture of a rat with cup-like ears resembling the kōnku bloom.\(^4\)

### Aiyur Mutavanar

Though the poet refers to all the four regions, his experience and interest seem to be in the mountain scenery. It may be said in general that his pictures are tame.

Of the sea coast scenery, his painting of the grove of āṇṇai trees of black branches with cool shade like condensed darkness on the white sand that looks like heaped-up moonlight is a lively picture.\(^5\)

He describes the tinai field along with the parrots coming in a flock seeking the tinai ears.\(^6\) The monkeys are depicted as bathing in the

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1. Aka. 133
2. Ibid
3. Ibid
4. Pura. 321
5. Kuru. 123
6. Nar. 206
streams, jumping and playing on bamboos as if on swings and resting with their mates on the *vēnīkai* trees.\(^1\)

A young calf of the wild cow is terrified by the sound of the hunters, and leaving its group it runs away to the village nearby and is brought up by the village boys and becomes tamed.\(^2\)

In the same manner he studies the life of the winged white ants that meet their death on the very day on which they start their life in the air and uses this study in teaching a moral based upon the transitoriness of life of the warmongers among kings who rise to power, wage wars and fall dead in the battlefields. In eight small words he paints the anthill with such a skill that the process of building the anthill is vividly brought before the eyes of the reader.\(^3\)

**Okkur Macattiyyar**

The poetess has two stanzas on the forest region and its appropriate season, the early winter.\(^4\) It is a rare coincidence, if Okkūr

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1. குறாவன் அர்த்த செய்யும் முடிக்கும் மறுமலர் மூக்கு ஏற்பிட்டு புதிய நூற்றாண்டு விளையாடும் புவிய குழு நிற்கும் காலைகளுடன்

2. தாமலை தமிழ் சொல்லாம் குழு ஏற்பிட்டு புதிய நூற்றாண்டு விளையாடும் புவிய குழு

3. மூடும் தாமலை சொல்லாம் குழு ஏற்பிட்டு புதிய நூற்றாண்டு விளையாடும் புவிய

4. அக்கா. 324; குரு. 126.

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-Nar. 334

-Kuru. 322

-Pura. 51
Macattanar, who has also written poems on this region, is her husband. But there is no other evidence to prove this except their names.

In stanza 324 of Akananuru she reveals her keenness of observation through all the senses except that of taste. Her sense of movement is evident from the beautiful comparison of water flowing fast along the lines furrowed by the wheels of the chariot to the snake's crawl link.

In a stanza in Kuruntokai, there it a personification of the season kār or early winter. The heroine expresses her feelings to her lady-companion saying that the season laughs at her disappointment and anxiety for her lover who has not yet returned as promised; and she sees it laughing with its teeth in the fresh buds of her own mullai creeper. This picture is most appropriate as the creeper yields buds only in the beginning of this season.

Otal Antaiyar

The fourth hundred of Ainkurunuru is by this poet besides a few stanzas in Kuruntokai. All the poems describe the arid desert region, mostly the mountainous desert. Yet they are almost free from rudeness, brutality, death, destruction and

2. -- Aka. 324
the like; and this shows that the poet is soft-natured and sympathetic.

The pictures of the lives of birds and animals are interesting and full of pathetic feelings. The female kite perches lonely on the leafless omai branch and cries aloud. The birds on the uraiyam tree are terrified by the sound of its leaves in summer and therefore leave it for another in a distant place. The elephant is afraid of the scorching heat of the ground and is careful not to touch it with its trunk. The thirsty elephant searches for water in vain and finally raises its trunk and breathes hard like the blowing of a horn. An old stag escapes from the attack of a tiger and calls its mate with a masculine voice.

Even the wild beasts are as sympathetic as the poet himself. A cennāy with its mate refrains from attacking a female deer with its young one. Another cennāy is said to keep itself away when a young pig comes on its way. The poet has the suggestion implied that even the wild beasts on
such desert tracts are good-natured and kind towards helpless creatures, and this he puts in the mouth of the lady - companion who consoles the heroine by suggesting that her lover would witness such sympathy even in the lives of the wild beasts on his way and would be reminded of his duty to his dear wife.

There is one appostrophe to the crow, an address by the foster - mother of the heroine requesting it to caw as a favourable sign portending the return of the hero who has eloped with her daughter.¹

In the ten stanzas called ‘Ilavēnil paṭṭu’, the poet describes the scenery of the early summer and the various trees that blossom or shoot tender leaves in that season.² The melodious tune of the cuckoo and the harmonious humming of the bees are not, of course, forgotten.

The poet sees from a distance the wild fire spreading in the mountain and aptly compares it to a gold chain adorning the back of an elephant.³

He also seems to have observed the fall of fire with thunder and illustrates it by bringing in the comparison of the dropping of the fiery red flowers of the ilavu.⁴

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1. मीट प्र पी रा पा सें...।
2. इबिड. 341-350
3. मापें प्रप्तप राघवें रामर सें...।
4. मापें प्रप्तप राघवें रामर सें...।

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- Ain. 391
- Ibid. 356
- Ibid. 820
The *ilavu* trees on these tracts are utterly leafless in summer but full of fiery flowers and, seen at a distance, the mountains with these trees look as if ablaze with fire.¹

Some of the comparisons of this poet are quite original and appropriate too. The creepers climbing round the trees and waving in the wind are compared to the ladies dancing in the arms of their husbands.² The large flat rocks on the mountains are like the hard blocks of iron in the blacksmith’s forge and the small pools therein are like the holes of the ants.³

There is a clear picture of a neem tree drawn in a few words ‘*ciriyilaik kuruṇ ciṇai vēmpu*’ (the neem tree of tiny leaves and short branches).⁴

**Orampokiyar**

He is a poet of the agricultural region and the author of the fourth hundred of *Aṅkuṟunūru*. Even his poems in other anthologies *Akaṇāṇūru* and *Kuṟuntokai* are about the agricultural tract. They prove his long association with Nature, especially in that region.

There are two descriptions of the buffalo with the *pakanyai* flowers intertwined in its horns, and they are the best examples of his power to paint

1. *Aṁjaram FileChooser FileChooser FileChooser FileChooser FileChooser*
   
2. *FileChooser FileChooser FileChooser FileChooser FileChooser*
   
3. *FileChooser FileChooser FileChooser FileChooser FileChooser*
   
4. *Aṁ 839*
word-pictures. The *pakanrai* flowers are white in colour like the *tumpai* flowers, the flowers symbolic of war in ancient Tamil country, and as such it is very apt when the poet says that the buffalo with the *pakanrai* flowers in its horns looks like a warrior marching in a battlefield, when it returns to the village in the evening walking over and cutting with its hoofs the *varâl* fish in the mire in which it was sleeping. In the other picture, the young calf itself is terrified when the parent buffalo approaches it with those flowers in its horns.

He has also an accurate knowledge of the lives of crabs, crocodiles and other animals. The birth of young crabs is said to cause the death of the mother and on the contrary the parent crocodile is said to eat away its young one. The tortoise, on the other hand, is affectionate towards its young one which is said to grow looking at the face of the mother.

The poems reveal his lack of keen sense of sound in observing Nature. There is not a single instance.

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1. Aka, 361
2. Aka, 316
3. Aka, 316
4. Ain, 97
5. Ibid. 24
6. Ibid. 24
7. Ibid. 41
8. Ibid. 44
in which he appreciates Nature with a musical ear. To him, Nature seems to be silent. Also there is the absence of the appreciation of fragrances.

As regards his sense of sight, motion and form attracted him more than colour. The kingfisher seizes and eats the varāl, flies to the low branch of the marutu tree and sleeps there. The crane feeds on the fish and flies to the haystack and stays there. Even the vēlam flowers are described in their swinging and waving state. A crab plays in the mire of the paddy fields and enters the burrows in the roots of the mulli. Another crab seizes a paddy ear, and with it enters its wet mud hole in the watery field. The paddy crops shed the blooms into such holes in the field. The ripe fruits of the mango trees over the bund of the tank drop down into the deep water.

His accurate observation of form is evident from some of his comparisons. The ōmpal with closed petals looks like the back of the crane. The mother tortoise appears like a measure used

1. வராள் நோக்கி நீரேற்றாள் பலி போன்ற நிலையிலே…
2. நாற்பர நாசா வரணல் போர்த்து.
3. பும்புசை முடி முதை போப்பாடு எந்தைந்து கொண்ட வோக்காட.
4. பாரசர் புச்சிக்கு கடிந்த வோக்காடு போக்கு.
5. மல்லுட் தூரத்தில் கூடை காண்பது கொண்ட போக்காடு போம்.
6. மல்லுட் தூரத்தில் கூடை காண்பது கொண்ட போக்காடு போம்.
7. மல்லுட் தூரத்தில் கூடை காண்பது கொண்ட போக்காடு போம்.
8. மல்லுட் தூரத்தில் புருவை காண்பது கொண்ட போக்காடு.

—Aka. 288
—Ain. 9
—Ibid. 17
—Ibid. 22
—Ibid. 27
—Ibid. 30
—Ibid. 61
—Kuru. 122
The Treatment of Nature

in those days and the young ones sleeping on its back seem like small vessels turned and placed over the measure. The comparison of the âmpal bud to the crane is made interesting in the picture in which the kentai fish that escapes the beak of a crane by dipping deep into the water is said to be terrified later at the sight of the white âmpal bud in the tank.

The poet has the painter’s eye for noting the colours and making comparisons. The white flowers of the vēlam on the bunds of tanks are said to appear like those of the sugarcane, and look like the crests of horses; when seen over the green bushes, they appear like the white cranes flying in the sky. The projecting, elongated eyes of the crab are like the neem buds. The complexion of the heroine is compared to the colour of the stalk of the âmpal when stripped off its outer fibre.

For his interest in the seasonal changes of Nature there is one example of a river depicted to be flowing with muddy water in late winter and with crystal clear water in summer.

1. மழிக்கேற்ற இயசுக் குறுகில் நோயாகம் வங்கல வங்கல வங்கலே வங்கலம். - Ain. 48
2. இது கரை சூடே வண்ணம் முதன் எங்கும் கரை உள்ளு கரை கரை கரை. - Kuru. 127
3. கோயில் கொடுந்து கம்பலுகாடு. வலுதால் மனமுத்து பௌத்த கற்கள் தூக்கிய காலா காலா காலா காலா காலா காலா. - Ain. 12
4. பாண்டிய வங்கல தோற்ற தோற்ற தோற்ற தோற்றம். - Ibid. 18
5. மும்பிய என்ற மும்பிய மும்பிய. - Ibid. 17
6. மும்பிய என்ற மும்பிய மும்பிய மும்பிய. - Ibid. 30
7. மும்பிய என்ற மும்பிய என்ற மும்பிய மும்பிய என்ற. - Ibid. 35
8. மும்பிய என்ற மும்பிய மும்பிய மும்பிய மும்பிய. - Ibid. 45
Auvaiyar

Auvaiyar's poems are on all regions though there are many on mountains and only one or two on sea coast.

Her chief merits are those of keen observation, alertness to sights and sounds and fragrances and interest in appreciating the beauty of whatever is high either in the sky or in the mountain heights.

The sun is a planet of great lustre passing through the sky.¹ The flock of white cranes flying in the sky in their characteristic arch-like arrangement is compared to a garland of white kūtaṇḍam flowers throw high in the sky.² The setting sun disappearing in a mountain is painted in a stanza.³ The clouds spread all over and cover the sky before they begin to rain.⁴ The poet sees and appreciates the fall of a stream in the Kolli hills.⁵ The monkey sitting on the high branch of a tree with its young one also attracts her eyes.⁶ She observes and describes lightning during the rainy season suddenly illuminating the mountain tops and the clefts therein.⁷ The moonlight in the early morning is depicted to become pale.⁸

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1. —Aka. 11
2. —Aka. 273
3. —Nar. 187
4. —Ibid. 371
5. —Aka. 303
6. —Kuru. 29
7. —Nar. 371
8. —Pura. 392
The Treatment of Nature

Her knowledge of the different seasons and the changes that Nature undergoes in those seasons is really interesting. The pictures of the dewy season and the early winter are vivid. The still silence of midnight is also described. The midnight silence is disturbed by the soft south breeze or by the roaring thunder of the rainy clouds. The evening is described in the picture in which the sun sets, the neythal flower closes its petals and there are shadows endlessly stretching eastward.

The poet with his keen ears notes the various sounds in Nature and by descriptive touches enables the reader to hear them. The crickets make peculiar sounds in the decayed trees in the desert tracts which are heard like the tinkling sounds of the bells around the necks of the bullocks of the salt merchants. The stormy wind in the arid tract blows over the dry seeds of the *uliñcil* which then strike atone another and make sound. The shriek of the owl in the *ñemal* tree in the desert tract is like the sound of the smithy.

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1. Aka. 283; Kuru. 183; Nar. 371. 381.
2. Kuru. 28
3. _ñemal kiski kávamam_ rúkín áppal akalav;
   —Ibid.
4. _ñemal kinkal Andrém_ áppal
   —Nar. 129
5. _ñemal akkópi kávamam_ rúkín áppal akalav;
   —Ibid. 187
6. _ñemal kinkal Andrém_ áppal
   —Aka. 303
7. _ñemal kinkal Andrém_ áppal
   —Kuru. 39
8. _ñemal kinkal Andrém_ áppal
   —Nar. 394
The poet has an interest in depicting the rainy clouds and the mountain streams full of water flowing in them. There is one apostrophe to the cloud in which the heroine blames it for its merciless and harsh behaviour towards women especially during the absence of their lovers.

The rattan creepers on the bunds of tanks and the otter taking refuge amidst them are again and again described by the poet. The vālai fish is said to seize the rattan fruits for its food and the otter is said to eat the vālai fish in its turn.

Many of the descriptions of the objects of Nature are used in similitudes, e.g., the crocodile that is capable of killing an elephant even in a small pool with water of no depth, a tree standing on the crumbling edge of the bank of a forest stream with its roots turned out and its tender leaves trembling, the footprints of an elephant, the kuvalai flower in a tank full of water. The high

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1. Kuru. 158; Nar. 129. 371, 381.
2. Aka. 303; Kuru. 200
3. குரு. 158; நார. 129. 371, 381.
5. குரு. 91.
6. Ibid. 384
7. —Pura. 104
8. —Nar. 381
9. Pura. 392
floods in a river touching the branches of the trees on the banks and in course of time subsiding and finally leaving little water,\(^1\) a monkey with its young one safe in its clutches even in the topmost branch of a tree,\(^2\) and the sparrows flying to a far off place to bring paddy and other food.\(^3\)

**Katiyalur Uruttiran Kannanar**

He is the author of two long idylls *Paṭṭinaṇappalai* and *Perumpaṇāṟṟuppatai* in *Pattupāṭṭu* and one short stanza in *Kūṟuntokai*\(^4\) and another in *Akanāṉūru*.\(^5\)

His astonishingly close observation of Nature enables him to give accurate comparisons to almost every sight and sound he describes in his poems. In his idyll *Perumpaṇāṟṟuppatai* there are many such comparisons. It is one stretch of pen-pictures of Nature beautified by countless similes. Some of them are:

**The bent tusk of the boar is like the *akutti* flower.**\(^6\) **The rabbit has long ears like the petals of the lotus.**\(^7\) **The young ones of the quail are**

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1. Kuru. 99
2. Ibid. 29.
3. Aku. 303
4. Kuru. 352
6. —Perumpan 109-110
7. —Ibid. 114-5
like the *kaṭampu* flowers.\(^1\) The forked legs of the crab are like the blacksmith’s pincers.\(^2\) The *kayal* fish and the shrimps frisking in the water appear like sharp arrows and bows.\(^3\) The *kuvalai* and *nīlam* flowers with attractive but different colours in a tank present the sight of a rainbow in the sky.\(^4\) The bent plantain fruits are of the shape of the tusks of the elephant.\(^5\) The sound of churning curd in the cowherd’s house in the early morning is heard like the mild grumbling of the tiger.\(^6\)

These go to prove his keen and interesting observation of plants, animals and birds. Only some of the poets mention the skylark in their poems, and Kaṭiyalur Uṛuttiran Kaṇṇaṇār is one of them.\(^7\) Like others he has also not given any description of the bird since it is not easily noticeable and spends its life in the high sky and in the distant forests.

He has a few lines depicting the Himalayas and the Ganges descending from it, and this description is used only in a simile.\(^8\)
In spite of such elaborate pictures of natural scenery in his poems, there is no evidence to prove that the poet has any interest in fragrances. Further he does not depict the seasonal changes in Nature and does not even restrict his descriptions to particular seasons.

Though he gives pictures of the clouds encircling the mountain cliffs and states that they play there,¹ there are no descriptions of the pouring rain.

Kantarattanar

He is the author of poems all on the theme of love and of them two are descriptive of the fresh showers of the early winter called ‘kārkālam’.² One of them is an apostrophe to the rain; the heroine blames the clouds thundering with harshness towards her in the absence of her lover.³

There is nothing peculiar or characteristic in his description of Nature, even in his stanzas on the fertile mountain scenery or on the arid mountainous region.

Kapilar

Among the Sangam poets it is Kapilar who has written a great number of poems, most of

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¹ — Perumpan. 257
² Aka. 23: Nar. 288.
³ — Nar. 288
which are on the mountain scenery. He is of distinct importance because of his lingering pleasure in the beautiful scenes of hills and of his poetic comprehension of them.

The Parampu mountain where he spent most of his life in the company of his patron and friend Pāri, the chief of the mountain and the surrounding country, has saturated, as it were, in his very soul and forms a very large portion of his pictures of Nature. He very rarely mentions the name Parampu¹ but this mountain is there in all his accounts. He has all the three indispensable attributes of a Nature-poet; an eye to see Nature, a heart to feel Nature, and a boldness and energy to depict it in word-pictures. He has the power of rendering a true landscape with a wealth of details and vivid imagery.

His mountains are very fertile and are full of fruitful trees like the plantain and the jack, flowers like the vēnikai and the kāntal, birds like peacocks and parrots, animals like elephants, tigers, monkeys and wild pigs and sounds like those of falling streams and humming bees.

In as much as his landscape is restricted, there are no paintings of the scenes and objects of regions other than mountains, and seasons other than the late winter which is the appropriate seasons for the mountain region. There are two references to the incessant roar of the waves of the sea tossed by wind (used in a similitude,²) and one description of

¹ Pura. 108, 113, 337.
² Pitirrup. 68
—Ibid. 69
the crow seeking fish in the backwaters,¹ one of the
crabs moving on the coast through the faded nālal
flowers² and another of the flock of cranes sitting
on a sand dune resembling an army.³ These are
exceptions which show that he has experience even
of the maritime region, but his interest lies in the
mountain scenery alone.

In the two anthologies Aiṅkurunūru and Kalit-
tokai, he is the author of all the poems with the
mountain regions as their background (poems of
kuɾiṅcittinan). In Pattuppāṭṭu, the poem called
Kuɾiṅcippāṭṭu (meaning ‘the mountain poem’) is a
long one elaborately describing the mountains
scenery. In it the author mentions the names of
about 99 flowers in a catalogue-like list and most
of them are of the mountain region.⁴ His vast
experience of trees and birds and animals of
the mountains is such that it may be said that
one gains all knowledge about them from his
descriptions.

There are three apostrophes, one to the sun,⁵
another to the Parampu mountains itself,⁶ and the
third to the parrots living there.⁷

His intimate knowledge of the lives of animals
and birds enable him to use it in similitudes and that

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¹ Quoted from Kuru. 246
² Quoted from Nar. 207
³ Quoted from Ibid. 29
⁴ Kurinolp. 62-95
⁵ Pura. 8
⁶ Ibid. 113
⁷ Nar. 876
is how makes the suppressed similes (*Ullurai Uvamam*) interesting to the reader.

Nature offers feast for all his senses and he pictures the animals there enjoying luxurious life like himself. A monkey drinks the water from a rocky pool mixed with the sweet honey dropping from the adjacent jack tree and becoming fermented; and then unable to climb over the sandalwood tree nearby, it falls down on a bed of withered flowers and sleeps there.¹ The noise of the mountain stream or the humming of bees serves as a lullaby to the sleeping elephant.² The poet hears in the music of Nature, various sounds like the tunes of flute, ‘yāl,’ horn, and drum³ and with these imagines an academy of music and dance of Nature in which the monkeys form the critical audience wondering at the dance of the peacock appearing with the gait of a dancing girl.⁴ His astonishingly close obser-

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¹ Aka. 2
² Kali, 42
³ — Aka. 332
⁴ Aka. 82

Ibid.
The Treatment of Nature allows him to give almost tangible reality with his artistic touches, to such imaginary pictures.

In his stanzas in Kalittokai, there is a leisurely elaborateness of description as if the poet enjoyed the work for its own sake. Some of the descriptive passages are perhaps too elaborate, but they are not ineffective and show the artist's close knowledge of natural phenomena and real interest in them. The elephant appears frequently in his pictures in this work and is the subject of many a simile. The mammal is interesting in its victorious fights with the tiger\(^1\) as well as in its acts of attacking the blossomed vēnikai tree mistaking it for its enemy, the tiger.\(^2\)

Besides describing objects and scenes in elaborate pictures, he also gives brief descriptive touches by means of epithets of two or three words which have almost the same effects as of those full pictures. Kuvi inarp pul ilai erukkam\(^3\) (the erukku of thick bunches of flowers and small leaves), ciriyilai vetir\(^2\) (the bamboos of tiny leaves) and Koḻunkoṭi valli\(^5\) (the valli creeper with luxuriously grown stems) are examples. Even in brief touches of description his knowledge of Nature has the quality of being specific and local and accurately defined.

There are many pictures of playful monkeys in Aiṅkuṟunūru.\(^6\) All of them are true to Nature and artistic. A young langur is pictured to play with and

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2. Ibid. 38, 49. 5. Ibid.
3. Pura. 106. 6. Ain. 271, 80.
roll the eggs laid by a peacock in a rock. The monkey eating the pulps of the jackfruit notices the arrows aimed at it by the mountaineer and immediately jumps over to a bamboo like a horse in a battle-field. The elephant scared away by the firebrand of the watchman in the tinai field looks at a falling star with terror mistaking it for the former. The cow grazing in the slopes gets itself besmeared with the pollen of the kāntal blooms on the way so that its own calf is unable to identify it and looks bewildered at it.

The comparisons of the poet are no less interesting. The bears surrounding an anthill to scoop out their food in it look like dark clouds around a mountain cliff. The white clouds seen on the top of a hill resemble the avarai blooms or the carded cotton. The plantain bud is like the tusk of the elephant stained with blood.
while fighting with a tiger. The mullai buds appear like the teeth of the young wild cat. The tepul is said to bloom like the spots on the elephant’s face. The varaku grows luxuriantly and presents the appearance of a pregnant peahen. A block of rock covered with the venkai blossoms looks like the coloured spots and stripes on the tiger’s skin. The tender sprouts of the bamboos are like the ears of the deer. The honeycomb on the mountain cliff has the appearance of the moon passing through a cloud. The mountaineers are said to mistake it for the honeycomb and prepare themselves to gather honey. The peacock is pictured in different settings and appropriate and artistic comparisons are given.

Kallatanar

His only theme is the different scenes of arid mountains and forests. Most of his pictures

1.  மடுத்து மாற்று வெல்லிப்பு கும்பம்
   அந்தம் கூர் தவறாகக் கூறும். Nar. 225
2.  மாற்று வெல்லிப்பு புள்ளி புராணம்
   மாற்று தவறாகக் கூறும். -Pura 117
3.  மாற்று வெல்லிப்பு புள்ளி புராணம்
   -Ibid. 119
4.  மாற்று வெல்லிப்பு புள்ளி புராணம்
   தேவேந்திரம் புள்ளி தவறாகக் கூறும். -Ibid. 120
5.  மாற்று வெல்லிப்பு புள்ளி புராணம்
   தேவேந்திரம் புள்ளி தவறாகக் கூறும். -Ibid. 202
6.  மாற்று வெல்லிப்பு புள்ளி புராணம்
   தேவேந்திரம் புள்ளி தவறாகக் கூறும். -Kali. 43
7.  மாற்று வெல்லிப்பு புள்ளி புராணம்
   தேவேந்திரம் புள்ளி தவறாகக் கூறும். _Kali. 42
8.  மாற்று வெல்லிப்பு புள்ளி புராணம்
   தேவேந்திரம் புள்ளி தவறாக�் கூறும். -Ibid 39
The Nature - Poets

are sympathetic descriptions of the sufferings of the elephants and the deer in these parts. A thirsty elephant looks from a distance at the white marāam flowers blown and dropped down by the wind and mistakes them for rain. On reaching the spot, it is disappointed and suffers with unbearable thirst. The raised trunks of a herd of elephants are imagined to signify their call for the rain and are compared to the stems of the palmyra trees that have decayed on account of the abnormal heat of the summer. A stag is caught and killed by a tiger and its mate feels the loss and forgets to graze and like widows eats vēlai flowers. The deer rest under the poor shade of the marāam trees with leafless branches and feed on the shrunk marals but when the flock of cennāy attack them, they scatter and run away in all directions.

The iruppai tree is described elaborately and the poet's keen observation of it is appreciable.
The *iruppai* buds are said to be like the sharp ends of arrows; the tender leaves are compared to copper sheets and the sweet juice of the flower to butter; the hollow inside seems as if perforated. When the wind blows, the flowers separate themselves from the stalks, and fall down like hail falling with rain. They fall on the coral red ground below and resemble fat floating over blood. The bears are said to come in groups and feed on these flowers which are fleshy and juicy like fruits.¹

As an evidence of the poet's keenness of perception, the description of the *marāam* flower as whirling to the right may be mentioned.² The white *marāam* flowers drop down when the wind blows and appear like the white waves dashing against the sea shore.³

**Kalark Kiran Eyirriyar**

This poet may be called the painter of the dewy season. She never describes the season but instead gives always curiously happy and delicate touches that suggest for more than they say. The description of the chill north wind always accompanies them, inasmuch as it is the wind of the dewy season.⁴

The lotus is said to wither away on account of the heavy fall of dew drizzling like the hard

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1. *Aka.* 171
2. *Ibid.* 83
3. *Ibid.* 159
breath of an elephant.  

The clouds are white and thin like the soft carded cotton.  

The north wind blows and waves the sugarcane flowers.  

The *pakanyai* blossoms white in green bushes.  

The *avarai* yields rich buds and the *töryi* puts forth bright red flowers which look like flames of lamps.  

The artist gives a number of such details along with the sufferings of cranes and buffaloes expressed in their cries and of crabs which are afraid of coming out and facing the chill wind and therefore confine themselves to their holes.

The poet has an intimate knowledge of the various plants that blossom in this season and the different shapes and colours of their flowers.

The comparisons like that of the just blossoming sugarcane flower to the pregnant whipsnake prove the keenness of her sense of form and colour.

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1. —Aka. 163

2. Ibid. 217

3. Ibid. 217, 235; Kuru. 35.

4. —Aka. 217

5. Ibid. 217, 235, 294.

6. Ibid. 217.

7. —Kuru. 261


9. Ibid. 217, 294.

10. —Kuru. 35
In spite of the various descriptions of plants and animals in connection with the description of the season, there is not a single reference to the changes in the sky particularly in that season. The poet knows much of the plant world and very little of the animal world. The crane among birds and the crab and the buffalo among animals are briefly described.\(^1\)

**Kavirippumpattinattup Ponvanikanar Makanar Napputanar**

(Nappūtanār son of a gold merchant of Kāvirippumpañtam.)

He is the author of Mullaippāṭṭu, a poem in Pattuppāṭṭu. As signified by the name it is a pastoral poem.

The ending lines of the poem reveal the poet's keenness of sight and his observation of colours and forms.\(^2\) The pastoral region is said to be rendered beautiful by the kāyā that blossoms like collyrium, the konrai that looks like gold, the kāntal that resembles hands, and the töwri that blossoms red like blood. As usual the pastoral region is described in the setting of the early winter and the happy life of the stags with their mates is mentioned along with other details.

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2. அருகில் வாழ்வு அசுரியால் வை

   செம்பெருமெல் காந்தலும் கோந்

   கோய்வாய் கொரையும் கோப்பு

   மலப்பிட்டையால் பாலம்பை

   என்று குறுப்பு கண்டவை அன்று

   நென்முறைப்பெரிய பாலம்பை

   பாலம்பை பிரித்து முடியல் வாலே

   கோப்பு கோமடரும் கோய்வாய்

   கொரையும் கண்டவை அன்று

   மலப்பிட்டையால் பாலம்பை

   பாலம்பை பிரித்து முடியல் வாலே.

Mullaip. 98 - 101
Killi Mankalankilar

He is a poet of the agricultural region and of the chill north wind.

Among the natural descriptions of the region, the poet mentions the motherly affection of the she-buffalo that never leaves her young calf for grazing at a distance and eats the paddy crop nearby.¹ The need of the mother's care for the young tortoise is also mentioned in a simile.²

Motion and form as well as colour of the Natural objects have caught the eye of the poet. The north wind is pictured to blow the broad leaves of the cēmṭu and make them wave like the ears of the elephant.³ It is also said to disturb the nilam flower in water, to toss the karuvilai flowers that resemble the eye-like spots in the peacock's plumage and to drop down the red iṇikai flowers.⁴

Though he thus describes the north wind, he is silent about the rainy clouds or the fall of dew accompanying the wind or even about the midnight which poetic convention requires for a complete background for kuriṇcittinai or the aspect of the union of lovers.
Kutavayil Kirattanar

Most of his poems depict the arid desert region of burning heat and dry pools. The west wind finds its due place; it blows hard making the unripe nelli fruits drop down like the perforated crystal beads falling from a snapped thread.\(^1\) It tosses the aerial roots of the banyan tree when the couple of doves fly far away with terror.\(^2\) Similarly the wind blows and waves the *irri*’s aerial root so as to sweep and clean the rock below with this root as its broom.\(^3\)

Nature is in its wild and cruel form when the poet describes the snake that was killed by the fall of thunder and lies on the wayside and also the *piranțai* cut off and left by the wayfarers to dry and compares the latter to the former.\(^4\) An elephant fights with a tiger, escapes from it and with unbearable pain goes to a mountain pool seeking water.\(^5\) The unfortunate animal has to dip its trunk into the empty pool and breathe hard with disappointment.

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\(^1\) Ibid. 315
\(^2\) Ibid. 287
\(^3\) Ibid. 345
\(^4\) Ibid. 119
\(^5\) Ibid.
There are no poems on other regions or seasons. Within the restricted limit in which the poet is placed, he proves himself to be one of the best poets with balanced observation and polished expression.

**Kunriyanar**

Though the poet describes the maritime region, he cannot ignore or forget his observations in the adjacent agricultural fields and those observations are mentioned either in similes, or, in order to complete the pictures of the coastal regions adjoining the fields.

Scared away by the sound of the drum in the harvest fields, the cranes cry like horns and fly towards the sea coast and perch on the palmyra stalks: this is one such picture. Another describes the crab that tries to escape from the crane and runs fast to its hole in the roots of the *kāntal*. Its rapid movement is then compared to that of an ox that breaks off the rope with which it is tied and escapes from the cowherd’s hold.

In one of his stanzas, Tonṭi the seaport of the ancient Tamil kingdom is described. In it some ladies are pictured to pound rice in the mortars for preparing *aval* and lay the pestles on the ridge of the

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1. *kāntal* is a type of palm, which is the subject of the metaphor in the poem.

2. *kāntal* is a type of palm, which is the subject of the metaphor in the poem.

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—Aka. 40

—Kuru. 117
paddyfields and then play there for a while. This makes it clear that the descriptions of fields along with the scenes of seashore are appropriate inasmuch as the poet has observed them so closely.

The poet dwells upon the east wind blowing and waving the screwpine trees on the sea coast. The roar of the sea, the ebb and flow in the backwaters and the life of the cranes feeding on the fish are all depicted briefly.

Even in such a wild and rude environment the poet portrays the affectionate, though not happy, life of the deer. The stag observes the fall of grain from bamboos and immediately calls its mate to eat it.

The poet has also an unerring ear for Nature's sounds. The female doves perching on the omai tree call their mates with a sorrowful voice. The kanantul birds observe with terror the hunter's nets and their cry is heard along with the tune of the yal played by the dancers halting on their way to a distant place.
The mischief of a young monkey is depicted with some interest. It somehow takes away the sweet milk from the hands of a girl who immediately sheds tears and cries aloud.¹

The patron of this poet is Cāttan of Mullaiyūr and after his death, the blossoming of mullai flowers seems vain to the poet inasmuch as the servants, the ladies and the musicians feel miserable and do not like to use them. He expresses this feeling in an apostrophe to the mullai² creeper.

Kurunkuti Marutanar

He is the author of the famous poem cited by the commentators as the best example of pastoral poetry with the appropriate background of the forest region, the early winter season, the evening hour, the animals and the birds of the region and the romance relating to it.³

There are two poems of his, one in Akanānūru referred to just now,⁴ and the other in Kuruntokai.⁵ The former is a description of the early winter season and the latter of the evening hours of that

1. Ṛṣya maṇḍapam cdvi rāmaṇaṁ
   kṣardhaṁ dāraṇāṁ kērtvāṁ pāramīr..., —Nar. 379

2. mālem ṛṣya Ṛṣya kṣardhaṁ
   Candrānaṁ vēnaviśeṣu vāṣyaṁ
   kṣardham kṣardham kṣardham kṣardham
   kṣardham kṣardhat

4. Aka. 4
5. Kuru. 344
The poet has a keen sense of sight for the beauties of Nature than a receptive ear for the various sounds; but the sense of smell is not indicated anywhere. Though he has described the screw pine trees blown by the east wind, he has no reference to the fragrance of their flowers or those of the neythal or other flowers which also he depicts. Even among his observations through the eye, it is form that attracts him more than colour. He notices the flowers in the backwaters closing their petals in the evening, the tiny nālal flowers of the size of the white mustard, the faded flowers of the marutu and the neythal flowers of luxuriantly grown petals; he mentions the colour of the flowers, the fiery murukku and the blue muntakam alone.

The call of the pregnant april bird at midnight from its nest in the palmyra stalks is one of the most lively word-pictures painted.

He is one of the poets who clearly pictures the maritime region with sunset as its appropriate hour as against those who contend that the appropriate hour for this region is dawn ('erpatu', the ambiguous...
term in Tolkāppiyam meaning the sunset as well as the sunrise). According to him, the hour of sunset increases the heroine's feelings of sorrow over the absence of her lover.

Kotimankalattu Vatuli Narcentanar

There are only two poems to his credit. One is on the arid tract formed of the formerly fertile mountainous region and the other is on the fertile mountain itself. In both, the elephant has a prominent place, though in the former it is depicted as a thirsty animal disappointedly raising its trunk towards the cloudless sky and in the latter as mistaking the thunder of the rainy clouds for the roar of a tiger and running away with terror leaving off the bamboo that it was just eating.

The description of the vēnikai flowers is also attractive. The buds are sapphire-like and the flowers golden. They drop down on the rock in the frontyard of the house and adorn the place where the mountaineers gather and dance together.

Kollan Alici

There are only three poems of this poet and they are enough to say that he is a poet of Nature with a keen sense of sight and hearing.

1. Aka. 40: Nar. 117.
2. Aka. 179.
3. Ibid. 232.
4. கொல்லன் அலிசி

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Aka. 232
The peacocks on the vēṅkai tree with all blossoms and no buds, look like ladies plucking flowers.¹ The nocci leaves are in threes and are compared to the feet of the peacock.² The flowers of the nocci are sapphire-like in colour.³ The avarai flowers are like the beaks of parrots⁴ and the buds of the mullai resemble the teeth of the wild cat.⁵ The poet with an artistic eye observes darkness setting in and making the blue hill disappear gradually like a vessel drawing in the sea.⁶ The comparison is very apt since darkness slowly covers the hill spreading all over like an ocean.

The dead silence of midnight is effectively depicted when the heroine says that she was hearing the very minute sound of the nocci flowers dropping down from the branches.⁷ The contrast is so subtle and so artistic that this picture stands supreme among the descriptions of the silence of midnight.

1. அவரையுள்ள மரத்தில் கூம்பாணா மலர்கள்
2. வெங்கையில் மலர்களாலிருந்து பெரும் முந்திய மலர்கள்
3. நோச்சி
4. பொர்புல் நோச்சி தூக்கிய செட்டியால்
5. அண்லைய மலர்கள்
6. ஒளிவெளிந்த தருப்பு மலர்கள்
7. வெங்கையில் மலர்கள் தன்மை மேற்கொண்ட கிண்ண திறன்

---Kuru. 26
---Ibid. 138
---Ibid. 138
---Ibid. 240
---Ibid.
---Ibid.
---Ibid. 138
The poet mentions the blowing of the north wind but there is no description of it. ¹

Ciraikkuti Antaiyar

He is a poet who sets his observations of Nature mostly in similes. The affectionate life of the male and female makanril birds which rarely separate from each other, ² the tender and loving look of the young calf at its mother, ³ the quick change of the watery path in which the fish frisks and moves, ⁴ the colour and the form of the pittikam bud that grows luxuriantly in winter, ⁵ the fragrance of the kualai and the āmpal flowers, ⁶ the attractive colour of the pollen of the lotus flower ⁷—all these are described by a few touches and used in similes to explain either the feelings of the heroine or her beauties.

There is only one description of Nature which is not used in this manner and it is of the sand dune on the seashore with the short-legged swans resting on it. ⁸

¹ Kuru. 240.
² —Kuru. 57
³ —Kuru. 132
⁴ —Nar. 16
⁵ —Kuru. 222
⁶ —Kuru. 300
⁷ —Ibid.
⁸ —Ibid.
The poet has not restricted himself to any region. The sea\(^1\) as well as the tank,\(^2\) the swan\(^3\) as well as the calf\(^4\) and the *pittikam* flower\(^5\) as well as the lotus flower\(^6\) are all referred to in his poems.

**Cittalaic Cattanar**

His poems, though a few in number, indicate his power of direct vision and of restrained simple expression. They are on all the regions except the fertile hilly tract.

The animals and the birds of his descriptions are tame and suffer quietly. The poet himself is very sympathetic towards them as seen in the reference to the feeling of the hero requesting the driver of the chariot not to quicken the horses and disturb the happy union of the stag and its mate on the way.\(^7\) The cranes quietly sleep in the paddy fields full of water\(^8\) and the tortoise climbs over a bent sugarcane and basks in the morning rays of the sun.\(^9\)

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1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid. 132
5. Ibid. 222
6. Ibid.
7. Aka. 134
8. Aka 306
9. Ibid.
The swan seeks fish in the backwaters and afterwards comes to the sand dune and smoothens its feathers.  

A crane returns from the backwaters after seeking fish there and is seen with its wet feathers.  

The poet's sympathetic eye notices the spray of water splashed by the shrimp falling over the crane already wet and making it shiver with cold.  

A hungry cennāy is depicted to stay with its mate suffering from hunger in the shade of a tombstone in the hot summer of the arid tract.

There are many indications of the poet's openness to sensuous impressions, specific forms, colours and sounds. It is of fragrance that the poet is silent.

As soon as early winter begins, the fresh showers make the forest appear fresh, fertile and beautiful; the blue kāyā flowers fade and drop down; among them the red cochineals run fast hither and thither; the white mullai flowers fall and mix with them; all these spreading over the red ground of the pastoral region, are comparable to an artist's skilful painting.

The poet's keenness of perception of forms is evident from the lines in which he compares the
twisted horns of the deer with the stalk of the plantain flower which has already shed some of the petals.¹

The descriptive touches like that of the murukkai flowers as white blooms with long stalks, are paintings in words.² The epithets to birds and animals are equally apt and picturesque, e.g. valleyirruv cennāy³ (the brown dogs with sharp teeth), cenkan iruikuyil⁴ (the black cuckoo with red eyes), kurunkāl annam⁵ (the short-legged swan).

In the poet’s imagination, the sun is a disc of hot rays moving fast in the sky.⁶

Among the seasons, he describes only two, the early winter⁷ and the early summer.⁸ The former is pictured by mentioning the fresh showers, the flowers blossoming in the forest, the cochineal insects and the stags and the hinds playing together and enjoying the season; and the latter is said to be a season when the cuckoo pecks with its beak the murukku flowers and perches on the branches of the mango trees that have yielded tender leaves and makes its characteristic melodious tunes pleasant to hear. The season is mentioned

¹ Aka. 134
² Ibid.
³ Ibid.
⁴ Ibid.
⁵ Ibid.
⁶ Ibid.
⁷ Ibid. 134.
⁸ Ibid. 229.
with the epithet 'in' meaning pleasant (in ilaṇēnil).

Centam Putanar

He is a close observer of clouds and mountains. He also describes the forest region.\(^1\)

He observes the rainbow above a mountain cliff\(^2\) and the sun setting and disappearing in a mountain.\(^3\) The clouds become darker and darker and spread themselves throughout the sky and pour in torrents and make the land fertile.\(^4\) There is thundering heard at nights and on account of rain there is a heavy flow of water in the mountain streams carrying away the jack fruits dropped down by the monkeys.\(^5\) On such a rainy midnight, a python devours an elephant and to digest it entwines itself round a big tree with strong core.\(^6\)

Besides two slight touches describing the midnight as the background for mountain scenery,\(^7\) the poet also depicts an evening scene of the

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1. Aka. 84; Nar. 69.
2. ท่านก็จะนาเซี่ยงมันให้ดี.
3. เขาจะปากและปากเขินอยู่เป็นผู้หมายว่าจะเล่นกัน.
4. สร้างการเมืองที่สั่งการการค้า.
5.  tegi engi.
6.  kadim kadim.
pastoral region. There is nothing original in it but yet it is set artistically and made interesting. The birds return to their young ones and the stags rest with their hinds; the *mullai* buds are said to open their mouths (i.e. they blossom). The *tōnri* flowers are imagined to light their lamps in the bushes as they are flame-like red flowers. The tinkling of the bells on the necks of the cows as well as the melodious tunes of the cowherds' flutes slowly reach the ears of the heroine who expresses her emotional attitude towards such an evening by blaming it as merciless (*arul il mālai*).

Besides descriptions of colours and forms, the poet refers to the fragrance of the *mullai* flowers and the flower-like scent of the ripe jack fruit (*pu nāru palavuk kani*).

A peculiar, but by no means unnatural, picture by this artist is that of a pig with fire-like small eyes sleeping under a bush of creepers and fragrant *mullai* flowers dropping over and covering its back.4.

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1. The Treatment of Nature

2. Naí, 68

3. Aka. 84

4. Kuru. 90

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1. *mullai* flowers

2. *tōnri* flowers

3. *pu nāru palavuk kani*

4. Aka. 84
Tankal Porkollan Vennakanar

Vennākaṇār has observed Nature in a playful mood. The fall of hail on the spotted face of an elephant is to the poet like the throwing of pearls on a hill and the hail collecting together on the rock below is like adorning it with crystals.¹ The kāntal flower stretching towards the kāya branch with blue blossoms is like a cobra spreading its hood afraid of a peacock in its presence.² The bee humming over the kāntal flower resembles the dice played with the hand.³ In such artistic comparisons, the poet’s sensitiveness to forms and colours is revealed.

The poet hears the pleasant, sweet and many-tuned voice (in tim pāl kural) of the cuckoo from the mango tree; the humming of the bees in the blossomed branches is like the sweet tune of ‘yāl’.⁴ He also gives a word-picture of an ordinary event in a village at night.⁵ The wild cat approaches in

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¹—Aka. 108
²—Ibid.
³—Ibid.
⁴—Aka. 355
⁵—Pura. 326
darkness and seeing it the hen shivers and cries aloud till it observes its mate with crest like the *murukku* flower. On hearing it the lady of the house suddenly springs from her bed with anxiety and lights the lamp.

**Tayankannanar**

The summer, the winter, the evening and the morning are all described by the poet and he seems to be interested in observing the various changes wrought by different seasons and hours in Nature.

The southern breeze blows softly through the blossomed branches of trees where the cuckoo sits and plays its tunes in summer.\(^1\) The flowers blossoming during this season are given epithets which are specific and descriptive. The *pātiri* flowers are rounded, beautiful and short-stalked.\(^2\) The *atiral* has thin creepers\(^3\) while the *'kuravu'* has buds like the teeth of the snake.\(^4\)

The *iruppai* flowers are white in colour and have holes as if perforated.\(^5\) The ‘long-handed’ bears come in herds and feed on them, after exhausting their food from the anthills.\(^6\)

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1. Olimiṟṟamalaiṟṟam aṟṟam parp<br> ஓலிரிற்றர்மளிற்றர்ம பர்பற்<br>—Aka 237

2. pāṟṟulēṟṟam aṟṟam kattaiṟṟam<br> பாற்றுற்றர்ம அற்றர்ம கட்டாற்றர்ம<br>—Ibid.

3. aṟṟumaiṟṟam<br> அற்றர்ம அற்றர்ம<br>—Ibid.

4. amalaiṟṟam aṟṟam amaiṟṟam<br> அமால்றர்ம அற்றர்ம அமால்றர்ம<br>—Ibid.

5. aṟṟumaiṟṟam aṟṟam amaiṟṟam<br> அற்றர்ம அற்றர்ம அமால்றர்ம<br>—Ibid.

6. nilam kattaiṟṟam aṟṟam<br> நிலம் கட்டாற்றர்ம அற்றர்ம<br>—Aka. 149
The activities of the bee are not less interesting. On the mountain slope it opens a bud in the mountain pool, goes to the *vēnikai* flowers, sucks honey from them, flies to the honeyed *kāntal* flowers and sleeps there dreaming of the flow of rut in the face of the elephant.

The evening is described in combination with the rain of the winter season and the poet is content with mentioning the animals that take shelter with their mates in forests and mountains. The morning picture ushers in the Venus rising in the sky and the lamps lose their brightness. The birds begin to chirp in their nests built in the branches of trees and the flowers that blossom in the tanks are imagined to open their eyes.

**Nakkannaiyar**

Two of the poems of this poet describe the beauties of the seashore and one, the mountain scenery. The other two regions, the agricultural and the forest regions are also referred to in a simile.

1. "..." — Aka. 132
2. "..." — Kuru. 319
3. "..." — Pura. 397
5. Aka. 252.  
6. Nar. 87.
In the description of the mountain, there is the rare reference to the lion called āli. It is not an animal frequently met with in ancient Tamil literary works. Here it is said to be an animal with an instinctive hatred for the prey that falls on its left, and with a liking for that which falls on the right. Even the tiger trembles at its roar. It attacks the elephant ferociously, strikes at its face and pulls off its tusks.

There is an elaborate picture of the screwpine tree in a stanza in Naṟṟiṇai. The surface of the trunk is rugged like the back of the shrimp and the thorny leaf is like the tusk-like fin of the shark; the screwpine bud is like the tusk of an elephant and blossoms like the crest adorning the head of a horse and spreads fragrance throughout the place which therefore smells as fragrantly as the place of festival activities.

The ‘punṇai’ buds blossom and shed their pollen on the shellfish which crawl on the seashore.
The sharp-teethed bat is imagined to dream in its sleep. It is sleeping on the high branch of a mango tree standing inside the village and dreaming of the sour taste of the nelli fruits of the forests of the patron Alici.

It is interesting to note that every thing is silent in his pictures. Neither the lion nor the sea is depicted to roar. The elephant silently falls a prey to the ferocious animal. There is not even the east or the west wind to make any sound. The whole Nature seems to be dumb for him. But he is sensitive to the lower senses of smell, taste and touch as is evident from the descriptions of the fragrance of the screwpine flowers, the sour taste of the nelli fruit and ragged and rugged surface of the trunk of the screwpine tree.

Nakkirar

Nakkirar deals with all the regions except the pastoral which, however, seems to have not attracted him. He takes interest in painting the pictures of the mountains and the sea coasts. Rarely does he describe the agricultural region.

The poet is neither content with colourful paintings of the objects seen, nor with the descriptions of their sounds, etc., but mostly narrates incidents in their life, usual, or unusual. The varāl

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1. பார்வை மற்றும் வொய்யப்பெற்று வாய் வந்த வைத்திருந்த காட்டுற்று மருத்துறை 
   .............புரோமா மேடையான
   வரையம் புதித்து சுருக்கி வருமது. —Nar. 87

2. Nar. 19.

3. வரையம் புதித்து.

4. புரோமா மேடையான வரையம் புதித்து. —Ibid. 19
fish as painted by him does not simply move in the tanks but eats the flesh in the hook of the fisherman's rod, tears away the āmpal leaves and the vallai creepers in the waters, struggles with the rod held by the fisherman, stirs the tank and fights like a bull tied to ropes.¹

The bat flies far off in the sky, suffers the summer heat, seeks in vain for fruits and with disappointment perches on the branch of an irri tree and dreams of the golden days when there was a rich yield of fruits ²

The cranes perching on the plantain stalks are depicted to be scared away by the sound of the pounding of rice for preparing aval.³ This description is further extended to show that they immediately leave those plantain trees and fly up lightly to the tall mango trees nearby. A male crane is caught in the net spread by the boys of the fishermen and its mate does not seek for its food but

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¹ Aka. 36
² Ibid. 57
³ Ibid. 141
with its young ones cries pitifully from the palmyra tree.¹

Similarly the crow is described as feeding on the cooked rice offered to it, then proceeding to the broad bazaar streets with heaps of shrimps caught in the sea, and stealing some of them and finally flying to the ship-mast.² The bees are said to sleep in the blossomed lotus flowers in the miry fields and in the early morning fly to the neytaḷ flowers and hum in them and afterwards in the morning approach the eye like blossoms in the mountain pools and warble melodious tunes there.³

The poet has two long poems in Pattuppāṭṭu, viz., Tirumurukāṟṟuppaṭai and Netunālvaṭai. The former has a religious theme and dwells upon the greatness of Murukan, the God of the mountain region and the beauties of the mountains and other regions where His temples are located. There are

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¹. Kamakam Kariyam Thalai Kural
   "The young ones cry pitifully from the palmyra tree."
   —Aka 290

². Kamakam Kariyam Thalai Kural
   "Similarly the crow is described as feeding on the cooked rice offered to it, then proceeding to the broad bazaar streets with heaps of shrimps caught in the sea, and stealing some of them and finally flying to the ship-mast."
   —Nar. 258

³. Kamakam Kariyam Thalai Kural
   "The bees are said to sleep in the blossomed lotus flowers in the miry fields and in the early morning fly to the neytaḷ flowers and hum in them and afterwards in the morning approach the eye like blossoms in the mountain pools and warble melodious tunes there."
   —Tiru. 72-77
many descriptions of Nature especially in the first part of Tirupparāṇkunram and the last one on Paḷamutircōḷai. The poem begins with the picture of the sun rising in the sea. God Murukan’s appearance with divine lustre is compared to the rising sun seen at sea.¹ The setting sun also is similarly associated in the poet’s mind with Murukan. In a stanza in Akanāṇuru he pictures a flock of cranes flying high in a row in the red twilight sky and compares it to the garland adorning the chest of God Murukan.² Thus it is clear that both the rising sun and the setting sun appeal to his sense of aesthetics and at the same time associate his thoughts with his religious devotion to Murukan.

Besides his artistic and devotional love for the scenes of sunrise and sunset, he reveals his keen interest in minute observations of the changes in the sky and the atmosphere. This is clearly expressed in the other long stanza in Pattuppāṭṭu, viz., Neṭunāḷvāṭai and also in some of his stanzas in other anthologies. He has a partiality for the north wind which he depicts with great facility. It is said to blow and scatter the tiny flowers of the bamboos and bend and break the long stalks of the kāntal flowers.³

1. கரண்ட ஆண் தமிழ் விளக்கம் குறிப்பிட்டு மார்க்கம் கூற்று குறிப்பிட்டு கொம்பி வினையிலும் ஐதரவை.
   —Tiru. 1-3

2. வநான் வர்த்த ரூபியான் மையம் குறிப்பிட்டு மெற்றுக்கொள்வோம் கோலவுகு வினையில் ஐதரவை.
   —Aka. 120

3. நகரை குடமை கடை சாட்டு குண்டு செப்பியை விளையாடும் பாசன கொலும்
   —Ibid.—78
The second idyll referred to above is one that deals with the feelings of a king who devotes his time in a winter camp on a battlefield and of the queen who feels the separation and pines in the palace. The title is unique. ‘Vātai’ means the north wind, the epithets netu and nal referring to its tediousness and advantageous effects respectively. Not content with this skilful description of the chill north wind in detail, he has felt that it is capable of suggesting to the readers the feelings of the hero and the heroine engaging themselves in different places in diverse moods, and has therefore named his poem by it. The poem is characterised by an accurate knowledge of the wildest phases of winter weather and show an originality of conception, a fullness of observation and a remarkable strength of expression.

The poet has observed the cloudless sky at midnight and has described the full moon seen in the company of the Constellation Pleiades i.e. on the day called Kārttikai.¹

The streams and torrents have a special attraction for the artistic eyes of this poet. The long white waterfall is said to sound like the drum of experienced dancers.² Its appearance on the black hills seen at a distance is, in the imagination of the poet, like the flow of rut in the cheeks of a rutlish
elephant. His famous poem Tirumurukaruppaṭai ends as it begins with a very beautiful description of Nature, and here is the most artistic picture of a waterfall in the end reminding us of Tennyson’s “Brook”.

There is a reference to the Kāviri river in Akanānūru in which the poet by brief touches traces its course from the top of a mountain to its flow into the sea. The flood in the river is said to be covered with flowers all over. In his opinion, the floods of the Kāviri weaken the seashore.

Nakkirar has a very keen eye in observing motions. There is beauty in the phrase nayavara nutanikum (waving attractively) used while describing the tender leaves of the iṅkai waving in the south breeze. The torrents that flow with force and make the wild beasts shiver with fear are said to be waving like white cloths seen on the top of the mountain. The aerial root of the īrri tree stretch-
ing towards a black rock below and waving with the wind is compared to be movements of the raised trunk of the elephant. The finest artistic touch is in the picture of the flame of the lamp in the military camp of the king where it bends towards south as the north wind blows and now and then burns bright. The descriptive touch of the movement of rain drops that cling to the leaves of trees in the garden is also true to Nature and highly artistic.

Nappannanar

The poem of Nappannanar in Paripātal is full of appropriate epithets for various kinds of flowers and thereby proves the keenness of the poet in observing the different colours and forms of the flowers.

The āmpal is depicted to blossom and look like the slightly opened mouth. The kāntals are in fragrant bunches and blossom like hands. The eruvaik is fragrant. The vēnkaikai flowers are also in bunches and fire-like in colour. The tōnri flowers

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3. Nappannanar
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1. Aku. 57
2. Nett. 173-175
3. Ibid. 27. 28
4. Par. 19: 75-79.
5. Pari. 19: 75-79.
6. Ibid. 19-75
7. Ibid. 19-76
8. Ibid. 19-77
are very bright and are like flames.¹ The naravu blooms are also in bunches and blossom one by one in order.² The ilavu flowers form a contrast in colour when placed with other blossoms.³

Nampi Kuttuvan

A poet of the neythal region, though very brief, his descriptive touches are enough to reveal his interest in observing the beauties of Nature.

The atumpu is said to have forked leaves like the hoofs of the deer and flowers bright in colour resembling small bells in shape.⁴ The shrimp is described to have thorn-like legs and bent back. They are said to go in swarms.⁵ The waves of the sea bring them together to the shore.

In the grove on the seashore, an unripe fruit drops down from the kantal tree and falls over the âmpal bud in the backwaters which then opens its petals a little and resembles the mouth of the crow just opened.⁶

The poet is sensitive to colours and forms, but there is no reference to his sensitiveness to sounds,
and fragrance. There is no description of seasons or hours of a day, no sky, no sun or moon rising or setting.

**Nallantuvanar**

Nallantuvanār is recognised as a poet of the maritime region but he has also poems on other regions. There is a description of the rain pouring on a mountain when it seems as if the sky and the earth are connected and joined by water. The clouds envelope even the sun, so that it is not possible to know where it is, except by those who count time with their time-measure called *kanyul.*

It causes such a flood in the streams that the elephants with their mates bathe in them in such depths that their trunks get submerged.

These are apostrophes to the sea, to the *anvil* bird and to the flute in which the heroine addresses them, pities them for their cry and enquires them what their sufferings are due to. The poet des-

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Akb. 45

-Kali. 129
cries and compares the sea to the army of a king marching to the battle field.\(^1\) The roaring waves stand for the royal drum, the boats for the elephants and the wings of the maritime birds for their different weapons.

In another poem, the flowers closing their petals, the leaves of trees dropping down, the blossoms adorning the bushes and the bees humming all over are all described to picture an evening scene and each of them is explained by a comparison in which a moral or an abstract idea is introduced.\(^2\)

There are two poems in Paripāṭal, one as an apostrophe to the Vaiyai river\(^3\) and the other as a description of it.\(^4\) The descriptions therein are elaborate and exhaustive.

Nallaliciyar

There are two poems of this author in Paripāṭal. One of them describes the flood in the Vaiyai river and the inundations in the adjacent regions.\(^5\) The other dwells upon the Tirupparaṅkuṟṟam, a hill near Madura and the various sounds heard there as Nature's music in accompaniment to the various

\(^1\) The Treatment of Nature. 
\(^2\) The Treatment of Nature. 
\(^3\) The Treatment of Nature. 
\(^4\) The Treatment of Nature. 
\(^5\) The Treatment of Nature.
instruments played by the skilled musicians.¹ Like every description in Paripāṭal these are also elaborate and extensive unlike the brief and telling descriptive touches in the other anthologies.

**Nalluruttiranar**

The poet has all his poems on pastoral region and they are all in Kalittokai. They reveal the poet’s accurate knowledge of the flowers of the region and his keen sense of colour and form.

The descriptive touches regarding the *piṭavu*, the *kōtal*, the *kāyā*,² the *mullai*, the *tōyri*, the *konvrai*,³ the *vetci*, the *kuruntu*, the *kullai*⁴ and other flowers are very realistic. The epithets given to the flowers are felicitous and apt. For example, the *kōtal* blossoms are depicted to have long stalks

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1. *Kali* 101
2. *Pari* 17
3. Ibid. 102
4. Ibid. 103
which sway and look like the drunkard reeling in his drunken state.¹

The poet describes bulls of different colours and his imaginative skill is revealed in the comparisons given. The tall black bull with white legs looks like a mountain with white waterfalls.² The white bull with dots over its body resembles the twilight sky with shining stars³. The red bull with its curved horns appears like the God Siva wearing the crescent moon on his head.⁴ The bells on the horns of the reddish black bull are like the bees humming over the nāyavu buds.⁵

To the poet’s trained eye, the small pool on a black rock is the open portion of the tender palmyra fruit called nūiku and the rock itself, a sleeping female elephant.⁶

**Nalvelliär**

The poet is acquainted with the mountain scenery and the life of the animals there, especially of the elephants. He enjoys the music of the streams; the water flowing down sounds like the

1. Kali, 101
2. Kali, 101
3. Kali, 101
4. Kali, 101
5. Kali, 101
6. Kali, 101
drum called *mulavu.*

The streams run through the pools on rocks washing away small stones and then rush through the forest at great speed.

There is a pathetic picture of a family of elephants. The male is killed by a tiger, and the bereaved mate with its young one close to it grieves over the loss like the warrior fatally wounded in a battle-field.

The elephants always move in a herd with a leader among them. The poet refers to this in a comparison wherein he states that the hero who has to leave his love returns to his village like the male elephant deserted by its herd. The deer is a very timid animal and is compared to the heroine bashful at the approach of her hero in solitude. Her heart, moved and melted by his approach, is compared to the mud that absorbs the rain water and consequently turns soft.

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1. *—Kuru, 305*
2. *—Nur. 7*
3. *—Nur. 47*
4. *—Akn. 32*
5. *—Ibid.*
Nalvettanar

The forest stream called kānyāru is mentioned in two of his poems. In one it is liked and loved by the heroine and, in the absence of her lover, it is believed that its sweet fresh water has a recuperative effect on her emaciated body. In the other stanza also the description is subjective but there the lady-companion requests the hero not to come at nights and warns him of the dangers on the banks of the stream. The elephants fight on the banks and destroy them, thereby making it very difficult and dangerous to walk over those banks at nights. Crystals and gold dust glitter among the black rocks through which the stream passes. There are dangerous whirls in it where the crocodiles live. In such streams, floods suddenly rise whenever there is a heavy fall of rain, especially at nights.

There is also a very brief description of a grove that appears fresh and beautiful in the early summer.
Nanpalurc Ciru Metaviyar

He is a pastoral poet and in both of his poems he dwells upon the shepherd and his shrieks while he shifts his flock from place to place or protects it at night.¹ The poet has an intimate knowledge of the plants of the region. The white mucunṭai flowers blossoming at night on the hillside resemble the stars twinkling in the blue sky at midnight.² His picture of the timid hare that is frightened by the shepherd's shrieck and immediately hides itself in a shrub nearby, is simple and interesting.³

Nannakaiyar

She is interested in depicting various seasons of the year. In the very few poems extant in her name, there are descriptions of the three seasons, īlavē-nil, kār and kutir i.e., the early summer, the early winter and the late winter. Two of them record the feelings of the lonely heroine and therefore the descriptions of the seasons are subjective and very brief.⁴ In the third one, clouds

¹. நந்பலரூ சிரு மெடசியர்
   பாலார் பாக வழி போட்டியில்
   டூடொலிடோர் நூறுக் கேரத்து
   மூன்றும் பருந்து தந்துக் காணலாம்
   குன்றோ ஆண்டு காண்டு வந்து
   முன்போ வல்லு வீணையில்.

². குழும் முந்தை பருந்து மூலா
   காணாமையில் காண்நாய் கூடாம
   குன்றோ ஆண்டு புரே வண்டு காண்நாய்

³. நந்நகையார்
   குறிப்பு குறிப்பு
   மூன்றும் பருந்து வந்து

⁴. குழும் குழும் பருந்து வந்து
   காணாமை காண்நாய்
   குன்றோ ஆண்டு புரே வண்டு
   —Aka. 394

—Kuru 192
surrounding the tops of mountains are referred to by the camppanion in trying to console the heroine in her separation.¹

The descriptive touch of the early summer is in connection with the cuckoo, the herald of the season.² Its shining black feathers are besmeared with the pollen of the flowers of the mango branches which the bird pecks with its beak. Its feathers then appear like the black touchstone with dust of gold.

The description of the late winter is restricted to the rainy clouds and to the chill wind that makes the people shiver.³

The poet compares the slow movement of the rainy clouds in the wintersky to that of the pregnant women and the comparison though peculiar is true to Nature.⁴

There is a description of the evening—very brief but artistic and complete in itself. The bat of expanding wings and of slight flight is said to seek in the evening for trees bearing fruits.⁵

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¹ Kurn. 197
² Ibid. 192.
³ Ibid. 197.
⁴ Ibid. 197.
⁵ Ibid. 287
⁶ Ibid 172
another poem, the evening is not described, but subjectively mentioned with an epithet expressing the grief of the heroine in her separation (*nār il mālai*).¹

**Nocci Niyaman kilar**

He is a poet fascinated by mountain scenery. The stream falling down is, in the imagination of the poet, like the wave of the sea; the blue mountain here resembling the blue sea and the white waterfall on the mountain, the white wave rising in the blue vastness of the sea with water splashing against the shore.² The fertile growth of the ears of the *tiṇai* in the cultivated fields is described.³ The parrots come there in search of food. The sapphire-like bees are also depicted to strike their humming note among the *kāntal* blossoms.⁴

**Paranar**

Paranar exercises his perspective over a wide range of Nature, from mountains to sea coast, though he seems to have more intimate knowledge of, and consequently an intense partiality for, the agricultural tracts.

In one of his pictures the buffalo feeds upon the *kalumīr* and the lotus flowers, walks majestically

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1. *Lf 6f jisvj ih LAir*fii > Lf&)trQutr@ —Kuru. 118

2. *'sirmtDStnfp t afa}£}tu /5«wQ*tj/ *(pafcf tor a? pJemiruSsar —Nur. 17

3. *neoofiSurtijft rtpmi&iLi sr nreo, Tbid. 17

4. *u)«slUijDpi j£iiQ t Gtr&)L~ npthiVeor —Ibid. 209

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—Ibid. 17
like a warrior and sleeps on a heap of sand.¹ There are four beautiful pictures of the lotus² and three of the āmpal³ He describes the tiny flowers like the mullai,⁴ the marutu⁵ and the neem⁶ artistically. The birds like cranes⁷ and the fish like the vālai⁸ find a place in his word-paintings. There is also a picture of the swan seeking fish in the south sea and flying in the evening to its young ones in the Himalayas.⁹ The poet incidentally alludes to the floods in the Kaviri river in two descriptive touches.¹⁰

In all these descriptions, it is action that has attracted the poet's artistic eye. The buffalo walks majestically.¹¹ The vālai fish frisks in the tank and makes the lotus leaves appear conspicuously among the ripples caused by its leaping.¹²

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¹ Aka. 6, 186; Nar. 300, 310.
² Nar. 100, 280, 300.
³ Aka. 236.
⁴ Nar. 350.
⁵ Kuru, 21.
⁶ Aka. 276; Kuru. 128, Nar. 350, 356.
⁷ Aka. 6, 142, 152, 370; Nar. 310.
⁸ Nar. 356
⁹ Aka. 76
¹⁰ Nar. 310
¹¹ Nar. 260.
¹² Nar. 260.
The wind blows and causes those leaves to wave like the ears of the elephant.\(^1\) The wind also bends the \textit{ämpal} flowers and makes them stretch towards the adjacent lotus flower when they look like the maids of a royal princess bowing before her and with raised hands begging her pardon when she gets angry with them.\(^2\) The flowers of the mango tree in the field drop down like the drizzle of rain.\(^3\) The birds perching on the branches of the \textit{marutu} tree are scared of the harvest drum and when they rise up and fly away from the tree, those branches shed their flowers,\(^4\) The crane walks cunningly and silently to catch the \textit{vālai} fish like a thief entering with great care into a house under watch and ward.\(^5\) The shrimp scatters the tubular \textit{vallai} creepers and leaps over the paddy crops in the field making the paddy ears expand suddenly.\(^6\)

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1. தோற்றுத் தோற்றுக் காண்புரிக் கி ...
ripe mango fruit drops down into the deep waters of the tank with the sound ‘tuțum’.¹

Even while depicting the mountain scenery, the elephant is pictured as rooting out trees and fighting the tiger with great ferocity and entering the field and damaging the tiṇṇī crop.² The stream falls down and looks like a white flag on the heights of the mountain.³ The māṇī creeper by the side of a block of rock is pictured to climb over the elephant sleeping nearby since it is there like a block of rock.⁴ The picture of a wild pig is a complete one and it includes the description of its daily life in the mountains.⁵ It drinks water of a rocky pool, eats the cempu roots, comes down on a rock that appears like a sleeping she-elephant, treads on brushing on its way the bunches of the
kūtalam flowers and has its back besmeared with their pollen so as to look like a touchstone with dust of gold, eats the tiyai ears and sleeps there in a happy mood.

The descriptions of the maritime region are equally full of such pictures of motion and action. A group of shrimp fish is said to attack the vessel sailing in the sea. The waves dash on the shore and sound like a drum and damage the small burrows of the crabs. The waves are numerous and their white tops dash and split and scatter spray. The vast surface of water is a grand spectacle and is said to shake itself when the wind blows on the surface.

In the desert tract, the iruppai flowers blown by the violent wind drops down on the rocks below like the round dice called kalaṅku carved out of the tusks of the elephants. The elephant hears the blended notes of the musical instruments of the musicians and mistakes it for the roar of a tiger, gets angry, attacks a blossomed vēṅkai tree, tears

1.  —Aka. 152
2.  —Kurn. 328
3.  —Pattirup. 42
4.  —Ibid. 45
5.  —Aka. 135
off one of its branches and wearing it on its head makes a roar that echoes in the mountain rocks.¹

Thus everywhere it is motion and action that fascinate the poet more than colours and sounds which also he mentions but briefly and rarely. Anyhow it has to be said that he is very poor in his sense of fragrance. The objects mentioned in his poems are numerous and they include many flowers like the lotus and the amplal, but it is a wonder that their fragrance is not depicted. The descriptions of the different kinds of scents of flowers require an accurate study of the seasons and the periods in which they blossom and spread their fragrance and it is clear from this why the poet who has depicted Nature in so many poems is so silent regarding references to seasons and periods.

But Paranar has exhibited his interest in observations of midnight, rainy clouds and the chill north wind. There are four artistic descriptions of the midnight,² three of the clouds in the sky³ and one of the north wind which is an apostrophe.⁴ One description is of a night bright with the moonlight and full of disturbances with the barking of

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1. Aka. 122, 125, 142, 162.
2. Ibid. 125, 162; Kuru. 247.
3. Aka. 125.
dogs and the hooting of owls. The third description is of a night chill and cold with dew-falls. The fourth is of a night with an ocean-like dark sky and heavy showers of rain and frequent lightning and incessant thunder causing great anxiety to the villagers.

The clouds moving in the sky after pouring rain at night are compared to the elephants mildly walking after their rutish adventure is over. They are said to pour at night and to surround the mountain cliffs at dawn like carded cotton. The rain pours at all places without distinguishing the fertile lands from the barren and the empty tanks from the broad fields and is therefore compared to a patron who never distinguishes his bards one from another but favours them all equally.

1. Aka. 122.
2. —Ibid. 142
3. —Ibid, 125
4. —Ibid, 162
5. —Ibid. 125
6. —Nar. 247
7. —Pura. 142
There is nothing peculiar in the description of a sunset in a stanza in Akanāṇūru, but the following picture is of some interest. The wild cat seeks food to feed its hungry mate that gave birth to young ones, hides itself beside a large receptacle of varaku and watches silently for the opportunity to catch the domestic fowl there. Sunrise is briefly mentioned in a simile which describes a king seen on a decorated chariot.

Paranar's sense of form and colour has been so developed that throughout his poems he gives comparisons of the most appropriate and most arresting type. For every description of colour, or form, there is some flower or stem or some such object brought in for comparison. The lady's paleness of complexion in separation and sorrow is like the colour of the pirkku flower. The shoulder is compared to the lovely part between the two nodes of a well grown bamboo. Her eyes
are like the *kuvalai* flowers\(^1\) and her complexion like the colour of the *ämpal* stem when its skin is peeled off.\(^2\) The soft tongue of the great scholars is compared to the *ilavu* petal.\(^3\) The movement of the needle in stitching the open wounds of the warriors wounded in the battle field is compared to that of the kingfisher that dips itself into the tank to catch fish.\(^4\) The flags waving over the high buildings appear like the waterfalls from the heights of mountains.\(^5\) Nature is referred to even in comparisons describing abstract feelings. The heroine pining in the absence of her lover consoles herself and says that her mind has suffered much like the cobra that has lost its gem.\(^6\) The poet's interest in depicting motion is again revealed in his comparison of the paleness that appears and disappears in her complexion to the duckweed in a tank that separates at the touch and re-joins and covers again by the removal of the hand from the water.\(^7\)

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<td>are like the <em>kuvalai</em> flowers and her complexion like the colour of the <em>ämpal</em> stem when its skin is peeled off. The soft tongue of the great scholars is compared to the <em>ilavu</em> petal. The movement of the needle in stitching the open wounds of the warriors wounded in the battle field is compared to that of the kingfisher that dips itself into the tank to catch fish. The flags waving over the high buildings appear like the waterfalls from the heights of mountains. Nature is referred to even in comparisons describing abstract feelings. The heroine pining in the absence of her lover consoles herself and says that her mind has suffered much like the cobra that has lost its gem. The poet's interest in depicting motion is again revealed in his comparison of the paleness that appears and disappears in her complexion to the duckweed in a tank that separates at the touch and re-joins and covers again by the removal of the hand from the water.</td>
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\(^1\) Nar, 6
\(^2\) Ibid. 6
\(^3\) Aka. 142
\(^4\) Patirrup. 42
\(^5\) Ibid. 47
\(^6\) Aka. 372
\(^7\) Kuru. 399
In a single stanza in Akanānūru, there are nine beautiful similes in a series.\(^1\) The tusk of a wild boar is very hard, and the hairs on its body are like the bamboo roots. The rocky pool resembles the beating side of the drum. The cēmpu has sapphire-like leaves and bulbous roots like balls of boiled rice. The rock on which the boar comes down looks like an elephant sleeping. The water of a fountain is abundant like that of a river. The white kūtalām flower just blossoming resembles the perching posture of a crane. The kūtalām pollen found on the dark skin of the boar is like the dust of gold seen on a touchstone. This is enough to prove that the poet revels in appreciating the beauties of Nature and in comparing one with another and painting pictures of different types. Similar one is found in the apostrophe to the north wind in Akanānūru.\(^2\)

The epithets and verbs he uses in his descriptions are felicitous and full of suggestions and enable the reader to visualize the objects described. The lotus has flame-like flowers, long stems and broad leaves.\(^3\) The vallai is the creeper thin and

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2. Ibid. 125.
3. Nar, 310.
tubular.¹ The dog is sharp-toothed and has its tail curled to the right.² The owl has a rough and strong mouth.³ The iruppai flower is rounded and cone-shaped.⁴ The elephant's trunk is strong and large like the trunk of a palmyra tree.⁵ The wild cat has rounded legs and greenish eyes.⁶ The domestic cock has dewlap-like part resembling tender leaves, thickly set hairs on the neck and bright crest like the murukku flower.⁷ The shrimp is a fish with soft hair-like part in the head and curved shape.⁸ The fig tree has white branches.⁹ The kūtali is short-stemmed.¹⁰ The swan is a bird with bright soft feathers and red legs and strong tireless flight.¹¹ There are many such epithets and verbs of apt description.

**Picir Antaiyar**

There are three poems of this poet which contain descriptions of Nature.¹² The poet seems to

1. தமிழ் எழுதிய தமிழச் செய்திகள்.
2. தமிழ் எழுதிய தமிழச் செய்திகள்.
3. தமிழ் எழுதிய தமிழச் செய்திகள்.
4. தமிழ் எழுதிய தமிழச் செய்திகள்.
5. தமிழ் எழுதிய தமிழச் செய்திகள்.
6. தமிழ் எழுதிய தமிழச் செய்திகள்.
7. தமிழ் எழுதிய தமிழச் செய்திகள்.
8. தமிழ் எழுதிய தமிழச் செய்திகள்.
9. தமிழ் எழுதிய தமிழச் செய்திகள்.
10. தமிழ் எழுதிய தமிழச் செய்திகள்.
11. தமிழ் எழுதிய தமிழச் செய்திகள்.
12. Aka. 308; Nar. 91; Pura. 67.
have lived near the mountains as well as the sea-shore. In a stanza in Akanāṉūṟu he describes the clouds that pour rain at night and wash away the wounds of the elephant which fought with the tiger; in the early morning these clouds overspread the mountain with a white haze like the smoke round the potter's kiln

In a stanza in Narriṇai there is a description of the seashore with the pleasant shade of the puṇṇai tree, the ceaseless sound of waves and the long-legged cranes seeking fish there. There is an interesting picture of the mother crane dropping a small fish into the mouth of its young one that has been all along calling its mother from its nest on a high branch.

The third stanza is in Puranāṉūṟu and is an apostrophe to the swan that seeks fish in the Kumari shore on the south and flies in the evening to the mountains on the north. By addressing the bird, the poet expresses his affectionate feelings towards his friend the Cola king called Köppe-runcōlan. In it the evening sky is painted with

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1. கூட்டியாரு வருகை ஆண்டார்கள் தொட்டை மண்டிரி மலர்புண்ணாக கப்பல்கள் கெட்டிடவாய் கோப்பை

2. உண்மையான புனாதா திருச்சபை சூடுப்புண்ணியானார் பாடல்பூர்வத்து சோல கொண்டு இலுமிநர் மாரும் திழ்குக்கை தருகாக.

3. இயற்று சோதனை கூட்டு நூறு

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—Aka. 308

—Nar. 91

—Pura. 67
the full moon shining bright and beautiful like the face of the king.

Perun Kunrur Kilar

Perunkunrur seems to be the village of the poet and, as signified by the name, the village was probably situated in a mountainous region. Most of the poems describe the mountain scenery and testify to the poet's intimate knowledge of this region.

There are evidences in these poems to suggest that the poet has observed the beauties of the mountains from various angles, from the top and from the bottom, from afar as well as from near. A male elephant slips down a slope and falls into a pit when its mate tries to save it by rooting out trees, breaking the branches and throwing them into the pit so that they may serve as steps to its mate to come up.¹ This violent plucking and piling of branches resounded beyond the high mountain. Perhaps the poet had heard the noise from the top itself. The sounding cataract is to him the drum called 'tannumai'.²

In another stanza there is a description of a rainy night in which the lightning flashes as if the mountain winks.³ This imagery is conceivable only

¹. பைத்து குற்றிட சிவிலம் காலையா
பெசுவாடவை தெய்வாம் பொழியம்
பெசுவாடவை பொழியம் புரூ
பெசுவாடவை சிற்றூர்கள் பூப்பு. —Aka. 8

². பெசுவாடவை சிற்றூர்கள் இத்தவை என்ற
பொழியம் பொழியம் ஆனே இத்தவை என்றவை
—Nar. 347

³. பைத்து பைத்து பொழியம் பொழியம்
பைத்து பைத்து பொழியம் பொழியம் —Nar. 112
if one sees a mountain in a dark night from a distance. The poet himself in a simile speaks of a mountain that seems as if standing and gazing at the world. Yet another stanza refers to the height of the mountain which looks as if it peeps into the sky thrusting its towering cliff.

Even regarding the descriptions of the ways of life of the animals there, the poet evinces his intimate and accurate knowledge of them. His picture of the bear that thrusts its hand-like foreleg into an anthill and digs and hurts the snake inside brings before the reader’s eye the actual scene. This usually takes place at midnights. The tiger kills the wild boar and draws it through the forest making the whole place stink. The watchman in the tinai field places a trap for the pig but an unfortunate tiger is trapped. The monkey leaps about and plays with the mountain goat called varutai.

There is a picture of an evening in the dewy season called acciram (or arciram). This season is described in another stanza also as one in which

1. —Pura, 211
2. —Nar. 347
3. —Aka. 8
5. —Nar. 119
7. Kuru. 388
the clouds pass on to the south and by pouring rain make the mountains green with shrubs and creepers growing luxuriantly.¹ The poet has a partiality for showers of rain and floods and streams. Four of his stanzas describe the rain with lightning and thunder.² In a stanza in Patirruppattu, there is painted in two lines a picture of a flood and the stanza is, therefore, aptly called ventalaic cempunal (water red in colour with white head i.e. flood of reddish muddy water with waves white on the surface).³ It is said to carry with it sandalwood and eaglewood from the mountains, pass through the regions with abundant foam and direct its course to the sea. There are brief references to the sea coast⁴ and to the agricultural fields.⁵ The poet in a humorous mood imagines the marriage of a big snail with a conch at day-time in the shade of an ampal leaf.⁶ The house-sparrow feeds on the rice in the field and with its mate rests in its nest.⁷

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¹ Nar. 5
² Ibid. 5, 112 347, Puram. 147.
³ Patirrup. 86
⁴ Ibid. 87
⁵ Ibid. 90
⁶ Puram. 266
⁷ Ibid. 318
In all such verses, the epithets to various objects of Nature are themselves such connotative touches that they enable the readers to visualize the pictures. For example, the shade of the āmpal leaf is not simply mentioned but it is the shade of a broad leaf of the āmpal with tubular stem. The male sparrow has a black neck and lives in the houses and its mate has a grey back. The descriptions are thus made vivid with a wealth of living details.

In addition to descriptions of the marutam region, the poet depicts the mountains and the rainy clouds. Even when he has to praise his patron Kuṭakkōc Čēral Irumpori, he compares his army and the noise of the royal drum to the mountain and the roaring thunder of the rainy clouds.

**Perun Kaucikanar**

He is a poet of the night clouds as in both of his poems he describes the rainy clouds in dark nights. In one stanza, the heroine looks at the dark sky and observes the movements of the clouds in the light emitted by the glow-worms among the branches of a jack tree. The second is an apos-

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1. *Pura*. 266
2. *Ibid*. 318
3. *Ibid*. 211
4. Nar. 44. 139
5. *Nar*. 44
The hero has returned home in time before the commencement of the rainy season, and therefore feels thankful to the clouds for pouring in torrents after his return and wishes them a glorious career over the cliffs of the mountains throughout the world. He is in such a happy mood that he is able to appreciate the clatter of the pouring rain and compares it to the sweet tune of the yāl.

Peruncittiranar

All his poems are on purapporu! or subjects other than love, and there is no necessity for him to describe the karuapporu! or objects of Nature as background for his themes. Yet, whatever he refers to in his comparisons is very apt interesting and is enough to prove his interest in observation and appreciation of the beauties of Nature.

Women who have lost their husbands cast of bangles as a mark of widowhood and this is compared to the shedding off of the petals of the plantain flower one by one when finally the stem is left without any beauty.² In another simile, the description of the Ganges is most appropriate and

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1. சதுர்ப்பு சாரைகள் பாரும்
   பாலாளிகள் சூடு விளைக்கும்
   உண்டு ரேமும் ரும்புகளை வெளித்து......
   பொருளுக்கு இசுநிலி
   அருமையேயும் பருவங்க செந்த உரையா.
   —Nar. 139

2. செம்பு கூடும் செடங்கள்
   கூடந் செளிவு செய்ய
   —Pura. 237
highly realistic. The clouds rise from the sea, gather themselves, appear dark and huge like mountains in the sky, roar with thunder and pour in torrents; when such a rainy season is past and when the summer reigns supreme making the tanks and rivers everywhere dry, the Ganges flows full of water for the benefit of the whole of mankind. It is a fact that there are floods in the Ganges mostly in summer as it is then that the snow in the Himalayas melt and flow into the Ganges. This the poet Peruncittiranar describes in a comparison while referring to the bountiful help rendered by the patron Kumanan in the absence of other patrons.

There are two descriptive touches of the burial ground and one of the Mutiram hills. In the description of the hills, a male monkey is pictured to take possession of a ripe jack fruit of thorny rind and beckon to its mate with its forelegs thereby resembling human beings signifying their call to others with their hands.

1. "The clouds rise from the sea, gather themselves, appear dark and huge like mountains in the sky, roar with thunder and pour in torrents; when such a rainy season is past and when the summer reigns supreme making the tanks and rivers everywhere dry, the Ganges flows full of water for the benefit of the whole of mankind. It is a fact that there are floods in the Ganges mostly in summer as it is then that the snow in the Himalayas melt and flow into the Ganges. This the poet Peruncittiranar describes in a comparison while referring to the bountiful help rendered by the patron Kumanan in the absence of other patrons.

2. "There are two descriptive touches of the burial ground and one of the Mutiram hills. In the description of the hills, a male monkey is pictured to take possession of a ripe jack fruit of thorny rind and beckon to its mate with its forelegs thereby resembling human beings signifying their call to others with their hands."

3. "There are two descriptive touches of the burial ground and one of the Mutiram hills. In the description of the hills, a male monkey is pictured to take possession of a ripe jack fruit of thorny rind and beckon to its mate with its forelegs thereby resembling human beings signifying their call to others with their hands."

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-Pura. 161
-Ibid. 238
-Ibid. 158
Peruntalaic cattanar

There are two brief, yet beautiful, pictures of the north wind and the dewy season. One refers to the midnight when all are asleep and when there is rain; the north wind blows and the eye-like karuvilai flowers wave and look like the spots on the peacock’s tail. The other is of the cranes that perch on the sugarcanes and cry aloud unable to bear the chill north wind and the drizzle accompanying it; the paddy ears with the edges of the grains like the ends of fire, bend and wave towards the south ridge.

The poet compares his own feelings, when the patron whom he approached for favour disappointed him, to those of the birds which fly a long distance seeking fruits in a mountain and return with great disappointment.

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1. Aka. 13. 262.
2. Aka. 13. 262
3. Aka. 13
4. Pura. 209
There are two descriptions of a desert tract with the birds and animals suffering without food in the abnormal heat of the prolonging summer.\(^1\) The branches of the \(yā\) tree with high trunks are dry without leaves and there is seen on it a kite looking at its mate hungering for flesh.\(^2\) Its feathers are said to be scorched on account of the burning heat there. The male elephant is said to feed its hungry herd with the inside of the trunk of the \(yā\) tree which it butts and gores with its strong tusks.\(^3\)

A stanza in Nārīnai is an apostrophe to the owl that has its abode in the deep recess of a tree on the bank of the village tank. In two lines the poet pictures the bird and brings it before the reader’s imagination as having a sharp bent bill, clear round eyes, sharp nails, straight flight and strong build. Its shriek at night is said to be alarming and the lady-companion promises it a fine and pleasant dish of meat boiled in ghee and fried flesh of rats if
only it kept silent at nights when the hero comes on visit.¹

**Perumpatumanar**

There is nothing peculiar except that his descriptions abound in audition. The wind blows and the dry seeds of the vakali sound like the drum beaten in accompaniment to a rope-dance.² The thunder roars and seems to shake and turn over the mountain.³ The birds chirp and gather in the branches of the banyan tree and seek its fruits again and again all the days of the year.⁴ Even the north wind is described to make the continuous sound *im* in the dark nights.⁵

**Peyanar**

He is the author of the last hundred of Aiṉkuṟunūṟu and a few other poems in the other anthologies; he is a poet of the forest region that appears most beautiful in the early winter, especially in the evenings. There are descriptions of the late winter

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1. நெய்கார் விளக்கி வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு நெய்கார் விளக்கி வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு
   வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு நெய்கார் விளக்கி வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு
   வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு நெய்கார் விளக்கி வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு
   வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு நெய்கார் விளக்கி வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு
   —Nar. 83

2. நெய்கார் விளக்கி வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு நெய்கார் விளக்கி வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு
   வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு நெய்கார் விளக்கி வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு
   வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு நெய்கார் விளக்கி வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு
   —Kuru, 7

3. நெய்கார் விளக்கி வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு நெய்கார் விளக்கி வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு
   வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு நெய்கார் விளக்கி வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு
   வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு நெய்கார் விளக்கி வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு
   —Nar. 2

4. நெய்கார் விளக்கி வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு நெய்கார் விளக்கி வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு
   வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு நெய்கார் விளக்கி வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு
   வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு நெய்கார் விளக்கி வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு
   —Pura. 100

5. நெய்கார் விளக்கி வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு நெய்கார் விளக்கி வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு
   வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு நெய்கார் விளக்கி வெள் தோற்ற நமக்கு
   —Nar. 109
and the dewy season also but they are very brief and rare, while most of the stanzas deal with the early winter and the flowers blossoming and the animals and birds playing merrily during the season.

The stags leap about the forests with their hinds. The fresh showers make the frogs happy so that in every pit and pool their croaking is heard. The bees hum over the newly-blossomed flowers in every shrub and creeper. The peacocks begin their dance. The skylark is content and is quiet and happy by reason of the heavy rain that pours. The hares run here and there; and when the watchmen fling some seeds at them, they timidly retreat into the coverts nearby. From the anthills the winged white-ants start their flight.

1. The fresh showers make the frogs happy so that in every pit and pool their croaking is heard.
2. The bees hum over the newly-blossomed flowers in every shrub and creeper.
3. The peacocks begin their dance.
4. The skylark is content and is quiet and happy by reason of the heavy rain that pours.
5. The hares run here and there; and when the watchmen fling some seeds at them, they timidly retreat into the coverts nearby.
6. From the anthills the winged white-ants start their flight.
The flowers *mullai*, *konrāi*, *tonṛi* and *piṭavu*, are described artistically. The *konrāi* flowers are said to be like small patens of gold. The poet uses a picturesque phrase when he mentions that the *konrāi* blossoms garlands, meaning that the bunches are like garlands. The *talavu* bud is like beak of the kingfisher and the bee hums over it and opens its petals. The *mullai* buds are as bright and white as the moonlight itself.

The red ground of the pastoral region looks as if adorned by the various flowers of different colours and scents dropping down on it. The gold-like *konrāi* flowers falling into a pit on the way make it appear like a box of gold coins with its lid opened.

The poet has a peculiar interest in comparing the beauties of Nature observed in this part of the region with the aspects of beauty of the heroine herself. The heroine's forehead is depicted to smell like the forest region that has become fertile and fresh after rain, and also like the *mullai* flowers that blossom in the rainy season.

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1. —Atin 497
2. —Ibid. 447
3. —Ibid. 454
4. —Ibid. 495
5. —Ibid. 499
6. —Kuru, 233
7. —Atin. 413
8. —Ibid. 492
peacock is compared to the heroine herself,\(^1\) and the timid look of the deer to her look.\(^2\) While in separation, the paleness of her eyes is compared to the colour of the *konrai* flowers and the eyes themselves to the *kuvalai* blossoms.\(^3\)

Pēyanār is so much interested in depicting the beauties of this region that one of his poems is an apostrophe to the region itself.\(^4\) It is an address by the hero who, on his return home, perceives the fresh appearance of the land made beautiful by the gold-like *konrai* blossoms and the honeyed *kāya* flowers and the *tōyri* flowers seen everywhere.

Since he has often described the fresh showers conventionally belonging to this region, one can expect descriptions of the atmospheric changes in the sky. He only mentions the rainbow in one of the stanzas and refers to the rain commencing its pouring.\(^5\) But these are not up to one’s expectation. There is not a single description about the movement of the clouds in the sky and this only proves that the poet’s eye observes with interest the beauties of the earth than those of the sky. There

1. *Pēyaṇār* *Mānasī* *Manippuṟam* *Kāppal* — *Ain.*
2. *Pēyaṇār* *Mānasī* *Manippuṟam* *Kāppal* — *Ibid.*
5. *Pēyaṇār* *Mānasī* *Manippuṟam* *Kāppal* — *Ain.*
are no doubt reasons for this; the earth is full of fascinating colours and forms and attractive scents besides various sounds and appeals to almost all the senses of the poet, whereas there is comparatively nothing in the sky except the colourful changes of the clouds to attract him.

In one of his descriptions of the late winter, there is a brief reference to the moon seen during day and consequently appearing white but not bright. The poet compares the white *pakanraic* flower to this pale moon. In the stanzas dealing with the dewy season, the north wind is described along with the fall of dew. The poet says that the dew-fall is such that the whole earth is shivering with cold. Here his vision is very wide, and he sees the earth as a whole in his imagination.

He is one of the poets who have mentioned the skylark and in the case of the other poets, there is no description of the bird, probably because it is not visible even to the poet's searching eyes.

**Peralavayar**

Though there are only three poems of this poet, in these he exhibits himself as a great word-painter. His pictures are very interesting and realistic. The churning rod of a milkmaid hangs in front of a thatched hut and the young calf there

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1. தென்கீழ் பக கரம் பசுதபாளையன்
   -Ain. 456
2. தனியில் காள முழுமுளையும்
   -Ibid. 479
3. உருளையை நீண்டு மங்கலம்
   பசுதல்பாளையம் அல்லது
   -Ibid 470
4. பசுதல்பாளையம் அல்லாமல்
   முழுமுளை பசுதல்பாளையம்.
licks the rod. The *kāṇci* tree is pictured with its short trunk and flowers that blossom in garland-like bunches.

The picture of a mountain on a rainy day is also interesting. The heavy downpour of rain is accompanied by the din of roaring thunder while the mountain with tall bamboo groves near the clefts echoes it. The mountain itself seems to be shaken by it. The elephant bespattered with mire on the forehead tramples over the *kulāri* flowers and then breaks off the branches of the jack tree.

The poet has not restricted himself to any particular region or to any particular aspect in his range of observation.

**Peri Cattanar**

Though there are a few poems in which he describes the scenery of mountains, he is mainly a maritime poet.

The sea and the thickly grown grove on the sea coast are, in the poet's imagination, like the moonlight and darkness side by side. The blos-
somed white screwpine flower looks like the broken tusk of an elephant, and the blowing westwind spreads its pollen on the toy-houses of the young girls playing on the sand.¹ The wind breaks the rising waves, splits the water and throws the spindrift like the soft cotton carded with a bow-like instrument.²

The tall palmyra trees and the blossomed punnai trees are everywhere described in the sea coast scenes.³ The sharp-beaked anyil bird perches on the palmyra stems and calls its mate in a pining voice.⁴ The village on the sea coast is on all sides surrounded by the palmyra trees as a fence.⁵ The punnai trees on the sand dunes have a special appeal to the poet's imagination. The bees swarm round the trees and hum over the flowers, and the hum is so loud that it is not possible to hear the

¹ Nar. 298
² —Ibid.
³ —Aka. 301
⁴ —Kuru s
⁵ —Nar 6
—Ibid 324

4 Aka. 305
5. —Nar 39
tinkling of the bells of the chariots running on the way.\textsuperscript{1}

The noise of the waves is twice compared to that of the drum called \textit{mulavu}.\textsuperscript{2} The sea is said to dance to the tune of the waves and resemble those who suffer from incurable wounds and restlessly toss in beds.\textsuperscript{3}

In the descriptions of this poet, the sea coast is always pictured in an evening setting and thus leads one to agree with Naccinärkkkiñiyar and argue that evening is the appropriate period for this region and that the term \textit{erpāṭu} occurring in \textit{Tolkāppiyam} means the evening.\textsuperscript{4} In the picture of an evening, the setting sun is depicted to disappear in a mountain leaving the sea coast desolate.\textsuperscript{5} The black-legged white cranes after feeding on the shrimps rise up and fly to the \textit{punnaí} trees and stay there.\textsuperscript{6} In the backwaters the sharks rise to the surface with their mates and because of

\textsuperscript{1} Puranam toka epuppam urum arivum
\textit{Pravakram viyum} \textit{pēkkādum} \\
\textit{Pāṇakalum} \textit{Smur arom} \textit{Pēkkādum} \\
\textit{Pēkkānam} \textit{Pēkkādum} Kīrtī. \\
\textsuperscript{-Nar.}

\textsuperscript{2} ... \\
\textsuperscript{-Ibid. 67}

\textsuperscript{3} ... \\
\textsuperscript{-Ibid. 378}

\textsuperscript{4} ... \\
\textsuperscript{5} ... \\
\textsuperscript{6} ... \\
\textsuperscript{-Nar. 67}

\textsuperscript{6} ... \\
\textsuperscript{-Ibid.}
their movements the flowers therein merge into the water and disappear.¹

In the mountain scenery, a male monkey climbs over the trees and drops the ripe fruits from there when the young ones peck at them from below.² The elephant and the tiger fight and shed blood which stinks; but the venkai blossoms and the kulavi flowers spread their fragrance and dispel the unpleasant odour.³ The peacock dancing there seems as if decorated with the gold-like pollen shed by the blossoms of the venkai trees.⁴ There is a picture of a honeycomb on the high branch of a tall sandalwood tree grown on the heights of a mountain.⁵ The bamboos grow in clusters and this the poet brings out in a comparison to a large family of members closely related to one another.⁶

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1. இன்றைய மரம் மலரும் நிறமா கைத்துடன் பூவன்கலரும் கப்பல்.

2. கூரூ

 Grip மரத்தில் கைத்து பூவன்கலரும் கப்பல் தொடரும் பார்த்தே மித்தோன் புறமில்லை.

3. பார்சைம

பிற்போது பாறை பறவைகள் கூடும் கூடிய தோற்றம் பொழும் பைத்து கொண்டு குடியிருப்பிட்டு கொண்டு வருகிறது.

4. பூயையும் தான்கள் அண்டை தூரித்து கூடும் கூடிய தோற்றம் பொழும் பைத்து கொண்டு குடியிருப்பிட்டு கொண்டு வருகிறது.

5. பனைத்தஸ் பாற்று நீர்வாய்கள் கிறிறும்

சுல்தான் புர்வா கியூன்றிக்

காண்க நீர்வாய்கள் பூங்கா

செய்று முனை படிவில் வருகிறது.

6. பார்சைம் கி நீர்வாய்கள் கீழ்மை ராசியும்

புறமில்லை புறநீர்.
The poet depicts a heavy fall of rain on the mountain when the dark clouds spread all over the sky, cover the sun completely and pour in torrents, so that even the herds of elephants shiver.¹ The poet also appreciates the beauty of the stream on the top that resembles when seen from a distance a white garland worn by the mountain.²

There is a reference to the Skylark that longs for rain and the poet mentions it is *tulinasai*pul, the bird that longs for the rain drops.³ The poet's keenness of observation of sights, sounds and fragrance is well attested by his descriptions.

Poruntill llankiranar

In two stanzas the poet describes the arid desert tract with *yā* and *iruppai* trees.⁴ The kite perches on the branches of the *yā* tree and calls to its mate in its characteristic shriek.⁵ The owl's harsh hooting is heard like the tune of the instrument called *makuli* and seems to have some signification.⁶ The *iruppai* trees have low branches which are tossed by the wind with all the

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¹  - Aka. 214
²  - Ibid. 38
³  - Pura. 198
⁴  - Aka. 19
⁵  - Ibid. 19
⁶  - Ibid. 19
leaves withered and fallen away, but with tender leaves bright and fire-like in colour.¹

The heroine’s eyes are compared to the red petals of naravu and the blue blossoms of kuvalai, and her hands deprived of the bangles to the creepers that have shed all the flowers.² She listens to the tick-tick of a lizard predicting her lover’s return.³

Maturai Alakkar Nalar Makanar Mallanar
(Mallanar son of Alakkar Nalar of Madurai)

The poet depicts the forest region both in its arid, rainless state and in its fertile state after fresh showers in the early winter.

When in an arid state, the west wind blows at the bamboos and the branches of niemai trees and deprive them of their leaves;⁴ it stirs the dust of the land and whirls itself;⁵ the wind is so hot that the poet appropriately uses the epithet eri-vāy (fire-mouthed).⁶ The pools are dry and the deer search for water, suffer without food, and faint in

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1. பூச்சின் எனினும் வைக்கு உயிருக்கிறது ஆனால் அவனுக்கு பரம்புகின் புதுமை விட்டாய்.

2. தோற்று

3. மூன்று வைத்துக்கு இறகில் தவை

4. மூன்று வைத்துக்கு இறகில் இரு பயணமும் கைப்பறை

5. மூன்று வைத்துக்கு இறகில் இரு பயணமும் கைப்பறை

6. மூைனு வைத்துக்கு இறகில் இரு பயணமும் கைப்பறை

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-Aka. 351

-Ibid. 19

-Ibid. 351

-Ibid. 353

-Ibid.
the shadeless forest region scorched by the hot rays of the summer sun. There is a picture of a ferocious boar with small eyes and miry back that falls a prey to the wild beast called kōṇāy which is in turn hunted by the mountaineers and deprived of the prey.

The wild fowl satiated with the buds sleeps in a place where the pepper-creepers grow and shed their seeds.

In the fertile pastoral region where the mullai and the pīṭavu blossom, the peacocks play and the stags leap about with their hinds.

The poet has a keen musical ear as evidenced by his reference that the wayfarers listen to the cry of the kite and compare it to the musical tune called ili.
The epithets the poet uses to describe various trees and flowers are arresting. The bamboos, the yā and the nāku trees grow tall and straight, and this is expressed by the epithets cennilai and pōkiya. The tender leaves of the yā tree are forked as described by the epithet kavaimuri. The mullai bud is white and sharp pointed. A pīțavu with a bent trunk is described and its flowers are like moonlight in colour and the buds are in closely set bunches.

**Maturai Aruva Vanikan Ilavettanar**
(Ilavettanar, the cloth merchant of Madurai)

The poet depicts all the regions except the sea coast. His pictures of the mountain scenery are many and leads one to think that he is mostly attracted by, or, acquainted with the mountainous region.

In his mountain pictures, there are tall plantain trees that wave their long broad leaves when the wind blows so as to stroke the elephant sleeping below. The east wind bends and closes the petals of the kāntal flowers and strews them on the
rocks; the flowers then look like the cobra that contracts the hood; the ears of the tina$i crop grow fertile like the trunks of the elephants; the echoed roar of the tiger that killed an elephant is heard by the mountaineers and is mistaken for the thunder of the rainy clouds.

The red ground of the pastoral region is beautifully pictured. The fresh showers have made it attractive and the sapphire-like karuvilai flowers, the bright tôn$ri flowers in the thickets and the gold-like blossoms hanging in bunches in the kõng$ai branches are all said to adorn the region.

In the agricultural tract set in the early summer season, a thin sheet of water flows in a curved manner like the crawling of a snake. The cuckoo is heard on the branches of the mango trees with

1. குரு 185
2. —Ibid.
3. —Nar. 344
4. —Ibid.
5. —Ibid. 221
6. —Ibid. 187
bunches of flowers. A buffalo with iron-like black horns enters the tank with pearl-like clear water, tears off the ampal leaves, feeds on the koyal flowers, chews the cud and walks under the kanci trees which shed the pollen of their flowers on its wet back.

The poet is very brief in his descriptions but very picturesque and balanced in his observations of colours, forms and sounds. He is, however, silent about the fragrance of the flowers he describes.

Maturai Marutankilar Makanar Perunkannanar
(Perunkannanar son of Marutankilar of Madurai)

The poet has two detailed descriptions, one of the early winter in a pastoral region and the other of the arid mountain tract.

In the first he begins with the clouds covering the atmosphere and raining with thunder; in the pools, the frogs croak like the drum beaten during a rope dance; the bunches of konrai blossoms seem like gold ornaments hung over the branches. The flame-like tonyi in the bushes and the mullai

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1. "..." - Nar.
2. "..." - Aka. 56-
3. Ibid. 364.
4. Ibid. 247.
and the *illam* blossom in the season; the rocky pools are full of water for the animals to drink.¹

In the arid mountain scenery, there is the bear with fire-like mouth seeking food in the anthill after being satiated with the *iruppai* flowers; the elephant keeps watch over the pathway and seeks to kill the wayfarers; the flock of kites with barren necks living on the heights of mountain longs for rotten flesh².

**Mankuti Marutanar**

The poet describes all the regions though it may be said that his description of the mountain scenery is poor.

His famous poem *Maturaikkânci* has a large treatise on Nature. The poem does not, as denoted by the title, restrict itself to the description of the city of Madurai, but deals with the Pandiya country as a whole and consequently the different regions of the country. The notable

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¹ The Treatmen of Nature

² Akk. 384

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³ Ibid. 247
feature of the descriptions is that of the various noises heard in the different regions. The Vaïyai river is portrayed with the animals and birds native to the banks and the flowers carried away by it in its flow and flood.

Trees and flowers are decked with appropriate epithets: the vêl tree is ciriyilai vêl (vêl with tiny leaves); the mango tree is tu'nart têk hokku (mango tree that yields bunches of sweet fruits); the āvirai flower is ponner āvirai (āvirai of

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1. कथित वातावरण साहित्य से हादसे तक 
2. वातावरण साहित्य विभिन्न उपाख्याति 
3. कथित वातावरण साहित्य के मूल 
4. कथित वातावरण साहित्य की सांस्कृतिक सूची 

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-Maturaik. 258-267

-Ibid. 291-299

-Ibid. 308-309

-1bid. 332-340

-Aka. 89

-Kuru. 164

-Ibid. 173
gold-like flowers; the \textit{kantāl} tree is \textit{kōntuntāl kantāl} (\textit{kantalof bent trunk}); the lotus is \textit{muṭṭāla cuṭāri tāmarai}. Similarly there are epithets to almost all the objects described.

The west wind is said to blow into the clefts and roar like the sea ruffled by the winds.

There is an interesting picture of the moist clouds and the flood they cause in the rivers. They spread from east to west, covering up the sky, pour in torrents day and night, fill up the streams with floods and by their rattling terrify the elephants and redden the rivers with the mud washed down the mountain slopes.

\textbf{Mamulanar}

Almost all his poems describe the dry desert regions, and, like \textit{Perunkaṭunķō}, he may also be distinguished by the epithet '\textit{Pālai-Pāṭiya}', but no necessity has been felt to distinguish him as he is the only poet with this name.
In most of his descriptions, Nature is wild and rude, not mild and kind, and is red in tooth and claw. He paints terrible pictures and, in fact, among the poems of his age, his poems abound in such pictures of Nature.

There is not a drop of water in the rocky pools on account of great heat and the rocks are so hot that the rice dropping from the bamboos immediately get parched by their heat.¹ There are no wayfarers and the highwaymen have no means of livelihood and are famished.² The heated rocks split leaving clefts everywhere.³ Migratory birds suffer when they have to cross this part of land even if they fly high in the sky.⁴ The bamboos that can withstand any heat no longer survive and become scorched and the nodes split.⁵ The elephants seek water in vain and in the mountain pools they find only moss which they eagerly eat and try to quench their thirst.⁶ There are corpses on the way from which the kites take

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¹ [Footnote: Aka.]
² [Footnote: Ibid.]
³ [Footnote: Ibid., 55]
⁴ [Footnote: Ibid.]
⁵ [Footnote: Ibid., 91]
⁶ [Footnote: Ibid.]
off the eyes to feed their young ones with. The tiger kills the deer, eats to its content and leaves off the rest for the kites and the eagles. The python devours the male elephant when its mate spends sleepless nights roaring with great sorrow. The poor mammal is always afraid of falling a prey to the hungry tiger.

Along with his description of the arid tracts, he paints the agricultural region in some stanzas with a contrast that is very conspicuous. In one such stanza there is the picture of the elephant in the arid mountain that searches into a rocky pool for some water but only gets the moss and eats it and then rests with its hungry, faint mate. In the same stanza, a buffalo in the agricultural tract eats lotus flowers and when satiated walks towards a bent
jack tree and rests under its dark shade. In another stanza, a tiger is depicted as attacking the deer and killing it and feeding on its flesh. When it leaves the place the kites feast on the remains. The picture given in contrast here is of *marutu* trees grown tall on the banks of a river and mango trees yielding beautiful tender leaves. In contrast to the kites feeding on the flesh, there are cuckoos perching on the blossomed branches of the mango trees and singing melodiously.

Of the fertile mountain scenery, there is nothing in his poems. But the mountains seem to have been observed from a distance and also from very near the bottom. The small and high mountains side by side have attracted his eyes and he draws their picture in artistic words—'kuriyavum netiyavum kuṟu talai maṉanta'.

1. The wild fire

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1. *Aka. 91*
on the mountains resembles the row of lights in
the fishermen’s boats sailing in the sea at nights.¹

The high cliff of a mountain is, in the poet’s imagi-
nation, the head of the mountain piercing and
entering the sky.² There is a curious picture of
the Himalayas, wherein he states that it rises high
like smoke, approaches the sky and there looks
like flame covered with snow.³

The sea is referred to in similes and the des-
criptions are brief.⁴ The tiny spray splashed by
the waves that break against the shore forms a
beautiful scene and is compared to the scene of the
tiny white flowers of the murun kai trees dropping
and whirling with the whirlwind in the arid tract.⁵

The rumour spreading in the village about the love
between the heroine and her lover is said to be as
bright as the full moon rising above the vast sea in
the twilight after sunset.⁶ There are references
to the sea, but no separate description of it.⁷

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¹ Aka. 65
² Ibid. 205
³ Ibid. 265
⁴ Ibid. 1, 15, 201.
⁵ Aka. 1
⁶ Ibid. 201
⁷ Ibid. 65, 201.
Rainfall is also referred to. In two similes there are references to the hail falling with the rain. The white murunikaï flowers blown by the whirlwind drop down like the hail in the fresh showers. When the elephant rubs its back on the trunk of the maräam tree, the latter sheds its white flowers which then resemble the hail falling with the rain.

The sun is described in a few stanzas not in similes but directly in connection with the description of the abnormal heat of the arid mountain tracts. He is said to be burning red like fire and spreading his hot rays to the utter destruction of the earth. His excessive heat causes clefts in the mountains. He that makes the bright day with ultra-violet rays changes the fertile mountain into a desert. In the poet's imagination the sun is the boat to sail the vast sky.

There is a description of early summer called by the poet 'arumpata vēnil'. While referring to
the *pittikam* flower, the poet mentions it as a blossom of winter.¹

Māmūlanār is generally more interested in animal life and incidents than in the beauties there in Nature. Even as regards the descriptions of Nature, there are evidences to prove the poet's keenness of observation of colours and sounds and his interest in noticing the beautiful forms of objects and their portrayal. The forked tender leaf of the black-trunked *yā* tree is bright and beautiful and resembles the dewlap-like part of the domestic cock;² the round and flat foot of the elephant is the drum.³ The white marām flowers drop down like the hail accompanying the cool showers of rain.⁴ When they drop on the hot rocks below, they become parched like the fried grains of rice.⁵

The poet is skilful in drawing word-pictures of an artistically high standard. The tall *iruppai* trees with red tender leaves shed their white flowers resembling cone-like pieces cut out of ivory.⁶ The bears visit in a group like a herd of sheep and feed on those flowers.⁷ In another picture, a tiger

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1. *Mamulan Drupam.*
2. *Mamulan Stalam.*
5. *Mamulan Drupam.*
attacks a male elephant whose loud roar terrifies its mate and makes it run away leaving its young one; after a while the poor female elephant searches for the young one with its trunk raised up and placed on its head,—really and affectionate mother searching for her missing child. Another elephant feeds on the vēnkai leaves and has its trunk raised and placed on its forehead when the trunk looks like a snake that crawls on a big rock. The poet’s sense of forms as well as intensity of imagination clearly prove his artistic sense of appreciation, his intimate knowledge of Nature and his sympathy with the lives of birds and animals.

Marokkattu Nappacalaiyar

To this poet the crocodiles seen at night in the deep moats surrounding the city seem to rush together to seize the shadow of the watchmen falling on the waters when they go round the city with lamps in their hands. The thick forest is as dark as if the night itself sleeps there quietly. The early morning is pictured with its dewfall and the

1.  துணை சும்பதி பார்வைக்குறை தமது
   வேருமையில் பார்வைக்குறை தமது
   துணை சும்பதி பார்வைக்குறை
   தமது.
   —Aka. 347

2. புட்டுவால் பின்னைக் கூர்ந்ததை வழங்கு
   விளையாட்டு வரும் விளையாட்டு
   விளையாட்டு வரும் விளையாட்டு
   விளையாட்டு.
   —Ibid. 349

3. விளையாட்டு விளையாட்டு வரும்
   விளையாட்டு வரும் விளையாட்டு
   விளையாட்டு வரும்
   —Puru. 37

4. விளையாட்டு
   விளையாட்டு
   —Ibid. 126
cock's crow makes men rise up from bed.\(^1\) The river Kāviri is full of water and dashes against both the banks noisily.\(^2\)

Nor does this poet lack acquaintance with the mountains. The parrots gather in groups in the fields on hills and feed upon the ears of *tiṉai* when their cry resembles the melody of the musical instrument called *vayir*.\(^3\)

**Milaip Perun-Kantan**

He is a pastoral poet and depicts an evening of the region with the blossoming *mullai* and the setting sun.\(^4\) In such a setting, the heroine feels that the evening approaches earlier during the period of her lover's separation than it used to do before, and this feeling is expressed in poetic language; she says that the period of the blossoming *mullai* is not the only evening; for persons like herself separated from lovers even the noon is an evening, even the dawn is an evening.

In another stanza, he illustrates the eternal newness of love by comparing it to the luxuriant

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1. சோரூர் வல்லும் சம்பந்தம் பொழுது சம்பந்தம் புராண நூற்றாண்டு.
2. சோரூர் வல்லும் சம்பந்தம் பொழுது சம்பந்தம் புராண நூற்றாண்டு.
3. மோகை மாற்றிய புதுக்கும் மாற்றிய மீனால் மீனால் மீனால் மீனால் பல்கலை பல்கலை பல்கலை பல்கலை பல்கலை பல்கலை.
4. கொஞ்சு வளைந்த வைப்பு பெருந்தோடு வைப்பு வைப்பு வைப்பு வைப்பு வைப்பு வைப்பு வைப்பு வைப்பு வைப்பு வைப்பு 

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\(^1\) Pura. 388

\(^2\) Ibid. 174

\(^3\) Nar. 304

\(^4\) Kuru. 234
and newly grown tender grass in the pastoral region gently rubbed by an aged cow.¹

**Mutattamak Kanniyar**

He is the author of the second poem in Pattupattu called Porunarahruppaṭai. It is a long idyll dealing elaborately with all the regions. The similes therein are apt. They are not far-fetched, nor irrelevant. The pustule formed in the feet of the wayfarers by walking over the sharp-pointed stones in the hot desert are compared to the ripe fruits of the *maral* which is one of the plants of the arid region.² The poor shade of the leaf-less trees in the tract is like the net spread on the ground.³

The skill of the poet in describing various objects aptly and accurately is evinced in the series of epithets in those descriptions.

The forest, the field, the mountain and the seashore are so near to one another that the wild fowl pecks the heap of corn in the agricultural fields, the domestic fowl eats the *tinai* of the hilly region, the monkey descends from the hillside and bathes in the backwater and the crane flies from the backwater and perches on the branch of a tree on the mountain.⁴

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1. Mutattamak Kanniyar

2. Porun. 44, 45.

3. Ibid. 50, 51

4. Ibid. 222-236
One of the most beautiful pictures of the poet is the moonlight-like sand dune on which a peacock spreads its tail and dances to the tune of the humming bees,\(^1\) which resemble the music of the flute.

The poet unfailingly praises the fertility of the Cōla country and, therefore, ends the stanza with a long description of the Kāviri in floods.\(^3\)

**Mutat-tiru Maran**

There are two verses by this poet. One contains a description of an arid mountain with no shade and no food for elephants and with whirlwind blowing and shaking the *ilavu* branches.\(^8\) In the other, a midnight in a mountain region is painted with rainy clouds spreading all over and

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1. *मुम्मत्तिरु मारण* के भाषालिखित अद्वैत, रङ्गभूषण।  

2. *मुम्मत्तिरु मारण*  

3. *मुम्मत्तिरु मारण*  

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Purn. 211-213

—Ibid. 233-248

—Nar. 105
making the atmosphere so dark that the eye cannot penetrate into it. There is an uncommon phrase describing a waterfall and it is very picturesque. He says that the mountain stream rises up and falls down (eluntu vil aruviya malai). In these very few lines he shows himself to be a keen lover and observer of the beauties of Nature.

Mutu Kuttanar

His descriptions are of the forest and the mountain region. In a stanza in Akanānūru he describes a forest wherein the streams are dry and the wayfarers have to quench their thirst by sucking the mire in the wells. The she-elephant treads first and the male follows it and touches with affection its footprints. In early winter, the mullai blossoms everywhere and all the shepherds come to the village with milk and return to the camp with food and wear the mullai buds on their heads.

In the mountain scenery, the pearl-like clear water and the gold-like vēnikai blooms form a con-

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1. முது குன்றனர்
   பெருநாடு விளையாட்டு நூற்றண்ணில்
   தோற்றம் மஞ்சு வருவதாலும்
   —Nar. 228

2. முது குன்றனர்
   சுவையுமாறு முக்கியமாக
   —Ibid.

3. முது குன்றனர்
   பெருநாடு விளையாட்டு
   —Aka. 137

4. முது குன்றனர்
   பெருநாடு விளையாட்டு
   —Ibid.

5. முது குன்றனர்
   பெருநாடு விளையாட்டு
   —Kuru. 221
The bamboo grow tall and seem to pierce and tear the clouds that sail the sky.

There is a brief reference to a desolate evening on the sea coast.

Moci Kiranar

He has not described any scenery as background but has painted two pictures, one of an elephant that starves with great sorrow for its mate that is missing and the other of the nerusci flower in a desolate place which always turns towards the sun. These two are brought in comparisons to explain respectively the great sorrow of the heroine during the period of separation from her lover and her constant love and attachment to him.

Vatama Vannakkan Tamotaran

In one of his verses, there is an interesting picture that describes a male sparrow that gathers fibre-like materials from the scentless sugarcane flowers to build a nest for its pregnant mate to
lay eggs in. This is a picture of sympathy and love.

The other one is of a dark night when the watchmen in the field keep up some fire to scare away the animals entering the field. When the fire becomes extinct a lustrous gem lying somewhere nearby casts its light instead.

Vayilan Tevan

In his description of the north wind he says that it is so chill and mingled with drizzling that the cranes which seek fish in the mire shiver and suffer from it. The cranes are pictured to have red mouth and fine feathers resembling the petals of kavir.

The other description is of an evening in a pastoral region. The mullai buds begin to blossom. The cows return to their calves and the clouds are seen to surround the top of the hill.

Virrurru Muteyinanar

Though there are four descriptions of Nature in his poems, there is nothing peculiar or highly picturesque.

1. நந்தைதல் நந்தைதல் நந்தைதல் நந்தைதல் நந்தைதல்
   நந்தைதல் நந்தைதல் நந்தைதல் நந்தைதல் நந்தைதல்
   நந்தைதல் நந்தைதல் நந்தைதல் நந்தைதல்
   நந்தைதல் நந்தைதல் நந்தைதல் நந்தைதல்
   நந்தைதல் நந்தைதல் நந்தைதல் நந்தைதல்

   -Kuru. 85

2. புாற்று புாற்று புாற்று புாற்று
   புாற்று புாற்று புாற்று புாற்று

   -Pura, 172

3. புாற்று புாற்று புாற்று புாற்று
   புாற்று புாற்று புாற்று

   -Kuru 103
   -Ibid.

4. புாற்று புாற்று புாற்று

   -Ibid.

5. புாற்று புாற்று புாற்று

   -Ibid. 108

The tender mango fruit is said to resemble the parrot.¹ The poet has with minute observation noted the doll-like part of the root of arukai grass.² The wind blows violently and causes the palmyra leaves to drop from the tree and fall in a heap.³

The shining stream flowing with sounds in a narrow path of the mountain is also a picture in his poems; and the divinity of the place is described to be such that even the male monkey that wants to feed its young one with the pulp of the jack fruit shivers and suffers as soon as it touches it.⁴

Venkannanar

There are two poems of this poet, one of which describes the seashore⁵ and the other the mountain scenery.⁶ Both the descriptions are artistic and evince the talent of the poet in noticing and depicting the beauties of Nature.

The picture of the screwpine flower in the grove on the seashore is highly imaginative.⁷ The tree has a rugged trunk and branches spreading like

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1. Aka. 37
2. Ibid. 136
3. Kuru. 372
4. Aka. 288
5. Aka. 130
6. Ibid. 192
7. Ibid. 130
the hair on the head of a demon. The thorny covering petal is said to be keeping watch over the richly fragrant flower which blossoms white, wafting its fragrance and dispelling the fishstink on the seashore. The munītakam on the sand dune has luxuriantly grown buds with red stalks and full of tiny pollen inside.¹ The waves throw off pearls on the shore and these get stuck into the parted hoofs of the horses that run there.³

In the mountain scenery, there are parrots with rainbow-like lines on their necks.⁸ When they go to eat the tinai ears on the fields, the wild fowls turn them out and peck the ears for themselves. The stream flows through the mountain as if searching for something there and finally leaves a lustrous gem near a hamlet which on dark nights casts its light and dispels the darkness in the streets around the hamlet.

¹. മൃഢോകൃഷ്ണം മുന്നുകും പാംകുമാരനു
തേരണം പുജിച്ചു പരാഗിച്ചു അസ്മാതനം
മരം മൂടുവാന്തു പോകുന്നു
സുംഗമ മൂന്നിട്ട് കോല്ലി പോകാൻ
മുംകാരുണികളിലീൻ വനം
എന്നവരിൽ രുമ്പിക്കുന്നവൻ.
---Aka. 130

2. മൃഢോകൃഷ്ണമുന്നുകും
പാംകുമാരനുമുന്നു
നിലയിലും രക്ഷിക്കുന്നു.
---Ibid.

3. മൃഢോകൃഷ്ണ
ഉല്ലണത്തെ അണ്ഡം അണിക്കുന്നു
ഉല്ലണത്തെ പുജിച്ചു പോകാൻ
വേഷണം മൂടുമുന്നു പൊകുന്ന
മുംകാരുണികളിലീൻ വനം
എന്നവരിൽ രുമ്പിക്കുൻ കൊണ്ടു
മരം മൂടുമുന്നു പോകുന്ന
മരം മൂടുന്നു പോകുന്ന
ഉല്ലണത്തെ പുജിച്ചു പോകാൻ
---Ibid. 198
Venputiyar

In only one of his three poems, there is a description of Nature.\(^1\) In the other two, there are simple references to the coastal grove and the screwpine trees.\(^2\) The *kalli* trees is pictured in an arid region dry without rain for months together.\(^3\) It has forked branches and bent growth. The seeds when ripe burst with a sound that scares away the happy pair of pigeons perching on the branches.

The screwpine tree on the sea coast has closely set leaves and bent trunk.\(^4\)

Vellivitiyar

The poet describes all the regions except the pastoral. In the mountain scenery there is a stream full of water mixed with honey.\(^5\) The tiger that fights with the elephant returns wounded and withdraws itself into its den.\(^6\) The poet refers to the incessant roar of the waves on the shore and the rich fragrance of the screwpine flowers scattered by the wind and the pining and heart-

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1. \textit{Kuru. 174}
2. \textit{Ibid. 97}
3. \textit{Ibid. 219}
4. \textit{Kuru. 219}
5. \textit{Aka. 362}
6. \textit{Ibid.}
rendering voice of the *anril* bird that cries from the stem of the palmyra tree.¹

The night-sky is bright with the light of the moon which has a special appeal to the poet.² In three stanzas she describes the moon³ and in one she refers to the numberless stars in the sky in a simile.⁴ The rays of moon-light spread all over the earth look like the garland of pearls worn on one’s chest and like the white stream shining bright on the mountain.⁵ The moon rises in the east and comes up in the bright sky causing the waves in the sea rise and fall with greater sound.⁶ The moonlight spreads in the blue sky like an ocean of milk.⁷ All these descriptions are of the night.

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2. The night-sky is bright with the light of the moon which has a special appeal to the poet. In three stanzas she describes the moon and in one she refers to the numberless stars in the sky in a simile. The rays of moon-light spread all over the earth look like the garland of pearls worn on one’s chest and like the white stream shining bright on the mountain. The moon rises in the east and comes up in the bright sky causing the waves in the sea rise and fall with greater sound. The moonlight spreads in the blue sky like an ocean of milk. All these descriptions are of the night.

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There is an apostrophe to the crane with feathers like the pure folds of washed cloth.\(^1\) It flies to the tank in the heroine’s village and feeds on the pregnant *keliru* fish and returns to the village where the hero resides.

**Vellaikkuti Nakanar**

This poet apostrophizes to the moon.\(^2\) The rays of moonlight appear as if gathered and densely set and resemble milk spread out all over. The heroine addresses the moon, praises it for its nobility and impartiality and requests it to inform her of the whereabouts of her lover.

There is a picture of an impenetrably dark night on a mountain in which the tiger springing from its lair attacks and kills an elephant, drinks its blood and cleans its mouth rubbing it against the trunk of the *vēnkai*.\(^3\)

The *Kāviri* comes in for praise as it makes the sugarcanes grow rich on the fields.

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1. *There is an apostrophe to the crane with feathers like the pure folds of washed cloth.*

2. *This poet apostrophizes to the moon.*

3. *There is a picture of an impenetrably dark night on a mountain in which the tiger springing from its lair attacks and kills an elephant, drinks its blood and cleans its mouth rubbing it against the trunk of the *vēnkai*.*
white sugarcane flowers look like spears grouped in rows and wave merrily in the wind.  

The poet looks at the earth, the oceans and the sky as one whole, and says that the oceans girdle round the earth that has for its canopy the sky where no wind blows.  

**Veri-patiya Kamakkanniyan**

There are brief touches of description of the *kuyiṇci* flowers and the *nocci* leaves. The tigers hiding and cunning movement while seeking the elephant for prey is mentioned in a simile referring to the hero coming to his lady-love, carefully escaping the notice of others.

A battle-field is described where a kite takes off a warrior's garland stained by the blood of his wounds mistaking it for flesh.

The *kuyiṇci* tree is described to have black trunk and soft tender flowers. This is only a
brief reference; there is no detailed description of this tree extant in the literature of this age in spite of the identity of the nomenclature of the flower with the region itself.

B. Poets distinguished by their Pictures of Nature:

Anti Ilan-Kiranar

There are very few verses depicting the evening of twilight and of them one by Ilankiranar is the most interesting.¹ The whole stanza is a picture of the restless state of the heroine in the evening during the absence of the hero. Out of eighteen lines of the stanza, nine portray the evening scenery. Like the ungrateful people deserting the poor and seeking the rich, the bees fly from the blossoms in the mountain pools to those in the branches of trees; the innocent deer look bewildered; the twilight sky is like the melted gold beginning to cool; the clouds of attractive forms spread in the vast sky, the evening bids farewell to the sun causing miserable despair to the lonely heroine. The arresting picture of the twilight herein earned for the poet the distinction ‘Anti Ilankiranar’ (Ilankiranar, the poet of the twilight).

¹ Antu Har, I.117.
Üttypar

He is an unidentified poet with two beautiful word-pictures of mountain scenery and life. His name is derived from the very appropriate verb he has used in both these stanzas to picture the colour of the tender leaves of the acōku tree in one and that of the blood-stained arrow in the other. The phrase is ‘ütty aña’ which means paint-like or looking as if dyed or painted so carefully as to arrive at the right hue.

In both these poems there are references to sounds harsh as well as harmonious. In one, the contrast is between the melodious sound of the stream which is said to move and soften the kūtalām creeper on its way and the loud roaring thunder that falls on the acōku tree. In the other, the heroine and her lady-companion listen to the humming of the bees which sounds like sweet music.

There is another picture in the first stanza, of a swift mountain flood immediately after heavy rain carrying away the young of an elephant, when its mother cries aloud and its father searches for it in the flowing current of water.

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1. Aka. 68

—Ibid. 888
In spite of all such artistic word-paintings, the verb ‘उत्ति’ occurring to describe the colour of the acōku leaves in one and that of a stained arrow in the other has been selected to christen the poet. Neither those leaves nor the arrow forms so important a part in these descriptions, yet the strength of the verb carries weight and the readers are impressed by it. Hence the poet comes to be known as Uṭṭiyār.

Kankul-Vellattar

There is a poem in Kuruntokai whose author is unidentified but is known as Kankul-Vellattar from the phrase ‘kankul vellam’ occurring in the last line. It is the expression of a heroine’s sufferings who anxiously awaits the return of her husband in an evening in early winter. The evening itself is dreadful enough for her and she worries herself as to how to pass those few hours of extreme grief. It is almost like swimming hard through those hours at the risk of her life. Her pining knows no bounds when she thinks that such an evening will however pass on and a more terrible solitary midnight is to follow. The evening is like a river or a lake with banks or bunds and one can swim through it to reach the other side; but in her imagination the night is a vast flood spreading all over space with no bank or bund to be seen on any side; and as such there is no hope for her to escape from it or to survive it. The metaphor of

1. கண்குலூரே வெல்லாடார்
   குருந்தோகை - அய்யார்
   குருந்தோகை ரகுடாங்க
   கண்குலூரே வெல்லாடார்
   குருந்தோகை சோனை அய்யார்

-Kur. 891
picturing the night as a great flood is the very core of the poem and is, therefore, used in remembering the poet who composed it (kañkul-night; vellám-flood).

Kayamanar

It is the arid mountain tracts with the scorching heat of the sun that he mostly depicts. Waterless tanks and rivers, shadeless and leafless trees and hungry and thirsty animals occur everywhere in his poems.

There is room to infer that 'Kayamanār' is not the poet's name and that it is derived from the arresting simile in which the neythal flowers tossed by the waves in the backwater are compared to the eyes of ladies bathing in a tank. Here, the tank (kayam) acquires such an importance in the imagination of the readers that the poet comes to be known as Kayamanār (meaning 'the poet of the tank'). There is also another stanza in which the tank (kayam) occurs in another context to explain the abnormal heat of the summer in the arid tract. There the tank is said to have lost its form and wrecked on account of the excessive heat (kayam kañnarra)

The west wind is described in three stanzas. The wind passes through the bores in the shell of the wood-apple and produces a melody like
that of the flute.¹ When it blows into the empty pools in the rocks, it is heard like the beating of a drum.² The small leaves of the bamboos are tossed hither and thither.³

There is in the poet a balanced development of all the senses, so that nature is portrayed in all its aspects, colour, form, sound, smell, taste and touch. This is indeed a rare gift.

The poet has observed the stars in the sky at dawn fading faintly from view and disappearing.⁴ This he gives in a comparison with the fire-like flowers of the *ilavu* tree that drops its flowers one after another when the wind blows. An elephant gores the *ōmai* tree with its tusk and eats the fibre; when it leaves it, the red inside of the trunk looks like flesh; a kite comes and perches on the *yā* tree to have the red core for its food obviously under the mistaken impression that it is flesh.⁵

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1. வாழும் பொருள் குறும் வாழும் எக்கின்று தான் பண்ணியும் தான் ஏனைய குறும் குறும் சொல்லியும்.

2. முய்யா குறும் வாழும் வாழும் வசனையே வசனையே மேற்கு புரோமா புரோமா புரோமா.

3. பெரும் பாசுவத்துக்கு வாழ்கள் புரோமா புரோமா புரோமா.

4. பெரும் பாசுவத்துக்கு வாழ்கள் புரோமா புரோமா புரோமா புரோமா புரோமா புரோமா.

5. தம்மையென தம்மையென வாழ்கள் பாசுவத்துக்கு வாழ்கள் பாசுவத்துக்கு வாழ்கள் பாசுவத்துக்கு வாழ்கள் பாசுவத்துக்கு வாழ்கள் பாசுவத்துக்கு வாழ்கள்.

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¹-²-³-⁴-⁵-Aka. 216

¹-²-³-⁴-⁵-Ibid. 331

³-Ibid 397

⁴-Ibid. 17

⁵-Aka. 294
The *nocci* leaves are described to be like the feet of the peacock, and this is an evidence of the poet's keen sense of form.¹

There are many noises heard in the arid tracts. The crickets are said to make their tinkling sounds like the bells in a chariot² and the noise of the west wind is also described;³ the male deer calls on its mate to come and eat the *iruppai* flowers fallen on the ground;⁴ a she-elephant hears a tiger roaring with ferocity and runs away in fright;⁵ a male elephant hearkens to the thundering clouds;⁶ the dove perching on the *nocci* tree calls to its mate in a very clear voice and expresses some grief in it⁷; the confused noise of the chirping of the birds on a big banyan tree full of fruits is also referred to in a stanza.⁸

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¹ Nar. 305
² Aka. 145
³ Ibid. 321
⁴ Ibid.
⁵ Kura. 396
⁶ Nar. 395
⁷ Pura. 254
The poet distinguishes different kinds of smell. The pot used for churning curd is said to smell like the wood-apple.\textsuperscript{1}

The bats are said to feed on the neem fruits and, being satiated, fly to the \textit{iruppai} trees seeking the sweeter fruits there.\textsuperscript{2}

There is an apostrophe to the \textit{vayalai} creeper.\textsuperscript{3} The foster-mother addresses the creeper in a grieving mood and feels for the absence of her daughter who used to water it daily but has now eloped with her lover.

The sufferings of the thirsty and hungry elephants are sympathetically portrayed in different ways. Even when the poet treats of empty pools in rocks he is reminded of the sunken eyes of the hungry elephants.\textsuperscript{4} The elephant crack the trunk of the \textit{ōmai} tree with their tusks to feed on the fleshy part of it.\textsuperscript{5} There is no water in the well dug by the cowherds and the thirsty elephants

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1} \textit{Kailai Tamil Nallar \textit{Kural}}. \textsuperscript{—}Nar. 12
\item \textsuperscript{2} \textit{Kailai Tamil Nallar \textit{Kural}}. \textsuperscript{—}Ibid. 279
\item \textsuperscript{3} \textit{Kailai Tamil Nallar \textit{Kural}}. \textsuperscript{—}Aka. 593
\item \textsuperscript{4} \textit{Kailai Tamil Nallar \textit{Kural}}. \textsuperscript{—}Aka. 531
\item \textsuperscript{5} \textit{Kailai Tamil Nallar \textit{Kural}}. \textsuperscript{—}Ibid 397
\end{itemize}
with their young ones search for water and thrust their trunks into it.¹

Kal-poru ciru-nuraiyar

The poet bears the name derived from an arresting simile in his poem² as the original name came to be forgotten.

The heroine's sufferings during the absence of her lover gradually increase day by day, so that she herself loses hope of her survival and thinks that the very grief will end her life in course of time. She expresses this pining away in disappointment in an appropriate simile in which she compares her condition to the foam in a flood which dashes on a rock and gradually becomes less and less and finally disappears altogether. ‘Kal poru ciru nurai’ means the foam dashing on the rock; and this phrase, being the very essence of the simile, came to be used to denote the poet himself.

Kalai-tin-yanaiyar

The original name of the poet as well as the stanza containing the picture that served to distinguish him came to be forgotten leaving the phrase ‘kalai-tiṅ-yāṇai’ (the elephant feeding on the

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¹ Aka. 321
² Kuru. 290
bamboos) in place of his name and a stanza in Puranānūru addressed to the patron Valvilōri. Naccellaiyar

Kākkaipatiniyār

Naccellaiyar is the poet's name and her verse in Kuruntokai earned for her the epithet Kākkaipatiniyār. It is not even an apostrophe to the crow like that of the poet Otal Antaiyār. It is only the expression of the feelings of gratefulness of the lady-companion to a crow. She was wise enough to interpret its cry as foretelling the early return of the hero and thus consoled the heroine who was pining during his absence. This is, of course, based on the belief that a crow's caw always predicts the coming of a guest to the house. It is perhaps to distinguish this poet from another of the same name that this epithet has been selected and affixed to her name.

Kākkaipatiniyār has ten stanzas in Patirruppattu, one of which is a beautiful picture of the seashore.

1. புனர் வருவாய் கொண்டு கொண்டு மாட்டே சிற்றாலே கொண்டு கொண்டு கொண்டு அருவிய தாலை கொண்டு கொண்டு கொண்டு கொண்டு கொண்டு கொண்டு கொண்டு_—Pura. 304

2. பெருங்கள் கொன்று கொண்டு மாட்டே மாட்டே மாட்டே கொண்டு கொண்டு கொண்டு கொண்டு கொண்டு கொண்டு கொண்டு கொண்டு கொண்டு கொண்டு கொண்டு—Kur. 310

3. மாட்டே மாட்டே கொண்டு கொண்டு... மாட்டே உண்மையுடன் வருகிறது—Ain. 691

4. பெருங்கள் உண்மையுடன் வருகிறது... பெருங்கள் உண்மையுடன் வருகிறது... பெருங்கள் உண்மை�ுடன் வருகிறது... பெருங்கள் உண்மையுடன் வருகிறது... பெருங்கள் உண்மையுடன் வருகிறது... பெருங்கள் உண்மையுடன் வருகிறது... —Patirrup. 51
This stanza is named ‘Vaṭu atu nun ayir’ which is the most imaginative and beautiful phrase in it. The wind blows and shakes the whole surface of the sea and causes it to roar like thunder. The crane seeks fish in the ponds and perches on the branches of the nāḷal where the bees have taken refuge among the bunches of flowers. The atumbu creepers grow wild in the shore. The crabs frisk on the sand and the marks created by their limbs are immediately covered up by the sea breeze with the soft sand there. ‘Nun ayir’ denotes the soft sand and ‘vaṭu atu’ means that which falls over and covers the marks of the crabs playing there.

Kavan-Mullaip-Putanar

The name suggests that he is a poet of the pastoral (mullai) region, but many of the poems are on the arid tracts. The remaining poems are on the forest region but they are not as impressive and interesting as those on the arid regions.

The south breeze occurs in one of his descriptions and it is said to shed the marām flowers on the heads of the wayfarers.¹

An original picture of this poet is that of the bees in the desert tract of scorching heat. They seek honey in a bunch of marām flowers but fly away with utter disappointment.²

1. An original picture of this poet is that of the bees in the desert tract of scorching heat. They seek honey in a bunch of marām flowers but fly away with utter disappointment.¹

2. —Aka. 91

3. —Kuru. 91quarter
The Treatment of Nature

The pictures of the animals suffering from thirst and hunger are sympathetic. The faint elephant is unable to move its tusks and has its trunk thrust into its own mouth. The stag runs after the mirage and when disappointed and tired stays and suffers from thirst. The excessive heat of the region is left to be inferred from the fact that even the sprouts of the bamboos are found shrivelled.

There are many similes which prove the poet’s keen observation of Nature. The unripe fruits of *ukā* are said to be like the eyes of the cuckoo, and the ripe fruits of *kumil* like the gold coins of ancient times. The elephant having its trunk thrust into its mouth looks like a hill with a cleft into which a snake enters.

The elephants are pictured to be wise enough to suspect a pit as one dug out by the hunters to catch them though in fact it is a well dug out

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1. *ukā*  
   ![Translation](image1)
   —Aka 391

2. *kumil*  
   ![Translation](image2)
   —Ibid. 241

3.  
   ![Translation](image3)
   —Ibid.

4.  
   ![Translation](image4)
   —Ibid. 293

5.  
   ![Translation](image5)
   —Nar. 274

6. —AL 391
and left unfinished as no water was found in it. The dried leaves over it are thought of by the elephants as having been wantonly used by the hunters to camouflage the pit and to deceive the animals coming that way, and they get angry and fill it up. This the poet must have either known from personal observation or learnt from the reports of others; there is such a sincerity of expression in the description.

The lizard on the *kalli* tree makes its characteristic tickling sound with its bell-like voice and is said to be predicting events to the wayfarers.

**Kuppaik-Koliyar**

The name is derived from the phrase ‘kuppaik-koli’ occurring in the stanza by this poet. It refers to the cocks fighting of their own accord with none to induce them to fight or to stop them from fighting. This is used in comparison. The heroine expresses her feelings about the pitiable state in which she is placed in the absence of her

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1. கோழி கோலியின் நோய் செய்யவும்
   ஆகவே கைசிறா மிகுதியே
   கோலியின் நோய் செய்யவும்
   கோலியின் நோய் செய்யவும்
   கோலியின் நோய் செய்யவும்
   —Aka. 21

2. போன்செய் சோழூரின் நோய்
   போன்செய் சோழூரின் நோய்
   போன்செய் சோழூரின் நோய்
   —Aka. 151

3. கோங்கு கோலியின் ஸ்ரீமா
   சூழூரின் ஸ்ரீமா
   சூழூரின் ஸ்ரீமா
   —Kuru. 805
The Treatment of Nature

lover. Neither can she go to her lover seeking his love, nor does he come to save her from grief. It is, therefore, that she has to suffer alone and end her life, as is the fate of the two cocks fighting themselves on a heap of grain with none to interfere.

The phrase is the very core of the word-picture, and hence it is most appropriate that it has been selected to remember this poet.

Kuriyiraiyar

The poet describes the village boys with whom the elephant baby comes to the village and becomes acquainted with the people there. The young boys are said to have small wrists (kuriyiraiyar) and the originality of this short descriptive touch catches the attention of the readers; therefore the poet has been named 'Kuriyiraiyar' the (the poet of 'kuriyiraiyar', 'small wrist').

Kukaik-Koliyar

In a brief description of the burial ground the poet mentions the sudden and shrill cry of the owl from the hollow recess in an aged tree with many roots spreading wide and piercing deep into the earth and causing clefts therein. The silence of the graveyard seems to be broken only by its hooting. Everything is concentrated on the bird

---Kura. 884

---Pura. 884
which is mentioned as *kūkaik-kōli*. The word 'kūkai' itself is enough and, not content with it, the poet adds the word *kōli* which means a fowl.

The readers are fascinated by this phrase in the word-picture of Nature and therefore they remember the poet by the phrase itself.

**Kottampalavanar**

A dancing girl climbs and dances over a rope skilfully to the accompaniment of musical tunes and leaves the place, when a female monkey with red face full of soft hair like a ripe fig, climbs over it and carefully moves and balances itself.¹ The young boys there witness it and immediately join together and keep time with their hands. 'Koṭtu' is the verb used by the poet to denote the rhythm of their clapping, and readers have distinguished the poet by this verb which is so impressively used in this context of humorous playfulness.

**Kotai-patiya Perumputanar**

As signified by the epithet 'kōtai-pātiya', the poet seems to have been celebrated for his descriptions of the west wind but the stanzas picturing it are now lost to us. The one extant in *Puranāṇūru* has no picturesque description of Nature.²

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¹. *Kottampalan* perumputanar

². *Pura. 259.*
Kovenkaip-perunkatavanar

There is the description of a mountain stream flowing rapidly through rocks and dashing forcibly against the branches of a high vēṇkai tree on a mountain. The tree is full of flowers and stands beside a rock along the course of the stream. The picture is so clear that the readers cannot forget the solitary vēṇkai tree. Hence the epithet kōvēṇkai (the high or predominant vēṇkai tree) is affixed to his name.

Cempulap peyal-nirar

The union of the hero with the heroine is inseparable though both of them belonged to different parentage unknown to each other previously. Love brought them together and made them one. This is explained by means of a comparison. The red ground of the pastoral region is far from the rainy clouds in sky. The rainy season brings them both together through fresh showers and the rainwater so mixes with the soil of the ground that they can no longer be separated. The comparison is well appreciated by the readers who have therefore selected the phrase 'cempulap-peyal-nir' (the rain water in the red soil) as the very life of the picture and used it to remember the poet.

1. கோவேந்கை பேரம்புரண்டை குண்டையனர்
   கோவேந்கை பேரம்புரண்டை குண்டையனர்
   கோவேந்கை பேரம்புரண்டை குண்டையனர்
   கோவேந்கை பேரம்புரண்டை குண்டையனர்

   —Kuru 184

2. கோவேந்கை பேரம்புரண்டை குண்டைய
   கோவேந்கை பேரம்புரண்டை குண்டைய
   கோவேந்கை பேரம்புரண்டை குண்டைய
   கோவேந்கை பேரம்புரண்டை குண்டைய

   கோவேந்கை பேரம்புரண்டை குண்டைய

   —Kuru. 40
Tumpi-Cer-Kiranar

The epithet 'tumpi cēr' to the name of the poet refers to the bee (tumbi) and there are two apostrophes of the poet in which the heroine addresses the bees and expresses to them her feelings of suffering in the absence of her lover.

The poet has a partiality for various kinds of fish. His descriptive touches of their forms are in the epithets given to them: the āral fish with the spindle-like nose (katir mukku āral) hide themselves in the low depths of water, and the vālai fish with the rotund pectoral fins (kanaikkōṭṭu vālai) frisk in the surface of water; the tortoise like the drum called tāṭāri in shape move and glitter here and there when the fishermen cast their nets. They catch in abundance the pregnant varāl fish which are like the palmyra sprouts (the unexpanded tender
leaves) and the bright kayal fish which look like spears.\(^1\)

The poet mentions both the sun and the moon in similes. The stream appearing bright and white on the high mountain is compared to the rising moon seen on the vast ocean.\(^2\) The blue colour of the mountains as well as of the ocean adds to the effect of the comparison. The sun is referred to when the heroine says that her life depends on the affection of her lover.\(^3\) She says that her shoulders become beautiful or pale in accordance with the presence or absence of her lover and that they are like the neruṇci flowers that direct themselves towards the sun and change according to its rising and setting. The hero is thus compared to the sun and is said to affect the life of the heroine just as the sun affects that of the neruṇci flowers.

**Tey-purip-palan—kayirrinar**

The hero pining for the separation of his sweetheart reflects on his own state and feels that his body is so very emaciated with grief that in no time his life would become extinct. He compares his body to an old rope with strands worn out

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1.  தேருண்டுருள் கிளைத்துண்டு�

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2.  பருருண்டுறி பக்குறி ந்றிஞ்சா

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3.  —Ibid.
which is caught on each side by an elephant.¹ The elephants are strong enough and they play with this rope which may at any moment give way. The readers are impressed by the state of the rope described by the poet and the analogy instituted; and although they have forgotten his name, they choose to remember him by the phrase referring to the rope: ‘ṭēy purip palaṅ kayiru’ is the old rope with worn-out strands, and ‘Ṭēy purip palaṅ kayirrinar’ is the poet of that phrase.

Netuven-nilavinar

The poet, whose proper name has been forgotten, is now known to us through the phrase ‘netuven-nilāvu’ (the big white moon) in his poem.² It is an apostrophe to the moon, and hence this phrase seems very appropriate to denote the poet.

The lady-companion addresses the moon and states that it is not favourable to the hero’s coming

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1. ¹pākkāppu tāvatāl akkāppu
   tēy purip palaṅ kayiru
   ṭēy purip palaṅ kayirrinar
   tēy purip palaṅ kayirru

2. ²Netuven-nilavinar
   netuven-nilavu
   netuven-nilavu
   netuven-nilavu
   netuven-nilavu

—Nar. 284

—Kuru 47
to her at night, since it is so bright that even the rock whereon the வென்காய flowers have fallen and spread appears bright and clear and looks like a tiger's cub, and may, in her opinion, frighten him when he comes that way.

Neytal Karkkiyar
Neytal Cayttuytta Avur Kilar
Neytal Tattanar

These are three poets with the epithet 'neytal'. Of them Kārkkīyār and Ṭattanār have described the nēyal or the maritime region and therefore deserve the connotation Neytal Kārkkīyār and Neytal Ṭattanār respectively. The former has two poems with a short description of the backwater and the soft moist breeze at nights in one poem1 and with only a simple reference to the sea coast in the other;2 the latter, Neytal Ṭattanār, describes the north wind blowing in the agricultural tract in one poem3 and pictures the sea coast with its heaps of milk-like white sand and with the fragrance of the punnai and the screw pine flowers in the coastal village in another poem:4 he has also a stanza on

1. உண்டாய் பெண்கள் கொண்டு மற்றும் கத்தியம்
பென்றுறி குறித்து பண்டனத்தில் மூளை
பென் எல்லாத்தானும் அல்ல.

—Kuru. 55

2. வருத்தி வைத்தியின்
அனைத்துக் கத்தியம் இல்லையே வைத்தியா.

—Ibid, 212

3. புல்வாந் புரூப்பும் பெற்றுப் பூர்
பெருந்திணை பெருந்திணை நூறுகள்
நதைய வாயுகள் வேலனை

—Aka. 243

4. புத்தாய் பயிரும் பூர்வும் வானை...
பெருந்திணை பெருந்திணை நூறு
பெருந்திணை நூறுகள் அழகு.

—Nar. 49
the aspect of love of the maritime region. The poet Avūr Kīlār has not a single reference to the sea coast or the sea and the significance of the epithet to his name is not known. His poems on the maritime region or the romance conventionally ascribed to it might have been lost; or, he might have belonged to a village called ‘neytal.’ His stanza in Akanānūru has pictures of the bears damaging the anthill and seeking their food in it, of the tiger that roars after killing an elephant to feed its hungry mate and of the herd of deer that make their characteristic cry in the mountain slope with pepper creepers.

Palaik Kautamanar

He is the author of the third ten of Patirṟupperpattu and all his poems are in praise of the Cēra king, Palyānaic-celkelu-kuttaṅvaṇ. He, is therefore, full of appreciation of the value of the fertile lands of the Cēra king, and in contrast pictures the
devastated lands of his opponents which are now in a desert-like state but were, before his raid, equally fertile and valuable.

The epithet ‘pālai’ to his name means “the arid desert tract” but the poet does not seem to have specialised in depicting artistically that region. No doubt he describes that region but his descriptions are not so exhaustive or full as to make him deserve the epithet. On the other hand he is equally interested in painting the agricultural region. Therefore it may be said that he might have been the author of many other poems describing more artistically the desert region which are now lost to us.

The phrases ‘tatainta kāṇci’\(^1\) (the kāṇci tree with branches in a damaged state), cirčāl velli\(^2\) (the Venus of great fame), kāṇ unaṅku kaṭu nerī\(^3\) (the terrible path of the arid forest), kāṭur kaṭu nerī\(^4\) (the wild path of forest-like nerunci), toṭarnta kuvalāi\(^5\) (the kuvalāi flowers grown thickly and in continuity) and uruttu varu malir nirai (the flood that comes with force and ferocity) are descriptive touches of nature and form the most arrest-
ing part of his poems. Hence it is appropriate that these poems are named by the phrases.

The *neruṇci* herbs grow so wildly in the deserted place of the enemies that the poet prefers to call it the forest of *neruṇci.*¹ The flood of red muddy water is, in the imagination of the poet, coming fast and ferociously wearing a garland of leaves gathered on the way.²

There is a brief description of the sea coast also in the last stanza.³

**Palai-patiya Perunkatunko**

In the case of this poet, the epithet Пālaipāṭiya (he who has sung of the arid desert tract) is quite appropriate. Most of his poems in the anthologies contain descriptions of this region, and though some do not refer to this, they depict the early summer (*ilavenil*) which is the season of this region according to the poetic convention.

His poems are full of descriptions of flowers of various colours and different fragrances viz., murukku, kōṅku, atiral, pātiri, marām⁴ *ilavu*,⁵

2. Ibid 28
3. *GTTvta* 26.²
4. *GTTvta* 30
5. *GTTvta* 99
6. *GTTvta* 185
iruppai, 1 vetchi, 2 kuravu 3 kalavu, and pitavu, 4. He is sensitive to colours, fragrances and forms, as revealed from these descriptions.

His sense of form is especially of a highly developed type. The crystal-like nelli fruits are said to drop down on the rocks below like the dice heaped upon it; 5 in the desert tract, an elephant goes in search of water and its foot-prints are seen in the wet ground adjoining the wells dug up by the shepherds: on the same way a tiger passes by leaving its foot-prints on those of the elephant, thus making them appear like the marks of the fingers beating the central part of the drum called ‘mulavu;’ this part of the drum is compared to the elephant’s foot-prints and the finger marks to that of the tiger; 6 the elephant’s foot-prints in such places are also said to

1. மேற்கால என்ற சிற்கின் வேப்பம் மறுப்பது நல்லகை நீர்கை வாசு—Aka. 207
2. கிருஷ்ணனின் வெற்றிகள் நல்லகை வாசு—Kuru. 209
3. பூனையின் அம்மனுக்கு வரும்பனை நல்லகை நீர்கை வாசு—Nar. 2: 4
4. கிருஷ்ணனின் கண்ணல் அழுத்தம் பியுத்தின் அவசரம் நீர்கை வாசு—Ibid. 256
5. சுந்தரத் குண பதவுரு சுந்தரத் குண பதவுரு—Aka. 5
6. மேற்கால என்ற சிற்கின் வேப்பம் மறுப்பது நல்லகை நீர்கை வாசு—Ibid. 155
look like the garden-beds of the sugarcane field; the snake suffering and fainting in the arid tract is like the lengthy money-bag emptied of its contents; the *iruppai* buds are compared to the feet of the wild cat; the unripe fruit of the *murukku* resembles the bent tusk of the wild bear.

The poet has an equally well cultivated sense of sound and this gift has enabled him to observe minute sounds and depict them in comparisons. In the branch of a *kalli* tree in a desert tract the lizard calls to its mate with its characteristic tickles which are compared to the sound of the people sharpening their arrows on the edges of their nails. The bamboo rice dropping on the very hot rocks of the tract parches immediately with a sound like that of the snapping of the finger nail. Besides such minute sounds, the calls of the deer and the crow

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1. தோய்கொண்டு நீங்க அன்னு
   பூமிக்கில் நோக்கும் சோகம்
   —Kuru. 262
2. பாலர்
   லிங்கை வார்த்தை விளக்கால்
   பூமியில் பூர்த்தம்
   —Aka. 313
3. அருள் என அது சீரமும் விளம்பம்
   —Ibid. 267
4. வேண்டு
   வாழ்கின்ற கையில் பக்திகை வேலைக்கு
   வெளியில் பெருமை விளக்கம்
   —Ibid. 223
5. குறார்
   புரயினாம் பல்ல பொருத்த வார்த்தை
   தொன்றுகிறது பட்டால் வேலை
   வெளியில் மேல் வலியுறு வேலை
   முண்டத் பதி மிகம்
   —Kuru. 16
6. சத்தியம் கோந்தை சண்டைப்பட்ட மறு
   கோட்டுள் பதிலை விளக்கத்து பராமரிக்கு
   —Aka. 267
7. சூழ்த் தோல்லை ஞானவத்து விளக்கால்
   கோலங்கள் கொண்டு செல்லிக்
   பெரும் அளவில் வண்டையைக் கொண்டு
   —Ibid. 313
8. குடும்பங்கள் உறவகு குண்டிய தோண்
   விளக்கத்து பெரும் முறை.
are also described. The cuckoo's call and the cry of its mate in reply are heard in the early summer. The poet attaches a significance to the cuckoo's note that the bird bids the lovers unite. The roar of a female elephant when its mate takes off its trunk and walks off in a different path is described as raising echoes in the mountain. The hard breath of a fainted elephant suffering from thirst and raising its trunk high mistaking a big spider's web for a rainy cloud, is compared to the sound of the horn called 'tūmpu'. The poet has an accurate knowledge of the habits and adaptations of the deer, the cennāy and other animals of this region, but he is unique in his descriptions of the elephants and their ways of life. There are eleven such descriptions full of artistic skill and human
interest. All these are utilised by the poet in bringing to the imagination of the readers the horrors of the region as well as the feelings of the heroine separated from her lover who is on a journey through such a tract.

Even the dried leaf, the withered creeper and the faded tender leaf are so depicted as to suggest to the hero the helpless state of his mate, in case he deserts her.

The poet, besides describing the early summer in detail, has, in one stanza, touched upon the dewy season and the north wind accompanying it. There are also descriptive touches of the early

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1. Aka. 111, 155; Kali., 7, 12, 13, 21, 25; Kuru, 37. 262; Nar 208, 318.
2. — Kali. 3
3. Ibid. 26. 27, 28, 32, 33, 34. 35, 36; Nar. 118. 224.
4. — Kali. 33
winter¹ and the west wind.² Yet there is no doubt that he is interested in depicting only one season viz., the early summer called 'ilavēnil.' His love for the season is evident from the affectionate terms with which he mentions it. He calls it inpa vēnil³ (the pleasant summer), mutirā vēnil⁴ (the young summer) and kulavi vēnil⁵ (the infant summer). The number of flowers he mentions with appropriate epithets in describing this season is amazing.⁶ In the stanzas in Kalittokai, the descriptions are exhaustive, yet, very interesting. The peculiar form of the 'kali' metre, no doubt, enables the author to indulge in such lengthy and elaborate descriptions, but it is his personal enjoyment of the season and powers of observation of Nature that make his poems so interesting and artistic.

One cannot pass without noticing his characteristic similes. He is one of the poets who depict the changes observed in the objects of Nature to illustrate the ethical and cultural ideas in human life. It is a wonder that the arid tract is full of pictures attractive to his eyes and enables him to draw lessons

¹. Nār. 256  
². Aka. 267  
³. Nār. 224  
⁴. Nār. 337  
⁵. Kāli. 36  
⁶. Aka. 99, Kāli. 26, 27, 28, 32, 33, 34, 35; Nār. 48, 118, 224
from them. He uses the strong verb ‘tōruru’ (to appear like) in five of his comparisons referring to this region.¹ The kōńku flowers of the forest region seen at a distance appear like the stars in the sky at dawn.² The desert-like forest with the wild wind scattering the red flowers of the murukku trees appears like elephants emitting fire.³ Two adjoining hills, one high and the other of a little less height, appear like a male elephant and a female elephant standing close to each other.⁴ These are all comparisons born of the imagination and recollection of the poet with an unerring eye and artistic taste.

Marutam-Patiya Ilankatunko
(Ilankatunko, the poet of Marutam)

As denoted by the epithet in his name, the poet has some attraction for the agricultural region. Of his three poems, one in Narrinai deals completely with the love-aspect of the region without any reference to its background, the fields or the tanks or the birds or the animals;⁵ but the other two elaborately deal with it.⁶

¹ Aku. 90. 111, 155. 223. Nar. 48.
² Mar. 48
³ Nar. 48
⁴ Aku. 223
⁵ Ibid. 90
⁶ Aka. 96. 176.
In one of them, the poet depicts a tank in which the shrimp is said to taste the water of a washed-out wine cask and on account of its stimulation leap like a bow that rebounds when its string snaps.\(^1\) On the banks there are the rattan creepers with thorny points on their stems like the edges of a saw.\(^2\) When the north wind blows, an \textit{ampal} leaf sticks to the thorny stem and rises up and falls down resembling the nozzles of the bellows in a smithy.

In the other picture, there are blossomed lotuses like smiling faces, with buds like sharp-pointed spears, leaves like the ears of elephants, rounded tubular stems like bamboo sticks and mature roots that enter deep into the ground causing clefts therein.\(^3\) The crab with bulging eyes resembling the neem buds fears the white crane seeking prey and

\(^1\) Aka. 98
\(^2\) Ibid.
\(^3\) Aka. 170
runs away to its mud-hole full of water through the pakanraï creepers in the miry field making its marks therein.

The poet is interested in depicting various colours, forms and movements.

Marutan Ilanakanar

The epithet Marutañ in the poet’s name leads one to doubt whether he is a poet of the ‘marutam’ or agricultural region like Marutam-Pâtiya Ilanarkatunko. The epithet in the latter’s name is Marutam-Pâtiya (one who has sung of the agricultural region) and is like ‘Palai-pâtiya’, the epithet in the name of Pâlai-pâtiya Peruṅkaṭunkō. Peruṅkaṭunkō and Ilanarkatunkō are, no doubt, poets of ‘Palai’ and ‘Marutam’ as is clear from the poems extant. But it is not so in the case of the poet under discussion. Here the epithet is not ‘Marutam-Pâtiya’ but ‘Marutañ’; Marutañ is familiar in the nomenclature of the Sangam age and there are three poets bearing this proper name in Sangam literature, viz., Kuṟunuṭi Marutanār, Maturaip-Peru-Marutanār and Māṅkuti Marutanār. Here Marutañ seems to have been the name of the poet’s father and prefixed to his own name Ilanākaṇar as in the case of the poets Korraṇār, Tevaṇār and Tittanār who had the names of their fathers prefixed to their own. Any how Ilanākaṇar is a poet traditionally celebrated for his descriptions of the ‘marutam’ region and its aspect of love.

There are many descriptions of the pastoral region in his stanzas. The konraï and other
flowers, the peacocks and other birds, the deer and other animals play their part. The fresh showers are dealt with. Of all these the most fascinating is the picture of the grass putting forth its tiny tender sprouts after showers, and the cochineal insects spreading amidst them like soft and small pieces of coloured cotton spread over the ground. In another picture, the mullai

1. The treatment of nature flowers, 1 the peacocks and other birds, 2 the deer and other animals play their part. The fresh showers are dealt with. 4 Of all these the most fascinating is the picture of the grass putting forth its tiny tender sprouts after showers, and the cochineal insects spreading amidst them like soft and small pieces of coloured cotton spread over the ground. 5 In another picture, the mullai

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1. Nar. 302
2. Aka. 34
3. Ibid. 184
4. Aka. 358
5. Nar. 21
6. Aka. 34
7. Ibid. 104
8. Ibid. 184
9. Ibid. 283
10. Ibid. 312
11. Nar. 21
12. Aka. 283
creepers on the short branches of the *kalli* with small thorns shed their blossoms on the water in the pool below; a stag with twisted horns comes there with its spotted hind to drink water and finding the *mullai* flowers covering the water, breathes hard so that they go apart and then drinks the clear water.\(^1\) In a village in the pastoral region, a young goat is depicted with its empty stomach like the empty *avarai* pod (only the covering outside) and with its long ears bent down;\(^2\) it nibbles the tender fork-like leaves of the *ar* in the village common.

In the descriptions of the arid tract, there is a picture of blood and horror; a kite is depicted to be disembowelling the intestines of the warriors fallen dead in a battle.\(^3\) Another kite plucks out the eye from a dead body and takes to its young ones in the nest in the topmost branch of a tall *yā* tree and drops it into the mouth of its young one but it slips and falls down; it proves a windfall to a

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1. வெழியுடன் நாடு ஏற்ப கல்லி

2. வெழியுடன் நாடு எல்லைத் தோற்றம்

3. வெழியுடன் நாடு ஏற்ப கல்லி

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\(^1\) Ibid. 184

\(^2\) Ibid. 104

\(^3\) Ibid. 77
hungry jackal below. The bird's beak is red with blood, its white neck is spotted with dots, and the red ears seem as if decorated. The partridge and the wild fowl are also described. A lizard is on the tombstone on the way and there makes the wayfarers pause a while on hearing its tickling sound. The yā trees are depicted to cast very poor shade and even this little shade is sought by the wayfarers on hot summer days.
In the stanzas in Kalittokai, there are picturesque descriptions of the bees, the swan, the paddy ears and the flowers like the āmpal and the lotus.

In a simile he brings in the scene of the sun rising above the sea but only mentions it as a plain fact with no digression. In a stanza in Kalittokai, the sun is depicted to sail through the sky. He describes the waves dashing against the shore and washing off the house-like drawings of the young girls playing there and compares these white-headed waves to the grey-haired elders. A male crab notices a fruit falling down from a naval tree, seizes it with its claws, crushes it out of shape and carries it to its mate in the hole among the screwpine roots.

1. "Spaih u*ifu*ir wtuitO <_
2. jfraorri g&r ftssrfv *>u.u Qumu.Qtufr^ (3lo *
3. Ibid. 78.
4. Ibid. 72.
5. Ibid. 71, 72, 73, 74, 79.
6. Nar. 283
7. Kali. 71
8. Aka. 90
9. Ibid. 880
The north wind, the dewy season, the early summer and the midnight are described in his poems, and there is nothing characteristic of this poet in such descriptions.

The poet evinces less interest in describing sounds and smells than in describing colours and forms. The elephants and the wild fowls are described without any reference to their sounds. The april bird utters its cry at midnight. The cuckoo and the peacock make their melodies. The partridge calls to its mate.

The lotus and the ämpal are described simply without any epithets as to their fragrance. The pastoral region is said to smell fragrant with its flowers like the pitavu. The best instance of the poet’s description of smell is in the picture in which the cranes eat fish and come and perch on

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1. Aka. 255.
2. Ibid. 269; Kali. 71.
4. "..."
5. Ibid.
6. "..."
7. "..."
8. "..."
10. "..."
the branches of the jack tree where the monkeys are thrown into a fit of sneezing on account of the stink of fish.\footnote{1}

But, he is highly artistic and very elaborate in the descriptions of colours and forms. The blue karuvilai flowers and the white pakanrai blossoms are said to form an artistic contrast in colours.\footnote{2} The anril’s head is red like fire.\footnote{3} The many tiny spots on the feathers of the wild fowl appear as if milk is sprinkled on melted ghee.\footnote{4} The young ones of the wild cat with soft white hair like the flowers of the wool plant called pūlai, gather round their mother and look like stars surrounding the moon.\footnote{5}

An elephant kicks the tombstone and has its nail broken; the broken nail, the poet says, is like the integument on the top of the palmyra fruit.\footnote{6} A block of black rock with no rain to wash off the dust over it looks like an elephant smeared with...
mud.\(^1\) The young boys sitting over the hairy back of a buffalo resemble the monkeys on a huge block of stone.\(^2\) The twisted horns of the stag appear like the forked stick borne on the shoulders of a hunter.\(^3\) The bent beak of the *aneol* bird is like a shrimp.\(^4\)

This aspect is more evident from some of the comparisons in Kalittokai. The lotus flower is compared to the face of a beautiful lady and the *pakanrai* blossom just approaching it, to the white vessel from which she drinks honey.\(^5\) The paddy ear bending and falling upon the petals of the lotus flower is compared to the ornament called ‘vayantakam’ worn on the forehead of a dancing girl.\(^6\) A tender mango fruit drops down from the tree on the lotus bud adjacent to an *ampal* flower and makes it blossom, and this scene is compared

1. முட்டைச்சிலை பெற்று இருந்து முளையுடன் காலையுடன் என்றும்
   —Kuru. 279

2. மகன்கரும் பொருளில் இணைந்து என்றும்
   —Aka. 206

3. புத்தாண்டு பெண்கள் வந்து முடியுடன் பெண்களே
   —Ibid, 34

4. வாய்ந்த எண்ணை செருந்து என்றும்
   —Kuru. 160

5. புத்தாண்டு பெண்கள் வந்து முடியுடன்
   —Kali. 73

6. புத்தாண்டு பெண்கள் வந்து முடியுடன் பெண்களே
   —Kali. 79
to a lady trying to please her angry parrot bringing to it a white cup full of milk; the lotus is the lady's face, the āmpal flower the cup with milk, and the tender mango fruit the parrot. Such comparisons make it clear that the poet has high artistic imaginations of forms as well as of colours.

Mineri - tuntilar

'Minēри tūnči!' is a phrase in a description in his poem in Kuruntokii and means the fishing rod. There is a mountain scenery in which the bamboo bent by the trunk of the elephant rises soon as the elephant hears the noise of the stone pelted from the sling aiming at it and runs away leaving the bamboo. There the poet compares the sudden rise of the bent bamboo to the fishing rod that rises up as soon as the fish is caught. The phrase is so exciting and aids the picturing of the scene; the poet is, therefore, named after it.

Vitta-kutiraiyar

While describing the tall bamboos soaring high towards the sky, the poet compares them to the horse seen leaping at a gallop with great speed.
which is denoted by the phrase ‘vīṭa kutirai’. The poet is known by this phrase which makes the comparison effective and aids in picturing the bamboos.

Vilikkat-Petaip-Perun-Kannanar

In a description of the beginning of the early winter in a pastoral region, the poet mentions the blooms of the season, pitavu, talavu, konrai, kāyā, etc., and portrays a stag calling its mate which has run away in panic along with its young one. While referring to the young deer, the poet uses a phrase ‘vīlikkaṭ ātai’ (the innocent creature gazing with wide-open eyes) which aptly applies to it. The poet Penānkanānar is, therefore distinguished by this phrase added to his proper name.
Part II
THE EARTH

According to Tamil literature, all land is divided into four regions, the mountainous, the pastoral, the agricultural and the maritime, and therefore called 'i.anilam' or the land of four kinds.\(^1\) The arid tract is only of the mountains and the forests that have become dry and lost their fertility, as explained by I\(\mu\hoo\hoo\hoo\)k\(\hoo\hoo\hoo\hoo\)vatika\(\hoo\hoo\).\(^2\) It is always depicted as such in the literary works of the Sangam age.

Besides classifying the earth into such divisions and describing them separately, the idea of the earth as a whole has been conceived and referred to briefly. The earth is pictured as surrounded—clothed in the poets’ imaginative language—by the sea\(^3\) and covered and adorned by the canopy of the

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\(^1\) Tol, Por. 5

\(^2\) Cilappatikaram, Katukankatai. 64-66

\(^3\) Perumpau. 409-410
—Pura. 8
—Nar. 130
blue sky above\(^1\) and illuminated by the sun and the moon moving round daily.\(^2\) Even Tolkāppiyānār prefers to use phrases like 'paṭu tirai vaiyam'\(^3\) (the earth surrounded by the sea of waves).

**The mountainous region**

In Tamilnad, the mountain ranges are never out of sight and it is the mountain scenery which many of the poets paint with special interest. Many of the mountains are mentioned by name, especially when the context permits such localisation, e.g., the Himalayas,\(^4\) the Kolli,\(^5\) the Naviram,\(^6\) the hills of Mullūr,\(^7\) the Potiyil,\(^8\) the Parāmpu,\(^9\) the Vēṇkaṭam\(^10\) and the Paraṅkunram.\(^11\) Though there are no descriptions of any panoramas from moun-

\(^1\) Porumpan \(\text{Pura} 35\)

\(^2\) -Purumpan. 17-18

\(^3\) Tol. Per. 2

\(^4\) Malai 78-9

\(^5\) -Pura. 126

\(^6\) -Ibid. 128

\(^7\) -Ibid. 108

\(^8\) -Pura. 380
tain tops, the interesting pictures of the poets like Kapilar must induce one to agree with Dr. Johnson that no man is qualified to be a poet who has never seen a mountain.

The clouds reaching the summits of the hills are described by various phrases. They are said to crawl over the cliffs,¹ to play on the heights² or to rest on their sides and slopes ³ The cliffs are depicted to be adorned with white clouds that look like the *avarai* blooms⁴ and the carded cotton.⁵ They are so high that they seem to check the swift course of the cloud,⁶ and the bamboos grown high in the mountains seem to pierce into and tear the passing clouds.⁷

The bright waterfalls in the hills appear to the poet's eye like the flags on the backs of the royal elephants.⁸ Their sound while rushing down the

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1. கவிஞையான சுருங்க செலுத்தும் வெள்ளைகள். - Patirrup. 73
   வெள்ளைகள் தூயவும் வரையும் வெள்ளைகள். - Nar. 353

2. மலர்சுட்டு வரை வரைதிருத்து விழுவை. - Aka. 47

3. வாயிலையில் விளையும் வெள்ளைகள். - Pura. 131

4. அவரையான வெள்ளைகள் வந்திருக்கும் வெள்ளைகள்
   வந்திருக்கும் வெள்ளைகள். - Ain. 209

5. வந்திருக்கும் வெள்ளைகள் வந்திருக்கும் வெள்ளைகள்
   வந்திருக்கும் வெள்ளைகள். - Nar. 353

6. வந்திருக்கும் வெள்ளைகள் வந்திருக்கும் வெள்ளைகள்.
   - Pura. 157

7. வந்திருக்கும் வெள்ளைகள்
   வந்திருக்கும் வெள்ளைகள் வந்திருக்கும் வெள்ளைகள்.
   - Nar. 28

8. வந்திருக்கும் வெள்ளைகள் வந்திருக்கும் வெள்ளைகள்
   வந்திருக்கும் வெள்ளைகள். - Aka 162

லாரை
   மலர்வீடுச் சுருங்க விழுவை. - Malai 582
rocks is like that of the big drum called ‘muracu’. The mountain with white streams flowing from the top seems as if adorned with white ornaments. It also resembles the dark sea with the white moon rising above it.

There are many similes comparing the mountain to an elephant. It is most appropriate when the waterfall on the mountain is compared to the must of the rutlish elephant. The pathways on a hill seen at a distance appear like the ropes on an elephant’s back. A hill adjoining a smaller one resembles a male elephant standing by the side of its mate. One with the Königu trees of golden blooms is compared to an elephant adorned with gold ornaments.

On dark rainy nights, the frequent flashes of lightning seen above the mountain appear, in the imagination of the poet, as though the mountain

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1. மூறியோட் செல்வது இயற்கை செல்வது
   — Patirrump 73

2. தேன் காண்பகுதியில்
   — Akar. 378

3. கத்தியுடன் கால்நடை வானூறிகளாக
   — Kurun. 315

4. மூர்த்த வெள்ளை செல்வாய் பல்லான் வானூறிகளுடன்
   — Akar. 205

5. அவியස்
   — Ibid. 28

6. பியூனூல் வானூறிகளுடன்
   — Ibid. 99

7. வங்கை வெள்ளை செல்வாய் வானூறிகளுடன்
   — Kal. 42
winks.¹ When darkness slowly sets in and covers the mountain, it appears like a ship sinking in the sea and finally disappearing.³

The height of the mountain cliff has not escaped the poet's keen observation. It has been described in various phrases. The cliff is said to touch the sky or penetrate into it. Vān idERY,² vān ura nivanta,⁴ viṇ toṭa nivanta⁶ and vān puku talaiya⁶ are such descriptions. Without exaggeration they are remarkable for their simplicity and directness.

There are two idylls in Pattuppāṭṭu with lengthy accounts chiefly of the mountain region, viz., Kuriṇzippāṭṭu and Malaiṭaṭukatām. Besides these, there are detailed descriptions in MaturaiKKānC and in the other idylls of the same anthology. There is an apostrophe by Kapilar to the Parampu hill of the great patron Pān.⁷

In Malaiṭaṭukatām, there is a long elaborate description of the various sounds heard in the

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1. vān ura nivanta
2. vān idery
3. viṇ toṭa nivanta
4. vān puku talaiya
5. —Nar 112
6. —Kuru 240
7. —Pura 399
8. —Nar. 53
9. —Kuru 262
10. —Aka. 301
11. —Pura 113
fertile mountain region and it extends to more than fifty lines.\(^1\)

Everything dark, huge and majestic suggests to the poets comparisons with the elephant, the greatest mammal of the hills. The blocks of rocks in the hills are to the poet like the sleeping she-elephants;\(^2\) in the long absence of rain, the rugged rocks covered with mud are like the elephants covered with dust all over the body;\(^3\) when found clean after showers, they resemble the elephants washed clean.\(^4\) The horizontal and the vertical rocks are discriminated. In poetic language, some rocks appear as if laid down and some as if planted erect.\(^5\)

The small pools in the hills are called ‘cunai’ in Tamil and are very familiar in literature. They are said to preserve water from the fresh showers of early winter so as to be useful for the animals to drink throughout the year.\(^6\) The narrow-

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1. Malai. 204-48
2. Aka. 2:6
3. Kali. 108
4. Kuru. 270
5. Ibid. 13
6. Malai. 14-16
7. Aka. 26:4
8. Aka. 36:4
mouthed pool is the beautiful vessel of honey,\(^1\) or the tender palmyra fruit cut open,\(^2\) or the drum-head;\(^3\) the very small pools are the tiny holes of the ants;\(^4\) the water in these pools is crystal-clear.\(^6\)

The mountain streams are pictured in many stanzas. The phrases *avvellaruvi,\(^6\) tuvellaruvi,\(^7\) vayaŋkuvellaruvi,\(^8\) olirilaŋkaruvi,\(^9\) vālilaŋkaruvi,\(^10\) vittafiraruvi,\(^11\) etc., denote the pure whiteness and bright appearance of the mountain streams. The rise and fall of the stream are pictured by the phrase ‘eluntu vil aruvi’.\(^12\)

The mountain stream is compared to a bright white cloth,\(^13\) a sea-wave,\(^14\) the white flag raised

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1. The mouthed pool.
2. The tender palmyra fruit.
3. The drum-head.
4. The tiny holes of the ants.
5. The crystal-clear water.
6. The phrases *avvellaruvi, tuvellaruvi, vayaŋkuvellaruvi, olirilaŋkaruvi, vālilaŋkaruvi, vittafiraruvi*.
7. The pure white appearance of the mountain streams.
8. The rise and fall of the stream.
9. The mountain stream compared to a bright white cloth.
10. The mountain stream compared to a sea-wave.
11. The mountain stream compared to the white flag raised.

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\(^1\) Ku. 193
\(^2\) Kali. 178
\(^3\) Kur. 112
\(^4\) Kurinoip. 57
\(^5\) Patitrup. 78
\(^6\) Kurinoip. 55
\(^7\) Kuru. 235
\(^8\) Aka. 202
\(^9\) Perumpin. 500
\(^10\) Aka. 278
\(^11\) Ibid. 288
\(^12\) Nar. 228
\(^13\) Kurinoip. 55
\(^14\) Nar. 17
The Earth

on the back of an elephant, the skin sloughed off by a serpent and the moon rising in the blue sea.

The tune of the flowing streams has been noted in many stanzas. The sound of the war-drum or of the running chariot is compared to that of the waterfall. Kapilar with his rich observation of such waterfalls in the Parampu hills, calls them drum-voiced torrents.

The rapid falls and starts of the torrents are noted by the poets with interest. The turns and twists are compared to the movements of the snake on the ground.

1. Malav. 583
2. —Aka. 162
3. Kuru. 235
4. --Ibid. 315
5. Patirrup. 78
6. —Puru. 143
7. --Ibid. 126
8. Aka. 184
9. Patirrup. 78
10. Aka. 362
11. —Kuru. 90
12. —Ibid. 134
13. —Ain. 251
14. —Kuru 134
The stream is said to rush through the caves and come off washing out lustrous gems. It strikes against the rocks on the way, breaks the bamboos it comes across, carries the jack fruits dropped down by the monkeys and washes away bamboo-reeds on the way.

While the stream glides through smooth valley-like parts on the mountain, the sound made by it is not rude and rough, but soft and sweet like the melodious sounds of the musical instruments, such as mūlavu and tanumai. The epithets innicai, imilicai, etc., are found in such description and indicate the sweetness of the inarticulate murmur of the stream. The epithet 'iḷumena' is very...
common and refers to the softness of the sound. There are other attributes like 'kalleṇa' elsewhere and a Cēra king has compared the confused and ceaseless noise of a torrent to that of the kitchen of a great patron who was one of his ancestors.

The melody of the stream is said to lull the elephants to sleep on its banks, and when it is at an audible distance from the hamlet, it serves as a lullaby even to the housewife there. In an apostrophe to the stream, the love-lorn heroine addresses it and remarks that it covers itself with flowers and glides off bashfully: with sympathy, she requests it to stay with her for a day.

The longest description of the torrent is by Nakkirar in Tirumurukāṟṟuppaṭai, the last twenty lines of which depict it. The poet must have watched with interest and feelings of wonder the waterfall rushing and leaping in sheets resembling

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1. மைய்மூன்றிருண்டு முடிச் சொல்லும்
வெள்ளை விளை.

2. பராசிரியர் கூடுமான்றுக்கு விளையாடும்
வசாகத்துடன் பூ வைத்து வருகிறது
அரக்கு வைக்கிறது.

3. இன்று வரை வாழ்வு செய்யாமல் அடுத்துக்
சுத்திருந்து வெள்ளியை அறிந்து.

4. இதை விளக்கை நகரிய மரநீர்வை பாத்து
சையும் கொள்ள வண்ண ஈட்சாம் கொண்டு
சுத்திருந்து வெள்ளியை அறிந்து
சுத்திருந்து வெள்ளியை அறிந்து.

5. ஆலமை பெருப்புக்
சுத்திருந்து வெள்ளியை அறிந்து
சுத்திருந்து வெள்ளியை அறிந்து
சுத்திருந்து வெள்ளியை அறிந்து
சுத்திருந்து வெள்ளியை அறிந்து.

6. Tiru. 295-316.

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—Aka. 228
—Ibid 168
—Kali. 42
—Nar. 77
—Aka. 398
waving banners varied in size, sweeping away the products of the mountain, making monkeys and elephants and peacocks shiver with cold and scaring and driving bears and boars to take refuge in caves.

Thus the streams and waterfalls are given careful and discriminating study, though this rarely goes beyond external, artistic qualities.

The Pastoral region

The pastoral region is pictured by many poets in its appropriate season and hour—the evening of the early winter. The fresh showers make the land appear fresh and pleasant with a wealth of flowers. The frogs in the pools croak like some of the musical instruments. The stags with twisted horns leap about with their hinds, graze the tender grass and drink the fresh clear water in the pits and take rest in groups. The flowers mullai, tōnri, pitavu, konraï and kāyā, blossom and adorn the forests.

1. "Iטור, מט" ,לט, ט" "מ"מ ,לט .גא"-Ain. 405
2. "ם"ם"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"כ"c
The red ground looks like vermilion;\(^1\) the faded kāyā flowers on the ground with the cochineal insects moving quickly amidst them look like sapphire artistically combined with coral.\(^2\) The poets use the phrase ‘mani mitai pavaḷam’ to picture the scene and this phrase is the title of the second part of the anthology, Akanāṉūṟu.

The cows graze on the meadows, and in the evening return with their udder full of milk calling their calves to the stalls.\(^3\) The bulls gore the wet anthills with their horns and with mud on the horns accompany the cows.\(^4\) The cowherds play their flutes while returning with the cows.\(^5\)

The poet Itaikkāṭanār has given beautiful description of this region with its appropriate season and hour. There is a long poem ‘Mullaippāṭṭu’, one of the ten idylls of Pattupāṭṭu, describing the beauties of the region as a background for the particular phase of love.

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1. *Akan. 14*
4. *Ibid. 64*
5. *Ibid. 54*
There are repetitions in the descriptions but the pictures are always interesting because of the variety and felicity of the details given.

There is an apostrophe by the poet Pēynār. The hero addresses the pastoral region and appreciates its freshness in early winter and states that he is returning to meet his sweetheart as well as to witness its beauty wrought by the season.

The arid tract

The descriptions of this region are frequent and abundant. The scorching heat of the sun in summer is explained by the picture of the nodes of the dry bamboos splitting themselves. Nothing is green; there is no verdure. Even the valai and the maral, the plants well known for withstanding the heat of summer wither away or wrinkle. The whirlwind blows with voilent force carrying off the dead leaves there. The dry bam-

1. "... பள்ளியுடன் கௌருடன் வேர்க் பொருட்களிடையே..."—Ain 420
2. "... கோய்கையில் கிண்ணிய வேல் ஒயை நோய்வதை..."—Aka. 364
3. "... வேலியே வேலியே நோய்வதை..."—Ibd. 371
4. "... வேலியே வேலியே வேலியே..."—Ibd. 177
5. "... வேலியே வேலியே வேலியே..."—Ibid. 327
6. "... வேலியே வேலியே வேலியே..."—Kall. 13
7. "... வேலியே வேலியே வேலியே..."—Aka. 143
boos rub together and cause a great conflagration throughout the forests.\(^1\)

The trees are devoid of leaves and consequently give no shade.\(^2\) The birds and the animals suffer too much from thirst and hunger. The mirage is mistaken for water by the thirsty animals which run about only to be disappointed finally.\(^3\)

Fissures are caused everywhere\(^4\) and the rocks are terribly hot\(^5\) and their pools are dried up.\(^6\) The heated rocks could fry even the grains of rice

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\(^1\) Aka. 47
\(^2\) Ibid. 1
\(^3\) Ibid. 327
\(^4\) Kali. 12
\(^5\) Ibid. 18
\(^6\) Aka. 55

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dropping on them from the tall bamboo. Instead of mire, the ponds and pits have dust in them.
The tender palmyra fruits grow hard and thick and the unripe neem fruits become wrinkled.
The empty pools among rocks look like the sunken eyes of the hungry elephants. The west
wind blows into them and sounds like drums. The highwaymen quench their thirst by licking their
own tongues and the wayfarers attacked by them do so with the drops of tears flowing into their
mouth.
The mirage is mentioned in Tamil as a white car (venṭēr) for the demon to ride on it(pēyttēr).
It is said to run through the arid region (ōṭu tēr).

1. மலையாள நாட் இவற்றின் பெயர்களும்
மல்லா வைலின் வரலாறு நூற்றாண்டு வரையிலைச் செயல்களை குறிப்பிட்டு இணையத்திற்கு காண்பி
மலையாள வட்டக்கல்லின் பொருட்களை வருவது.
—Aka. 267

2. Ibid

3. காவல் வரலாறு வல்லாவை.
—Pura. 389

4. மலாயலம் வரலாறு;
—Ibid.

5. பொட்டு ப்பேடில் பொட்டு ப்பேடில் பொட்டு ப்பேடில்
அம்மா இலும்பளத்தில் இரை அம்மா
இலும்பளத்தில் இரை அம்மா
—Aka 321

6. Ibid,

7. பொட்டு ப்பேடில் பொட்டு ப்பேடில்
இரை அம்மா இலும்பளத்தில்.
—Kuru. 274

8. காவல் வரலாறு
உண்மையான பொட்டு ப்பேடில் பொட்டு
அம்மா இலும்பளத்தில் இரை அம்மா
இலும்பளத்தில் இரை அம்மா
—Kali. 6

9. காவல் வரலாறு வல்லாவை வல்லாவை
—Aka. 179

10. மலாயலம் வரலாறு வல்லாவை
வல்லாவை மலாயலம் வரலாறு
—Ibid. 67

11. மலாயலம் வரலாறு வல்லாவை
—Ibid.

—Nar. 84

—Aka. 89
and is also called 'valankat têr (the car that never runs). It looks like a vast sheet of water shining at a distance and attracts the thirsty animals.

The agricultural region

The buffalo is a sine qua non of this tract. The kingfisher, the turtle and the otter come in for profuse mention along with the valai and other kinds of fish of tanks and rivers. The cranes belong to the tanks, the trees, the fields and also the hay stacks. The fields are full of crops

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1. Kali 7
2. Aku. 327
3. Ibid. 305
4. Ibid. 3, 6
5. Aka. 380
6. Aka. 43
7. Ibid. 8
8. Perumpan. 287-8
9. Ibid.
like paddy and sugarcane. The kāñci, the marutu, and the kamuku, are the important trees, and the vayalai and the rattan, are the creepers that flourish there. The habits and ways of life of the crabs, the free occupants of the burrows in the paddy fields, are not lost sight of.¹

Elaborate accounts of this region are found in the idylls Porunarāṟṟuppaṭai and Maturaikkāñci and in a number of stanzas dealing with the differences between the goodman and the lady of the household.

The tanks are full of lotus flowers of flame-like hue² and numerous tiny fish like parched grains of rice.³ The epithets 'netu nīr', 'kuntu nīr' and so on explain the depth of water.⁴

When the ponds are full with water, the poets imagine them to be the eyes of the rivers wide open to look at the beauty of the world in wet weather.⁵ The blossoming of the eye-like flowers in the ponds is in the imagination of another poet, the waking of the latter with opened eyes.⁶

1. Ain. 21-30.

2. "..." —Porumpan. 289-90

3. Ibid.

4. "..." —Ain. 61

5. "..." —Kali. 33

6. "..." —Pura. 397
The descriptions of the rivers of this region are no less interesting. Many of the rivers are mentioned by their names, as the poets recall those which they know. The Ganges descending from the Himalayas is always overflowing its banks.¹ The Kāviri, the Ceyāru² and the Vaiyai too frequently mentioned in the stanzas of Paripāṭal and Kalittokai and also in the idyll Maturaikkāñci are among the important rivers. The descriptions of the Kāviri are found in PerumpaNārruppaṭai and in PorunarNārruppaṭai and in some othere poems. In winter the water in the river is said to be muddy and cool but crystal-clear in summer.³ In the early summer called ‘ilavenil’, the flow of a thin sheet of water in the river is like the crawling of the snake.⁴ There are also descriptions of rivers gliding with gentle murmur reminding one of Shakespeare’s river in ‘The Two Gentlemen of Verona’.⁵

The floods of rivers have attracted and inspired the poets. The flood in the Vaiyai is pictured in many long stanzas in Paripāṭal.⁶ The poet Aricil Kīlār perceives the huge sheet of water

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¹ Perumpan. 429-31
² Malai 475-76
³ Ain. 45
⁴ Nar 157
⁵ The Two Gentlemen of Verona II, VII 25-32
⁶ Pari 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 16, 20, 22; Maturaik-335
in a river spread all over and feels that the earth cannot bear it.\(^1\) The flow is fierce and the waves huge and strong. The flood in the Kāviri is depicted by the poets Āvūr Mūlān Kiḷār,\(^2\) Nakkīrār,\(^3\) Paranār\(^4\) and others. It is said to swell to the brim of its banks, denude the shore with great force and drain into the sea. The flood carries along with it the sandalwood, the eagle-wood, the foaming froth, many kinds of fragrant flowers and dried leaves.\(^5\) The red muddy water seems to adorn itself with these flowers and leaves.\(^6\) 'Uruttu varu malir niṟai' is one of the phrases describing the fierce flow of the huge sheet of water and this forms itself the title of a poem in Patirruppatu.\(^7\)

There are descriptions of the bubbling eddies revolving with speed like the potter's wheel.\(^8\)

\(^1\) Ibid. 201, 474.
\(^2\) Patirrup. 73.
\(^3\) Aka. 341.
\(^4\) Ibid 126.
\(^5\) Patirrup. 50.
\(^6\) Patirrup. 87.
\(^7\) Ibid.
\(^8\) Malai. 474-76.
The foam is depicted to strike against a rock and slowly dissolves itself and finally disappears altogether, so that the poet himself is remembered by the descriptive phrase in the stanza, ‘kal poru ciṟu nurai.’

**The maritime region**

There are many poems describing the maritime region, but only very few depicting the sea and its aspects. The sea awakens no sense of elation or of mysterious kinship as in the case of the English poets, Shelley, Byron and others. Though ancient Tamilnad was surrounded by the sea on the three sides, the south, the east and the west, it had never once assumed an aspect of deepening mystery. The influence of the sea upon life was great, though not greater than that of the mountains, but there are very few poems referring to the seafaring life of the time. The sea, in fact, has been mentioned by almost all the poets incidentally while describing the seashore or the grove there or the backwater, or while referring to its incessant roar heard especially at nights in the villages on the coast.

Even Ulōccanār, Nallāntuvanār and Ammūvanār who seem to have lived very near the shore and gained a rich knowledge of the birds and the plants there, have not pictured the sea as Shelley or Byron have done. Alfred Noyes’ explanation in the case of the English poetry seems to apply to that of Tamil also.

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1. Quoted


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is, according to him, in almost all her phases—political, social, religious and artistic—a daughter of the sea, there was meagreness of conception and expression of it till Byron and Shelley came. There are very few Elizabethan lyrics that deal directly with the subject. The physical aspect of the sea began to have some vital importance for the English poets only after some of them had caught sight, across the grey horizons of England, of a vaster and more significant sea. The traders of the ancient Tamil country had recourse to commerce abroad with the countries both in the East and the West but the charm of sea-life and sea-borne traffic had no great influence on the Sangam poets; nor had they any thirst for sea adventure like Byron or Shelley. There are copious references to the life at the shore and the trade that was abundant at ports which had established themselves, but direct pictures of the dark deep sea are rarely found. Marutam Ilandakaṉaṉar's verse in Akananūṟu

1. Vincent Smith, Early History of India, P. 462.

2. Pattinap. 60-218

3. Marutam Ilandakaṉaṉar’s verse in Akananūṟu
The Earth

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describing the course of a vessel on the sea, alludes to its starting and compares its movement to the whole world in motion by reason of its hugeness and notes its blowing wind bellowing on the surface with the sailor at the helm directing its movement with an eye to the light-house on the distant shore. It is only pictures of this type that reveal their knowledge of sea-life beyond the back-water, the coastal grove and the shore.

The seashore with white sand looks like moonlight while the blue sea itself appears like darkness.1 The sea-grove is fragrant with the puṇṇai and screwpine flowers2 the crabs playing amidst the ṇāḷal flowers dropped down from an attractive scene.3 The maritime tract is the only region which does not depend on rain for its fertility and

1. 腱நெண்கி குண் குமார் விளையம்
   பற்றுக்கொள்வ பொன்னரையூர்

2. ைத்துலையா ருஷ்டிக

3. பிள் குளிரும் உள்ளூரின் பகளென்

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1. Aka. 255
2. Kuru. 123
3. Aku. 20
4. Ibid. 270
5. Ibid. 270
6. Ibid. 351
7. Nar. 63
8. Ibid. 203
9. Kuru. 328
the poet Uḷōccaṇār says that when there is no rain the muṇṭakam creepers grow abundantly and the salt-panṣ yield large quantities of white salt.¹

The references to storms in the sea teem in a number of similes. The ruttiṣh elephant that breaks its pegs, kills its keeper and runs wildly, is compared to a ship that is driven by the storm from its moorings.² Many of the objects mentioned in Maturaikkāṇci are related to the waves and waters in the sea. The banners in Madurai are said to wave about like the waves of the sea.³ The silent slumber of the city is like the noisy sea at rest.⁴

The waves are said to attack and fight with the shores.⁵ There are pictures of the wind blowing violently and causing the waves to become huge and rise higher and dash against the shore with greater force.

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¹ The references to storms in the sea teem in a number of similes. The ruttish elephant that breaks its pegs, kills its keeper and runs wildly, is compared to a ship that is driven by the storm from its moorings. Maturaik 375-83

² Many of the objects mentioned in Maturaikkāṇci are related to the waves and waters in the sea. The banners in Madurai are said to wave about like the waves of the sea. Maturaik 541-52

³ The silent slumber of the city is like the noisy sea at rest. Maturaik 35

⁴ The references to storms in the sea teem in a number of similes. The ruttish elephant that breaks its pegs, kills its keeper and runs wildly, is compared to a ship that is driven by the storm from its moorings. Maturaik 375-83

⁵ The silent slumber of the city is like the noisy sea at rest. Maturaik 35
The white foam of the waves is imagined to be the white head of the sea; and the waves which wash away the toy-houses built on sand by the young girls playing there, are the grey-haired old men who are generally a hindrance to their play. ¹

The waves are described to roar like thunder and like the war-drum beaten on the battle field. ² The epithets 'mulanţku tirai' ³ and 'itikkural punari' ⁴ illustrate this: where the sea is said to sound like a drum, the blowing wind is compared to the drumstick. ⁵ The whole sea is compared to the military expedition of a king, the boats sailing in it to the elephants in the army, the sound of the waves to the sound of the drum, and the white cranes sitting in array on the sandheaps to the soldiers in white uniform. ⁶

The waves are often pictured to dash against the punmai and the screwpine trees on the shore. ⁷

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1. भूमिका अनुसारं गंगातंत्रम् गुरुं
2. अर्थो जगतंत्रम् श्रीमयं श्रीमयं
3. कृष्णेऽऽर्थो जगतंत्रम् गुरुं
4. गंगातंत्रम् गुरुं
5. भूमिका अनुसारं गुरुं
6. अर्थो जगतंत्रम् श्रीमयं श्रीमयं
7. कृष्णेऽऽर्थो जगतंत्रम् गुरुं

—Aka. 90
—Nar. 395
—Ibid. 16
—Ibid. 74
—Patirrup. 68
—Kali. 149
—Aka. 270
—Nar. 203
The white spray of the waves breaking on the shores is said to split and spread like the soft cotton carded with the bow-like instrument.¹

Paraṉar says that the sea neither shrinks because the clouds drink its waters, nor swells because the rivers flow into it.² It has also been noted that the waves rise higher and dash with greater force when the moon rises.³

Numerous are the epithets describing the incessant noise of the sea,⁴ the tossing waves,⁵ the blue colour of the sea⁶ and its vast expanse of water.⁷

There are two apostrophes to the sea by the poets Ammūvanaṉar⁸ and Nallantuvaṉar.⁹ Both

1. கரத்து பிள்ளி உபரவினேளச்சு வன்வலவு நாட்டுப் பூன்றை. —Nar. 299
2. நாட்டேளச்சு இணங்கு வண்ணங்கு கொள்ளும் நாட்டுப் பூன்றை. —Patirrup. 45
3. பெருந்து உலகத்து நாட்டுப் பூன்றை வண்ணங்கு தேக்கி உத்தும். —Nar. 375
4. பெருந்து பெருந்து. —Ibid 91
   உறுத்து உறுத்து. —Ibid 74
5. நவீன் விளக்க. —Aka. 130
   வளச்சு விளக்க. —Nar. 335
   குண்டு விளக்க. —Ibid, 283
   குண்டு விளக்க. —Aka. 263
6. கருப்பு விளக்க. —Ain. 102
   தெருதியும் சிறந்த விளை. —Kuru. 49
   தெருதியும் கலைஞர் பூக்கு. —Nar. 159
7. கருப்பு பூம். —Kuru. 318
   மாட்டும் பூம். —Nar. 338
   மாட்டும் மாட்டும். —Patirrup. 51
   மாட்டும் பூவெி. —Nar. 31
8. kuru. 163.
9. kali. 129.
express the grief of the heroine during the period of separation from her lover.

The descriptions of the backwater abounding in sharks\(^1\) are also interesting. The phrases ‘koṭuṅkāḷi’\(^2\) and ‘iruṅkāḷi’\(^3\) are often used to indicate its curved form and its blue tint. It is full of the neytaḷ, the nilaṁ and other flowers of the region.\(^4\) The ripples in it sound and serve as a lullaby to the crow.\(^5\)

The seasons

The early winter is always described with the pastoral region since it is in that season that this region appears fresh and beautiful. The phrases ‘puḷaṅ anī koṇṭa kār etir kāḷai’\(^6\), kār kaviṇ koṇṭa kāmar kāḷai’\(^7\) and ‘kār ceytāṅrē kaviṇ peru kāḷam’\(^8\) are felicitous. The flowers, mullaḯ, koṇrāi, tōṇri, pīṭavu and illam, blossom and adorn the region.\(^9\) The fresh showers delight the stags and the hinds which leap about and drink of the cool

1. \(\text{Ceytāṅrē kaviṇ peru kāḷam} \) - Nar. 67
2. \(\text{Kār kaviṇ koṇṭa kāmar kāḷai} \) - Ibid. 78
3. \(\text{Pulaṅ anī koṇṭa kār etir kāḷai} \) - Ain. 183, Nar. 211
4. \(\text{Mullaḯ, koṇrāi, tōṇri, pīṭavu and illam} \) - Ibid. 116, 163; Nar. 78, 117; Aka. 80
5. \(\text{Kār ceytāṅrē kaviṇ peru kāḷam} \) - Ain. 116
6. \(\text{Pulaṅ anī koṇṭa kār etir kāḷai} \) - Ibid. 183
7. \(\text{Pulaṅ anī koṇṭa kār etir kāḷai} \) - Ibid. 163
8. \(\text{Pulaṅ anī koṇṭa kār etir kāḷai} \) - Aka. 304
9. \(\text{Pulaṅ anī koṇṭa kār etir kāḷai} \) - Ibid. 374
10. \(\text{Pulaṅ anī koṇṭa kār etir kāḷai} \) - Ibid.
water in the pools. The frogs begin their incessant croaking.

The season succeeding it is late winter called 'kūtir kālam' and is mostly set in the hilly tract. The pakaṇrai and the īṅkai blossom; and the rivers flow full with muddy water which is a contrast to the crystal clear water in summer. The beasts do not set out: the monkeys seek shelter on trees and shiver. The cows spurn their own calves. The clouds send down drizzling drops.

The seasons following next are 'munpani' and 'piṇpani' (the season of early dew and that of late dew) and both are termed 'aṅciram', which is too frequently mentioned. The season of early dew is denoted by the phrase 'putu varal aṅciram' and the dew-fall itself is said to be like the hard

1. Āk. 304
2. Ain. 468
3. Ain. 456
4. Ibid. 45
5. Natun. 9
6. Ibid. 11
7. Ibid. 19-20
8. Aka. 78, 183, 217, 273, 339; Kur. 68, 338; Nar. 312
9. Aka. 273
breath of the elephant. The dew makes the lotus flower wither away as if scorched by heat. The clouds after pouring their contents look like carded cotton. The avarai blossoms now. The bamboo blooms drop down; as also the long petals of the kántal. But the green gram and the black gram grow fertile. Along the roads the water runs zig-zag like a snake along the marks of the wheels of the running chariots.

The dewy season is so continuous that it is very difficult to mark out the season of early dew from that of late dew. It is, therefore, that the poets have described the dewy season in many stanzas without specifying whether it is the former or the latter. In the latter season, the dew is said to fall in the early mornings like small pearls dropping down from the thread that had given way. In the fields the paddy crops are said to bend with the weight of their ripe grains and fall on the edges.
The sugarcane blossoms;\(^1\) when the lotus buds blossom, dew drops shed from their petals.\(^2\)

The season next in order is ‘iḷavēnil’ or the early summer. The poet Otalāntaiyār has ten stanzas as ‘Iḷavēnil pattu’ describing the various flowers that blossom in the season.\(^3\) The cuckoo’s sweet notes are heard from the branches of the trees which, in this season, put on a foliage of tender leaves of attractive hue.\(^4\) Perunkaṭūṇkō’s long descriptive similes about the beautiful scenery of the season are interesting.\(^5\) The phrase ‘yāṇar vēnil’ refers to the endless new wealth and pleasures the season promises.\(^6\) To distinguish this from the succeeding hot summer, various epithets are used; cevvi vēnil\(^7\) (the appropriate summer), mūṟṟā vēnil\(^8\) and mutirā vēnil\(^9\) (the young summer), nāṭpata vēnil,\(^10\) and arumpata vēnil\(^11\) (the summer of suitable climate), inpa vēnil\(^12\) (the pleasant summer), kulavi vēnil\(^13\) (the infant summer).

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1. ஐளவெனில் கொண்ட வளனம்.
2. பலிதாரம் மூன்றாண் பெருந்து பார்த்த களையை நிறைத்தேற்
4. குருவியல் கிருத்து அச.
5. Ibid. 25 - 35
6. பரார் வெனில்.
7. கோள் வெனில்.
8. மும்பி வெனில்,
9. சிக்க வெனில்,
10. வரும்ப வெனில்,
11. பல்லபம் வெனில்.
12. வரும்ப வெனில்.
13. குளவி வெனில்.

—Aka. 13
—Kali. 71
—Ibid.
—Ibid. 27
—Ibid. 337
—Ibid 157
—Ibid. 97
—Ibid. 224
—Ibid. 3
The descriptions of the late summer of scorching heat are too many and occur in almost all the verses on palaittina or the incidents or the anecdotes on the separation of lovers. The descriptions refer to the arid tract where the trees stand bare and offer no shade and the animals and the birds suffer from thirst and hunger and abnormal heat. There is not even mire in the ponds but only dust. Everywhere there is mirage to lure the thirsty animals and disappoint them.

The hours or periods of the day

The evenings described are mostly of the early winter season set in the background of the pastoral region. The cows returning home satiated with pasture, the birds returning to their nests, the sun setting in the west and the darkness slowly setting in are all alluded to along with the blossoming of

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1. கொன்று 50-51
2. கொன்று 18
3. கொன்று 11
4. கொன்று 389
5. கொன்று 67, 327.
the flowers, *mullai*, *piṭavu* and others. There are also a few verses that depict the evening in the coastal region where the screwpine trees blossom and diffuse their fragrance, the sea increases its roaring, the tide swells in the backwater and the *neytal* and the *nilam* flowers in it close their petals. In the poems by Nallantuvaṉār in Kalittokai, there are picturesque accounts of the evening scene with many similes aptly introduced.

Midnight has a place in literature next in importance to the evening. According to literary convention, the lovers' clandestine union takes place at midnight, especially in the late winter of

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1. "..."
   —Aka. 64

2. "...
   —Nar. 69

3. Kali, 118 - 120.
the mountain region. It is, therefore, that the descriptions of midnight go with those of the late winter, and refer to the rain accompanied by thunder and lightning.\(^1\) The sky is dark with clouds, the land is covered with sheets of water and there is darkness everywhere.\(^2\) Thunder rumbles in the air and lightning rends like fire tearing the dark sky.\(^3\) The tiger is out in search of prey; and the bear digs out its food in the anthill.\(^4\) The anril of the maritime region perching on the palmyra stem calls to its mate, the sea seems to have stopped its incessant roar,\(^5\) the grove on the shore is silent and even the fish seem to sleep.\(^6\) There are appropriate phrases (viyal irul,\(^7\) kañai irul\(^8\), mayañku irul,\(^9\) and ār irul,\(^\text{10}\)) describing the terrible darkness
at midnight and its stillness is denoted in 'nālēn yāmam', its dreadfulness in 'uṭku varu nāṭu nāl.'

The early morning called 'vaikāraī' is the next period of the day in order. It is very attractive to the artists' observation. The space in the sky seems to expand gradually and moonlight turns pale. The cock crows as 'the trumpet of the morn.' In rainy weather the white clouds are seen covering the mountains like the smoke rising from the kiln for baking earthen pots, and then they appear like carded cotton.

Morning is rarely described. The descriptions of noon are mingled with those of the hot summer in the arid region. Even in those descriptions specific mention of noon is rare. References to afternoon are rarer. All the six periods of the day are described in Maturaikkāṇci in which the story of a day is woven in the most graphic manner in the description of the city of Madurai as in Tennyson's account of Enoch Arden's life on the desert island.

It must be mentioned that the poets have not dilated on these different parts of the day but have only given them slender references either independently or in the background of particular seasons of the year. Yet, in this respect they can be said to have excelled the poets of the later period in the accuracy and minuteness of treatment and setting.

The wind

The south wind which is so frequent and popular in the literature of the later age, is very rarely referred to in the Sangam works under discussion. But the phrases ‘aitu varal acai vali’¹ (the wind blowing softly and gently) and manavāyit tenral² (the southern breeze of fragrance) are enough to prove that the poets have all praise and appreciation for the wind. It is a wind of the early summer.

The north wind, though disliked by all, is most frequent in Sangam literature. The whistling of the wind is noted by the phrase ‘immena iraikkum’³ It is described to blow in late winter and in the season of early dew.⁴ Its chillness is

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¹—Aka. 102²—Ibid. 21³—Nar. 109⁴—Aka. 126

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felt more severely at nights when even the cranes and the crabs could not bear it. The former cry out pitiably and the latter resort to their mudholes. It tosses the sugarcane flowers, the vēlam flowers; the cēmpu leaves, the plantain leaves and the nests of the weaver-birds. There is an artistic picture of the wind blowing and waving the thorny stem of the rattan with a broad āmpal leaf sticking to it which then rises and falls like the bellows in a smithy.

1. The Treatment of Nature

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1. Kuru. 103
2. Ibid. 160
3. Aka. 13
4. Ibid. 235.
5. Ibid. 217
6. Nar. 241
7. Kuru. 76
8. Ain. 460
9. Nar. 366
10. Aka. 46
There is one long poem by Nakkirar which bears the name of this wind with the attributes netu (long) and nal (good). The epithets indicate the effects of the wind on both the hero and the heroine. The contrast is clearly laid down and the descriptions are so realistic and touching that the author reveals himself as a master of word-painting.

It is only the north wind that has apostrophes; and there are four apostrophes by four different poets but the theme is common referring to the unsympathetic attitude of the wind in increasing the sufferings of the heroine in separation.

The east wind is mostly mentioned in the verses describing the seashore. The sand-dune there is said to be raised by this wind. It blows soft sand and covers up the marks made by the crabs playing on the shore. It is also a soft breeze as indicated by the phrase ‘koṭal acai vali.”

The west wind is more frequent than the east wind and the south wind; and in literary importance it may be placed next to the north wind. It is mostly pictured in the descriptions of the arid tract. There it blows through the clefts and roars like the sea. Sometimes it takes the form

1. Netunalvatai.
2. Aka 125, 163; Nar. 193; Kuru. 235.
3. Aka. 20
4. Patirrup. 51
5. Nar. 74
6. Maturaik. 308 - 9
of a violent whirlwind when it is termed 'cūralaan katu vali' or 'cuḷaṇṟu varu kōṭai' (the west wind that whirs about). When it blows through the bores in the bamboos, it sounds like the tune of the flute. The same sweet sound is heard also when it blows into the bores of the woodapple shell. With the dried seeds of the uḷīṇcil it causes the sound of the drum beaten in accompaniment to a dance. It is said to use the konrai seeds as its drum-sticks to beat against the rocks nearby. As it blows in late summer, it is said to be very hot and this is well explained by the phrases 'erivāyk kōṭai' (the fire-mouthed west wind) and 'āḷaleri kōṭai' (the fiery west wind). In an interesting picture, it tosses the bamboos in a bush and betrays the tiger hiding in it. In another it raises a heap of sand around the trunk of a palmyra

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1. கொர்லான் கது வலி. 
   குராண்டு கெரசல். 

2. கொர்லான் சுவை பெரிக் போவின் கெரசல் அச்சுகள் குரிக்குரி. 

3. கொர்லான் வைள் பட்டாண்டுப் போவின் கெரசல் குரி கெரசல் குரிக்குரி கெரசல் குரிக்குரி. 

4. கொர்லான் சுவை பெரிக் போவின் கெரசல் அச்சுகள் குரிக்குரி கெரசல் குரிக்குரி. 

5. கொர்லான் வையாண்டுவது கெரசல் அச்சுகள் குரிக்குரி கெரசல் குரிக்குரி. 

6. கொர்லான் கெரசல். 

7. கொர்லான் கெரசல். 

8. கொர்லான் வையாண்டு போவின் கெரசல் 
   குரிக்குரி கெரசல் குரிக்குரி. 

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1. Aka. 1
2. Ibid. 2
3. Ibid. 219
4. Ibid. 46
5. Nay. 46
6. Aka. 353
7. Aka. 219
8. Ibid. 27
The Earth

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tree on the sea coast and makes the tree appear shorter.1 It is also pictured to drop down fruits, flowers and pollen of many trees2 and to toss the aerial roots of the irī3 and the banyan trees.4

The wind from the four directions are denoted by four terms referring to those directions. The south wind is called 'teŋral' (from teŋ or teŋku, the south), the north wind is vātai (from vāta or vattakku, the north), the east wind is 'koŋtal' (from kuṇa or kuṇakku, the east) and the west wind is 'kōtal' (from kuṭa or kuṭakku the west). As seen above, the north wind and the west wind blow violently, the former with great chillness and the latter with abnormal heat. The south wind is a light breeze blowing gently; and the east wind is an ordinary wind of no force or violence. All these are depicted in their action on the leaves of

1. தென மண்ணறு வாக்கு சில
நோக்கினால் கீழ் செலுத்திய
தென கைலை. —Kuru. 248

2. குணர் குணர் வாக்கு
பாரசய மூத்து எஃபீ பாலாய
சனை வேலி பெரும் கூறிய.
கரைய புரியா மூண்டு வரலாறு
புளை குறுக்கு பொறிய. —Aka. 101

3. குணர் குணர் வாக்கு
முன்னெற்று மூன்று வரலாறு
புளை குறுக்கு பொறிக். —Ibid. 306

4. குணர் குணர் வாக்கு
விளை விளை வெளிய வாக்கு.
—Aka. 287

5. குணர் குணர் வாக்கு
புளை குறுக்கு பொறிக்.
—Nar. 299

6. குணர் குணர் வாக்கு
புளை குறுக்கு பொறிக்.
—Ibid. 162
plants or on the water in tanks or ponds or the sea and in the case of the violent winds, also on the birds and animals and on the clefts in rocks and the bores in trees. The various kinds of sounds made by the winds are also often noted. They are depicted to murmur through the trees, to rustle lightly over the shrubs, to join the concert of woods and waters, or to sweep in mighty harmonies through forests and hills.
THE SKY

The Sangam poets were observers of a high order of the striking aspects of the sky, particularly those that appeal to the sense of beauty. They mention the night of a cloudless sky with twinkling stars\(^1\) and also the twilight sky with the crescent.\(^3\) But most of the descriptions of the sky at night refer to black clouds, heavy showers of rain, flashes of lightning, the roaring of thunder and darkness all over.\(^8\) The descriptions of moonlight are comparatively few.\(^4\) The sky with the sun shining with abnormal heat is referred to, to point out the parched nature of the arid region.\(^5\) The day sky is but briefly and vaguely mentioned.\(^6\)

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1. Lnenipiri\(^1\) perumpan. 412
2. Aka. 284
3. Aka. 162
4. Perumpan. 412
5. Ibid. 323.
6. Ibid. 143
7. Aka. 122
8. Ibid. 228
9. Nar. 371
10. Ibid. 399
11. Nar. 348
12. Ibid. 145
13. Kali. 71
The sky is like a canopy to the sea-girt earth. The sun and the moon are the eyes of the sky which is likened to the face. The sky is also imagined to be a sea in which the sun sails as a boat.

During the heavy rain in winter, the sky seems to be connected to the earth by the pouring showers. The lightning spreads like creepers of fire in the sky that looks like the vast expanse of water in the sea. When the north wind blows and the dark clouds move from the north to the south, the sky seems as if it peels off its dark skin. The mucuntai creepers blossom white in the green bushes and remind the poet of the cloudless blue sky with lustrous stars.

The twilight sky with the crescent moon in the midst of clouds is well pictured. The flock of cranes flying in their characteristic orderly row

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1. முசுண்டை முதல் வரல் குரு மறை மடுத்து. —Perumpan. 409 - 10
2. முசுண்டை வரல் விளையாடுகள் என வாறுப் பேசும் போரிய குடை. —Pura. 365
3. முசுண்டை முதல் வரல் போர் விளையாடும் பாரிய குளை. —Aka. 101
4. முசுண்டை முதல் வரல் குரு மறை மடுத்து கண்டு வானங்கள் கன்னியால் குடைய மூன்று பெரும் குளைய விளையாடும் பாரிய குடை. —Ibid 148
5. கழுகும் குழந்தை விளையாடும் குரு மறை மடுத்து குடை. —Aka. 162
6. முசுண்டை வரல் விளையாடு வரல் விளையாடும் குரு மறை மடுத்து குடை. —Ibid. 24
7. முசுண்டை வரல் விளையாடு வரல் விளையாடும் குரு மறை மடுத்து. —Ibid. 246
8. முசுண்டை வரல் விளையாடு வரல் விளையாடும் குரு மறை மடுத்து. —Perumpan. 412 - 13
seen against the background of the evening sky with red glow, is described and compared to the white garland of pearls on the shoulders of the red god Murukan. The scene of the twilight sky with the vast expanse of sea in the west is like the Gods Siva and Vishnu appearing together.

The sun is the light-giver and founder of the day. The daily course of the sun is the subject of a number of references. It is praised as the producer of all the wealth in the world and the centre of radiating light. Its disc-like shape and apparent movement diffusing light and lustre all over the blue sky have kindled the imagination of the poets. It is a boat sailing in the ocean-like sky. ‘Mantilam’ (orbit) is the term very frequently used to denote it. Mythologically, the

1. பருவத்திற்கு நேர்ந்த மருத்துணை

2. பெருமாள் எகாதாஸை குமாரர் மண்டலம்

3. பெருமாள் எகாதாஸை குமாரர் மண்டலம்

4. மண்டலம் மண்டலம் சிறுத் தமிழ்

5. பெருமாள் எகாதாஸை குமாரர் மண்டலம்

6. பெருமாள் எகாதாஸை குமாரர் மண்டலம்

7. பெருமாள் எகாதாஸை

Nar. 69, 117, 152; Kali. 71.
sun is riding a chariot of a single wheel\(^1\) drawn by seven horses,\(^2\) the seven colours of light being represented by them.

The rays of the morning sun are tender and not mature.\(^3\) The setting sun has a red glow with the heat diminished in its rays.\(^4\) Most of the epithets to this heavenly body glorify the fire-like rays and scorching heat in summer, e.g. uru keḷu maṇṭilam,\(^5\) uruppu avir maṇṭilam,\(^6\) kāyuntu celal kaṇali,\(^7\) kāy katir,\(^8\) kaṭuṇ katir.\(^9\) Those describing its ultra-violet rays, brightness and brilliance are also many, e.g. pal katir nāyyiru,\(^{10}\) akan cutar,\(^{11}\) ilaṅku katir,\(^{12}\) vayaṅku oḷi maṇṭilam,\(^{13}\) alaṅku katir maṇṭilam,\(^{14}\) celaṅ katir maṇṭilam,\(^{15}\) vira katir maṇṭilam.\(^{16}\) It is often described as a disc moving fast in the sky,\(^{17}\) or a circle of brilliant light crawl-
ing there and burning hot like fire and scorching the hills and forests. The fierce summer is, in the imagination of Uruttirankaṇṇaṉar, the reign of the angry sun. It spreads fire, making the trees shadeless in the arid tracts and splitting the rocks and causing fissures.

Either sunrise or sunset is mentioned occasionally and described very rarely. The sun is, in most of the pictures, depicted to rise in the blue sea, but the setting is most by behind the mountains. The rising sun is adored as a divinity and is paid homage to. Nakkrar compares the red god Murukan’s appearance with the sun rising in the sea to the great delight of the whole world. The bright gold-like blossoms of the vēnikai tree remind the poet of the same scene.

There are many descriptions of the sun setting in the mountains. To describe the descending

1.  உருட்டிராங்கன் நார் மட்டும் தம்முள்ள பெரும்புறாம்
   கோள்பரந்த நாட்கள் அழகமாக இருக்கும் காலாண்களே
   கன்று கொண்டிருந்தன.
   —Aka. 11
2.  ஆராய்ச்சி துவதித்து குறிப்பிட்டு விளக்கல்.
   —Perumpan. 3
3.  உருட்டிராங்கன் நார் பெரும்புறாம் பெரும்புறாம்
   கன்று கொண்டிருந்து விளக்கல் விளக்கல்.
   —Aka. 381
4.  குருந்து கூடிய கூம்பில் கூம்பில்.
   —Ibid. 55
5.  குருந்து பொழுது பொழுது அடுக்கும் அடுக்கும்
   —Ibid. 263
6.  வீனிகை மூன்று வீனிகை மூன்று
   உருக்கு உருக்கு உருக்கு உருக்கு.
   —Nar. 69
7.  Aka. 263.
8.  இன்னும் என்னும் என்னும் என்னும்
    மூன்று மூன்று மூன்று மூன்று.
    —Tiru. 1 - 2
9.  பக்தர் என்னும்
    என்னும் என்னும் என்னும்
    என்னும் என்னும் என்னும்
    —Aka. 298
sun, the eastward lengthening of the shadows on
the earth is adduced in proof. The phrase
‘civantu vāṇku maṇṭilam’ aptly describes the red
glow of the setting sun. The sun with its rays of
diminished heat seen just when disappearing behind
the mountains is compared to the eclipsed moon. Murańciyār Muṭinākarāyar has observed the sun
setting in the sea on the west coast, and there is
the rare mention in his poem that the sun rises
and sets in the seas. The poets generally depict
it as setting among the mountains.

On some full moon days, the moon and the
sun are seen at the same time in opposite direc-
tions, and in a short time the sun disappears in the
mountain on the west. On some other full moon
days, the sun sets first and immediately the moon
rises in the east and dispels the darkness.

Nallantuvaṇār describes the days in which the
sky is full of clouds and the sun is not visible; time
is known only by means of the water-clock called
kurunīrkk-kaṇṇal and it is not known where the sun

1.  Omar Kāmaṇna ṛppukkāṭattu
       kanti kari kari paruvi yelān
   —Nar. 187
2.  Omar Kāmaṇna ṛppukkāṭattu
       kanti kari kari paruvi yelān
   —Ibid. 117
3.  Omar Jāmūkkam kanti kari kari
       paruvi yelān yelān yelān
   —Aka. 114
4.  Omar Jāmūkkam kanti kari kari...
       paruvi yelān yelān yelān
   —Pura. 2
5.  Omar Kāmaṇna ṛppukkāṭattu
       kanti kari kari paruvi yelān
   —Ibid. 65
6.  Omar Kāmaṇna ṛppukkāṭattu
       kanti kari kari paruvi yelān...
       kanti kari kari paruvi yelān
   —Ibid. 876
7.  Omar Kāmaṇna ṛppukkāṭattu
       kanti kari kari paruvi yelān
   —Aka. 43
is. There is the description of a winter day in which the sun becomes visible only just before sunset and immediately disappears;\(^1\) this rare scene of Nature is compared to the winking of the eye.

There are two apostrophes to this heavenly body, one by Kapilar and the other by Uraiyr Enicceri Mutamociyar.\(^2\)

### The Moon

The poets seem to have been attracted more to the moon than to the sun. There are many verses which hail the full moon. On full moon days, the moon rises in the east soon after the sun sets in the west\(^3\) or both occur simultaneously.\(^4\)

The full moon just rising in the sea is pictured in a simile.\(^5\) The light of the moon as bright as day,\(^6\) as well as its paleness at dawn\(^7\) are mentioned in descriptions. Auvaiyar notes this paleness in the felicitous phrase ‘pacalai nilavu’.\(^8\)

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1. \[\text{SProv. 8, 374.}\]
2. \[\text{Pura. 8, 374.}\]
3. \[\text{Pura. 376.}\]
4. \[\text{Ibid. 65.}\]
5. \[\text{Aka. 201.}\]
6. \[\text{Ibid. 228.}\]
7. \[\text{Ibid. 299.}\]
8. \[\text{Pura. 392.}\]
spread over the blue sky and on earth are like an ocean of milk. The rays of moonlight on a mountain are compared to a white pearl garland worn on the chest and to a stream of brilliant whiteness seen on a mountain slope.

Piciräntaiyār compares the face of his friend, the Cōla king called Köpperunicolan, to the full moon. It is likened to the beautiful face of the heroine. In her pining state, the pale moon seen at dawn comes in for comparison. The king shines in his company, his kith and kin, like the moon in the midst of stars. His fame waxes like the waxing moon while that of his foes wanes like the waning moon. The face of the lady, now hid and now seen, is the moon now hidden by the

1. The rays of moonlight on a mountain are compared to a white pearl garland worn on the chest and to a stream of brilliant whiteness seen on a mountain slope.

2. The face of his friend, the Cōla king called Köpperunicolan, to the full moon.

3. It is likened to the beautiful face of the heroine.

4. In her pining state, the pale moon seen at dawn comes in for comparison.

5. The king shines in his company, his kith and kin, like the moon in the midst of stars.

6. His fame waxes like the waxing moon while that of his foes wanes like the waning moon.

7. The face of the lady, now hid and now seen, is the moon now hidden by the
clouds and now revealed.\(^1\) The wheels of a chariot with their spokes resemble the rays of the moon engirt with a halo in winter.\(^2\) The moon seen through the smoke on the top of a mountain,\(^3\) or through the passing clouds,\(^4\) has a special appeal to the trained eye of the poets and is compared to the honeycomb on the cliff.

The crescent is not out of their ken. The crescent of the third day is worshipped by the people;\(^5\) when seen in the sky of red glow it looks like a broken conch.\(^6\) It is not easily seen and the people have to wait patiently looking at the western sky, especially in winter when the clouds rarely reveal it; this has been referred to in a comparison.

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1. *Kuruppan.* Curupna. 444-52

2. *Kuruppan.* 250-53

3. *Kali.* 30


5. *Kuru.* 170

6. Ibid.
The crescent moon of the eighth day is likened to the forehead of the heroine. The poet-king Köpperunčōlan compares the forehead surrounded by the black tresses of hair to the crescent of the eighth day seen rising in the blue sea. Kapilar compares this crescent with a tank on the Parampu hills with curved bund.

The lunar eclipse is employed in similes, but there is absolutely no mention of the solar eclipse. The halo of the moon is mentioned, but not described. The spots in the moon resemble a hare and are betrayed when the sky is bright without clouds. The moon is very near the constellation Pleiades (aru mēn) on the day of the Kārttikai festival.

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1. The poet-king Köpperunčōlan compares the forehead surrounded by the black tresses of hair to the crescent of the eighth day seen rising in the blue sea.

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4. The moon is very near the constellation Pleiades on the day of the Kārttikai festival.

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-Kurn. 129
-Pura. 118
-Aka. 114
-Cirupan. 180-5
-Aka. 2
-Cirupan. 250-53
-Aka. 141
-Ibid.
The Sky

This satellite of the earth is observed by the poets in the early part of the night\textsuperscript{1} and also at dawn,\textsuperscript{2} but it is only the midnight moon that is too frequently mentioned in conjunction with stars and also has apostrophes to it.\textsuperscript{3}

According to Mutukuttanār of Uraiyr, the moon has a lesson even for the ignorant: one can learn the transitoriness and changeability of the lives and things of the world by observing the moon in the sky.

The Stars and the Planets

The stars are treated in general terms. The poets have observed the stars growing paler and appearing fewer at dawn.\textsuperscript{4}

The seven principal stars of Ursa Major, Charles’ Wain (elā min) in a clear blue sky are

1. மிளவான நாகர்கண்ட காவறு
   குறுக்கு பூக்குகள் அபுமிச்சைக் கட்ட.
   —Aka. 201
   மஞ்சோன் காவறு பற்றி இருக்கும்
   பூக்குகளும் பிரச்சனைப்போகின் காவறு...
   —Pura. 376
   மஞ்சோன் காவறு பற்றி இருக்கும் பூக்குகளும்
   கற்களில் கட்ட.
   —Aka. 299

2. குருசின் விளைய.

3. குருசின் விளைய
   அதன் பூக்குகளை விளையை விளையை.
   —Kuru. 47
   பல்குறிக்கு விலை பல்குறிக்கு விலை
   பல்குறிக்கு விலை பல்குறிக்கு
   விளையை விளையை விளையை.
   —Nar. 196

4. பல்குறிக்கு விளையை விளையை
   பல்குறிக்கு விளையை
   பல்குறிக்கு விளையை
   ஆணை ஓர்களும் ஆணை ஓர்களும்
   ஓர்களும் ஓர்களும்
   —Pura. 27

5. பல்குறிக்கு விளையை
   விளையை
   விளையை
   —Aka. 17
   குருசின் விளையை
   விளையை
   —Nar. 48
mentioned in comparison to the small birds playing in the seawater.\textsuperscript{1} The Constellation Pleiades (aru m\textsuperscript{i}n) is mentioned as an important one from the festival point of view and the K\textael{k}\texttip{k}aittirun\textael{l} is said to be that on which the full moon is very near to it.\textsuperscript{2} The star called Uroki\textnil (Hyades, part of Taurus)\textsuperscript{3} and the Aries or the Ram (first zodiacal constellation)\textsuperscript{4} are also referred to.

Of the plants, only the Venus shines bright in literature, being the brightest and transcending in brilliancy even the brightest stars in the sky. The interest with which it has been observed is also to a certain extent due to the belief that it portends the prospects of rain for the year.\textsuperscript{5} As a morning star rising in the early morning and

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{1} Nar. 231
  \item \textsuperscript{2} Aka. 141
  \item \textsuperscript{3} Aka. 86
  \item \textsuperscript{4} Netu. 101-63
  \item \textsuperscript{5} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
dispelling darkness in the blue sky, it indeed deserves the prominence given.\(^1\)

**Clouds**

There are fitting and felicitous touches of description of the clouds that surround and adorn the mountain cliffs.\(^2\) They are said to play over the hills.\(^3\) When they appear white and thin, the hills look as if donned in the garb of the *avarai* blooms.\(^4\) They also resemble smoke of the hills\(^5\) or the soft carded cotton.\(^6\)

The pictures of the rainy clouds accompanied by thunder and lightning at midnight are very elaborately painted.\(^7\) The lightning seen above the

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1. நார் 230
2. ஆக. 47, 97, 133; ஆய. 209; நார் 247.
3. ஆக. 47
4. ஆய. 209
5. ஆக. 97
6. நார் 247
7. ஆக. 133

Ibid. 374.

Pari. 20
mountain cliff kindles the imagination of the poet in a peculiar way; it is to him the winking of the mountain.¹

The clouds draw water from the sea, become darker and darker, cover the atmosphere with darkness, go round the sky, roar with thunder, cause lightning as if they split themselves, come down very low, and pour in torrents without any harsh roar of thunder but with the melody of raindrops that is heard like the sweet tune of the famous harp called 'yal.'²

The raindrops falling on water and creating bubbles are very rarely mentioned;³ the drops on leaves of trees and other plants are described occasionally.⁴

The whole process of raining is compared to the military expedition of a king. One of the verses of Paripātal has many lines devoted to it.⁵

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1. இன்னும் முனையாக மலர்கள் இன்றுவரும் கர்த்தரின் கொலும்.
2. உன்னே உரியதை மூடி முனையாக இறைவர் உண்டும் துளையினால் புரியும், வந்த தோன்றி வெண்பும் பெரும் மராத்தியால் முனையாக இறைவர் உண்டும் துளையினால்
3. உன்றும் துளையினால் வரும் புரியும்
4. உன்றும் துளையினால் வரும் புரியும்
5. Pari. 22.
The clouds are compared to the fighting elephants, the roaring thunder to the beating of the royal drum, the rain drops falling swiftly to the arrows flying fast, the lightning to the spears and the showers poured down to the bounteous gifts of the king to the bards approaching him after the battle is won.

The clouds draw water from the sea and preserve it for twelve months before they empty themselves in raining. In the poet’s imagination, they are pregnant with water for twelve months. Like pregnant women with a keen desire for sour taste, they feel unable to climb over the sky and, therefore, pour down their contents on the hills nearby.¹

The black clouds appearing in groups in the sky are also akin to the herds of elephants in the forests.² The rain descending on the horizon from the clouds is the trunk of the elephant.³ The clouds that have poured rain and become empty are the elephants whose rut is over.⁴

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1. குரு. 287
2. அகல். 183
3. Ibid. 334
4. Ibid. 125
It is only to the rain that there are a great number of apostrophes in ancient literature. There are six poems by six different poets set in different contexts.¹

Hail

It is very rarely mentioned along with showers² and its chief use is in comparison. The fall of hail is likened to the fall of small white flowers from the murukai trees³ and the mardam trees in arid tracts.⁴ The pieces of hail falling down are compared to the dice round in shape⁵ and to the inkai flowers.

Thunder

The roar of thunder is generally said to be harsh.⁷ It is so fierce that it splits the hills and even shakes the Himalayas.⁸ The fire falling with it is compared to the red flowers dropping from the ilavu tree.¹⁰ The superstitious tradition

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¹ Aka. 188; Nar. 130, 238, 248; Kuru. 158, 280.
² Patirrup. 50
³ Aka. 334
⁴ Ibid. 101
⁵ Ibid. 211
⁶ Ibid. 334.
⁷ Ibid. 125
⁸ Nar. 51
⁹ Kuru. 158
¹⁰ Nar. 2

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1. Aka. 188; Nar. 130, 238, 248; Kuru. 158, 280.
2. Patirrup. 50
3. Aka. 334
4. Ibid. 101
5. Ibid. 211
6. Ibid. 334.
7. Ibid. 125
8. Nar. 51
9. Kuru. 158
10. Aka. 320.
that the thunder is an enemy of the snakes and that it kills them, has also its place in literature.¹

Rainbow

The rainbow, though very attractive, is not mentioned as frequently as one might have expected. It is compared to the garland worn on the chest of Vishnu,² and to the neckstripes of the parrot.³ To distinguish it from the ordinary bow, the imaginative phrases ‘eyyā vari vil’⁴ (the bow that is decorated but never used to dart arrows), ‘vānattuk kuraivil’⁵ (the unfinished bow of the sky) and, “vicumpañī vil”⁶ (the bow that adorns the sky) are used.

It may here be said that the descriptions of the sun, the moon and the stars are fewer than those of plants and animals; yet they are enough to reveal the poets’ discriminating and appreciative faculty in the study of what is actually to be seen in the heavens, viz., the never-failing phenomenon of sunrise, the solemn pageant of sunset, the charming and pleasing moonlight, the bright starry sky and the ever-changing charms of the clouds.

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1. செழுக்கு முத்திருமல் தோற்றுமல் வுருணம்
2. செழுக்கு வைரவில் பூர்ணக் பருளும்
3. செழுக்கு
4. குராய் வெளி தியாண கல்லுல்
5. வான்துக் குராயில்
6. விகும்பனி வில

-Kuru. 158
-Aka. 178
-Ibid. 192
Ibid.
-Perumpan. 292
-Aka. 210
Lowes says that the oldest things in the world are the things that also have been new as many times as human beings have been born and cites as examples the moon and the stars which have not grown old because uncounted centuries ago men had seen them and brooded and wondered and dreamed. In ancient literature, it is seen that the poets have that gift to catch and fix the familiar objects of Nature in the sky as well as on the earth in the recurring act of becoming new, the gift of seeing and seizing anew the latent possibilities of familiar objects.

1. Convention and Revolt in Poetry, P. 86.
THE FLORA AND FAUNA

The trees, the shrubs, the herbs and the creepers of the different regions are treated individually and described with great interest and attention. Each of them is introduced by name and many of them are dealt with in detail. The katukkai,¹ the ulinai,² the crab’s eye (kuṇri)³ and the erukku⁴ are mentioned without any elaboration. But the treatment is different in the case of the plants like the iruppai,⁵ the jack,⁶ the vēṇkai,⁷ the bamboo,⁸ the punku,⁹ the screwpine,¹⁰ the punnai¹¹ and the mullai.¹² Their flowers and other parts are compared to the objects they resemble and their colour, form, fragrance and other particulars are minutely observed and picturesquely depicted through purple patches used as epithets.

Some of the trees are mentioned with the birds that nestle in them, e.g. the vēṇkai with the

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¹ Aka. 399
² Patirrup. 63.
³ Aka. 133
⁴ Pura. 106
⁵ Aka. 9, 95, 225, 267, 275.
⁶ Kur. 50; Nar. 213; Patirrup. 60.
⁸ Kali. 43; Aka. 397; Nar. 116.
⁹ Kur. 53, 388.
¹⁰ Nas. 19, 131, 203, 235, 292, 335; Kur. 245; Aka. 180.
¹¹ Aka. 10, 80; Nar. 223, 231, 278.
¹² Ain. 454; Nar. 248, 368; Kur. 108, 220; Pura. 117.
peacock,¹ the mango with the cuckoo,² the palmyra with the *april*,³ and the *yā* with the kite.⁴ The rattan bush is described as the refuge of the otter.⁵ The climber *atiral* is pictured along with the *pātiri* tree⁶ and the *vayalai* with the *vēlam*.⁷

While dealing with the fruits of various trees and the ears of different crops, the particular birds and animals that seek them for their favourite food are also mentioned.⁸ The poets also evince their knowledge of the taste of different fruits. The water one drinks after chewing and eating the *nelli* fruit, is as tasty and sweet as the honeyed words of an affectionate mother fondling her young child.⁹ The *ukāy* fruit tastes as if mixed

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¹, ², ³, ⁴, ⁵, ⁶, ⁷, ⁸, ⁹ See references cited at the end of the text.
with pepper.\(^1\) The trees that yield big bunches of fruits are not neglected. The big drum-like fruits hanging in the branches of the jack tree have attracted the keen and imaginative eyes of the poets who have depicted the scene with a wealth of words.\(^2\) \(\text{Viľkōť palavu,}\) \(\text{vilukkōť palavu,}\) \(\text{tālkōť palavu}\) and \(\text{celuňkōť palavu}\) are the phrases describing this attractive sight of the fruits of the tree. ‘\(\text{Pūnāru palavukkāni}\)’ and ‘\(\text{pacum palap palavu}\)’ refer to the flower-like fragrance of the fruit and to the green colour of its coat even when ripe. The sweet juice in the tender cocoanut is denoted by an imaginative term ‘\(\text{kūlavit tī nīr}\)’ (the sweet water of the infant cocoanut) and the mature cocoanut as ‘\(\text{muppuṭātī tirāl kāy}\)’ (three-sided rounded nut).

Similar descriptive phrases are found frequently in the case of the unripe fruits also. The unripe \(\text{nelli fruit}\) is noted by the phrases pukaril pacuṅkāy,\(^11\) \(\text{vilkaṭātī tirāl kāy,}\)\(^12\) kuvi kaṇ pacuṅ-
kāy,1 pun kay,2 ampuḷi tiraḷ kāy3 and tiṅcuvaţ tiraḷ kāy,4 which refer to its beautiful form, rounded shape, colour and taste.

There is a picture of a neem fruit in the hooked beak of a parrot eating it.5 This suggests to the poet the comparison of the fingers of a man with pointed nails holding globular gold coins to string them into a thread. The form and colour of the nails resemble those of the parrot’s curved beak and the globular gold coins of those days are compared to the ripe neem fruits.

The colour and form of the leaves of the different trees are also accurately described. The epithet ‘ciṟiyilai’ (small leaf) is prefixed to the trees the velam,6 the sandalwood,7 the bamboo,8 the ulīṇai,9 the nelli10 and the neem,11 as these are the trees noted for their tiny leaves. The luxuriant growth of the leaves of the field-beans is noted by the phrase ‘kōḻilai avarai’.12 The most tiny leaf is that of the utai13 tree and is mentioned

1. உருண்ட புருவும். —Aka. 316
2. புனிதம். —Ibid.
3. அம்பரிளை விளகும். —Ibid. 69
4. மண்டிலால் விளகும். —Ibid. 241
5. வெள்ள
வெள்ளாவற்றுள் வந்த பூஞ்சை வெள்ளால் விளக் கூறில்
 கொழுந்து செய்து வெள்ளாய். —Kuru. 61
6. Aka. 89.
7. Nar. 7, 64; Aka. 242.
9. Purīṟup. 68.
10. Aka. 284.
12. புல்லு செய்யுடன். —Ain. 217
13. புல்லு செய்யுடன். —Pura. 324
to illustrate the smallest space on earth. The leaves of the *ar* and the *atumpu* have been observed to be forked. The teak, and the plantain leaves are broad; the dried leaves of the former are blown by the wind and rising high in the sky they resemble the kites flying in confusion. The plantain leaves swing and wave with the wind and the phrase ‘tünkilai vālai’ is a picture by itself. The *nocci* leaves resemble the feet of the peacock. The tender leaves of the *ya* and the *acōku* have a special attraction for the keen artistic eyes of the poets; the former is compared to the wattle of the domestic cock and the latter is so well described by a poet that he came to be remembered as ‘Uṭṭiyār’ by the significant phrase in that description.

1. *நொச்சி, குடும்பம் பொழுது நீர்க்குளியில் பெற்று விளை* மிருந்து வாய்ந்த கொத்தைகள்.

2. *சொடர் வருங்க*.

3. *சோன்று விளை*.

4. *போசர் இழிந்து உறைய*.

5. *நூடி எருந்து விளை* என்று

6. *நூடி எருந்து விளை*.

7. *நூடி எருந்து*.

8. *மூத்த தூவி மீர் எழுதி*.

9. *குளோ வருங்க*.

10. *குளோ வருங்க*.

11. *மூத்த தூவி மீர் எழுதி*.

12. *குளோ வருங்க*.

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(Pura. 363)

(Aka. 104)

(Ibid. 80; Kuru. 243)

(Aka. 107)

(Ibid. 143)

(Nar. 309)

(Aka. 143)

(Ibid. 299)

(Kali. 50)

Kuru. 138

(Aka. 257)

(Kuru. 244; Aka. 273)

(Aka. 187)

(Ibid. 68)
The wind is pictured along with the descriptions of the trees as blowing and swaying the branches, blowing down their dried leaves and faded flowers, shedding their pollen, spreading their fragrance far and wide and causing the dried seeds to rub together and sound like drums and other instruments.\(^1\) The wind also waves the aerial roots of the \textit{irri} and other trees and bends and breaks the tender stems and stalks of some plants of delicate structure.\(^3\) The pictures of the waving \textit{cempu}\(^4\)

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1. \textit{thb} [Aka. 1]

2. \textit{thb} [Kuru. 7]

3. \textit{thb} [Aka. 57]

4. \textit{thb} [Ibid. 78]

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1. \textit{thb}

2. \textit{irri}

3. \textit{thb}

4. \textit{cempu}
and lotus leaves\(^1\) are interesting when they are compared to the elephant’s ears and the comparisons are most appropriate and artistic. In summer, the arai (or aracu) tree is full of hanging leaves and when the wind blows it makes its characteristic sound ceaselessly and scares away the birds that come and perch on its branches.\(^2\) The waving aerial root of the banyan tree frightens away the doves likewise.\(^3\) The west wind tosses the aerial roots of the irri tree so as to swing to and fro and stroke the she-elephant sleeping nearby.\(^4\)

Many of the stanzas have accounts of the blossoming of the flowers. While describing their fragrance and colour, the poets express a sincere and naive interest in them; scarcely a single detailed landscape scene can be found which does not contain some reference to them. The seasons and hours in which the blossoming of various plants takes place have been observed clearly. The season of blossoming is sometimes used as an epithet to the plant itself, as in ‘mārip pittikam’\(^5\) (the pitti-
The treatment of nature), ‘venil pātiri¹’ (the patiri of summer), ‘vēnil atiral²’ (the atiral of summer).

The tulāy has been rarely mentioned in Sangam literature. It has been praised for its fragrance and the phrase ‘kamalkural tulāy³’ is the title of a poem itself. That of the screwpine flowers is also described with interest⁴ and the epithet ‘vēnil nāṟram’ refers to its abundance in scent.⁵

The name vēnkai also denotes the tiger and it is a wondrous sight that the blossomed tree resembles the tiger with its dots and stripes.⁶ This fact has attracted the imagination of many poets of the age and they have described the elephants attacking with vengeance⁷ or running away from the tree mistaken for a tiger.⁸ The poet Ceṅkannanār has put this fanciful image in a nutshell in the three

1. तुलय परमी। — Aka. 257
2. तुलय सली। — Ibid. 261
3. कपित्रु अन्प्रव। — Patirup. 31
4. उपन्यास खेल वेंकत चारण श्रीराम करणम धर्मरथी गृहदेव भागवत अमृत त्रिवेण वेणुविक्रम निवृत्तम भुज्य परम्परागत अष्ट सुदर्शन समाप्तम। Nar. 19. — Aka. 180
5. भेंजी सिना ललितिक श्रेयम
   उपवासी तासेवी देवीक कालुकस आध्यात्मिक गीतम नाम। — Nar. 335
6. आम्बू वेंकत देवभास काविक
   भर्तृता वृंदावन आधुनिक अनुभूतिक विश्वास। — Pura. 202
7. नमुना ललितस्वामिनु पुष्प पारंपरिकका
   विद्यानि अविधात तथ्यमुपात। — Kali. 38
8. उपन्यास खेल वेंकत चारण
   त्रिवेण भुज्य परम्परागत समाप्तम। — Aka. 12

Ibid. 228.
words 'vēnkaiyum puli īraṇa'11 meaning that the tree has blossomed tiger.

Similarly the kāyā tree2 is said to blossom the collirium, the tōnri the lamps or blood,3 the kandal the ladles,4 the kōtāl the hands5 and the koṇrai gold.6 The flowers of the koṇrai,7 the pitavu,8 and the kānci9 are found in garland-like bunches and are, therefore, said to blossom garlands. The akatti blooms10 like the tusks of the wild boar and the ilavu is distinguished by the epithet 'erippu' (fire-like blossoms). The flowers of the punlu11 the nālal,12 the iruppai13 and the murukku,14 are also observed and described by

1. Thālakē pūndiḻ kāyā. —Nar. 389
2. Viṣṇuviḻ kāyā. —Mullaip 93
3. Viṣṇuviḻ kāyā. —Nar. 69
4. Kottulē pūndiḻ. —Aka. 235
5. Viṣṇuviḻ kāyā. —Mullaip. 96
6. Viṣṇuviḻ kāyā. —Aka. 108
7. Viṣṇuviḻ kāyā. —Viṭṭaip. 95
8. Viṣṇuviḻ kāyā. —Ibid. 94
9. Viṣṇuviḻ kāyā. —Ibid. 497
10. Viṣṇuviḻ kāyā. —Aka. 34
11. Viṣṇuviḻ kāyā. —Ibid. 296
12. Viṣṇuviḻ kāyā. —Ibid. 341
14. Viṣṇuviḻ kāyā. —Kuru. 341
15. Viṣṇuviḻ kāyā. —Aka. 240
16. Viṣṇuviḻ kāyā. —Ibid. 9
17. Viṣṇuviḻ kāyā. —Ibid. 41
18. Viṣṇuviḻ kāyā. —Kali. 88
comparisons to similar objects in Nature or elsewhere. The beautiful forms of the buds of the inkai, the lotus, the vetci, the kuravu and the iruppai are also depicted with appropriate comparisons. The flowers that have soft hair-like parts called tuy are specially mentioned with them.

As expressed by F. C Prescott, whatever new faculty the poet may develop, whatever wisdom he may get from his experience of life, he must above all keep something of the child’s freshness and vividness of imagination. The poets are said to be men who still see with the eyes of childhood. While describing the flowers and fruits of various trees, the poets are thus seen to evince their child-like observation and imagination. They seem to have a simple and sincere delight in nothing their colours and forms and tastes.

1. உண்மையான விளக்கம் வாய்ந்ததில் நாம் அன்றாலோல், அல்லா குரளில் அய்யாவில் குருவி புகைந்த.

2. மரக்கச் சிற்றில் பூச்சள் தொகு குரட்டி பண்டை குருவியில் புறப்பணை.

3. முழுமது நிறிய சக்கரிப் பூம்.

4. பயிலும் பாண்டு அய்யாந்திரி தற்க.

5. புவியில் பும்பு அய்யா பும்ன்பன.
   Ibid. 267.

6. ஐயன் வெளியில் பும்பு வந்து.
   Ibid. 294.

7. அம்மகல குரும்பு பும்பில.
   Ibid. 387; Patirrup. 86; Kuru. 110.

Further, even familiar things have attracted the eyes of these artists of child-like imagination. With common men, if familiarity does not breed contempt, it may breed indifference or induce a state of passivity which borders on indifference. But this sort of imagination of the poets helps to develop a critical appreciation of familiar things as well as new and unfamiliar ones and open their eyes to their beauty. The dweller in the country is apt to care little for the wild flowers which are a wonder and a delight to the dweller in the cities. But the poets have the special gift of discovering the beauty of Nature even in the common things of his familiar surroundings, and their perceiving powers never grow blunt or dull. As an example, the poets’ treatment of the *neruṇci* flower may be cited. *Neruṇci* is generally seen in the uncultivated or desolate parts and along the pathways of certain villages.¹ The flower is neither attractive in colour nor fragrant in smell but the poets appreciate it for always turning towards the direction of the sun and use it in comparisons in three contexts to explain the devoted life of the chaste heroine,² the attachment of the hero to the prostitute³ and the grateful

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1. ¹—Kuru. 202
   —Pura. 155
   —Patirrup. 26

2. ²—Kuru. 315

3. ³—Kuru. 315
   —Aka. 335
feelings of a poet towards his munificent patron. Even the mushroom\(^2\) and the duckweed\(^3\) are referred to in such comparisons. As defended by Shelley, poetry turns all such things to loveliness; it strips the veil of familiarity from the world, and lays bare the naked and sleeping beauty, which is the spirit of its forms.\(^4\)

The petals of the plantain flower dropping down one by one day by day\(^5\) and the flowers of the marāam with spirals turned to the right\(^6\) are described in apt phrases. There are deft descriptive touches of the screwpine flowers with their thorny petal covering them and protecting the soft fragrant ones inside which later on slowly emerge from them and spread their scent far and wide.\(^7\)
The pictures of the āmpal and the lotus blossoms are highly imaginative.

The height of many stately trees is depicted in apt words but not exaggerated. The bamboos grow very high, as noted by the phrases like 'ōnku kalai' and 'nītu amai.' The branches of the yā tree stretching high have an attraction for the poet's eye.

The stems of various creepers and climbers are described with apt epithets. Some like the vallai stem are said to be tubular, some are noted for their delicate structure, some are described to be interlacing and some are depicted to be thorny. As in the case of other features, the poets...
try to picture them successfully by comparisons. The varaku⁶ and the blackgram⁵ and the field-beans⁴ are also depicted in artistic pictures. The seeds of the greengram⁵ and other plants are also pictured with appropriate phrases.

The bulbous roots of the ginger⁶ and the seeds of the kalli⁷ and the blooms of the ayuku⁸ are said to be like dolls in form. The hanging or waving aerial roots of the irri tree by the side of a rock suggest the imaginative picture of the waterfall in a mountain or the raised trunk

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1. நீர்ப்பார் நீங்கும் லங்கத்து மூன்றாக மையட.
   —Ain. 211
   —Kuru. 256

2. நீர்ப்பார் நீங்கும் தூய்வி மிகுதியும் புறார் மூழ்கு அதிகார.
   —Malal. 112-9

3. புத்தாகர் அரண அயனார் துங்கத்து தொடா மையா.
   —Pura. 120

4. அல்லாந்து பரீங்கள் பயணம் பிளாக்கம் தூத்தியும் புறார் மூழ்கு மையா அதிகார.
   —Malal. 109-10
   —Kuru. 240

5. துரை
   புள்ளியே பிளாக்க புறார் அம்மா.
   —Aka. 339
   —Pura. 297

6. பேசப் பெரும் அண்டாகியே புள்ளியே பிளாக்கம் தூத்தியும்
   —Malai. 125-6

7. பேசப் பெரும் அண்டாகியே புள்ளியே பிளாக்கம் தூத்தியும்
   —Nar. 314

8. புத்தாகர் அரண அயனார் புள்ளியே பிளாக்கம் தூத்தியும் புறார் மூழ்கு மையா அதிகார.
   —Aka. 186
of an elephant. The screwpine's aerial roots have no such suggestion but its name *tālai* is common for the cocoanut tree also and when describing the latter, they distinguish it as 'vīḷ il tālai' (the *tālai* that has no aerial roots). The aerial roots of the banyan tree has, of course, special descriptive notes, and there is a very interesting picture of a very old tree that has lost its trunk but is supported by its aerial roots on all sides.

Just as the animals in the arid tract are depicted to suffer and faint on account of the abnormal heat, so also the trees therein are described to be deprived of leaves and to wither away. Big trees like the *yā* and the *marām* also do not cast shade in desert tracts. The little shade that they offer is said to be so much interspersed with light as to look like a net spread on the ground. Even the bamboos and the *mavāl* which are generally

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1. *பொண்டு தீன் காவியால் கால்கள்
   செருப்பு சுவாசிப்பா குறிப்பிட்டாத.
   இமயம்மன் அறன் பொண்டு விதியா.
   கால்கள் கொல்கன அப்பங்கள்
   பயன்படுத்த வேண்டிய பாதம்.

2. *மூலம் சரணாம் சுமேத கார.

3. *பாழிகள் மழிகாள் கூடியதாம்
   மூடுந்திருக்கும் கால்கள்.

4. *மன்னர் கால்கள் கருணாய குறாம்
   பாழிகள் கூடியதாம் கால்கள்.

5. *மின்ன நடிய தோட்டம் நர.
   சூறை பயர் கால்கள் கூடியதாம்
   பாழிகள் கூடியதாம் பாதம் கால்கள்.


7. *பாலம் நிரம்.
   கால்கள் கூடியதாம் கால்கள்.
   மின்ன நடிய தோட்டம் கால்கள்
   பாழிகள் கூடியதாம் பாதம்.

8. *Aka. 173, 347

9. *அகாவ் விரித்திய கால்கள்.

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able to withstand the heat of summer are said to shrink and wither away in this hot region.

Nature's mischief in the plant-world is also depicted in respect of some of the trees. A mature cocoanut is described to drop down on a pot of rice cooked by the wayfarers and a palmyra fruit to fall down on a neythal flower in the backwaters and crush it down and plunge into the deep mire. A ripe jack fruit drops down into a deep cleft of a hill and on its way destroys a honeycomb full of honey. A kantal fruit is described to fall over an āmpal bud and cause it to blossom prematurely. In a picture by Maturaik Kanakkāyanār, the bamboos were when the wind blows, and betray the tiger hiding in their midst.

Among the plants, the nocci, the tinai crop, and the vayalai and mullai creepers are those that have apostrophes addressed to them. The mullai

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1. Perumpan 364-5
2. Nar 372
3. An. 214
4. Nar. 345
5. An. 27
6. Pura. 272
7. Nar. 251
8. Aka. 388
9. Pura. 242; Kuru. 162.
has two. Its blossom being a symbol for chaste life and a herald of the early winter stands as the most popular of the flowers in ancient Tamil literature just as the lotus flower has occupied a similar place in the literature of later days.

On the whole it may be said that the plants are given abundant and discriminating attention, but this attention rarely goes beyond external, artistic qualities.

It is a well-known fact that the names kurinci, mullai, pālai, marutu, neytal, vetci, karantai, kānci, uḷiṇai and nocci are very popular names in literature indicating some of the trees as well as the different aspects of love and war. Especially the first five of these indicate in Tamil literature the well-known five aspects of love and the five regions of land appropriate to them. Though there are arguments in favour of the theory that the names originally indicated the aspects of love and then the respective regions as expounded by Naccinārkkiṇyar,1 there is also a school of thought which agrees with the earliest commentator Iḷampūraṇar2 and believes that the names originally indicated the flowers and then only the regions concerned and finally came to symbolise the associations of love of those regions.3 This proves the interest of the ancient Tamils in associating their lives with Nature.

1 Tol. Por. 5; Nar. 2. Ibid, Ilam.
3. We know that the ancient Tamils distinguished five regions (tinaś): kurinci, neytal, mullai, palai and marutam. These names were given probably after the trees or flowers which grew abundantly in the respective regions.—V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar, Studies in Tamil Literature and History, p. 273.
through the plants of the various regions and also the intimate knowledge they had of them.

In the descriptions of the manners and habits of the animals, the terrestrial, the amphibious, the arboreal, the aquatic and the aerial, the poets have evinced powers of equally accurate and minute observation. Their word-pictures of the various animals are delightful and interesting. Not only the domestic animals like the cow and the ox but also the wild animals like the deer and the tiger are dealt with in detail. In fact, the domestic animals are not described as elaborately as the wild ones. The buffalo, the bull, and the ass have slender references.\(^1\) As regards the domestic cat, there is no description of it, whereas the wild cat is mentioned frequently and sometimes described.\(^2\) But the elephant, the tiger, the deer and the wild boar are so frequently and so elaborately brought in that one wonders why the cow and the dog at home have not so much attracted the eyes of the poets. Even among the wild animals, there are some which are rarely mentioned and never described, e. g., the jackal.\(^3\) Yet, it has to be concluded that the poets of this age treat more of the wild animals than of the domestic ones.

This may be easily inferred from a study of the animals with reference to the regions to which they belong. Most of the animals described in Sangam literature belong to the mountain and the forest regions, either in their fertile or arid state,

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1. Aka. 14, 64, 87, 156, 341; Kuru. 104, 204.
2. Aka. 297, 367; Pura. 117, 324, 326; Kuru. 107, 139, 220.
3. Aka. 198, 274.
and only a few belong to the agricultural and the maritime tracts. The buffalo, the otter, the turtle, the snail and the crab are those described in the poems on the agricultural tract, and the various kinds of fish, the shark, the crab and the conch find place in the descriptions of the maritime tract. But most of the wild animals in the mountains and forests are observed with interest and depicted in detail. There are sparse references to the mule and the camel which are not native to this country. An animal called ācuṇam, which is extinct now, is mentioned with an interesting tale about its sharp ear for music. The lion is referred to with the name āli which, in the literature of later days, denotes a fabulous animal with the elephant’s trunk and the lion’s body. There are many references to the otter, the wild goat, the wild cow and the wild ox which are now either rare or extinct species in the country.

The elephant, the bear, the tiger and the wild pig play a prominent part in similes detailing their legs, heads and other parts. Even their habits are dealt with in detail. Interesting pictures of the fear and anger of the elephant at the sight

1. Aka. 88; Nar. 244.
2. Aka. 252, 381; Perumpan. 258-59.
3. Aka. 6, 16, 336; Nar. 195, 390; Kuru. 364.
5. Aka. 3, 238; Kuru. 363; Pura. 57.
7. Aka. 148, 179, 228, 251, 347; Nar. 47; Kuru. 180, 232.
8. Aka. 8, 15, 88, 201; Nar. 325; Tiru. 313-3
10. Nar. 98; Aka. 84, 178, 277, 322.
of the blossomed venkai tree which resembles a tiger, are frequently met with. The tiger and the wild cat are noted for their cunning act of lying in wait for their prey and pouncing on and seizing them.

The thirsty elephant mistaking the spider's web for a white cloud, and the crab mistaking a black beetle for a naval fruit, are all interesting. There are verses dealing with the affectionate life of the animals with their mates, their sacrifices for one another and their sufferings while separated, especially in the case of the elephants, the tigers, the deer and the crabs. The care and attention of the parent animals towards their young ones are well depicted in the case of the elephants, the monkeys and the wild pigs.
In the pictures of some other animals such as the bear neither their family life nor their affection for their young ones is dealt with. The poets have noticed and described the life of certain kinds of animals living as herds with a leader for each group. The various kinds of sounds of roar or cry of the tigers, the sheep, the crickets, and the toads are given in appropriate contexts.

The poets have imagined the fish and other aquatic creatures in the tanks and backwaters as feeling afraid of the objects that look like their enemy. There fancies of the kențai fish and the prawn afraid of the white lotus bud or the screw-pine bud that looks like a crane waiting for its prey, excite appreciation. The shadow cast on the deep water by the rattan stem waving on the bund is mistaken by the vālai fish for the fisherman's angle, as the poor creature has once had its own bitter experience of it. The superstitious ideas that the cobra has a gem disgorged to throw

1. Aka. 15, 218, 248; Alm. 275; Kall. 25.
2. Kuru. 237; Alm. 218; Nar. 383.
4. Aka. 89, 303; Patirrup. 23.
5. Aka. 154, 301; Kuru. 193.
6. கூறுவர்கள் தனிகள் விளக்கந்த அபுத் தலையும் தலையும் வடிவில் வாழ்க்கை மேற்கொண்ட கூறுவர்கள்.
—Kuru. 127
7. கூறுவர்கள் தனிகள் விளக்கந்த அபுத் தலையும் தலையும் வடிவில் வாழ்க்கை மேற்கொண்ட கூறுவர் என்னும் என்னும் கூறுவர்கள் என்னும் என்னும் தலையும் தலையும் வடிவில் வாழ்க்கை மேற்கொண்ட கூறுவர் என்னும் என்னும் கூறுவர்கள்.
—Nar. 211
8. கூறுவர்கள் தனிகள் விளக்கந்த அபுத் தலையும் தலையும் வடிவில் வாழ்க்கை மேற்கொண்ட கூறுவர் என்னும் என்னும் கூறுவர்கள் என்னும் என்னும் கூறுவர்கள்.
—Perumpan. 286-8
light while seeking prey in the dark, that the thunder strikes at and kills it, and that the lizard is a prognosticator, have their right place in the poems.

The instinctive qualities of some of the animals have also drawn the attention of the poets. The tiger is said to eat only that prey which, when stuck, falls to its right and to leave off that which falls otherwise even if it be a fat one like an elephant. There are funny accounts of the cunning acts of the monkey. The elephant is resourceful in

1. The tiger is said to eat only that prey which, when stuck, falls to its right and to leave off that which falls otherwise even if it be a fat one like an elephant. (Aka. 72)

2. Bastin, A., 1924, pp. 355 and 202

3. Ibid. 151

4. Ibid. 351, 387

5. Nar. 22

Ibid. 379.

Kuril, 335
saving its mate as well as itself from danger. When the male elephant slips and falls into a deep slippery pit, its mate breaks off big branches and throws them into the pit so as to improvise steps for the fallen animal to come up. 1 A pit dug for a well and left unfinished gets itself covered with the dried leaves there, and when the elephants pass by they notice it and mistake it for the pit dug out by the hunters to ensnare them and with great anger fill it up. 2 The wild boar is depicted to be very careful while entering the tina field. 3 There is a picture in which a boar is about to walk into a trap kept by the watchmen in the field but hearing a lizard’s tickling fortunately hesitates and slowly steps back and wisely retreats to its rocky dwelling. 4 It is an animal well known for its heroism in defending its mate and young ones. A boar attacks a hunter’s dog, terrifies his followers, runs away beyond their reach, takes the young ones in its care, and with an aim to protect its mate and kith and kin stands at the entrance of

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1. அகாட்சி புவியின் சீரமைப்பு பொட்டியின் அரித்து ஒருவர் பிப்பு குச்சும் இருக்கும் புகாரம்.

2. நிலையால் பூட்டிக் குறிப்பிட்டு கூறும் புகாரம் குறிப்பிட்டு பூட்டிக் குறிப்பிட்டு முடியும் திரையான தொன்று.

3. அச்சாமல் விளைக் காத்து பூர்விதச் செய்யலான பூர்விதச் செய்யலான பூர்விதச் செய்யலான பூர்விதச் செய்யலான பூர்விதச் செய்யலான பூர்விதச் செய்யலான பூர்விதச் செய்யலான

4. ………………… சில்லா பணி

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-Akn. 8

-Ibid. 21

-Ibid. 88

-Nar. 89
its cave expecting the hunter himself there. The poet continues the story and says that the hunter comes there and appreciates its heroic deed and returns without harming it. When ferocious it is said to attack even the tiger. The deer is depicted to be wise enough to blow and breathe upon the surface of water in a pool before drinking it, so as clear it of the faded mullai flowers falling from above.

As regards the crocodile, there is not a single reference to its pretences signified by the proverbial saying ‘to shed crocodile tears’, nor is there such a proverb in Sangam literature. The turtle is described to have an instinct for hatching its eggs and bringing up its young ones. The pregnant turtle tears off the atumpu creepers, lays eggs on the sandy shore and covers them with the creepers. Its mate looks after the spot till the eggs are hatched. The oviparous young ones are afterwards taken care of by the mother.
The peculiarities in the lives of various animals are noted and specified. For example, the crocodile is said to eat its own young ones, and the mother crab is said to die after delivering young ones.

The favourite food of the different animals is carefully noted in the descriptions. The bear seems to have a special craving for the comb of the white-ants, nest in the ant-hill and digs it out with its hand-like forelegs; the poets have pictured it in various stanzas with appropriate comparisons. The poets have not ignored even the particulars that the tiger first sucks and drinks the blood of its prey and eats the flesh afterwards.

The white-ants' ant-hill and the spider's web are referred to in many verses; it is only the former

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1. Aka. 160
2. Ibid. 24
3. Ibid. 81, 88, 257; Nar. 125, 386.
4. Nar. 158
5. Aka. 72, 257.
6. 111, 190, 298; Perumpan. 285-7.
that is appreciated for the great endeavour of the termites in raising them.¹

The luxury that Nature provides for these animals has been the subject of description in many stanzas. A female monkey drinks the sweet water of the stream mixed with the honey dropping from the plantain flowers.² In another picture, the sweet juice of the plantain and jack fruits drops into the water in a rocky pool which becomes a self-fermented intoxicant and acts of the monkey that drinks it.³ Later on this animal tries to climb up the adjacent sandalwood tree but fails and falls down but only on a comfortable bed of fragrant soft flowers. Nature also arranges the peacock to dance with the necessary accompaniment of an orchestra and to entertain the monkeys that from the critical audience.⁴ The monkeys

¹. न्यूयर प्रलक्षक विशेषता विशेषता
   कोडाइकिरण जान सावरून सावरून विशेषज्ञ
   इबिड. १४८।

². न्यूयर प्रलक्षक
   कोडाइकिरण जान सावरून सावरून
   कोडाइकिरण जान सावरून सावरून।

³. न्यूयर प्रलक्षक
   कोडाइकिरण जान सावरून सावरून
   कोडाइकिरण जान सावरून सावरून।

⁴. न्यूयर प्रलक्षक
   कोडाइकिरण जान सावरून सावरून
   कोडाइकिरण जान सावरून सावरून।

—Nar. 855
—Aka. 2
—Aka. 81
—Aka. 82
are accustomed to such fragrant smells of Nature that when a flock of cranes comes and perches on the branches of a jack tree, they sneeze on account of the bad odour of fish that the birds emit.\(^1\) When an elephant sleeps near a plantain tree, a light breeze slowly waves its broad leaves so as to stroke the mammal gently.\(^2\) When sleeping near an \(iyyi\) tree its aerial roots similarly caress the mammal and make it sleep.\(^3\) While on the bank of a stream, the noise of its flow serves as its lullaby.\(^4\) The luxurious life of the wild boar is also equally interesting. It drinks water of the drum-like rocky pool, then eats the rounded rooks of the \(cēmpu\), walks over the elephant-like rocks, brushes against the white \(kūtalam\) flowers and with their gold-like pollen on its touchstone-like back eats the bending \(tinai\) ears and sleeps there happily.\(^5\)

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1. சோயிக்கினையால் மலிகம் பாலகுறுத் தானும்

2. அம்மான் எடுத்துத் தவுகுறை பலிசு பலகுறுத் தகவும்.

3. பூங்கா என்று உருவான உயிரின் கூறுலில் தகவும் தோறை

4. அப்பொழுது உருவான உயிரின் அத்திரிக்

5. நாம் என்று எலும்பள் செய்து

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\(^{1}\) Nar. 326

\(^{2}\) Akm. 302

\(^{3}\) Nar. 162

\(^{4}\) Kali. 42

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region, the buffaloes enjoy such a life. They enjoy plunging into the deep waters of the tanks and rest in the pleasant shade of the marutu trees.\(^1\) A buffalo is depicted to tread upon the fish, feed on the rich *kuvalai* flowers and rest itself on the bed of the *kuvalai* blooms under the shade of a jack tree on which the pepper creepers climb; there the soft leaves of the turmeric are said to chafe its back, and while chewing cud, the animal is depicted to emit the smell of honey as a result of eating the flowers full of nectar.\(^3\)

The descriptions of the animals suffering from the heat of the arid tract in summer excite pathos. Finding the ground too hot, the elephant walks with warily so as not to touch it with its trunk.\(^5\) When thirsty, it runs after the mirage and with utter disappointment in the end lies on the way like a boat in a waterless river.\(^4\) The thirsty
animal is depicted to raise its trunk and breathe hard sounding like the instrument called *tumpu.*

With raised trunk it look at the sky for rainy clouds. When the scorching heat becomes unbearable, the deer likewise forgets the food of leaves and faints forlorn.

It is not primarily the objects of Nature described, but the method of describing those objects that makes these word-pictures interesting. The pathetic descriptions of the sufferings of the animals and of their sorrowful cries move the reader and strike a sympathetic chord in him. Here lies the greatness of the ancient poets as artists in words. For, according to T. G. Tucker, fine art is the expression of that which the artist experiences, or sees, or imagines, or thinks, in a manner so perfect that he contrives to communicate to others his own sensations, emotions, visions or conceptions, and literature is such a fine art, as evidenced by these descriptions of the animals of the arid tract.

There are also pathetic descriptions of the sufferings of the animals in other regions. A female monkey is said to have lost its young one in a deep cleft and to mourn over its loss by crying aloud

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1. *Tampu* 377
2. *Aka. 383*
3. *Ibid. 353*
4. *The Judgement and Appreciation of Literature, p. 9*
among its group.\(^1\) On the death of its loving mate, another female monkey is imagined to hand over its young one to its kith and kin and perform sati by falling down from the top of a hill.\(^2\) The male elephant is depicted to deny itself food when its loving mate is missing.\(^3\) When the male is devoured by a python, its mate roars aloud throughout the mountain without sleep or rest.\(^4\)

There are no references to the poet's sympathy or love towards domestic animals. Want of biographical evidences as to such sympathy and love keeps one in the dark. Anyhow, the verses depicting there love for wild animals are enough to show that some of them might have been as much kind and affectionate towards domestic animals as Byron had been towards his horses and bear and wolf and as Scott towards his favourite dog, Camp, which he solemnly buried in his garden with the whole family weeping round the grave.\(^5\)

There are many artistic pictures of comparison to the animals in different postures. For example:

1. நாராயணம் மேல் கூர்மல் மாதிரி
   
   நாராயணம் மேல் கூர்மல் மாதிரி
   
   நாராயணம் மேல் கூர்மல் மாதிரி
   
   —Malai. 311—14

2. கைத்திருமாணங்காளி போட்டும் போட்டும்
   
   கைத்திருமாணங்காளி போட்டும் போட்டும்
   
   கைத்திருமாணங்காளி போட்டும் போட்டும்
   
   —Kuru. 69

3. கைத்திருமாணங்காளி போட்டும் போட்டும்
   
   கைத்திருமாணங்காளி போட்டும் போட்டும்
   
   கைத்திருமாணங்காளி போட்டும் போட்டும்
   
   —Aka. 392

4. கைத்திருமாணங்காளி போட்டும் போட்டும்
   
   கைத்திருமாணங்காளி போட்டும் போட்டும்
   
   கைத்திருமாணங்காளி போட்டும் போட்டும்
   
   —Nar. 14

5. G.Brandes, Main Currents in Nineteenth Century Literature, Vol, VI, p. 10,
when an elephant raises its trunk between the tusks and thrusts it into its mouth, it resembles a big snake entering into a cleft in a hill;\(^1\) raised and placed on the streaked forehead, it looks like a snake crawling over a rock.\(^2\) When the young turtles climb over and sleep on the dome-shaped shell of the mother turtle, they resemble small copper vessels placed on the grain measure called ‘ampanam’;\(^3\) rush of the turtle in water is a stone splintering off and its slow movement is a drunkard’s walk.\(^4\)

The footprints of some of the animals are depicted with apt comparisons. The mark of the elephant’s foot on the wet mud is compared to the centre of the drumhead and that of the tiger walking over the elephant’s footprints to the hand marks of the drummer beating at the centre.\(^5\) The elephant’s footprints are also compared to the

\(^1\) Aka. 391

\(^2\) Ibid. 349

\(^3\) Ain. 48

\(^4\) Aka. 256

\(^5\) Ibid. 155
beds in the sugar-cane field. The rounded hoofs of the deer make such cavities on sand that, when filled up with bubbles of water in rainy season, they look like silver cups. The marks made by the crabs running over the soft sand on the sea coast are like decorative lines, which the waves immediately wash away. When they move through the tiny nāḷal flowers shed on the shore, their marks resemble the finger-marks of the women spreading with their hands the tinai grain drying in the sun.

The artistic use of appropriate epithets in describing the animals is positive proof of the keen observation of Nature on the part of the poets. The front legs of the bear are called peruṅkai (long hands) as opposed to the epithet kuruṅkai (short hands) referring to the tiger's front legs which are used as hands in attacking, seizing and eating its prey: the sharp claws of the bear are sheathed by the skin when unused and the phrase 'tūṅku tōl tutiya vallukir' aptly describes this; 'its legs are covered by thick hair as noted by the

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1. Kuru. 262
2. Nar. 124
3. Kuru. 328
4. Nar. 267
5. Aka. 72, 171, 201
6. Ain. 216
7. Aka. 8
epithet "mayirkkāl"; its head is said to be bent down (kavi talai) and its mouth red like fire (aḷal vāy); its body is bent and curved (kūṇal) and its walk is short-paced (kuru naṭai). While describing the tiger, the ferocious red eyes, the bright sickle shaped stripes on the body, the neck like the trunk of the palmyra and the large cleft mouth are noted by the epithets ceṅkaṇ, kaṭuṅkaṇ, vāḷvari, kuyavari, paṇaimaruḷ eruttu, kaya vāy, paku vāy, and peḻvāy. The simple epithet "vilai" in the case of the squirrel denotes the fact that it is a harmless creature generally loved and liked by one and all. The chameleon is depicted to change its colour (niṟam peyar mutu pōṭtu); the dog's tail is whirled to the right (valaṇ curī tōkai); a kind of conch has spirals to the right (valam puri). The bear has the epithet "umai" (dumb) which refers to the fact that the

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1. —Aka. 267
2. —Nar. 325
3. —Aka. 247
4. —Ibid. 112
5. —Ibid.
6. Kuru. 321
7. Kall. 43
8. —Aka. 168
9. —Ibid. 398
10. —Ibid. 238
11. —Ibid. 221
12. —Nar. 144
13. —Aka. 277
14. —Ibid. 109
15. —Nar. 186
16. —Aka. 122
17. —Pura. 225; Aln. 193; Nar. 172
18. —Malal. 501
beast makes no loud noise like the other animals and consequently deserves to be called dumb or comparatively silent.

Such artistic epithets are not mere words but the outcome of the intimate experience, keen imagination and serene recollection of the poets who perceived the beauties of the objects of Nature. Dorothy Wordsworth records in her "Journal" that her brother William Wordsworth had tried to seek an epithet for the cuckoo, and after forty-three years found himself able to express the sound of the cuckoo's "wandering voice",¹ A Japanese painter once confessed that he had to concentrate on the bamboo for many years and still a certain technique for the rendering of the tips of bamboo leaves eluded him.² Word painting is no less difficult. While depicting the objects of Nature, the ancient Tamil poets frequently use such simple adjectives that their deep thought and knowledge are distilled into elaborate details. This is especially true in the case of their pictures of animals.

Among the animals, the monkey is depicted to be the most playful. A group of monkeys bathes in the mountain torrent, swings in the swing left hanging by the owners of the \textit{tinai} field and plays among the \textit{venkai} branches dropping down flowers on the rock below.³ The leader of a group

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3. தேவீரம் வைர் செல்லும் பண்பாடின் பெரும் என்று என்று.
   பூமியான மற்றும் பெரும் பூமியான
   பூமியான காற்று செல்லும் காற்று
   காற்று என்று என்று காற்று.

—Nar. 384
takes in its hand a stick of the *cural* plant and beats the bubbles formed in the rain water. Another takes the *narai* creeper and beats a thin cloud approaching it. One climbs the *irri* tree through its hanging aerial roots, and from there runs about. A young langur rolls the eggs of a peacock on a rock and plays with them in the pleasant rays of the morning sun.

The baby elephants are said to play with the boys of the adjacent village. There is a picture of a young elephant competing with a boy and running to take a woodapple just fallen from the tree in front of a house.

The crabs on the seashore do not seem to be playful but the young girls have great pleasure in chasing them out and trying to catch them. This

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1. இரண்டு பெண்கள் குறுக்கில் செல்ல நாயக்க போல் தோன்றிய மரபு புள்ளிகள் பிணிக்கும்.

2. உடலில் கருவாக போர்ந்தவர் கூர்கள் போல் கந்துபட்டல் கூட்டி வெப்பந்த மரையல் புள்ளிகள் பிணிக்கும்.

3. கோலாளத திரு புராணா சிற்றாக தொடர்ச்சியான தங்கி கண்கண்டை வருவ விளக்கும் ஆக்கிரம்.

4. நாளும் வளரும் அடுக்கு பழங்கள் பெயரை போர்ந்த விளக்கும்.

5. பான்வள குறுக்கில் போர்ந்தவர் கூர்கள் போல் கந்துபட்டல் கூட்டி வெப்பந்த மரையல் புள்ளிகள் பிணிக்கும் முறை விளக்கில்.

6. வேலை பெண்கள் வெளியில்படிச்சிகள் கவர்கிய குறுக்கி கூர்கள் போல் கந்துபட்டல் கூட்டி வெப்பந்த மரையல்.

7. குழந்தைகள் குறுக்கில் செல்லும் குருக்கள் கூர்கள் போல் கந்துபட்டல் மரையல் விளக்கும் விளக்கில்.

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1. Ibid. 275
2. Ibid. 276
3. Ibid. 279
4. Kuru. 38
5. Ibid 394
6. Pur. 181
7. Kuru. 308
play is called ‘alavāṇ āṭṭal’ in Sangam literature. The crabs, being very swift and careful, always elude them by plunging into the holes in the soft sand.¹

Though many of the animals are described in detail and with interest and accuracy, they seem to be lacking in the closeness of relationship with the poets; and it is, therefore, that there are not many apostrophes to them as in the case of birds. It is only the crab that is blessed in this sense and only once.² Even the monkey which is so familiar in Sangam literature has none either, perhaps because there is nothing serious in the animal which is by nature humorous; and as such it does not suggest anything to the lovers who in their separation seek vent to their feelings of sorrow.

It is natural that the poets should know, as they have done, birds of all the regions and their ways of life. The habits of birds, their manners of flight, their nests, the trees they choose for their habitation, their ways of protecting their young ones, are all well explained in their descriptions. This only shows that the birds are very much associated with the everyday life of men and play an important part in poetry.

There are many birds which are simply mentioned and nowhere described. It is only birds that affect or are affected by the lives of men that the poets have dealt with in detail. For example, among birds frequently referred to, the parrot is

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¹ Kuru. 201
² Aka. 170
one that has some connection with the *tinai* field. There the birds feed on the corn while the heroine keeps watch over them and scares them away.¹ The owl is a bird with nocturnal habits and its hooting is felt to be a hindrance to the hero coming clandestinely alone at night to his sweetheart.² The bat is a bird of the evenings and its flight reminds the parted heroine of the approach of the desolate evening.³ The peacock is a bird of the early winter season called *kārkālam* and its dance is the harbinger.⁴ The hero’s return is expected, as promised by him, before the season begins, and

¹ Nar. 206
² Ibid. 209
³ Ibid. 378
⁴ Kuru. 291
⁵ Aka. 122
⁶ Ibid. 260
⁷ Kuru. 172
⁸ Ain. 339
⁹ Ibid. 378
¹⁰ Kuru. 251
¹¹ Ibid. 85
as such the bird’s dance plays on the emotions and passions of the heroine. The cuckoo is a bird of early summer, the ilavēnīl, a season most fitted for the enjoyment of lovers. The bird’s note in the season has a very painful effect on the feelings of the heroine in separation. Thus these birds directly or indirectly affect the life of men, especially of the lovers; and this is the reason why they are more often referred to and described with more interest than other birds. In addition to this, their attractive form, their charming movements and their melodious notes have lent colour and grace to poetry.

The parrot being a small bird with beauty and charm in appearance and gay and grace in flight, deserves an important place in literature. But the Sangam poets have not treated it with as much important as the peacock or the cuckoo or the anṁil. There are only very few stanzas in which the bird is referred to with some interest; even in them the ideas are simple and the descriptions slender. Compared to the variety of the picture of the peacock, those of the swan are also very few inspite of its being equally celebrated for

1. puṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟруд
Ibid. 248; Kali. 92.

2. kaḷḷaiṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟ tamil
Ibid. 206

—Nar. 224
—Aka. 324
—Kuru. 67
its gait. The poets have depicted only the simple and happy life of the bird, but nowhere credited it with the popular notion of its power to separate milk when mixed with water as the poets of the later periods have done. The skylark has not been portrayed by any poet, and the only mention about it by different poets is of its song while soaring in the sky longing for rain, and it is said to suffer in the absence of seasonal showers. Its names are given in different forms all expressing the same idea: vanam pāti—that which sings in praise of rain, vanam vāltti—that which praisers rain, tūli nacaip pul—the bird that longs for rain drops and tāli unavin pul—the bird that feeds on rain drops.

Many of the birds live in flocks and the poets never fail to note this with imaginative touches of description. When the cranes perch on the sand-dune along the sea coast, they resemble an army in

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1. Pottalvalugal Valampana Pambu
   Vanam pāti
   —Aka. 34

2. Vanam pul
   —Kali. 69

3. Ibid.

4. Varavāla
   —Ain. 418

5. Usariyam Papan
   —Aka. 67

6. Kāltal Papan
   —Pattaṇa. 3, 4
white uniform;¹ likewise the swans assemble and smooth out their feathers on the sand-dune.² The parrots always fly to the trees and fields in groups as denoted by the phrases 'cevvāyp pācīnām' and 'valai vāyp pācīnām' (the green flock with red beaks or curved beaks).³ The crows too fly together and caw and with their kith and kin⁴ take the offerings made to them.

Some of the descriptive phrases are picturesque and interesting. The parrots are referred to as 'cirukili'⁵ 'centārp paiṅkili',⁶ 'koṭuvāyk killai'⁷ and 'taliriyal killai' (meaning 'small parrots', green parrots of red neck stripes', 'parrots of curved beaks' and 'parrots soft as tender leaves'). The cranes are noted as muṭamutir nārai'⁸ and 'kūral kokku¹⁰ referring to the bent-

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¹ Nar. 291
² Ku. u. 300
³ Aka. 320
⁴ Nar. 298
⁵ Ibid. 373
⁶ Ibid. 348
⁷ Nar. 326
⁸ Aka. 340
⁹ Nar. 20
¹⁰ Akă. 28

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down posture of the birds. The characteristic
dance-like movement of the peacock is pictured
with artistic touches describing its feathery tail.
The phrases 'oli neţum pili,'1 'kāmar pili'2 'ani kilar
kalāvam'3 and 'mani marul kalāvam'4 describe
the tail as beautiful, luxuriantly grown, long,
charming and sapphire-tinted.

There are many kinds of cranes described.5
The owls are of two species, one a night bird
residing in the hollow trunks of trees,6 the other
living in the arid regions.7 The fowls are of
three kinds and the poets have been careful to
distinguish them. The jungle-fowl is always de-
noted by the term vāraṇam5 and thus easily
distinguished from the domestic fowl (maṇaiyurai
kōli).9 The water-fowl is referred to as that
living in water and blue in colour (nīruṟai kōli
nilac cēval).10

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. —Kuru. 264
—Aka. 358. 378
—Nar. 284
—Aka. 242
Kuru. 103, 303; Aka. 290.
—Nar. 63
—Ibid. 394.
Ibid. 21, 297, 39; Aka. 64, 192;
Pura. 52.
—Kuru. 139; Aka. 187, 277.
—Ain. 58.
According to P. H. B. Lyon, there is a mystery in the instincts which govern bird life and to the skilled listener something of this mystery escapes in the songs of birds.\(^1\) Such songs form an important part of the descriptions in Sangam literature. The distinctive calls of the birds are referred to frequently. The owl with nocturnal habits living in the burning grounds and other waste lands is said to make the sound ‘cuttukkuvi’ and is imagined to call to the dead.\(^2\) The hooting of the species living in arid tracts is said to be like the sounds of the drums called *mukuli\(^3\) and *tutë,\(^4\) it is also compared to the sound made by the stones rolled down a hill\(^5\) and to the sound of the iron cast and beaten in the smithy.\(^6\) More often the poets mention its hooting by the verb ‘iraṟṟum’ which means making double notes.\(^7\) The shriek of the kite is noted by the words ‘neṭu vili\(^8\) and ‘teḷ vili\(^9\) and ‘vilaḷi\(^10\)’. The male kite has a

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1. The Discovery of Poetry, p. 122.
2. *Qe̱ṟu̱ḵ Ṯe̱m̱u̱ṉ Q̱e̱ṟm̱ Q̱e̱m̱
distinctive note praised to be melodious when it calls its mate to the nest. The wayfarers are said to compare it to the tune called ‘ili’. The female bird’s voice is sorrowful and moving when it feels the separation of its mate and cries aloud.

Among the singing birds, the place of honour is given to the cuckoo. It is the peculiar, suggestive and flute-like warble or musical note of this songbird that is repeatedly mentioned by the poets. Its pleasant song is said to accompany the music of *yāl* and rouse the people from bed in the early morning. ‘Intim pal kural’ (sweet harmonious voice of many tunes) is the phrase that adequately describes the bird’s song. No other bird is so much praised by the poets for the sweetness of the voice. It makes at daytime such appealing and heart-rending notes when separated from its mate as does the *anvil* bird at nights when similarly separated.

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1. வனவியழிப் பாசனங்கள் வரும் விளக்கம்
   ஹயர்மையும் வேல் ஐரோட்டில் பாடும்
   முன்னிருந்து திருகோல்கள்
   —Aka.

2. ரூபாயுர் குபல் குழுவின் யைல்
   அனுமதிக்கும் என்பது
   பாண்டியரால் விளக்கம்
   —Alm. 321

3. தோற்றம்பட்டு
   அன்பிருமையான வரும் பூமியில்
   பெண்ணுக்கு பெண்ணுக்கு பதிக்கும்
   பரான் குழு பதிக்கிறான்
   —Aka. 279

4. மன்னன் பாடல்
   —Ibld. 355

5. புராணம் அன்ன பாடலின் வாசனை
   வகையை பாடுகிறது என்பதே
   சங்கம் என்று வரும் மற்றும்
   நிதியியல் விளக்கம்
   —Ibld. 229

6. மாராத் பாடலில் முன்னாட்டியின்
   மத்திய சமயம் கிளைக்கு கடும்
   பாண்டியப் பாறை ஐரோட்டும்
   —Ibld. 25.
The flight of the birds has a variety in itself and an attraction for the imaginative eyes of the poets. When the cranes fly in an order high in the air with the background of the evening sky shining in red glow, they are said to look like the white pearl garland on the chest of the red god Murukan.¹ This orderly row of flying cranes suggests to another poet the comparison with a garland of the white kūtalam flowers thrown high into the air.² Though they fly high, they are neither fast nor quick in their flight. The poets notes this by the epithets ‘kurum parai’³ (short flight) and ‘men parai’⁴ (delicate and slow flight). While seeking for fish, the bird is depicted to walk silently with a slow pace like a thief carefully entering a house under watch and ward.⁵ The swans are remarkable for their stately flight very high in the sky and then they seem to approach the sun.⁶ They

¹ Kuth. 92
² Aka. 724
³ Ibid. 273
⁴ Ibid. 346
⁵ Ibid. 40
⁶ Madurai. 385-6
fly in an orderly row (nirai parai annam) and are said to present the appearance of the galloping white horses. The house-sparrow, in the poet's observation, leaps more than it flies and is, therefore, distinguished by the epithet tullunatai.

It is said that poetry and painting, if not brother and sister, are at least nearly akin. But painting cannot really represent action. As explained by Charleton, the painters can only represent it as a scene, a deed done, or a deed about to be done. They paint the horse's foot raised in act to leap, the man's arm bent in act to throw and so on. But the leaping and the throwing are actions, and as actions, they cannot be represented in paint or in pencil. They can only be suggested. But the word-painters have the privilege of representing the actions themselves. The old Greek saying that painting is dumb poetry and poetry is speaking painting is too true in the case of the description found in Sangam literature. The crane is depicted in the act of slowly and cunningly walking on the banks seeking and watching for its prey. The kingfisher is pictured in the act of plunging suddenly and diving into the water to

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1. Kuru, 85
2. Landscape in Poetry, p. 5.
3. The Art of Literary Study, p. 112
4. Principles of Literary Criticism, p. 151
5. -Aka. 234
6. -Aka. 276
catch fish in the tanks. The peacock is described to walk with gait and perform its dance-like movement with its charming tail. There are such complete pictures of the lives of the house-sparrow, and the kite.

In general it may be said that the birds have an appeal both to the eyes and the ears of the poets. They have heard with interest not only the flute-like notes of the cuckoos, but also the pleasant as well as the unpleasant cries of the parrots, the pea-

1. Patirrup. 42
2. Ku. 284
3. Nar. 288
4. Aka. 358
5. Pur. 318
6. Kuru. 46
7. Ibid. 85; Nar. 181.
9. Aka. 12, Nar. 304
cocks, the kites, the owls and the *kanantu*.*

They have been inspired not only by the plumy crests and painted feathers of birds, but also by the dance-like movements of the peacock, by the gait of the swan and the diving act of the kingfisher.*

The flights of the birds, swans, kites and cranes have also attracted their eyes. They have observed the cranes perching in flocks on the sand-dunes in the seashore and smoothing out their feathers. The fighting of the cocks has also been noted with some interest.*

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1. Aka. 86.
   Ibil. 194, 358; Kuru. 391; Pari. 14.


3. *Kuru.* 80S
   Ibil. 19

4. *Pari.* 14
   —Ibid. 39

5. *Kuru.* 107
   —Kuru. 80S

6. *Aka.* 194
   —Aka. 277

7. *Pari.* 326
   —Ibid. 277

8. *Kuru.* 20
   —Kuru. 305
The timidity of the birds, parrots,\(^1\) cranes,\(^2\) crows,\(^3\) and doves,\(^4\) has moved the sympathetic hearts of the poets who have imagined and depicted various incidents in this connection. The mature seeds of the *kalli* tree are said to split up with a snapping or cracking sound and frighten and drive away the couple of doves that come and perch on its branches.\(^5\) The timid birds are also afraid of the spider's web that looks like the hunter's net.\(^6\)

The sympathy of the poets sometimes extends further and imagines provisions for the life of the aged birds unable to fly far off or to move quickly. An aged crane finds itself helpless and quite unable to fly out and therefore quietly perches on a branch.
that bends down and stretches towards the waves on the shore and expects some fish through the waves rising there.\(^1\) An aged kingfisher having lost its strength slowly comes to a tank and perches on a lotus leaf in the water and silently keeps watch for the small fish that come near the leaves.\(^2\)

The sufferings of the birds caught in nets have also drawn the attention of the poets and have been described with pathos. A female crane is said to grieve for its mate caught in the net of some young boys. It stays with its young ones on the palmyra stem and cries aloud piteously without food.\(^3\) There is a pathetic picture of a peacock caught in a net with its charming long tail bent and folded and its attractive feathers broken and scattered.\(^4\)

Such evidences as to the sympathy that existed between the ancient poets and the birds are numerous and show that the poets might have extended this sympathy in their real life as in their imaginative poetic creations. But unfortunately

\(^1\) Kuru. 125
\(^2\) Aka. 106
\(^3\) Ibid. 290
\(^4\) Kuru. 244
there are no biographical records of them as there is in the case of Tennyson who, on account of such sympathy, refrained from shooting the blackbirds and from netting his orchards. ¹

The habits of some birds are described with remarkable accuracy and minuteness. The skill of the weaver-birds in building their “textile” nests is much appreciated. ² The kites are portrayed as keeping their fledglings in the nests built on the topmost branches of tall trees like the yu, so that they may be beyond the reach of mischievous wayfarers and hunters. ³ The affection of birds towards their young ones is depicted in various stanzas especially in the case of the cranes, ⁴ the swans, ⁵ the quails ⁶ and the kites ⁷.

2. Aka. 31
3. Ibid. 83, 193.
4. Aka. 240
5. Ibid. 96
6. Nar. 366
7. Nar. 356
8. Perumpan. 208-9
9. Aka. 240
Some incidents in the lives of the birds like the sparrows, the swans and the kites are imagined and narrated. The way in which a female sparrow treats its mate coming late after spending some time with another female bird is an interesting example. The bird first refuses its mate admission to the nest but finally recalls it with some pity. The swans and the kites are said to mistake things easily and commit errors in life. The pregnant cranes and swans and other birds are treated with sympathy. The male birds taking care of them, building nests for them to lay eggs and feeding them when they are unable to go out and seek food are examples of pictures painted with human love.

1. Nar. 181
2. "Ain. 103
3. Pura. 271
4. Aka. 397
5. Kuru. 301
6. Kuru. 85
7. Nar. 268
The poets have with no less enthusiasm mentioned the skylark which is a bird occasionally heard and very rarely seen.¹ The cuckoo is a bird more often heard than seen and yet the poets have descriptive touches of its red eyes resembling the ukāy seeds² and also of its shining black feathers with the gold-like pollen of flowers shed over them.³ In the case of the skylark, there is not a single description of its feathers or any part of its body, but the ears of the poets are open to discover the hidden songster which is no easy matter.⁴

There is an attempt on the part of the poets to the verbal reproducing of the notes of the owl⁵ and the domestic cock,⁶ and there is also the

1. Ain. 418; Aka. 67; Kali 16; Pura. 198; Tatianap. 3, 4.
2. Aka. 229
3. Kuru. 192
4. Kali. 34
5. Pura. 240
6. Kuru. 157
sentimental interpretation of the notes of the cuckoo,\(^1\) the peacock\(^2\) and other birds.\(^3\)

The reference to migration of birds are very few.\(^4\) Peruntalaic - Cāttaṇār compares his own disappointed return from the patron he approached, to the flock of birds that with dejected feelings leave the trees in which the ripe fruits are over and migrate to another region.\(^5\) Kallāṭaṇār compares the soul departing from the body to a bird that leaves its nest in a tree and migrates to another in a distant place.\(^6\)

Nature is also depicted to provide the birds with certain comforts and luxuries in life and these pictures are creations of the sympathetic imaginations of the poets. For example, the sound of

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<td>&quot;பாரம்பரிய குச்சை &quot;நீர்த்தோன கொரையோர் தந்தையறியால் பொருள் &quot;குச்சையார் என்று அறியியது பொருள் பைபூச்சையார் என்று கையெடுக்கும்.</td>
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4. Pura. 269; Aku. 113. Ain. 325. |

5. Pura. 209 |

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the waves is said to serve as a lullaby to the cranes on the seashore, and while in the fields, the *nikai* shoots or the tender leaves of the mango trees are said to rub softly over their backs and make them sleep. The sound of the waves in the creek of the sea serves the crows as a lullaby in their sleep. The peacock dances in the presence of its mate basking in the morning sun's pleasant rays. The *venikai* blossoms shed their pollen on the charming feathers of the dancing peacock; the bees sing tunes and the owls hoot and keep time to its dance and thus encourage it. The monkey is depicted to act as its drummer but the drum that it has in its grasp is only a jack fruit and produces no sound. A peacock drinks the self-fermented toddy in a rocky pool formed of the

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1. சிறியப்பக்கம் காற்றுக்குக் காற்றுக்கு வாழ்ப்பாடு மறுப்பது இருந்து *முருங்கை* குடித்தை அடைக்கும்.

2. புலவர்கள் கோவன் கோவன் ஏதாவது விட்டு மின்னிலிருந்து வந்தது.

3. காணவெளியில் நிறுவனம் என செய்தது எடுத்து தடுத்தது.

4. மூடுமும் காசு காசு காசு காசு போன்ற மதில்கள் நேர்ந்தது.

5. வருண்டு விலங்கு வளந்து துணிக்கிறழ், பொறியமைக்கும் மதில்கள் நேர்ந்தது.

6. சுருக்குமுதல் சுருக்கு மேல் மேல் நேர்ந்தது போன்ற போ

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1. Kuru. 303
2. Nar. 312
3. Aka. 306
4. Ain. 168
5. Nar. 288
6. Aka. 242
7. Porun. 211-2
8. Ain. 292
9. Ibid. 291
water mixed with honey and with the pulps of the jack fruit and staggers like a lady dancing on a rope.¹

The apostrophes to the parrot,² the owl,³ the cock,⁴ the swan,⁵ the crane⁶ and the crow⁷ show more than anything the soft-heartedness of the poets towards the birds. Naccellaiyār has come to be known as Kākkai-pāṭinīyar Naccellaiyār, the poetess of the crow, through her poem in Kuruntokai appreciating the caw of the bird.⁸

In general, it may be said that some of the Sangam poets must have been great lovers of birds or ornithologists, for the intimate knowledge of their ways and habits displayed could only have been the outcome of long-continued and keen observation.

The bees and the beetles have an important place in Sangam literature. They are almost always associated with the flowers from which they collect the nectar.⁹ Their tiny bright wings have attracted the eyes of the poets.¹⁰ They are not content with small descriptive touches of these

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2. Nar. 376.  6. Nar. 54, 70.
3. Ibid. 83.  7. Ain. 391.
9. Aka. 132, Kuru. 175, 239; Nar. 25; Kali. 66, 74.
10. குறுகிய புரு என்னையியைர் பார்த்தே.  —Kuru. 239
    மாட்டையியைர் பார்த்தே. —Ibid. 392
    உடைய பலனா நேதாதே. —Tiru. 77
insects, but give biographical notes of their lives.\textsuperscript{1} Their nomadic life is narrated with interest.\textsuperscript{2} The humming of the bees is not an ordinary sound but the favourite tune of Nature that the poets enjoy. The buzz of the insects over the temples of the rutlish wild elephant is said to be mistaken for the sweet tune of \textit{yāl} and listened to with interest by the \textit{acunam}, a creature believed to be susceptible to harmony and fascinated by notes of music.\textsuperscript{3} Their humming is depicted to be as melodious as the sweet \textit{yāl} resonating the \textit{vilari} or other tunes.\textsuperscript{4}

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1. \textit{Aka. 132}

2. \textit{Tiru. 73.7}

3. \textit{Cirunah. 73.8}

4. \textit{Aka. 88}

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5. \textit{Ibid. 317}

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6. \textit{Ibid. 35}
In a few instances, the bees are described along with their honeycombs which also attract the imagination of the poets by their bright colour and beautiful form.

The beetles are also described often. There is a humorous picture of a beetle approaching a ripe black naval fruit mistaking it for its kind. A crab runs to the spot thinking that there are two black fruits and snatches the unfortunate beetle first. The poor insect makes its pitiable cry like the sweet tune of yāl and attracts the attention of a crane in its immobile watch for fish and gets itself disentangled when the bird approaches to snatch away the crab.

There are three apostrophes to the insect, two of which are by a poet Kīraṇār who thereby came to be distinguished as Tumpi-cēr-Kīraṇār (Kīraṇār of the bees).

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1. *Qēvēmrē Qērāmin*  
   —Patirrup. 71
   —Nar. 1
   Mulai. 239

2. *Qēvēmrē Qērāmin*  
   —Ibid. 524-5
   —Nar. 168
   —Ibid. 185

3. *Qēvēmrē Qērāmin*  
   —Nar 35


5. Kuru. 392; Nar. 277.
Part III
NATURE IN SIMILITUDES

The similes in Sangam literature have the exceptional vividness that comes from first-hand observation and show an accurate perception of subtle analogies. There are no conventional and stock phrases of similes as when, in the literature of later times, a woman’s face is frequently compared to the lotus flower, her eye to the kuvalai, her shoulder to the bamboo and so on.

There are such simple comparisons in Sangam literature; but they are very rare and in each of them, there is an imaginative freshness and appropriateness. For example, the hero on his return home looks at the full moon appearing above a hill and immediately calls up to mind the face of his sweetheart at home and derives a consolation in the thought that he too has such a moon in the face of his lady.1 In a poem by ḫankirānār, the heroine is depicted as feeling desolate when she hears that her lover is leaving her on a journey to a foreign country and her face is then said to have lost its fresh beauty and become as pale as the moon without lusture at dawn.2

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1. இலக்கிரங்கர் ராகாரு பெற்றுக்கொள்ளி பொற்றாடிய பெண் பெண்முடல் மேல் கொண்டிருக்கும் வெள்ளை கூவறைக் கோவையுடன் மூலம் கூடிய மானில விளக்கம்.........குறிப்பி. —Nar. 62

2. ஒன்றிய மலர்களோ ஓலுக்கண்டு சொல்லியிருப்பது பொற்றாடிய பெண் பெண்முடல் மூலம் கூடிய மானில விளக்கம் ஒன்றிய மலர்களின் விளக்கம். —Aka. 299
The heroine's forehead seen beneath her dark tresses appears as the crescent of the eighth day just rising in the dark sea. The tresses themselves resemble the black layer of sand called 'aral' along the rivers, or the dark clouds descending to rain or the tail of the peacock. The braided hair is like the trunk of the she-elephant or the plantain flower itself. The women on beach with their dishevelled hair drying after bathing are said to look like a flock of cranes smoothing out their feathers.

The heroine's eyes are likened to the neythal blooms blossomed at dawn, or a pair of kuvalai flowers; the eyes with tears glisten like the kuvalai

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1. The heroine's forehead seen beneath her dark tresses appears as the crescent of the eighth day just rising in the dark sea.
2. The tresses resemble the black layer of sand called 'aral' along the rivers.
3. The tresses look like the trunk of the she-elephant.
4. The women look like a flock of cranes smoothing out their feathers.
5. The heroine's eyes are likened to the neythal blooms.
6. The eyes with tears glisten like the kuvalai.

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Cirupan, 13-14
Aka. 35
Ibid. 120
Aka. 152
Ibid. 177
Cirupan, 21-22
Ain. 186
Ibid. 188
Aka. 10
Nar. 301
Ain 500
flowers with rain drops after a shower in winter. ¹
The red streaks in the eyes give the appearance of
the petals of the nayavu blooms. ² The eyes them-
selves were frequently compared in later days to
the tender green mangoes, but in Sangam literature
the original appropriateness was made clear. The
iron knife that cuts the tender green mango into
equal halves also splits the white seed within and
turns it blue. This colour in the centre of the
oval-shaped halves makes them resemble the eyes
with the pupils in the centre. ³ The red eye-corner
has a special artistic attraction in it and three of
the Sangam poets have explained it with one and
the same comparison. ⁴ The object compared to it
is the red outside of the fragrant pittakam bud of the
winter season.

The teeth are white as the mullai buds, but
the poet imagines only the buds arranged in two
rows like teeth. ⁵ The shoulder has the shape

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¹ Aka. 307
² Ibid, 395
³ Ibid, 19
⁴ Ibid, 49
⁵ Kuru, 222
Aka. 295

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of the bamboo; three poets of this age have compared it to that part of the bamboo between two nodes. Kapilar specially mentions the bent portion of a bamboo between two nodes so as to make the comparison most fitting to the form of the shoulder. P. H. B. Lyon is just in his remark that only a poet can make an exact comparison for the first time, because he has the gift to see the likeness in two things which on the surface are quite different.

The gait of the heroine is likened to that of the female swan, and her entrancing movement to the peacock’s dance.

Numerous comparisons are given to the tan-like colour called ‘māmai’ of the young lady. Paranār and Ōrampōkiyār liken it to the colour of

1. Ōrašima, ōtāmāru.  
2. Kapilar  
3. P. H. B. Lyon  
5. Ādivala, Ādivala.  
6. Ōrašima, ōtāmāru.  
7. Nar. 6  
8. Ōrašima, ōtāmāru.  

—Ibid. 171  
—Ibid. 152  
—Ibid. 18  
—Aka. 271  
—Aka. 279  
—Aka. 47  
—Ain. 35
the "ampal" stem when stripped of its skin-like covering. It is of the same hue as the tender leaves of the acōku,\(^1\) the fresh blooms of the kuri\(i\)\(i\)\(ci\)\(^2\) or the tender leaves of the \(i\)\(nkai\)\(^3\). Even such tender leaves are those looking fresh after showers.\(^4\) The paleness in the complexion while pining in separation is said to resemble the colour of the \(p\text{i}rkku\) flowers\(^5\) or the \(ko\text{ny}ra\)i blooms.\(^6\) The yellow spots of beauty on the skin are like the pollen of the lotus flower,\(^7\) or the \(v\text{e}nkai\) blossom itself.\(^8\)

When adorned with shining gold jewellery the young heroine is as grand as the blossomed \(v\text{e}nkai\) with golden blooms,\(^9\) and when in a desolate state

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1. \(\text{\textit{Nar. 244}}\)
2. \(\text{\textit{Ibid. 301}}\)
3. \(\text{\textit{Ibid. 205}}\)
4. \(\text{\textit{Kuru. 232}}\)
5. \(\text{\textit{Aka 135}}\)
6. \(\text{\textit{Ibid. 398}}\)
7. \(\text{\textit{---Ain. 500}}\)
8. \(\text{\textit{Kuru. 300}}\)
9. \(\text{\textit{Citupan. 23-24}}\)
10. \(\text{\textit{Patirrup. 40}}\)
without adornment, she is the vine that had shed all its flowers.¹

The grey hair of the old woman bent with age resembles the white feathers of the crane.² The child's lips look coral-like³ and its pure palms like the bright inner petals of the lotus flower.⁴ The red tongues of the learned are compared to the blooms of the ilavu.⁵

The beauty of the heroine is frequently equated to the grandeur of cities,⁶ seaports,⁷ or rivers⁸ which the poets are acquainted with and desire to speak highly of. Here is an opportunity for many of the Sangam poets to praise the cities, etc., to ingratiate themselves with rulers possessing them, or to please themselves by thus appreciating their own native places. For example, Ammuvaṉar, the poet well-known for singing of the coastal region, depicts the lady-companion as requesting the hero to elope with his sweetheart who is as beautiful as the Cera king's seaport Toṇṭi.⁹ The same poet in another stanza com-

1. āmūvaṉar $',rāvi$rǔ$ uvasāyam mañcikai
   pūruṣuṉṟaalṁ māmātañṟa tennu
   avārāya vañcikai sārāvā char
   pūruṣuṉṟaalṁ...ravai.
2. sāvaṉ māyiṟṟañṟa vañcikai
   sārāvā charaṟṟa avārāvai.
3. sāvaṉ māyiṟṟa.
4. pūruṣuṉṟaalṁ mañcikai pūruṟṟa
   sāvārā vañcikai sāvārā māviṟṟa.
5. māvaṉ māyai rāvai.
6. Ibid. 69, 78.
7. Aln. 175, 177, 178, 180.

—Aka. 19
—Pura. 277
—Aka. 16
—Ibid.
—Ibid. 142
pares the status of the hero to that of this great seaport in South India.¹

These are all examples of comparisons sought from Nature to explain human beauty, but there are also similes of the reverse order in which the objects of Nature are compared to the various parts of the human body. The blooms in the mountain pools are said to blossom like eyes,² and the mullai to yield buds like teeth.³ The hero is depicted to console his sweetheart before departure by promising to return when the mullai yields buds like her teeth.⁴ The rainy clouds are said to descend like her tresses.⁵ The peacock spreads its tails so as to resemble them,⁶ and moves like her.⁷ The pastoral region with its mullai blooms smells like her forehead.⁸ The neythal blooms submerge in the tide of the backwater like the eyes of women.

¹ Aln. 178
² Tira. 75
³ Kali. 27
⁴ Nar. 316
⁵ Alu. 328
⁶ Citrupan 14-15
⁷ Ibid. 262
⁸ Alu. 418
⁹ Ibid.
merging into the water while bathing in a tank.\(^1\) The petals of the *murukku* look like the painted finger nails of ladies,\(^2\) while the *konrai* trees blossom like ladies wearing many gold jewels.\(^3\)

The next class of similes consists in explaining the things of the world by comparing them to the objects of nature. The cloth of the finest texture of those days was as bright and tender as the sloughed-off skin of the snake\(^4\), or the skin-like delicate covering of the bamboo.\(^5\) The wheel of a cart with its spokes and axle-box was like the halo round the moon.\(^6\) The chariot rolled as fast as the flow of water\(^7\) and as swift as the mountain stream. The wheel was bright like the crescent moon and cut off the green crops on the way while running fast like the meteor.\(^8\) The white chariot

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1. ปั้นกราน หัวใจ เติมเต็ม แก่นิ้วมือ 
หนังสีน้ำตาล ขัดสนิม ฉ่ำน้ำ แต่เป็นผันผวน 
สีอ่อน สดใส นุ่ม ฉ่ำน้ำ

2. โถงนวล หัวใจ บริสุทธิ์ สวยงาม สมบูรณ์ 
สีดี สดใส นุ่ม ฉ่ำน้ำ

3. ผักแครอท ริมฝีปาก หอม จ้ํา 
หน้าอก สาว สวยงาม สวยงาม

4. สภาพ ผิวสุขภาพ

5. ผ้าผ้า ผิวสุขภาพ สวยงาม สมบูรณ์ 
หน้าอก สาว สวยงาม สวยงาม

6. สภาพผิวสุขภาพ ผิวสุขภาพ

7. ผ้าผ้า ผิวสุขภาพ สวยงาม สมบูรณ์ 
หน้าอก สาว สวยงาม สวยงาม

8. สภาพผิวสุขภาพ ผิวสุขภาพ

9. สภาพผิวสุขภาพ ผิวสุขภาพ

10. สภาพผิวสุขภาพ ผิวสุขภาพ สวยงาม สวยงาม สวยงาม สวยงาม สวยงาม

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—Kuru. 9

—Aka. 317

—Nar. 302

—Porun. 83

—Pura. 383

—Cirupan. 236

—Cirupan. 250-53

—Malai. 571

—Kuru. 189

—Ibid.
ran like the swan flying in the sky¹ and the noise of the running chariot reminded the poets of the stream rushing through rocks.³

The plough is said to be like the trunk of a she-elephant.³ The royal drum sounds like the sea.⁴ The elephants in an army resemble a group of hills⁵ and the army itself roars like the sea.⁶ The raised spears shine like lightning.⁷ The broad street of a city is like a river and the high building in it resemble the hills and the clouds, while the noise therein is heard like that of the sea or of rainy clouds. The flags waving over the high buildings present the appearance of the streams on the hills.⁹ The whitewash gives a bright appearance to the buildings like that of the crescent moon while the inside is spacious and cool like a tank.¹⁰

1. ¹²³⁴⁵⁶⁷⁸⁹¹⁰
The pearl-garland worn by the heroine on her chest is said to emit light and appear like the lustrous eyes of the wild cat in a dark night;¹ the sides of the drums called *parai* and *kinai*³ resemble the footprints of the elephant; the big grains of cooked rice are like the date seeds;⁴ the bubbles formed in fermented curd appear like the budding mushroom;⁵ the cooked *varaku* resembles the *pulai* flowers⁶ and the cooked *avarai* looks like the *vēṅkai* blooms;⁷ the young boys marching with cooked rice in their hands look like the ants marching in an order with their white eggs;⁸ the worn-off rags are like the feathers of a kite wet in winter;⁹ the pustules formed in the feet by walking along a very hot tract in a summer noon are like the *maral* fruits;¹⁰ the young boys on a buffalo’s back look like the monkeys on a block.

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1. வரலாறு கருப்பு பலர் காரங்கை
   மாற்றம் செய்ய

2. மயக்கமுடிய அனுப்பிய வரலாறு படிகம்
   செய்ய

3. படிகமுடிய அனுப்பிய படிகம்
   செய்ய

4. மயக்கமுடிய வரலாறு காரங்கை
   படிகம் செய்ய

5. குளம் மாற்றுகள் வெளியுறுக்கு
   முழுமை செய்ய என்று கூறி கூறியது

6. செய்யப்படும் பலர் பலர்
   படிகம்

7. மயக்கமுடிய வரலாறு
   செய்ய

8. வரலாறு மறை மறை
   முழுமை செய்ய

9. மயக்கமுடிய வரலாறு
   படிகம்

10. வரலாறு மறை மறை
    படிகம்

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¹ - Aka. 78
² - Puran. 263
³ - Ibid. 392
⁴ - Perumpan. 130-1
⁵ - Ibid. 167-9
⁶ - Ibid. 192-3
⁷ - Ibid. 194-5
⁸ - Puran. 178
⁹ - Ibid. 150
¹⁰ - Puran. 44-5
of rock;¹ the large group of relations of a chieftain stands as the thick cluster of bamboos in a bush.²

The following are examples of yet another class of similes, a class in which the objects of Nature are used in comparison to explain one another. The hare's eyes are like the unripe nelli fruits³ and those of the ukā tree like the eyes of the cuckoo;⁴ the eyes of the crabs of the sea coast are akin to the nōcci buds;⁵ those of the agricultural region are like the neem buds;⁶ the hare's legs like the stems of the elephant-grass called 'kaṇṇu';⁷ the tender leaves of the yā tree forked like the wattle of the domestic cock;⁸ the mullai yielding buds like the teeth of the wild cat;⁹ the white clouds on the cliffs like the avarai blooms;¹⁰ the lightning over the hills like konrāi flowers amidst the kāyā blossoms;¹¹ the terul blossoms like the spots on the face of the elephant;¹² the red

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1. Aka. 206.
2. —Ibid. 268
3. —Aka. 284
4. —Ibid 293
5. —Nar. 267
6. —Ain. 80
7. —Pura. 334
8. —Aka. 187
9. —Pura. 117
10. —Ain. 209
11. —Nar 371
12. —Pura. 119
kāntal like those of the elephant stained with blood while fighting with a tiger; the sugarcane flowers blown by the north wind like the flowers of the pūlai; the vākai bloom like the plume of the peacock; the kāyā tree blossoming blue like the peacock itself; the kāntal flower stretching towards it resembling a hooded cobra afraid of the peacock; the kuvalai blooms like the lower part of the neck of the chameleon; this chameleon suffering by reason of fierce heat of the arid region in summer and becoming wasted like the unexpanded tender leaf of the maral of the same region; the tiny murunkai flowers dropping down when a whirlwind blows violently presenting the appearance of a seashore with the waves splashing white particles of water; and the plantain bud like the white tusk of an elephant stained with blood while fighting with a tiger.
The *varaku* crop grown luxuriantly looks like the pregnant peahen;¹ the rich *tinai* ears are like the trunks of the she-elephant;² the tender green mango resembles the parrot;³ and the folded leaf of the sugarcane appears like the pregnant whip-snake.⁴ The broad leaves of the *cempu*⁵ and the lotus⁶ waving in the wind remind the poets of the ceaseless waving of the ears of the elephant. A block of huge rock washed by rain resembles the washed elephant.⁷ The elephant's trunk when raised high looks like the trunk of the palmyra tree,⁸ and when thrust into its own mouth appears like a snake entering a hill,⁹ and, when placed on its own forehead, is verily a snake crawling over a block of rock.¹⁰ The *irri* root that stretches down and touches a rock below looks like the

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¹ Puru. 120
² Nar. 344
³ — Aka. 37
⁴ — Kuru. 35
⁵ — Ibid. 70
⁶ Aka. 188
⁷ — Kuru. 31
⁸ Aka. 333
⁹ — Ibid. 391
¹⁰ — Ibid. 349
elephant's trunk raised above. The nail of the elephant's foot bears resemblance to the integument covering the palmyra fruit.

The setting sun loses its lustre and puts on the garb of the moon in eclipse. The moon spreading its rays appears like the white stream on a mountain. The mountain stream, on the other hand, is compared to the moon rising in the sea. It is also said to rush down like a snake crawling over the earth and like its skin sloughed off. The sea and the dark grove on the coast present the appearance of moonlight and the ring of darkness surrounding it. The dark rainy clouds look like a herd of she-elephants and the descending rain like the trunks of the elephant.

1. The elephant's trunk raised above. The nail of the elephant's foot bears resemblance to the integument covering the palmyra fruit.

2. The setting sun loses its lustre and puts on the garb of the moon in eclipse. The moon spreading its rays appears like the white stream on a mountain.

3. The mountain stream, on the other hand, is compared to the moon rising in the sea.

4. It is also said to rush down like a snake crawling over the earth and like its skin sloughed off.

5. The sea and the dark grove on the coast present the appearance of moonlight and the ring of darkness surrounding it.

6. The dark rainy clouds look like a herd of she-elephants and the descending rain like the trunks of the elephant.

—Aka. 57

—Ibid. 365

—Ibid. 114

—Ibid. 362

—Kura. 316

—Ibid. 134

—Ibid. 235

—Ibid. 81

—Ibid. 334

—Ibid.
west wind blows through the mountain clefts and roads like the sea.\(^1\)

The comparisons of objects of Nature with those made by men constitute another class of similes. They are also very frequent in Sangam literature and the following may be cited as striking examples:

The flowers of the *ilavu* tree shine like the lamps lighted during the Kārttikai festival;\(^2\) the *tōnyi* flowers are like small hollow earthen lamps;\(^3\) the *punku* blossoms appear like parched rice\(^4\) and the *mulli* like sapphires;\(^5\) the *kōtal* yields its laddle-like blooms that wave here and there like a drunkard;\(^6\) the *iruppai* flowers are white and resemble dice-like pieces cut out of the elephant’s tusk;\(^7\) the small pit full of blossoms dropped from the *kōyai* tree looks like an open box of gold coins;\(^8\)

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1. *Maduralk. 308-9*

2. *Aka. 17*

3. *Ibid. 166*

4. *Aka 285*

5. *Kuru. 53*

6. *Aka. 236*

7. *Kali. 101*

8. *Aka. 135*

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the pātiri blossoms like the painter's pencil\(^1\) while the vēlam is the royal yak-fan itself;\(^2\) the murukku petals remind one of the painted nails of ladies;\(^3\) and the sugarcane flowers present the appearance of spears.\(^4\)

The wood-apple drops down like a ball falling to the ground;\(^5\) the kumil fruits look like globular gold coins;\(^6\) the unripe fruits of the nelli are like dice;\(^7\) the leaves of the cēmpu are like sapphire in colour\(^8\) and its roots look like balls of cooked rice;\(^9\) the dried seeds of the ulīncil\(^10\) and the konrāi\(^11\) sound like the drum when blown by the wind; the marks made by the crab running through the faded nālal blooms are like those of the fingers of the lady drying the tinai grain;\(^12\) and the poor

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1. பாதியில் காட்டுக்குள் நான் வந்து கொண்டு வந்து வந்து வந்து பாதியில்.
   - Nar. 118

2. தையில் வெள்ளாட்சியான விளையாட்சி செய்து வந்து வந்து வந்து.
   - Ibid. 241

3. சிறுந்த பெருமையில் கூறியுள்ள கூறியுள்ள கூறியுள்ள கூறியுள்ள.
   - Aka. 317

4. பார்வித்து பெருமை சூழ்ந்து பெருமை சூழ்ந்து பெருமை சூழ்ந்து.
   - Pura. 35

5. சுற்றும் பால்பழ பழத்தை சையுறுக்கு மீது வந்து வந்து வந்து வந்து வந்து.
   - Nar. 24

6. பார்வித்து பெருமை சூழ்ந்து பெருமை சூழ்ந்து பெருமை சூழ்ந்து.
   - Ibid. 272

7. பார்வித்து பெருமை சூழ்ந்து பெருமை சூழ்ந்து பெருமை சூழ்ந்து.
   - Aka. 5

8. இருக்கும் கூறியுள்ள கூறியுள்ள.
   - Aka. 175

9. பாலும் அத்தியாரங்கள்.
   - Ibid.

10. குமிலில் குமிலில் குமிலில் குமிலில் குமிலில் குமிலில் குமிலில் குமிலில்.
    - Ibid. 151

11. உளிந்தில் வணிகம்
    - Nar. 46

12. கன்னை கன்னை கன்னை கன்னை கன்னை கன்னை கன்னை
    - Nar. 267
shade of a leafless tree in arid tract is like a net spread on the ground.¹

The flock of cranes sitting on the dune resembles an army in white uniform;² the cuckoo³ and the bee⁴ besmeared with the pollen of flowers look like the touchstone with streaks of gold; the spider's web on a Ane mai tree waves in the west wind and present the appearance of a flag on the elephant's back;⁵ and the cochineal insects swarming on the pastoral region resemble pieces of coloured cotton spread there.⁷

The horns of a deer look like a forked stick carried by a hunter;⁸ the footprints of the elephant are like the sides of the drum called Mulavu⁹ or like the garden-beds of the sugarcane field;¹⁰ and

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1. மலையில் வேறு நாமை காணே ஆலான் பூள்ளைப் பெயர்ந்த.  Porun. 50 - 1
2. குறிக்குறி கிள்ளை ஒன்றேத்தி அரசர் நூற்றை கிள்ளையை கிள்ளை எச்சரம்.  —Nar. 291
3. தேலைகள் தேலை தோண்டும் தேலைகள் கூட்டுப் பூநாயன் தேலையை எச்சரம்.  —Kuru. 192
4. கர்கரை கும்பங்கள் பறிண்டு மன்னர்கள் மன்னரை மன்னராக எச்சரம்.  —Nar. 25
5. பரந்த பரந்த தின்னகுடி பூநாயன் நூற்றை கூட்டுப் பூநாயாக மன்னரை எச்சரம்.  —Aka. 111
6. விளையாட பெரியம் பொருள் பெரும் உலகச் சேவை எச்சரம்.  —Ibid. 288
7. கோசியன் சாளத்தை கூட்டும் கால் சுற்றிய செந்தில் எச்சரம்.  —Aka. 34
8. பல்கர்ஜான் பிள்ளை கும்பங்கள் பிள்ளை பயிர்நூற்றை மன்னரை எச்சரம். —Ibid. 155
9. அன்னை கூட்டும் மலைய மன்னர்தர் மலையாக எச்சரம்.  —Kuru. 282
the bear that draws out its food from the anthill and breathes hard seems to bellow like the noise at a smithy.\(^1\) The shrimp is pictured to leap about like a bow when its tight string suddenly snaps.\(^2\)

The falling dew drops glisten like pearls falling from a thread that snapped;\(^3\) the white clouds gathering round a cliff are like the carded cotton\(^4\) or the smoke round a potter's kiln;\(^5\) the mountain stream sounds like the big drum called muracu\(^6\) or echoes the noise of the famous kitchen of the great Cēra Utiyan.\(^7\) The disorderly flow of the flood in the Vaiyai river is like the dancing of a lady without any training in the art\(^8\) or like a lady in exultation ignorant of the tact of tackling her husband;\(^9\) the white spray of the waves of the sea is like soft pieces of cotton;\(^10\) and the sea with

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1. Nar. 125
2. Aka. 8
3. Kuru. 104
4. Nar. 358
5. Ibid. 308
6. Pura. 143
7. Aka. 168
8. Pari. 7, 17–19
9. Ibid.
10. Nar. 299
The white foam of the waves resembles the grey-haired old men, especially when it destroys the toyhouses on the shore built by young girls at play. ¹ The radiant sun in the sky is, in the imagination of the poet, a boat rigged out to sail on the vast sky. ²

Another class of similes consists in comparing feelings and passions to facts of the world of Nature. Such similes are also of frequent occurrence in Sangam literature. For example:

The heroine pining in separation compares her trembling heart to the shivering tender leaves of a tree on the bank of a stream when its roots are washed off by the flood dashing against and smashing the banks; the villagers engaged in calumny against the lovers are blamed for their indirect and unreasonable ways of behaviour like the fibres intricately woven without any order in the nest of the weaverbird: the hero’s heart always longing for the love of his sweetheart and heaving towards her is compared to the swan that seeks prey in the southern coast and flying far

¹ — Aka. 90
² — Ibid. 101
³ — Nar. 381
⁴ — Kuru. 374
off to the young ones in the nest built in the Himalayas.¹

During the period of secret amorous approaches of the hero, the heroine is rarely to be seen and her rare appearance then is compared to that of the crescent in the sky.² The heroine in separation feels very much disappointed at the absence of her lover and feels that their love and relationship are lost once for all as is the ripe jackfruit fallen into a deep cleft in a hill.³ She also says to her companion that in such a period of separation she feels herself languishing and perishing gradually like the foam in the sea dissolving and disappearing little by little while striking against a rock.⁴ When the hero has gone to a distant country, she feels that in that grief of separation, her soul had better departed from her body as the bird that leaves its nest while migrating to a distant place;⁵ the hero in the distant country also feels this separation but there is a struggle in him, between his feelings and his thought; the former induce him to

1. Nar. 356

2. ஓர்மதாரசின் பெரிது ஓர்மதாரச் பார்மதாரச் மற்றும் பார்மதாரச்

—Kuru. 178

3. மிதமான கர்நாை சேர்க்கி யான் பெரிது ஓர்மதாரச் பார்மதாரச் மற்றும் பார்மதாரச் கர்நாையான் ஓர்மதாரச் பார்மதாரச்

—Nar. 116

4. ஓர்மதாரச் பலிலை ராட்டிசோந் முட்டை கூட்டு சிலுத்தியை ஒளியாள் மோகன் சின்ன சக்கரங்க

—Kuru. 290

5. ஓர்மதாரச் செல்லும் கூம்பால் பலிலை செல்லும் கூம்பால் முட்டை கூட்டு பலிலை சிலுத்தியை ஒளியாள்

—Aka. 118
start immediately to his sweetheart, while the latter condemns this attempt as bringing on him the charge of ignorance and blame for not having accomplished his duty and exhorts him to be firm; he then feels that his body will perish in the struggle just as an old rope with worn-out strands will give way when caught on opposite sides by two elephants at play.¹ Even while setting out from home for this purpose he undergoes this struggle and feels himself to be in the state of an ant at the centre of a firebrand burning on both sides.² He feels this struggle also on his way to the distant country and blames his heart for not permitting him either to proceed further and earn wealth to get rid of poverty, or, to return to console his pining sweetheart. He then explains to himself the state of his heart swaying hither and thither, towards affection on one side and duty on the other side and compares it to the unsteady waves in the sea where the river Kāviri drains into it and where they bring shrimps

¹ Nar. 284
² Aka. 339
to the shore and carry away garlands to the deep waters.¹

During the period of secret relationship, the companion perceives the despair and sorrow of the heroine and blames the hero for being the cause and compares him to the young elephant that originally played with and pleased the boys of the village and has later on turned troublesome by beginning to graze and destroy the tiṇai crops in their fields.²

When the heroine has an occasion to criticise the behaviour of her husband, she explains his faults to her companion and says that he who has been all along good and kind, has turned to be the cause of her affliction, just as the neruncii that yields attractive blooms has also thorns with it.³

When the hero elopes with the heroine, those who find him on the way along the hot desert

1. Aka. 123

2. Kuru. 394

3. Ibid. 203
region blame him for escorting the young lady through this tract and remark that he is unkind and merciless like the harsh thunder shaking even the hills.\(^1\)

After quarrelling with her husband the heroine perceives his kindness and gradually feels drawn towards him and finally accepts his approach. When questioned about the quarrel, she explains to the companion that her heart melted away at his behaviour just as the ploughed red soil of the field becomes soft and dissolves when mixed with rain water.\(^2\)

On his return home after accomplishing his duty undertaken in a distant country, the lady-companion asks the hero whether he had remembered them there: and in reply he says that his great feelings of anxiety were like an enormous flood in a river and have now come to a close like the same flood subsiding into a thin sheet of water to be drawn out and used in small quantities.\(^3\)

The hero's love is as essential to the life of the heroine as is the tender care of the

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3.  

—Nar. 2
—Aka. 26
—Kuru. 99
mother turtle to the growth of its young ones.\(^1\) The heroine’s affectionate look at her lover is like that of the calf at its mother cow\(^3\) and her great disappointment and despair at its absence are like that of the calf when the cow has not returned home.\(^8\) Her delicate soul bears her great love for him as the slender branches of the jack tree bear fruits of very big size.\(^4\) The coming of the hero with proposals of marriage is as great a relief to the heroine and her companion, as the shower to the withering paddy crop after a long drought.\(^6\)

The heroine is so completely reliant on her lover that she has no thoughts and words beside those of his and simply repeats to her companion what he says to her, just as the mountain rock echoes only the sound that one utters near it.\(^5\) She admits to her companion that her

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1. மாணவன் பெண் பெண் பெண்ணார்
   மாணவன் பெண் பெண் பெண் பெண் பெண் பெண் பெண்
   மாணவன் பெண் பெண் பெண் பெண் பெண் பெண் பெண்
   மாணவன் பெண் பெண் பெண் பெண் பெண் பெண் பெண்
   —Kuru. 152

2. கூத்தர கல்லைக்கு கல்லைக்கு கல்லை
   கல்லை கல்லை கல்லை கல்லை
   கல்லை கல்லை கல்லை
   —Kuru. 132

3. மாணவன் சிறைக்கு சிறைக்கு சிறை
   சிறை சிறை சிறை சிறை
   சிறை சிறை சிறை
   —Ibid. 64

4. கூத்தரையில் கூத்தரை கூத்தரை
   கூத்தரை கூத்தரை கூத்தரை
   —Ibid. 18

5. மாணவன் மாணவன் மாணவன்
   மாணவன் மாணவன் மாணவன்
   —Nar. 22

6. கூத்தரையில் கூத்தரை கூத்தரை
   —Kall. 48
The Treatment of Nature

lover is to her shoulders what the sun is to the *neruñci* blooms which always direct themselves towards the sun and droop down when the sun sets. The lovers have united themselves and become one like the rain-water mixing with the red soil and turning out to be inseparable.

The heroine feels that her love is so powerful and influential that it overcomes her self-control like the great flood in the Ganges that overflows the banks and smashes the dams in its course. The inseparable union of the lovers is compared to that of the water-birds called *makanñil* and the sufferings of the heroine in separation to that of the *añril* bird in the absence of its loving mate.

The lonely heroine’s plight of despair is like the desolate front yard of a house in a small village where even the timid squirrel freely frisks and plays without any fear as there is none to scare it away, while her rejoicing in the company of her

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3. 1990 (2) 1980

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4. 1990 (2) 1980

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5. 1990 (2) 1980
lover is like the exultation of the whole village on festival days.¹

The acquaintance with noble men of high qualities is as sweet as the honey gathered by the bees from the lotus flowers and stored in the honeycomb on the lofty branch of a sandal-wood tree in a high mountain.³ A patron and king of the Pāṇṭiya dynasty supporting a large group of dependants in the wake of his bountiful ancestors is compared to the aerial roots supporting the whole banyan tree when it has lost its trunk.³ A bard awaiting with hopes the kind munificence of a benefactor compares himself to the skylark that longs for drops of rain⁴ and his (imaginary) begging bowl raised towards the patron to the neruncí bloom directing itself to the sun.⁵

¹—Kuru. 41
²—Nar. 1
³—Pura. 58
⁴—Pura. 198
⁵—Ibid. 155
There are some other similes, in which the poets explain the things in Nature by comparing their conditions and changes with the moral and ethical behaviour of men; and such similes are very rare compared to others.

When the bee hums over the kantāl bud and tries to penetrate into it, the bud slowly yields to it and blossoms with fragrance like the dutiful and grateful men welcoming with delight the noble gentlemen with whom they are acquainted;\(^1\) the parrots with their kith and kin feed on the tināi ears in the field, just as the bards and other poor dependants live upon the bountiful benefactions of a patron;\(^2\) the tināi ears heavy with corn bend like the modest women full of coyness;\(^3\) the leaves of the trees droop down in the evening like the heads of the gentlemen hearing others praising them in their presence;\(^4\) in early summer the trees yield tender leaves and blossom with fragrance like the ever-flourishing wealth of one with spotless character.\(^5\) In the desert region the trees wither away like the career of a youth in

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1. குண்டன் தினுரைந்து தொட்டு உற்பத்தி
   தால்கு தூளை தேவிக்கிறார்
   காஞ்சவத்திற்கு ஆயிரவர்
   தரும கூறுகிறார் நேர்ப்பதிவு

—Kuru. 265

2. குண்டன் தினுரைந்து
   தால்கு தூளை தேவிக்கிறார்
   காஞ்சவத்திற்கு ஆயிரவர்
   தரும கூறுகிறார் நேர்ப்பதிவு

—Nar. 376

3. குண்டன் தினுரைந்து
   தால்கு தூளை தேவிக்கிறார்
   காஞ்சவத்திற்கு ஆயிரவர்

—Kali. 40

4. குண்டன் தினுரைந்து
   தால்கு தூளை தேவிக்கிறார்

—Ibid. 119

5. குண்டன் தினுரைந்து
   தால்கு தூளை தேவிக்கிறார்
   காஞ்சவத்திற்கு ஆயிரவர்

—Ibid. 27
poverty and become devoid of any shade like the useless wealth accumulated by a miser of mean character; and some of the trees become scorched to their very roots like the despot wrecking himself on the rock of his own tyrannical acts.

The objects of Nature have also been compared to the mythological pictures or scenes of the Puranas and the Itihasas; and though a few, these form a different class by themselves. Some of them are given below:

The blossomed venkaï tree at a place of height where two hills meet and two streams fall down looks like the Goddess Lakshmi seated on a very beautiful red lotus flower while two elephants pour water from their trunks one on each side of the Goddess. The cranes flying in a semi-circle in the evening twilight sky resemble the white pearl garland on the chest of the red God Murukan. An elephant in rut perceives a venkaï tree fully blossomed appearing like a tiger and in great anger it gores into its trunk with its tusks but the poor

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1. மரால் வேங்கை வேங்கை என்று விளக்கம்  —Kall. 10
2. மரால் வேங்கை வேங்கை என்று விளக்கம்  —Ibid.
3. வேங்கை வேங்கை என்று விளக்கம்  —Ibid.
4. வேங்கை வேங்கை என்று விளக்கம்  —Ibid. 44
5. வேங்கை வேங்கை என்று விளக்கம்  —Aka. 120
animal immediately suffers unable to take off the tusks from it like Ravana who attempted to lift up the Kailas mountain with his arms but shrieked and suffered, when caught under pressure.¹

The complexion of Krishna and his brother Balarama is dealt with in a comparison with the scene of a blue hillside and a white waterfall adjacent to it;³ the elephant that bends the branches of a yāḍa tree, so as to enable its mate to feed on the tender leaves is compared to Krishna in his act of bending the branches of a kuruntū tree on the banks of the river Jumna so as to enable the ‘gopikas’ to use its branches for hiding their nakedness from the sight of Balarama who came there while they were bathing;⁸ the trees, marāṁ, cerunti, kānci, nāṭal and ilavu standing on the bank of the Vaiyai river in the suburb called Tirumarutamunturai or Marutanturai (corrupted as Maturai) present a peculiar scene with trunks of different sizes and flowers of different colours and are compared to Balarama, the Sun God, Kama or the God of love.

1. Kali. 38
2. Nar. 38
3. Aka. 59
his brother Sama, and Siva respectively. When a herd of elephants is caught in a wild fire spreading over a mountain, the leader of the herd takes courage and boldly guides the others out of the fire and saves them like the hero Bhima of Mahabharatha who saved his brothers and his aged mother when their palace was set fire to by the scheme of their arch-cousin Duryodhana. An elephant attacking a tiger with great ferocity and with its sharp tusks tearing it into pieces is compared to the same hero of the great epic in his act of fighting with his enemy Duryodhana and cutting his thigh with vengeance. When it returns to its herd in a spirit of joy and pride after killing the tiger, it is compared to Krishna who killed and crushed the pugilists induced to attack him.

There are also pictures of Nature set in different environments and compared to similar pictures of Nature or outside it. An ampal flower among its green leaves in a blue tank is conceived to blossom white and brilliant early in the morning like the Venus rising with lustre at dawn in the
The bear thrusts its hand-like front leg into the anthill raised by the termites and scoop out their comb for its food at midnight. While doing so, the poor snake that has its abode in the anthill, is fatally wounded by the sharp claws of the beast. The fireflies surrounding the ant-hill fly scattered and emit phosphorescent light. This scene in repeatedly pictured in many passages by different poets and compared to that of a smithy. The beast covered with thick black fur all over the body is likened to the blacksmith working in the smithy, the ant-hill to the raised structure of the furnace, the hard breath and action of the beast to the roar and action of the bellows, and the fireflies flying and emitting light to the sparks of red hot iron beaten there.

The acute observation of the objects of Nature in their most meticulous details is best revealed in another type of similes employed by the Sangam poets. Nature's objects are best portrayed in instituting comparisons sometimes of the components of a plant of the botanical kingdom.
or a few of the organs of animals. Oftentimes the similes are also of the Homeric type one depending on another in succession lending charm to the theme of the verses. To illustrate from Porunārāppatai:

The lyre of the age known as the yāl is anatomised and set in appropriate comparisons of things and objects profuse in the richest storehouse of a poet's imagination. The hollow part called pattal is the footprint of a hoofed animal; its stitched leather-cover is a young woman's stomach with soft hair at the beginning of her pregnancy; the pins binding the eyelets fastening the leather-cover are the eyes of the crab; the opening on its drum-like part is the crescent of the eighth day; and the handle is the snake with its hooded head, the strings being the well-husked tināi grains.1

A second may be drawn from Ulōccanaṅār's description of the punnai tree.2 The mineral kingdom comes into full play, precious stones

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1. தாம்பரையில் மண்டல் தடுமை புள்ளி 
தோண்முறை குழை பிள்ளிச் சுருக்கம்
னூறு மித்துக்க உருப்புருங்கள் அடையும்
குனாந்து நெடுவிய சர் வரையும் வாண்டி
நார்கள் புராணம் புராணம் புராணம்
அதாரும் அவள்கள் காண்க காண்க
நீளையார் தாண்டிய கருப்பால் காணி
நார்கள் திருச்சித் தாண்டியது யாது
நார்கள் திருச்சித் தாண்டியது யாது

2. நிலையால் கன்னடம் குனீத்துக்கும் புள்ளி 
குனாந்து பசை பிள்ளிச் சுருக்கம்
மூலன் கன்னட விளையாட்டின் நுழைஞ்சோ 
பேரார்கள் குனாந்து பக்தியாளர்

—Porun. 4-17

—Nar. 249
included. The dark branches of the tree look like iron; the green leaves are like sapphires; the bright bunches of flowers blaze like silver and the fragrant pollen glitter like gold. Nakkaṇṇaiyār's painting of the screw-pine belongs to the same type.¹

The trunk is as rugged as the back of the shrimp; its leaves are as thorny-edged as the tusk to the shark: its biggest buds resemble the elephants' tusks while its blossoms bristle like the plume on the horse's head.

The warp and woof of these similes establish beyond the shadow of a doubt the poets' deep insight to the morphology of Nature's objects, their profoundest comparative study and their richest imagination in associating them with things of human creation.

Yet another type of similes employing objects of Nature is neither artistic nor figurative but forceful in expressing certain ideas. The poets bless their patrons and kings to live a long happy life for as many years as the drops of rain-water poured on the earth,² or the grains of sand on the sea-shore or the river bed or bank,³ or to live an

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¹ مَّنَّاَصُمُّ لَكُمُ الصَّدَقَةُ الْقُرْبَىٰ لَدَيْنَا وَلِلَّهِ مُتَبَسَّرَةٌ مِّنَ الْأَجَلِّ
² مَّنَّاَصُمُّ لَكُمُ السَّلَامُ مُّنَّاَصُمُّ مَّنَّاَصُمُّ لَكُمُ السَّلَامُ مُّنَّاَصُمُّ لَكُمُ السَّلَامُ
³ مَّنَّاَصُمُّ لَكُمُ السَّلَامُ مُّنَّاَصُمُّ لَكُمُ السَّلَامُ
unperturbed and most reputed and unique life like the mountains, the Himalayas\textsuperscript{1} and the Potiyam.\textsuperscript{3} The rich men of the world who lived in vain without helping others and died without a name are as many as the grains of sand in the Ceyaru river.\textsuperscript{8} While advising a ruler to be just and kind and to do his best to the people, a poet declares that the number of imperialistic rulers who had ruled and disappeared from the earth would be as countless as the particles of sand heaped up on the shore by the waves of the sea.\textsuperscript{4} Another poet praises the bountiful acts of the patron Ay by stating that if the whole of the sky is illumined with stars leaving no space there, they would then perhaps equal the number of elephants offered as gifts.\textsuperscript{5}

1. \textsuperscript{1}Unpublished manuscript... —Pura. 2
     वर्तमानमं दृष्टिपत्रम ् बिशिष्टमिति बालकम् भवति। —Ibid. 166

2. Ibid. 2

3. अनुभवं वरोहिक अस्मार्थतः
     ज्ञातवर्थ विद्यमानं यथा न्यायं विभासितं
     कर्तव्यं श्रवणं विद्वानुयाय जीवनं
     विधिकं करोणं विषयं भूषणं
     सिद्धस्थितं सत्यं परमेश्वरं भवेत्। —Mal. 552-6

4. धर्मसंहारं रक्षकम् भगवनं सहितं
     समुद्धिः समाधिः द्विजं जीवम्
     कर्तव्यं श्रवणं विद्वानुयाय
     धर्मिकं विधिकं करोणं विषयं
     सिद्धस्थितं सत्यं परमेश्वरं भवेत्। —Pura. 363

5. इतिहासं लघुपरमपतिः
     वासन तमस दुर्प्रेमगति
     विभवाः समुद्धिः द्विजं
     पुत्राञ्च विधिकं करोणं
     सिद्धस्थितं सत्यं परमेश्वरं भवेत्। —Pura. 129
Tolkappiyar specially notes yet another kind of simile\(^1\) which Peraciriyar\(^2\) explains as a type resorted to, to make the literary expressions apter and more beautiful. These are the similes characteristic of Sangam literature and are implied or suppressed as denoted by the term *ulluyai uvamam*. They are used to illustrate human actions giving vent to subtle feelings. They are similes *incognito* which leave to the reader to discover them. The commentators have done a great service in explaining their setting. Sometimes they are very suggestive and sometimes not. Even when they seem far-fetched, they are not superficial. The things compared are true and subtle but are only implied, lacking in facts required to illustrate them accurately. The subtlety of the analogies often escapes the reader, but no one can fail to observe the beauty of the little pictures into which the things compared are imbedded as in the following examples:

An angry elephant attacks a *véñkai* tree and destroys its branches: the branches are not broken but only bent to the ground; the branches continue to blossom and the girls find it easy to pluck the flowers standing on the ground.\(^3\) This picture is in the utterance of the heroine suggesting the companion that the hero has caused her untold sufferings but has been merciful enough

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1. *த்தக்கறி காரத்தாள் குப்பாங்கள்
   ஒருங்கு மகிளக் குறிச் சிதை.
   —Tol. Por. 48
2. —Ibid. 300; Per.
3. *கூறாவளியுள்ள தலை குச்சார்
   கூர்கும் குறுத்து
   குருக்கோயில் குறுத்து.
   —Kuru. 208
to make her still live without perishing and undergo some more sufferings by others. The vēnkaṇ tree here stands for the heroine, the elephant for the hero, the bent-down branches for her miserable life during their secret relationship, and the flower-gatherers for the scandal mongers.

An otter enters a lotus tank, scatters the vallai creepers, seizes the vālai fish amidst them, feeds upon it and returns to its rattan bush.\(^1\) The heroine describes the incident to blame her husband on his return from a prostitute's house. She suggests to him that she is aware of his infidelity, of his loose morals, of pleasing the prostitute's parents and her kith and kin and of returning home at dawn for a formal stay. Here the hero is the otter, the prostitutes the vālai fish, the vallai creepers the prostitute's parents and his own house the rattan bush.

In these innuendoes, the pictures of Nature serve to express the subjective feelings which the utterer hesitates to pronounce openly but desires to dwell on minutely and more effectively in a wordy caricature of a familiar incident in Nature.

Many of the interesting descriptions of the plants and animals in Sangam literature are found in such implied similes suggestive of the feelings, passions and emotions of lovers; these are the very core and essence of the many scattered

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\(^1\) —Aka. 8
similes in Sangam literature displaying objectively the subjective aspects of conjugal relationships.

The bees, the buffaloes, the fish and other objects are frequently brought into play in this class of similes. In a good allegory there has to be a perfect balance and correspondence between the components, namely, the description of Nature and the idea suggested by it. Norman Hurst would have it in an allegory that the characters and details of the description of Nature should be in harmony with the lesson or idea to be conveyed by the utterer; and the purpose of such similes, as that of the allegory, is both to reveal as well as to conceal. Therefore they may be called 'dark similitudes', the term which Bunyan used to denote the allegories.

Tolkāppiyānār clarifies and codifies the conventions in the utterances of the heroine, the lady-companion and others involved in such suppressed similes. For example, the heroine's utterances of this type are generally restricted to the marutam and the neytal aspects of love and to those objects of Nature with which she is familiar. Among the objects called 'karupporul', the grammarian would not defile God in such similes; the play of plants, animals, birds, etc. is alone permitted in them.

1. Four Elements in Literature, Pp. 145-6,
3. ேவ இத தாது நாட்டா வோ
நோக்கு நிறம் வேறுபட்டு மருடம்
—Ibid. 301
4. அன்று
—Ibid. 304
5. அல்லூரை கருப்பூர் என்று மாணர்
—Ibid. 47
The frequency and abundance of similes, Petrarchan as well as Homeric, and the wide range of the objects from which they are drawn lead one to conclude that the Sangam poets had the power not only of memory, but of free reproduction of their experiences in Nature. They are, therefore, able to reproduce them aptly whenever required in comparing objects. As explained by I. A. Richards, it is availability, not mere possession of experiences that is essential for poets¹ and this the Sangam poets were richly endowed with. It is, therefore, possible for them to compare the beauty of one object in Nature with that of another and explain the variety of the beauty of Nature. The numerous similes that are found in the work of each of the poets are the result of this richness of experience and their availability for reproduction. Most of the similes are of visual images, images formed through the eye, for, according to Alden, both memory and imagination are more at home with objects of sight than with those perceived by the other senses.²

Nature is thus often used in similitudes and described for a purpose. The comparisons given are neither conventional nor superficial but original and copious. The aspects of Nature employed in such comparisons are depicted artistically while the human facts are represented realistically. The vast range of such similes comprehends plants, birds, beasts and insects, besides landscapes painted with a picturesque vigour.

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¹. Principles of Literary Criticism, p. 181.
². An Introduction to Poetry, p. 94
COEXISTENCE WITH NATURE

The Sangam poets have not only painted landscapes as scenic backgrounds for the play of human love, but have also depicted their heroes and heroines as projecting their own personal feelings into Nature and discovering there, sometimes a sympathetic response to their emotions, at other times an unsympathetic repulse. When they are glad and prosperous in their love, Nature’s beauty increases their ecstasy; at other times it brings only cruel mockery or misery to the rejected lovers. Thus the external world is brought into direct relationship with their individual feelings; and Nature and man seem to coexist. Sometimes there is a personification of natural objects with the ulterior purpose of making them conscious of the emotions of the heroine and others. In such cases, the expressions bear the mark of inner conviction, or strong emotion, and Nature is pictured in terms of human feelings and actions, or as Palgrave puts it, Nature is clothed in the hues of human passion.¹

The lovers meet in the mountain grove adjacent to the tinai field and the growth of the tinai crop with rich ears has a great part to play in the beginning. The heroine’s father bids her watch the field and scare away the parrots with slings and other instruments, and this makes her companion feel happy over the opportunities they have

¹ Landscape in Poetry, p. 9.
for meeting the hero there. After a few days, the heroine wants to inform her lover of her cares and anxieties in leading such a secret life of love and with this aim addresses the tiṇai to say that she watches the crop only on account of his boundless affection towards herself and her companion and requests it to grow full and fertile and rich with ears. This address is meant to be heard by the hero who has come just then and whose presence she pretends not to have noticed.

While seeking the help of the companion of his sweetheart, the hero says to himself, but so as to be heard by the companion, that the parrots also recognise the voice of his sweetheart watching the tiṇai field and that he feels himself relieved of his anxiety when these birds fly to the field and that his whole life ebbs away when they absent themselves.

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1. புளிரும் புளிரும் பரமார்வம் தமிழித்

2. பார்வூர் பார்வூர் பரவல் போன்ற

3. பார்வூர் பார்வூர் போன்ற

—Ibid. 26

—Ibid. 208
There comes a stage in their love-affair when the companion has to goad the hero on to marriage putting forth various reasons, the chief of them being the mother's restriction on the heroine not to go to the field. The hero promises to marry soon after the harvest but she informs him that her parents would not let her watch the field till the harvest, as her melodious voice invites the parrots instead of scaring them away. Later on, to make it more effective, she pretends to have not noticed the hero just coming and standing beside the fence, and warns the heroine that if she continues to be careless in watching the field always filled with thoughts of love, then the mother will notice the earless stalks of the tīnai crop and ban her from this duty. She also makes the hero overhear her request to the parrots to inform him, if they happen to meet him there in their absence, that the mother forbids her to watch the field since they eat away the tīnai ears and leave only bare stalks.

The vēńkai tree in the tīnai field also stands to bear some significance to their life. Its blossoming

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1. தோலுக்கான மற்றும் விளையாட்டுக்கான முடிக்கை

2. விளையாட்டுக்கான முடிக்கை

3. தோலுக்கான மீன்பென காலத்தில் விளையாட்டுக்கான முடிக்கை
season is the season for the marriages of ancient
days and also for the harvest of the fields. One
day, in her usual overheard speech, the lady-
companion enquires the heroine why her mother
prayed that the venikai should blossom and imme-
diately looked at her face. She thereby suggests
to the overhearing hero that her mother may
hereafter restrain her daughter from going to the
field and thereby indirectly urges him to marry
soon.¹

The hero absents himself for a short period
in order to make arrangements for marriage, but
this leaves the heroine in a state of anxiety and
despair. She then asks her companion how he is
able to forget to leave a message, though not to
them, at least to the venikai tree which has been
such a good company to him during many desolate
nights.²

In another situation, the companion addresses
the bee with sapphire-tinted wings and requests
it to carry the news of the restricted life of
the heroine at home to the hero of the yonder
hills and also hints that there is nothing to be
afraid of in carrying such a good message.³

¹ Nar. 206
² Kuru 266
³ Kuru 392
There is another address to the bee but it is by the heroine herself when her lover has gone to a distant country seeking wealth. Her complexion becomes pale with sickness, and she asks the bee why it is not attracted by the paleness of her complexion just like the pîr blooms of the same colour and attributes it to its lacking fragrance. She blames that the bee is cruel and has no virtue, and enquires whether it is as gloomy and dark in knowledge as in colour. She also curses it to suffer like her since it does not help her and carry her message to the hero. ¹

The hero in a delightful mood of appreciating the charms of his sweetheart enquires the bee whether there is any flower known to it smelling as fragrant as her tresses and requests it to state, not what it likes but the barest truth in the matter. ²

When the attempts for marriage come out successful, the companion in a mood of joy remembers the past days of anguish and anxiety and asks the heroine how she was able to bear all

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¹ Nar. 277
² Kuru. 3
the sufferings. The reply of the heroine is that one day the stream from the hero's mountain brought in its flood a kāntal with tender leaves which she embraced, brought home, planted and looked after with loving thoughts of him. She also feels grateful to her mother for not having objected to these eccentric acts.¹

The companion perceives dark clouds encircling the mountain cliffs with lightning and thunder and says to the heroine that there will be rain and consequently flood in the stream so as to enable them to plunge and bathe in its fresh water and hopes to be relieved of the distress caused by the absence of the hero of that mountain.² She also explains the nature of the expected flood with its foam, flowers and fragrance, and eagerly desires to bathe in it to their satisfaction if only somebody represented to the good mother the advantages of young girls going outside and playing in free air and if, on their advice, the mother permitted her to do so.³ In another context, it is said that the mother expressed that the fresh sweet water of the stream would have medicinal

¹ Ooru 361
2 —Aka, 278.
3 —Nar, 68.
effect on her daughter and advised her to bathe in it. The companion thereby doubts whether she is aware of their love-affair.¹

One day she meets the hero and directly expresses the desolate condition of the heroine suffering in his absence by saying that she begins to weep even at the sight of the stream in his mountain.²

The heroine’s mother, while a young girl, played with some punnai seeds and forgetfully left one in the sand which later on grew into a young plant. She took affectionate care of it as if it was a child and watered it even with the milk and the honey offered to her by her mother. It gradually grew into a tree she herself became a mother. To her own young daughter she introduced it as her elder sister since she treated it as her child before her marriage. This daughter also had some real affection towards it till she herself became a young lady, now the heroine. The hero has been frequently meeting her under the shade of this punnai tree, but one day the companion makes use of the story behind it to urge him to early marriage. She informs him that the heroine

1. மனிதன் தெரில் மருதியும் தொர் என்று பல குறிப்பிட்டாட்டம் கையிலர் போன்று கையில் கலந்து... கையிலான பூர்வனைகள் கரத்துக் குற்றம் மகள் கொடுக்கும் போல் குடும்பம் என்னையைத் தெரியவுள்ளது. அதன் மீதியுடன் வாழ்ந்து பொன்றை விளக்கம் செய்யவுள்ளார். நன்மை போற்றவுள்ளார். —Nar. 38

2. குருமை கூம்பில் கும்பில் குருமை குறிப்பிட்டாள் ஓவியம் அடைத்து பூர்வனை கையில்... கையந்தல் மீதியுடன் வாழ்ந்து கையில் குருமை அடை கொண்டு கொண்டாட்டாள். —Aln. 351
feels shy to meet him under its shade as she considers it as her elder sister.¹

The hero has to be absent for a short period to arrange the marriage when the companion feels depressed and asks the heroine how she could stand the separation. In reply, the heroine just looks at the mountain of her lover and turning to her companion enquires of her whether the complexion of her forehead has improved or is of the same old pale colour of sickness. She thereby suggests that she will try her best to console herself by often looking at his mountain.²

Yet, the heroine feels desperately lonely in the evenings; the sight of the birds returning to their nests, the flowers closing their petals, and the coastal grove appearing desolate increases her misery. The evening sky appears to her bewildered and suffering like herself; and she hopes to survive if only somebody informed the hero of her plight.³

The heroine pretends to be unaware of the approach of the hero on the side of the fence and

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1. விழாவிடும் பொழுந்து வந்து வருவையும் அறிய
மாட்டுல்ல உடல் கன்னைகள் ஆறிய
சிற்றம் இறந்து பெண்மில் முற்றிலும்
முதல் உள்ளே நீர்த்தான ஆட்டங்கள்
அனுராக குறிப்பிட்டு பெண் கவனம் எடுக்கிற
அனைத்து பொன்று நூற்றிற்றிற் கைவிடம்.
—Nar. 172

2. பொற்றும் பொழுந்து நோய் அறியாலே
நூறு பூண்டுகளிலிருந்து கொஞ்டு
பூண்டால் அறிய கவனிச் செய்யவும்.
—Kuru. 249

3. போற்றும் பொழுந்து நோய் அறியாலே
செய்யப் பொருள்கள் பூண்டுகளிலிருந்து
விளக்கும் பூண்டால் கவனி
செய்யப் பொருள்கள் பூண்டுகளிலிருந்து
பொற்றும் பொழுந்து நோய் அறியாலே
கவனி செய்யப் பூண்டுகளிலிருந்து
செய்யப் பொருள்கள் பூண்டுகளிலிருந்து
கவனி செய்யப் பூண்டுகளிலிருந்து
பொற்றும் பொழுந்து நோய் அறியாலே
—Kuru. 310
in her talk with her companion mentions that she has been all along bearing the misery of separation only on account of the sight of the lofty cliff of her lover's mountain. In another context, she requests the companion to explain to her mother her feverish and wasted condition and move her heart, so as to permit her to come out in the fresh air and enjoy the breeze from the mountain of the hero which will bring her comfort and health.

The *aprîl* is a bird wellknown for its constancy in love and for its sufferings when separated from its mate. The hero expresses his miserable despair at night especially when the *aprîl* raises its cry from the nest and expects the companion at a distance to listen to his words and help him in obtaining the favour of the heroine.

The companion tries her best to console the pining heroine but in spite of all her attempts, the latter feels for her miserable loneliness at nights. The evening begins with its usual accompaniments, the darkness slowly setting in after sunset, the bats flying hither and thither and the nocturnal owl screeching in the neem tree.

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1. *அந்தர் உங்கள் வசன்...அந்தர்கள் பிறரையும் அப்பூச்சியை பிறர் வசனையும் குறையும் கருத்து உடையும்.* — *Aka 378*

2. *சுருக்கள் கூர்கள் காண்ட்கள் புணிதம் நூற்றுடன் அரிதியார் முதலிருந்து வருந்து... அணுகல் வெள்ளாட்சி முழுக்கொள்ள ஐரீசீர் பலகை முடியும் கவிதை.* — *Nar. 236*

3. *அக்கைத் தோழத்துகள் துணைப்பன்று முடியும் அனைத் தொடர்கள் ஆதிக் காணத்து குறையும் கூர்கள் பிரபார்கள் ஏற்பிரஞ்சு போர்.* — *ibid. 152*
The heroine broods, thinks of what is to follow them and immediately feels more miserable and asks her companion whether she will have to hear also the voice of the anril from the palmyra tree.¹

When she is sleepless during wintry midnights with the chill north wind blowing ceaselessly, she experiences the effects of hearing the anril’s cry and says that it is enough to make the lonely lovers lose all their hopes and pine away.² The voice of the bird in the company of its loving mate aggravates her misery and she asks her companion whether the hero knew how she longs for him.³ Her sufferings increase whenever she hears the lonely anril making its sorrowful cry in the palmyra tree adjacent to her dwelling.⁴ She says that its pining cry is such that her heart burns on hearing it and later on the tune of the flute played by some careless people fans her grief into

¹ Nar. 318
² Kuru. 160
³ Nar. 308
⁴ Ibid. 385
a flame. Her despair increases to such an extent that she gradually loses her sense of discrimination and enquires the bird whether it makes the cry in sympathy with her own sufferings or whether it has itself such a cause for suffering.

When the professional bard pays his usual visit to the house, the companion informs him of the heroine’s misery and tells him that the heroine with tearful eyes points to the sleepless bird separated from its loving mate. Expressing her own inability to console her she requests him to carry the news to the hero in the distant country.

The heroine feels herself desolate and miserable at the approach of evening and the companion also feels sorry for her. This sentimental attitude towards the evening is expressed by various epithets in describing its approach. Some of them are:

paiyul mālai (the distressful evening)
pulampu kol mālai (the desolate evening)
perum pun mālai

(the evening of great unpleasantness)

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1. பெரும் புண் மலை (the evening of great unpleasantness)
2. புண் செரும் மலை (the desolate evening)
3. பெரும் புண் மலை (the evening of great unpleasantness)
4. பெரும் புண் மலை (the evening of great unpleasantness)
5. பெரும் புண் மலை (the evening of great unpleasantness)
6. பெரும் புண் மலை (the evening of great unpleasantness)

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1. Aka. 305
2. Kali. 129
3. Aka. 195
4. Kuru. 172, 391
5. Aka. 164
6. Nar. 369
Coexistence With Nature

cirupun mālai (the evening of misery and unpleasantness)
palaiṅkaṇ mālai (the evening of distress)
punkaṇ mālai (the bewildering evening)
maruṅin mālai (the merciless evening)
arul il mālai (the evening of despair)
pulampoṭu vanta punkaṇ mālai (the evening of solitariness and distress)
pataiyotu vanta paiyuḷ mālai (the distressing evening that invades with an army)
kaiyaṟu vanta paiyuḷ mālai (the evening of despair and distress)
kaiyaṟu vanta poluṭu (the evening of despair)
kaiyaṟu vanta maiyai mālai (the enervating evening of despair)
pulambu koḷ maruḷ mālai (the evening of despondency and desolation)
įṭumpai kūr maruḷ mālai (the painful evening of despondency)

1. Kuru. 352
2. Kuru. 352
3. Nar. 69
4. Nar. 69
5. Nar. 69
6. Nar. 69
7. Nar. 69
8. Nar. 69
9. Nar. 69
10. Nar. 69
11. Nar. 69
12. Nar. 69
13. Nar. 69
14. Nar. 69
15. Nar. 69
16. Nar. 69
17. Nar. 69
18. Nar. 69
The companion tells the heroine that the evening approaches as a messenger from the lover. The heroine's sufferings increase as it slowly approaches and in her pining state she enquires her companion whether the hero would not have such an experience and whether there is no evening in the distant country where he has gone to seek wealth. She also feels that it comes earlier now in his absence than it used to do before, that it comes in the noon itself; and addressing it she cries that there is none to help her even if it came still earlier, with the morning itself. She is so much in agony as to feel unable to believe, in what others say that evening is the hour in which the mullai blossoms. So she says to her companion that the hour of dawn when the cock blows its trumpet and the bright noon time are also evenings for all those who suffer loneliness during the absence of their lovers.

The crescent in the twilight sky reminds the heroine pining in separation of her hero and

1. ஐன்றல்
குர்ஆன் முது எச்ச.

2. மெலயுரொ அந்த கலுமா கைக
முற்றுவரும் தமிழ் முற்று முற்பண்ண
மாற்றும் தமிழ் முற்பண்ண
பிள்ளையார் கம்ப் கோலும்.

3. மெலயுரொ குர்ஸ்தேறு பிள்ளையார் பங்களித்த
சுற்றுவரும் தமிழ் முற்பண்ண
சுற்றுவரும் தமிழ் முற்பண்ண
சுற்றுவரும் தமிழ் முற்பண்ண.

4. ஸ்ரீலங்கார்ணியா இந்திய தமிழ்
மாற்றும் தமிழ் முற்பண்ண
சுற்றுவரும் தமிழ் முற்பண்ண
சுற்றுவரும் தமிழ் முற்பண்ண

-Aka. 259
-Nar. 848
-Ain. 183
-Kuru. 284
aggravates her feelings of despair. She says that the very appearance of it is distressing.¹

While returning from the distant country the hero requests the charioteer to drive the chariot faster so as to reach his village before evening, as otherwise, his sweetheart will have to hear the sound of the bells in the necks of the cows returning to their village and thereby suffer with despair on account of his absence.² Later on in his life, the hero has an opportunity to remember how when he stayed in an evening in a village on his way home he imagined the feelings of the heroine at home in her act of lighting the lamps.³

Midnight is not addressed to by the lovers but it has its own influence over their feelings and sufferings. The death-like silence prevailing in the village at midnight is unbearable to the desolate

1. மரணம் தோன்றும் சூரியன் தாமை
விதையும் மித்தமல் பொருந்துக் கொண்டிருக்கும்
மூத்ததை மணிதீர் பெட்டி

—Kuru. 307

2. கோசம் இறாம் பக மன்னரால்
தாக்கீ போர்கள் புரியும் கரைர
சாந்தமல் அம்மன்றா தண்டி கோளியਦா
நோயாவா தான்

—Aka. 64

3. கோசம் போன்ற மன்னர்கள் கூறி
சாந்தமல் குண்டு போர் மூன்றும்
சாந்தமல் முன்னே புரியும் கோளியல்

—Nar. 3
heroine and increases the pangs of her heart. She is tempted to hit herself over a wall, to beat herself, or to pretend a cause to cry aloud and wake up the whole village silent in sleep without any sympathy for her sufferings. The hero's sufferings have not found any such expression but he says that in his pangs of separation he breathes hard at midnight like an elephant in sleep. He feels miserable and says to himself that his thoughts of the heroine make him sleepless even at midnights, even when the fish sleep.

To the companion who consoles her in her desolate loneliness, the heroine says that even if she swims through the despair of evening, she feels herself distressed at the approach of the flood of night, a flood greater than the ocean itself.

Amidst the silence of the wintry midnight, the companion hears the roar of the tiger that killed an elephant and says to the heroine that it would be better if the hero failed to

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1. சையாரே சையாரே சையாரே
   தம்மைத் தம்மைத் தம்மைத்
   குட்டு குட்டு குட்டு
   ஆண்டு ஆண்டு ஆண்டு
   குன்றிய குன்றிய குன்றிய
   குன்றிய குன்றிய குன்றிய.
   —Kuru. 28

2. பூணை, பூணை பூணை பூணை
   பூணை பூணை பூணை
   —Ibid. 142

3. பூணை பூணை
   பூணை பூணை
   பூணை பூணை
   —Nar. 319

4. பூணையும் பூணையும் பூணையும்
   பூணையும் பூணையும்
   —Kuru. 387
turn up that night as her heart is filled with anguish when she thinks of the risks of the way through which he has to come. ¹ When she meets him in such a rainy midnight, she wonders how he has found his way when the whole sky is covered with rainy clouds, the vast earth is enveloped in sheets of water and the atmosphere is very dark and everywhere silence prevails and all are asleep. ³

Even the moonlight night affects the life of the lovers meeting secretly at nights. The lady-companion blames the moon for shining bright and causing hindrance to the stealthy approach of the hero. In its light, the venkai blooms fallen on a block of stone present the appearance of a tiger's cub and, the lady-companion imagines that it might frighten the hero coming that way. ³

When the hero has gone to a distant country seeking wealth, the heroine perceives the full moon spreading its milk-like light all over the earth, praises it for its nobility and impartiality, says that there is nothing hidden to it on earth and requests it to let her know about the hero's whereabouts. Interpreting its silence as its pleading ignorance and failing to be fair, she says that it wanes day by day and becomes paler and paler.

¹ Nar. 154

² மும்பையில் கூறும் நிலையால் அமையும் நாடு குறித்து செய்துள்ள தன்னாலே கூறும் பொறுப்பில் இருக்கும் பல்லிக்கட்டு வரும் எங்கும் மாரமான வருமான் கூல்பு. —Kuru. 355

³ கூறும் பொறுப்பில் இருக்கும் பல்லிக்கட்டு வரும் எங்கும் கூண்டு கூறும் கூருவும் கூறும் நீரின் கூல்பு. —Ibid. 47
like her own shoulders as it proves itself false and does not bear witness to his whereabouts.¹

After accomplishing mission in the foreign country, the hero returns; and on his way the full moon appears just above a hill and draws his attention; and he then exclaims to himself that he too has a moon of his own in the face of his sweetheart in the village.²

The frequent screeching of the owl at night is dreadful to hear in the silence of midnight; and the companion requests it to stop its cry especially when she and the heroine distressfully keep awake expecting to meet the hero. As a mark of her gratitude, she promises the bird a dish of fried rats along with mutton cooked in ghee.⁵

When the heroine has to recollect her first meeting with the hero and tell her companion

¹ Nar. 196
² Nar. 62
⁵ Ibid. 88
that it is up to him to keep true to his engagement
she, in great pain, expresses that she has
none to bear witness to their relationship and so is
completely at his mercy. She also says that there
was a crane then on the bank of the stream, but
that, too, was keenly watching for the āṟal fish in
the flowing water.¹

There are also two apostrophes to the bird in
which the heroine requests it to inform the lover
of her lonely sufferings and to take some interest
in her case; she enquires whether it is so very
forgetful or so unkind as to turn a deaf ear to her
request.²

She notices the birds living with their mates
and flying together and enquires her companion
whether such birds in the distant land could not cite
their own example and ask the hero staying there
why he should be parted from his wife and live
alone.³

The vayalai creeper is one of the pet objects
of the heroine while playing at home as the darling
of a wealthy family. She has been looking
after it affectionately and watering it daily. When
she has eloped with her lover to a distant place,

¹. புருஷர் விவேகம் கூறிய கூற்றனை
செய்ய வேண்டிச் செய்யவும் வேண்டிச் செய்யவும்
வர்த்தகர் அரசு விளக்காமல்
அடுத்து பற்றி பற்றி
செய்ய வேண்டிச் செய்யவும்.

². குரு. 25

³. அன். 833
her mother weeps and cries and feels great distress whenever she sees the different objects she played with. The *vayalai* creeper is one such to aggravate her misery. She addresses the fading creeper and pities it for having lost its dear patron.\(^1\)

The crab on the sea coast is assigned its own place in the life of the lovers. When the hero seeks the favour of the lady-companion to approach his sweetheart, he notices a crab taking with its pincer-like legs a *nāval* fruit and offering it to its loving mate in the burrow among the screwpine roots. He then remarks that the creature is blessed and fortunate to be so loving. He makes this remark in the hearing of the lady-companion who later on conveys it to the heroine and convinces her of his sincerity in his love.\(^2\)

The heroine in a despondent mood of lonely sufferings expresses that neither the coastal grove, nor the backwater, nor the *punnai* tree is sympathetic enough to convey her message to the hero. She begs of the crab to do this help and inform

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1. வாயலை குருவை முன் ஒரு வாலை நான்கு ஒரு தொலைப் பாடலை மூலமாக ஒரு செழுத்தை வரக்கை வாழ்க்கை மனை விளக்க குறியீடு தேவதையர் என்றும் வாழ்க்கை நூற்றாண்டுக்கு பதிவாற்ற வாயலை குருவை முன் ஒரு வாலை நான்கு ஒரு தொலைப் பாடலை வரக்கை
2. கூட்டு பாடல் பாதுகாப்புப் பாடல் வாயலை குருவை முன் ஒரு வாலை நான்கு ஒரு தொலைப் பாடலை வரக்கை வாழும் தொலைப் பாடலை என்றும் வாழும் தொலைப் பாடலை என்றும் வாழும் தொலைப் பாடலை என்றும் வாழும் தொலைப் பாடலை என்றும் வாழும் தொலைப் பாடலை என்றும் வாழும் தொலைப் பாடலை என்றும் வாழும் தொலைப் பாடலை என்றும் வாழும் தொலைப் பாடலை என்றும் வாழும் தொலை

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—Aka. 383
—Ibid. 380
him of her distress. Nature is, in such passages, addressed as a conscious being and is called upon to sympathise with the heroine's sorrows, as in the works of the early Elizabethan poet Sir Thomas Wyatt, who communes with and interprets Nature with an impulse of an unrequited love-passion.

The part played by the sea is also worth noticing. The hero replies to his enquiring friend that his miserable condition is due to a love affair, and on account of it he is sleepless at night just like the restless waves of the sea. The heroine has similar sufferings and is sleepless hearing the waves of the roaring sea. She also asks it whether it cries aloud in sympathy with the misery of those pining in separation just like herself or whether it has

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1. The Interpretation of Nature in English Poetry, p. 165
2. Ibid. 172
3. Ibid. 107
4. Kuru. 163
been first loved and later on forsaken by anybody as in her own case.\(^1\)

Just as in Wordsworth’s “The Wanderer” the contemplation of the sea enhances the heroine’s prevailing mood of melancholy during the absence of her lover. But there is nothing terrible or dreary as found in the feelings of the poet in “The Wanderer”. It is the ceaseless roar of the waves heard amidst the death-like silence of the seacoast that increases the heroine’s sense of desolation and despair. William Cowper admits that the sight and sound of the ocean have often composed his thoughts into a melancholy and the Sangam poets have rightly assigned the sea coast as the fitting and ideal background for the heroine’s feelings of desolation and despair.\(^2\)

The influence of the crow and the lizard has a superstitious background in the setting. The foster-mother grieves over the elopement of her daughter with the hero and requests the bird to caw and foretell their return to her house. In grateful recognition of this timely help, she promises to feed it and its kith and kin with raw mutton and fat offered in a gold vessel.\(^3\) During

\(^1\) "The Treatment of Nature"

\(^2\) "The Treatment of Nature"

\(^3\) "The Treatment of Nature"
the absence of the hero, the lady-companion has
the responsible duty of consoling the heroine and
for this help he thanks her after his return; but
she replies to him that it is the crow that kept her
happy by crying often and prophesying his return,
and as such suggests the grateful offer all the
rice of the fields of Tonti with the ghee yielded by
the numerous cows in Nalli's forest and remarks
that even this offer is very little compared to the
great consolation rendered by the bird.1

The lizard's clicking noise is considered as an
omen sometimes prophesying good news. The
hero finishes his duty in the distant country and
starts to his village when he keenly desires that the
lizard at home should tickle whenever she thinks of
him and thus give her hopes of his return and
relieve her of her distress and despair.2 The lady-
companion at home hears its lovable sound at
midnight and consoles the heroine by interpreting
it suitably.3

1. இலையில் சூடை காலத்தில் அம்மனை
பன்றி பார்க்க வேண்டும் ந்தனையும்
பேருக்கு இலையில் காலத்தில் தாம்பரம்
தட்டை உண்டுவிதியுள்ள சிற்றுப்பு
புத்தானின் கிளையார் மலர்வு
சீராக செழுத்திருப்பதை பாதித்து.
—Kuru 210

2. உருசியாம் புத்தாக்கு பெரும்புளியுள்
நூற்றிலும் கிளையார் மலர்கள்
நேறுவி லையில் காலத்தில்...
என்றுகிளையார் குன்னுபாசியயன
நூற்றில் புத்தாக்கு பெரும்புளி
புத்தாக்கு பெரும்புளியுள்
—Aka. 351

3. முதலுடன் அன்ன காலத்தில் புத்தாக்கு
திகழுவின் பகுதியில் புத்தாக்கு
கிளையார் வாழ்க்கை நடைபெறாத
முறையாக குளிரும் முறையாக பெரும்புளி
பெரும்புளியுள் பன்னாட்டு
பாதிக்கும்போது பெரும்புளி
—Nar. 333
The innocent domestic cock makes its usual cry early morning but the heroine accuses the bird for disturbing her and waking her up from her pleasant sleep by the side of her lover who returned from the foreign country only on the previous day; she also curses the bird to fall a prey to the young wild cat that seeks the domestic rats at night.¹

Of the winds, the north wind plays a prominent part in affecting the passions and feelings of the lovers, and as referred to above, the idyll Neṭunālavātai bears eloquent testimony.² There are also stray small passages with apostrophes³ or references to it.

The heroine suffering from her desolate loneliness blames the north wind as merciless and unsympathetic, harsh and cruel.⁴ “Oh! chill north wind!” she cries, “We have not meant any harm to you. Please don’t cause further suffering to this miserable soul”⁵ She remarks that it

¹. "The Treatment of Nature"
². "Vide pp. 25, 152.
³. "Kuru. 107"
⁵. "Aka. 247"
mercilessly blows at midnight to afflict her alone without any pity for her utter despair and bids it blow through the country where the hero is, so as to remind him of her and make him return.¹

The hero in the distant country feels the effects of the north wind but only thinks of his sweetheart suffering lonely in the distant village and requests the wind not to blow athwart her village.² When the bard comes from his village carrying the heroine’s message to him, he welcomes him and enquires him more and more of the message so as to be relieved of the misery caused by the north wind blowing as if deriding him for his loneliness.³

Knowing the return of the hero, the lady-companion scorns the north wind for blowing chill at midnight and afflicting those who are helpless and suffer from miserable loneliness, and laughs at it remarking that it has to retreat fast and become powerless when the hero returns.⁴

¹—Aka. 163
²—Kuru. 235
³Aln. 479
⁴—Aka. 125
This north wind is not generally welcome to the heroine pining during the period of separation of her lover. Various are the epithets expressing her sentimental attitude towards it:

arul il vāṭai¹ (the merciless north wind)
inṉātu eritarum vāṭai²
(the north wind that blows unpleasantly)
arāṇ iṇrū alaikkum ānā vāṭai³ (the north wind that blows incessantly and unkindly)
alkalam alaikkum nalkā vāṭi⁴
(the unfavourable north wind that blows and worries every day)
tuyar kūr vāṭai⁵
(the north wind that aggravates misery)
pāṇpu il vāṭai⁶ (the north wind that has no character)
inṉā vāṭai⁷ (the distressing north wind)
kaṇ il vāṭai⁸ (the unsympathetic north wind)

The early winter is the season of the mullai blooms. The heroine notices the mullai buds on the locks of the shepherds while they come to the village with milk and return to the folds carrying food with them. When the companion consoles her during the absence of the hero,
the heroine feels more and more miserable and referring to the mullai buds seen on the shepherds' locks laments that the season has begun with the blossoming of the mullai and that the hero has not yet returned.¹

On his way home, the returning hero looks at the fresh mullai buds and imagines that the creeper laughs at the lonely lovers with the buds for its teeth; he, therefore, chides it for its lack of sympathy.² He addresses the pastoral region itself and appreciates its fresh and beautiful appearance with the gold-like koyrai blooms, the sapphire-like kāya blooms and the blossomed tônji. He says that he is coming to perceive the region with its seasonal changes and to meet his sweetheart in the village therein.³

While on his return from the distant country after accomplishing the work undertaken by him there, the hero's heart is filled with tender and affectionate feeling for his sweetheart and he is soft and tender to the deer and the bees living happy with their mates. Perceiving a stag and a hind in happy union on the way, he directs the

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¹ Kuru. 221
² Ibid. 163
³ Ain 420
charioteer to drive the chariot slowly and silently without disturbing them in their happiness. Similarly he sees the bees humming and sucking nectar from the flowers along with their mates and gets down his chariot and ties up the tongues of the bells so as to prevent them from sounding and disturbing the happy life of the insects in those flowers.

On his way through the pastoral region in the beginning of early winter, a stag makes its pregnant mate graze the aruku grass and sleep quietly on the bank of a brook, and then it chews the cud and watches the sleeping mate. It draws the attention of the hero who appreciates the qualities of chivalry and nobility in the animal and requests the charioteer to drive the chariot fast so as to go and meet his sweetheart in time. He exclaims that his heart melts away at the sight of this affectionate stag.
He is also attracted by the act of a wild cock scratching the wet sand in the pastoral region, finding some food therein and immediately looking at its mate as if inviting it to eat the prey. The hero draws the attention of the charioteer to the scene and in full praise of the bird requests him to drive the chariot faster by using the goad remaining unused till then.  

Approaching his beloved wife, he bursts out to her, “Oh dear! on my way the peacocks dance like you, the mullai blossoms and spreads fragrance like your forehead and the deer look bewildered like you. All these I saw. I thought of you and you alone, and have come fast, faster than the season itself”.  

After having returned home, he feels great relief and remains unperturbed by the changes brought on by the beginning of the season and with great pride addresses the rainy clouds: “Dispel the darkness with your lightning’ pour forth cool and pleasant showers and make your roars of thunder like the royal drum beaten with the drumstick. Pour you may as you like; I am safe, unaffected  

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1. இவ்வுன்னின் வாய்க்கவுள்ள வாழ்க்கையை, வந்து வந்த உணர்க்கும்... 
   நீர்த்துள்ள வாழ்க்கையை, 
   பயின்று வந்து வந்த உணர்க்கும். 
   பாதிக்கும் வாழ்க்கையை வந்து 
   வந்து வந்த உணர்க்கும். 
   பாதுகாக்கும் வாழ்க்கையை வந்து. 
   வந்து வந்த உணர்க்கும். 
   —Nar. 21

2. விழுந்த பருவதில் வாழ்க்கை வந்து வந்த உணர்க்கும் வந்து 
   வந்து வந்த உணர்க்கும். 
   வந்து வந்த உணர்க்கும். 
   வந்து வந்த உணர்க்கும். 
   வந்து வந்த உணர்க்கும். 
   —Ain. 492
on the soft tresses of my beloved". It rains heavily while the hero witnesses it with feelings of pride and rejoicings, and thanks the rain for pouring in such torrents after his return and blesses it with a noble career over the mountain cliffs all over the earth for the well-being of the whole world. In such passage, there is a meditative dream-like sentiment, a sympathetic nearness to Nature as in Kalidasa’s Meghaduta or Cloud Messenger.

The lady-companion is very particular in inducing him to be serious and sincere in his attempts for marriage and one day when he is at an audible distance, she addresses the cloud and asks it whether it has the real intention of pouring rain and protecting the *tinai* crop or whether its roaring thunder will prove futile in the end. Thereby she suggests to him to be really serious.

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1. "..."—Kuru. 270

2. "..."—Nar. 139

3. The Meghaduta, Purvamegha, 6-11
   Uttaramegha, 54, 55.
in marrying the heroine and not to indulge in promises and proposals in vain.  

The heroine speaks to the cloud passing in the sky with roaring thunder and remarks that it is so harsh in its roar as to shake off even the great Himalayas and is merciless towards helpless women, especially when they are lonely. She addresses the rainy cloud of early winter and comments on its thunder as being very harsh and unpleasant to hear and remarks that its attitude is unworthy of noble persons. She says that the seasonal rain derides her miserable loneliness; she sees its derisive laugh in the lightning and hears its shout of ridicule in the roaring thunder. The season itself seems to laugh at her with the mullai buds for its teeth. When the clouds spread themselves and descend to pour, she trembles with overpowering desolation and her cry of despair is “Alas! How can I bear these sufferings”.

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1. மூல்லையை நெருங்கி ஒரு வேறு கொள்ளில் வைக்கிறார் வல்லின் உண்மை... கொள்ளிலை கொள்ளிலை பற்றிய உண்மையை வைக்கிறார்...  

—Aka. 183

2. மூல்லையை சீழுகள் வைக்கிறார்... கொள்ளிலை உண்மையை வைக்கிறார்... கொள்ளிலை உண்மையை வைக்கிறார்...  

—Kuru.158

3. புல்லையை சீழுகள் வைக்கிறார்... கொள்ளிலை உண்மையை வைக்கிறார்... கொள்ளிலை உண்மையை வைக்கிறார்...  

—Nar.288

4. மூல்லையை சீழுகள் வைக்கிறார்... கொள்ளிலை உண்மையை வைக்கிறார்... கொள்ளிலை உண்மையை வைக்கிறார்...  

—Ibid.214

5. மூல்லையை சீழுகள் வைக்கிறார்... கொள்ளிலை உண்மையை வைக்கிறார்...  

—Kuru.128

6. மூல்லை அல்லது கொள்ளிலை உண்மை... கொள்ளிலை உண்மையை வைக்கிறார்...  

—Nar.381
The pittikam yields buds, and on seeing them the heroine feels distressed. Besides she hears the rain pouring with thunder and asks her companion how the hero will suffer if he happens to hear it there in his lonely life in a distant country.¹ She observes the mullai blooms on the nocci tree and is reminded of the parting words of the hero; pointing to it he had then said that he would return when it blossomed.² The konrai blossoms pale like her own paleness caused by miserable loneliness; the seasonal rain has made the pastoral region fresh and cool, so that the deer leap about happily with their mates. The heroine, therefore, enquires if there is such a season in that distant country also and if so, whether the hero there will witness any stag wandering lonely without its loving mate.³

As a means of consoling the heroine just when the early winter is to begin, the lady-companion assures her that the hero will immediately return as there are promises of fresh showers in the clouds dark as herds of elephants⁴ and calls her to

¹ வாழ்வில் மலர்ப்பூ மிளையில் சிற்றூட்டுவது கல்வை
உள்ளே மலர்ப்பூ மிளையில் சிற்றூட்டுவது
விளைவு முடியாது குலியில் பயணிகுகின் என்று
சிற்றூட்டுகளை கூர்ந்துகிறது.

² மலர், குறுக்கு கோயில் குறிப்பிட்டு
உள்ளே மலர்ப்பூ மிளையில்
சிற்றூட்டுகளை கூர்ந்துகிறது.

³ நெடுங்கு இலவசமான மலர்
சிற்றூட்டுகளை கூர்ந்து
சிற்றூட்டுகளை கூர்ந்து
சிற்றூட்டுகளை கூர்ந்து
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சிற்றூட்டுகளை கூர்ந்து
சிற்றூ�...
come out and look at those descending to pour and looking like her own tresses. She also tries to bring her comfort by explaining that the hero will surely return before it begins to rain heavily as indicated by the lightning that seems as if the mountain winks and by the thunder that roars aloud; she continues that a feast should be arranged to be given to this helpful rain and enquires the heroine what sort of feast it should be.

Pointing to the *mullai* buds that the cowherds wear on their locks, she tells the heroine that it is the season of his promised return and the *mullai* buds seem as if conveying the message. She also makes her feel comfort by suggesting to her that the bewildered look of the beautiful hind in the fragrant pastoral region will remind him of her, and he will then bid his charioteer drive faster and will reach home immediately.

Sometimes the lady-companion finds it necessary to assert that the early winter season has not started and tries to console the pining heroine.

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1. The lady-companion tries to comfort the heroine... 

2. She also tries to bring her comfort by explaining that the hero will surely return before it begins to rain heavily... 

3. She tells the heroine that it is the season of his promised return and... 

4. The lady-companion finds it necessary to assert that the early winter season has not started...
by means of lies. She says that the kōnrai is foolish in mistaking the casual rain for the seasonal one and beginning to blossom. She wants her to believe that the ignorant cloud drew too much of water from the sea and unable to carry it through the sky poured a little on the way and that it is not therefore, the seasonal rain. She advises her not to take into consideration the folly of the pījavu, the kōnrai and the kōtal that blossom as if the season has commenced. She addresses the rain itself and blames it for worsening the misery of the lonely heroine’s heart with its merciless roars of harsh thundering and for taking an interest in witnessing her sufferings, and says that she will not be deluded by its pretending to be the seasonal showers though the flock of foolish and self-deluded peacocks should commit the mistake.

The early summer with the cuckoo’s flute-like notes has also some effect on the sentiments of the heroine in the absence of her lover. When the pleasant season begins, she is reminded of the promise of the hero that he would return early and along with her listen to the cuckoo’s songs in the season. But he has not yet come and the lady-companion and the heroine think in despair whether

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1. 1.  மலைக்கூர் குறுவாரன் கோருக்கம்... பி஛ுமிக் கூர் தம்மான் கோரியகம்
   கோருக்கம் கூருக்கம் கோருக்கம்
   கொண்ட கூரியக் கொண்ட மறுக்கியார்.

2.  மலைக்கூர் குறுவாரன் கோருக்கம்
   கூருக்கம் கூரியக் கொண்ட மறுக்கியார்.

3.  மலைக்கூர் குறுவாரன் கோருக்கம்
   கூருக்கம் கூரியக் கொண்ட மறுக்கியார்.

   —Kuru. 66

   —Nar. 99

   —Ibid. 248
there is no such season in the distant country to remind him of his promise.\(^1\) To the lonely heroine, the cuckoo's notes are not at all pleasant,\(^2\) but only aggravate her misery like the spear thrown at one's chest already suffering from a deep and painfull wound yet uncured. The river with crystal-clear water is more cruel to her as that also reminds her of the season's pleasures and pastimes which she is deprived of. Still more cruel is to her the wench calling aloud and selling in the street the \textit{kurukkattil} and \textit{pittikam} blossoms and painfully reminding her of the pleasant season.\(^3\)

When the companion tries her best to console her, she bursts out with grief and asks whether it is possible to stop shedding tears for those who are unfortunate enough to hear the cuckoo's voice in the grove of the mango trees appearing beautiful with tender leaves and fresh blooms.\(^4\) The bird

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{Aka. 3}\textbf{17}
\item Harmony seems to have such an effect on Shakespeare's Jessica when in the moonlight scene she utters, "I am never merry when I hear sweet music" —
\textit{The Merchant of Venice, Act. V, Sc. I. 69}
\item \textit{Nar. 97}
\item \textit{Aka. 97}
\end{enumerate}
makes appealing and heart-rending notes when separated from its mate. There are four stanzas by four different poets of this period describing the bird's note with some special significance for the lovers, as an instruction to those who live together, as a warning to those who propose to part, and as a rebuke to those who have already parted.¹

The *pātiri* blossoms in early summer. When a woman shouts selling these flowers in the streets, her call afflicts the heart of the lonely heroine as she is reminded of the pleasant features of the season and of the promise of the hero to return before the season began.²

The *pir* blooms in winter and its colour is like the paleness that has marred the complexion of the disconsolate heroine. She perceives such blooms, compares their colour with her own sickly paleness and suggests to the lady-companion that it would be better if some took a few flowers to

1. "*pātiri* blossoms in early summer. When a woman shouts selling these flowers in the streets, her call afflicts the heart of the lonely heroine as she is reminded of the pleasant features of the season and of the promise of the hero to return before the season began.²

2. "The *pir* blooms in winter and its colour is like the paleness that has marred the complexion of the disconsolate heroine. She perceives such blooms, compares their colour with her own sickly paleness and suggests to the lady-companion that it would be better if some took a few flowers to..."

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¹ Aka. 25
² Nar. 324
² Ibid. 248
² Kali 92
² Nar. 118
represent to the hero the paleness of her countenance.\(^1\)

The cry of the peacock in early winter is interpreted by the heroine as a call to the lovers in separation to hasten without delay to unite themselves.\(^2\)

In praising the Cēra king Kaṭuṅkō Vālī Atan, Kapilar addresses the sun and comparing it with the king brings out all his greatness. The sun has a fixed time for its reign, takes to flight while setting, shows its back to the enemy, appears again in the east, disappears in the mountain and shines with bright rays in the sky only during day-time, whereas the king reigns supreme through out the land at all times and is always a terror to his enemies. Kapilar, therefore, says that the sun is not worth comparison with the Cēra king who is free from all its shortcomings.\(^3\)

The poet Muṭamōciyār of Eṇiccēri appreciates the munificence of the patron Āy in such an apostrophe to the sun: “Oh sun! Art thou bounti-

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1. "Oh sun! Art thou bountiful like the glories of the Āy king? Like the sun the Āy king is the abode of glory while he appears in the east, shows his back to the enemy, appears again in the east, disappears in the mountain and shines in the sky only during day-time, whereas the sun is a terror to his enemies. Kapilar, therefore, says that the sun is not worth comparison with the Āy king who is free from all its shortcomings." —Kuru. 98

2. "Oh sun! Art thou bountiful like the glories of the Āy king? Like the sun the Āy king is the abode of glory while he appears in the east, shows his back to the enemy, appears again in the east, disappears in the mountain and shines in the sky only during day-time, whereas the sun is a terror to his enemies. Kapilar, therefore, says that the sun is not worth comparison with the Āy king who is free from all its shortcomings." —Parl. 14

3. "Oh sun! Art thou bountiful like the glories of the Āy king? Like the sun the Āy king is the abode of glory while he appears in the east, shows his back to the enemy, appears again in the east, disappears in the mountain and shines in the sky only during day-time, whereas the sun is a terror to his enemies. Kapilar, therefore, says that the sun is not worth comparison with the Āy king who is free from all its shortcomings." —Pura. 18
The Treatment of Nature

ful like our patron Āy Anṭiran? High in the sky thou shinest in vain.”¹

With pangs of sorrow for the sad end of his great friend and patron Pāri, Kapilar leaves the Parampu mountain taking along with him the two daughters of the patron. At a distance he painfully looks at the mountain and takes leave of it: “Famous Parambu! Thou wast so fertile and rich, full of bounty to us. Now, after the end of Pāri in great sorrow and misery, we take leave of thee with tearful eyes.”²

In an elegy, Kuṭavāyil Kirattanār mourns the death of the chieftain Peruncāttan son of Ollaiyur Kilār perceiving the mullai with its blossoms remaining unplucked and unused, he asks it why it should blossom even after the death of the patron when his servants have no use for them, the ladies do not wear them, and the bard or his wife do not use them, since the whole country is plunged in unbearable grief.³

In an apostrophe to the nocio tree, Mōci Cāttanār praises it as the best and the most lovable

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1. कुलीन ऋषि नाम संख्यार नाटनि अर्थात् ब्रह्माण्ड अतिदयः कुलीने भाष्यास्त्यात् सम्पूर्ण भवति।

2. सत्यां राजां रुपमिकं बलसनी

3. सत्यां राजां कर्मसंगति नान्यति

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-Pur. 374

-Ibid. 118

-Ibid. 242
of all the blossoming trees since its leaves are
strung into an adorning garment and worn by
charming ladies, and its flowers are used for the
military badge and worn on the head by the hero
defending his fort.¹

The well-known poet Picirāntaiyār expresses
his boundless affection for his ideal friend Kōp-
peruṅcōlan in an apostrophe to the swan that flies
towards the hills in the north after seeking fish on
the southern coast, the Kumaritturai (the Cape
Comorin). The poet directs the bird to stay for a
while in the Cōla king’s palace in Uṟaiyūr on the
way and to introduce itself to the king as the poet’s
obedient servant and to receive as kind gifts of him
valuable jewels to adorn its happy mate.²

The affectionate life of the animals with
their mates on the desert tract through which the
hero makes his journey is also pointed out by the
lady-companion as a means of consoling the pining
heroine. Tolkāppiyāṇaṟ refers to this as ‘anpuru

¹. படிகன்பாவி கோபருங்கோலன் கோலி
பல்லூரிக் பெண்ணை பல்லவிசையுடன் நேரில்
கலன் கூரலையில் மருத்துவ
நுழைவு குறிப்பிட்டு கொண்டுபோறின்
கோலீசூர் பெண்ணை புலளையுடன் புதியத்துடன்
கொண்டுபோறின் கோலீசூர் விக்குருக்கன
பொது எருவைத் தம்புரையில்.
—Pura. 272

². மண்டல் இல்லாத மண்டல் இல்லாத... மண்டல் மண்டலியும் புள்ளியும் பெரிய நோக்கில் குறிப்பிட்டு புரோட்டும் பெண் பால் பதியும்
மண்டலின் மண்டல் பெரிய பாலையும்
புள்ளிகளின் எளிய வாழ் மையங்களின்
நோக்கில் புள்ளியும் பெண் பாலையும்
புள்ளிகளின் எளிய வாழ் மையங்களின்
நோக்கில் புள்ளியும் பெண் பாலையும்
புள்ளிகளின் எளிய வாழ் மையங்களின்
நோக்கில் புள்ளியும் பெண் பாலையும்.
—Ibid. 67
takuna iraicciyul cuttal. For example, she describes the aerial tract with elephants which break and tear into strips the branches of the yañ trees to feed their hungry mates and thereby suggests that the hero will perceive the loving tenderness of these animals on the way and may return home thinking of his duty to his beloved wife. The male elephant is said to search in vain for water in the dry pools and afterwards rest with its loving mate and protect it from its enemy, the tiger. The hero will perceive its constancy in love never parting from its mate even while suffering from thirst and will be reminded of his duty by his dear wife. A deer is depicted to kick at the bark of a trunk, feed its young one with it, eat what remains afterwards and protect it from the abnormal heat of the sun’s rays by giving it its own shade. Such pictures console the lonely heroine with hopes of the hero’s return.

Apart from the various means by which Nature affects the passions of lovers directly, it is

1. "இராச்சிய வைக்கும் கல்லு குன்று.
2. "செல்வால் கலாம் வாரியம் வாக்கார்

3. "தூக்கல் என்று தூக்கும் தூக்கல்

4. "ஏற்பாடு முழுவதும் தூக்கும் தூக்கல்

Tel. Por. 281

—Kuru. 87

Tel. Por. 281. Nac.

—Kuru. 215

—Kuru. 213
also depicted to have influence on them indirectly from the mere suggestions made by the lady-companion in different contexts. When the hero has been meeting his sweetheart at nights the lady companion wants to impress on him the necessity of hastening the marriage and asks him to come and meet her during day-time. She specifies a place for the meeting by day and describes it as the place where the honeycomb hangs, the trees are full of ripe fruits and the kāntal blossoms are in abundance.¹ She expects the hero to understand from this description that there will be a number of people coming to the spot attracted by the honey, the ripe fruits and the fragrant flowers and indirectly forbids him from coming secretly at day-time as well as at night and urges him to marry without further delay. Similarly when he meets his beloved at day-time, she requests him to come at nights and describes the frontyard of the house as adorned by the punnai trees with fragrant blooms and the palmyra trees with the cranes and the anril birds. The suggestion of the description of Nature here is that at nights the anril birds are so close to the house and keep her awake and make her suffer in despair by their heart-rending cries; here is also the indirect urge on him to marry soon and

¹. புன்னை, பல்மை பூக்கை மற்றும் அனிரல் பறவை... பக்காகத்தில் பூக்கை மற்றும் அனிரல் பறவை
பல்மை பூக்கை மற்றும் அனிரல் பறவை
பக்காகத்தில் பூக்கை மற்றும் அனிரல் பறவை
பல்மை பூக்கை மற்றும் அனிரல் பறவை

—Aka. 18
live an inseparable life. Such indirect suggestions are known by the term ‘iraicci’ or ‘utanurai’ which are explained by the grammarians as implied in the descriptions of Nature in the utterances of the lady-companion or the heroine.

Empathy also plays a part, though not frequently, in the descriptions of Nature in Sangam literature. Human qualities are attributed to non-human things; the objects of Nature are cleverly interpreted in concordance with human feelings and actions. But the poets are careful not to make such identification in detail, for, as Ernest G. Moll explains were the non-human to be described in any great number of respects in terms of human personality and action, reason would rise up to point out the differences, and the identification would all at once become unconvincing.

Perunjaṭuṅkō the poet well known for the pictures of the arid tract depicts a male dove relieving the sufferings of its mate in the scorching heat by gently fanning its soft wings over it. A stag offers its own shade to its mate in that

1. ஐரேசர் இனுந்தியை இறாச்சியும் இருக்கும்
ஏரேசர் இனுந்தியை இறாச்சியும் இருக்கும்
ஆர்வார் இறாச்சியும் இருக்கும்
ஏரேசர் இனுந்தியை இறாச்சியும்
புராண நாதாராய்ந்த பெங்கல்சுரு
—Aka. 360
2. ஐரேசரோ.
—Tol. Por. 229, 230
3. ஐரேசரோ.
—Ibid. 242
4. Ibid. Nac.
5. The Appreciation of Poetry, p. 116
6. ஐரேசர் ஐரேசரோ.
புராண நாதாராய்ந்த பெங்கல்சுரு
—Kali. 11
shadeless desert. A vālai fish celebrates its marriage with a snail under the bower of an āmpal leaf in a tank. Though not exactly true, such descriptions can be read with pleasure because Nature is blended into harmonious and lovely picture. As expressed by Lowes, poetry, both the old and the new, is compact of what seems, not of what is; of appearance, not reality. Art deals with emotion and the poet’s truth which is presented through illusion is also truth tinged with emotion. The bamboos are pictured to be so tall as to tear the passing clouds in the sky. A monkey takes the nārāi stem and beats the thin cloud approaching it. The poetic fancy in such descriptions differs from the scientific truth which the scientist strives to catch and fix. This is exaggeration, no doubt, but this is exalting without deceiving. This is “the fine excess” which Keats refers to when he declares that “Poetry should surprise by a fine excess.”

1. Kall. 11
2. Poru. 266
3. Convention and Revolt in Poetry, p. 12
4. Nar. 28
5. Ain. 276
In poetic imagination the yak\(^1\) and the crow\(^2\) experience dreams too. A philandering male sparrow returns late to its nest, and, on its return, its mate refuses it admission and makes it wait outside in the drizzling; and only when evening sets in, it pities and recalls it. A female monkey has clandestine union with a male and trying to escape the notice of its group, looks into a deep pool of clear water, uses it as mirror and sets right its hair on the head.\(^4\) Another bereaved of its loving mate, hands over its young one to its kith and kin and commits suicide by falling down from a cleft.\(^6\) In such pictures the poets introduce humanity into the scene and colour Nature by human feeling. As Winchester explains, when the poet's imagination is active, their reason is asleep, not absent or altogether lost.

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1. Patirrup. 11
2. Aka. 170
3. Nar. 181
4. Ibid. 151
5. Kuru. 69

Some Principles of Literary Criticism, p. 123
Coexistence With Nature

Thus it is found that in Sangam literature, the description of Nature are frequently blended with human emotions. In the words of Abercrombie, literature communicates experience.¹ In Sangam literature, the poets of the age give us not only the beauty of Nature that is experienced by them; they not only give us how they have experienced it, but they give their experience itself, transplant it from their mind on to ours through the medium of words; they have communicated both the matter and the manner of their experience in Nature. That is why their descriptions seem to be almost objects instead of words. Even the epithets in those descriptions imply a kind of personal life underlying Nature. They are indeed the natural expressions of the sensitive hearts and observant minds alert to the impressions of Nature.

The Sangam literature does not merely mirror Nature; if it does so, it could give one no more than Nature gives one now. But the fact is that one enjoys the descriptions in poetry because it gives one something which Nature does not give. This something is the experience of the poets who are capable of coexisting with Nature and interpret it accordingly. Aristotle expressed this truth when he said that poetry imitates a conception of Nature and refuted the theory of Plato that poetry imitated Nature.²

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1. Principles of Literary Criticism, p. 34.
2. Ibid. p. 134.
CONCLUSION

It has been observed that there is a comprehensive portrayal of Nature in the ancient Tamil works constituting Sangam literature. Some of the poets of the age are found to be content with the most delightful scenes as a whole; some enter into details and depict even the minutiae of Nature; and some have a genuine appreciation and love for Nature in her milder forms and some in her wild forms. The poets' eyes range freely over woods, mountains and deserts and see beauty in them no less than on meadows and shady groves. Their range of vision is so wide and they have the faculty of detecting beauty even in humble and trifling forms of the world of Nature. Each of the seasons, the birds, the flowers, etc., is set in its own appropriate setting, and each adds its own note of freshness and suggestive charm to its poetry. The poets evince a rich, sensuous delight in their forms, colours, sounds and motions. Sometimes they seem to have a preference for the wilder, freer forms of Nature and appreciate their uncontrolled and unsubdued aspects, as for instance, they survey the cloud-capped mountains and dense forests in detail. Though Nature is almost always militant towards man, yet they love Nature even as a brave warrior loves his noble antagonist against whom he is pitted. Thus there are frightful, terrible and glorifying scenes of Nature as well as sober and smiling ones.
These are all the expressions of the personal experience of the poets of the age and the direct outcome of their native taste and fortunate environment. Further, they had cultivated that artistic sensitiveness to external impressions. All kinds of Nature, animate and inanimate, wild and tame, remote and close at hand, attracted their increasing attention. They had Nature around them to look at and listen to for themselves and to make report of what they found in the waters and the skies, on the field and among the hills. Their endowment as poets is a peculiar openness to sense impressions that enabled them to perceive Nature with fullness and accuracy. They had the mind that was watchful and receptive. They looked about themselves and adapted a diction appropriate to the loveliness that they found around them. It may, therefore, be said that their pictures are the inevitable imprint on sensitive minds of scenes that had ministered to their needs.

As evidences of the poets' intimate knowledge of all that pertained to the country there are their admirably vivid and detailed accounts of the life of the people of the different regions, the mountaineers, the shepherds, the farmers and the fishermen. As such, their descriptions of Nature are candid expressions of facts of nature fairly obvious to an age well-versed in the love of fields and woods, and easily conceived by their genius and rare gift of knowing a great deal by observation of a little.

There is scarcely anything in these descriptions which is conventional; the brightness and
animation of the scenes are real and are the outcome of the poets' own appreciation of such scenes. They are, therefore, treated with truth and simplicity without superficiality or abnormality. Sangam literature is full of a variety of images painted from Nature itself by dint of careful observation with a keen insight into Nature. The descriptions of some of the later poets who have copied from each other and have never looked at the objects themselves, lack in such distinctness and precision, and they are either vague descriptions or hereditary images handed down from age to age. But, in the case of the pictures in Sangam literature, the total effect on the mind of the patient reader is always one of reality. There is nothing traditional or bookish in them, seen through the eyes of others and repeated in new verses. Through these poems, it is easy to recognise the fact that they are the works of men who knew the country and had an appreciative eye for beauty as a joy for ever. Their intimacy with Nature and accuracy of observation are well revealed in the lines depicting the ways of life of the animals and in the comparisons illustrating the forms and colours of the flowers, leaves and barks of the plants and the eyes, beaks, legs and feathers of the beasts and the birds and also in the lines describing the particular trees and other places with which the birds associate themselves in building nests, in rearing their young ones, in uttering cries, in taking refuge from their enemies and such other acts.

There is no introduction of foreign images as the poets always copy direct from Nature in their
surroundings. Even when they have to describe the scenes of a distant country, as for example those of the Ganges in floods\(^1\) or of the yak at the foot of the Himalayas,\(^2\) they do not describe them in detail but restrict themselves to the facts they know and avoid the odd mixture of any incongruous details in them. Even while describing the scenes of their own country, they do not seem to extend their lists beyond their own probable observation. For example, Kapilar, the great poet of the age, who has left us the maximum number of verses, has not depicted the agricultural tract; the poet and Cera king Perun'kaṭunctō, celebrated for his descriptions of the arid mountains and forests, is silent about the beauties of the coastal region.

It is therefore evident that the poets knew the objects of their descriptions from personal experience and their pictures have no mere conventional significance. They are the inspiration of direct observation; and this is chiefly due to the realism which lends vigour and energy to their descriptions.

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1. \(\text{Pura. 161}\)
2. \(\text{Pura. 18}\)

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\(^{1}\) Perumpan. 429—51
\(^{2}\) Maturakk. 698
But, it is obvious that there are no descriptions of Nature for their own sake, no attempts to present aspects of Nature in isolated, artistically composed pictures. There are reproductions of sights and sounds from Nature with a direct appeal to the senses, but they are not pure descriptions dissociated from any purpose. Nature is nowhere chosen as the theme, but is utilised as illustration or background for other themes. In the poems on the theme of love, the beauty of Nature is blended with sentiments of love with a graciousness of imagination that defies analysis. The human elements are so fused with the pictures of Nature that one cannot think of the love scenes apart from their fresh and lovely surroundings. Those poems deal with man amidst scenes of Nature, never with the natural scenes themselves; and it is therefore clear that their main interest centres round the depiction of human love. Even in the case of the poems on themes other than love, Nature is made subordinate to man in the sense that pictures from Nature are nowhere elaborated or dwelt upon for their own sake. Man is the central figure of those poems as well, and the poets never express a feeling for the beauties of Nature independent of man. Landscape painting is of value only so far as it helps to make the dominant human interest clearer, to illumine what might be called the landscape of the heart. Thus, in either case, in dealing with love episodes or war and other incidents, Nature serves a subordinate purpose; it is used as a background for the scenes depicted, or similitudes are drawn from it for human qualities and passions.
The poets do not dwell upon their subjective joys in forests and mountains, but utilise their experience for depicting scenes in relation to the feelings and actions of their characters. Though there is an artistic mingling of human emotions and details of Nature, Nature by itself is not treated as by the English poets in Ode to Autumn, Ode to Nightingale or The Daffodils. The Tamil poets do not express the loving delight or the tender awe awakened by Nature in their own hearts, though they describe its pitiless anti-human aspects as well as its charms, its sterner as well as softer appeals, not to them, but to the characters of their creation. The effect of Nature on the poets in soothing their grief, modifying their passions and elevating their own character is nowhere expressed. There is no expression of the lyric passions of cry as that in Shelley's apostrophe to the West Wind. This does not mean that the Sangam poets do not feel kinship with Nature. They do feel it, and give expression to the appreciation of Nature, but they only import their feelings into the characters created by them in dramatic poetry on esoteric themes and consequently abstain from dwelling with rapture on the streams, sky, and other objects. Even when the poems are on exoteric themes and are autobiographic, they do not express their personal indebtedness to Nature. This objective treatment of Nature may be said to be due to the fact that they were, like the ancient Greeks, in their thoughts and habits of life so much a part of Nature that they felt no impulse to seek her with the ardent longing of the modern poet, whose earnest and heart-felt love of
Nature is but the result of a mode of thought and life out of harmony with it.

It is therefore clear that there is no passion for solitary communion with nature among the Sangam poets, as among the English poets like Wordsworth. None of the Tamil poets seems to have felt any desire to escape from the "tradeful hum" of their own days like their English compeers who always longed for a rural retreat. On the contrary there are glowing accounts of the din and bustle of life in city whether inland or port as found in the two great idylls bearing the names of the greatest cities of their age, viz., Maturaikkānci\(^1\) and Paṭṭinappālai.\(^2\) The cities of those days were in no way harmful to the imaginative dreams and aspirations of the poets unlike the great industrial and commercial centres of modern days which have been an anathema to modern poets. Further, the lives of many of the ancient poets were not confined to the great capitals of those days. The names of many of them indicate that they belonged to villages in the mountainous and forest tracts. The great poet Kapilar himself lived on the Parampu hills for years together along with his patron and friend Pāri. Ālattūr, Ilampul-lūr, Aiyūr, Kaccippētu, Kaṭampanūr, Kayattūr, Kuruṅkōliyūr, Kövūr, Mukaiyalūr, Ṭuṟaiyūr, Nallāvūr, Kampūr, Kuṇṟūr, Peruṅkunuṟūr, Potumpīl, Maṭalūr, Aḷḷūr, Okkūr, Kaṭiyalūr, Koṭṭūr, Eriiccalūr, Ceyalūr, Cellūr, Taṅkāl, Nallūr, Naṉpalūr, Pullāṟṟūr, Maruṅkūr, Viricciyūr, and Viriyūr are some of the Sweet Auburns of many of the poets.

\(^1\) 345—686. \(^2\) 111—218.
The names of these villages attached to those of the poets indicate that they had been familiar with country life. Those were days when there were no distinct advantages or disadvantages relatively of city life or of country life and nobody then preferred clinging to a city to a natural life outside.\(^1\) Country life was neither felt to be dreary or monotonous, nor to be pleasant and soothing to troubled minds. Nature was inevitably within the reach of everybody in his daily life and hence there was no longing for solitude with it and in it.

On the other hand, the sensation of Nature's indifference to men, the strong sense of Nature's aloofness and want of sympathy with human affairs experienced under the stress of strong emotion is expressed in ancient literature. The remarks of the lonely heroine against the unsympathetic birds that are happy with their mates,\(^2\) the coastal grove,\(^3\) the backwaters\(^4\) and the bee\(^5\) that do not take interest in informing the hero of her desolate condition in spite of emotional appeals made to them, the chill north wind that

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1. In the words of Hazlitt, the cockneys preferred hanging in London to a natural death out of it.........Hazlitt, "On Londoners and Country People."

2. பலரின், மானா தன்னின் கையில், அல்லது கையில் கையில், புத்தகத்தில் புத்தகத்தில், பலரின் பலரின், பலரின், பலரின், பலரின். —Ain. 333

3. கோவையும் குடியையும் கோவையும் குடியையும் கோவையும்... கோவையும் குடியையும் கோவையும்... —Aka. 170

4. Ibid.

5. கோவையும் குடியையும் கோவையும் குடியையும் கோவையும்... கோவையும் குடியையும் கோவையும்... கோவையும் குடியையும் கோவையும்... —Nar. 377
The Treatment of Nature

blows incessantly and violently, the rainy cloud that roars aloud with harsh thunder and the early winter that seems to laugh with scorn testify to Nature's indifference. The apostrophe to the blossomed *mullai* in an elegy by Kuṭavāyil Kīrattanār also belongs to this rare type.

The opposite assumption, namely, of imagining natural phenomena as subservient to the moods of men is also found in ancient literature. The Sangam poets depicting the feelings of the lovers have recourse to this treatment; in such cases a sympathetic interpretation of nature comes into view and Nature is brought into relationship with men. It is regarded as furnishing symbols and analogies to human conduct and human aspirations. The heroine and other interlocutors are depicted to dote on Nature's objects to share their joys or to divide their griefs. They call upon them to listen to their appeals, sympathise with their sorrows and to help them in their misery. Many of the apostrophes to the objects

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1. *S̄r̄īhari līlā pūjā lugā kātvēm
dhiṅkṣaṁ maitreṇa sādhanyā jñānamacan
dhaṁ māṁśe tēm..*

Ibid. 243; —Aka. 125

2. *mālamā pūrṇaṁ kātvē māmāyai...
dhiṅkṣaṁ mahārājāḥ prabhā
dhaṁ anākṣitā māmāyai durvā.

Ibid. 243; —Nar. 193

3. *pūrṇaṁ māmāyai
dhiṅkṣaṁ mahārājāḥ prabhā
dhaṁ anākṣitā māmāyai durvā.

Ibid. 243; —Kuru. 158

of Nature in the poems on love bear eloquent testimony to this type.¹

Nature is not represented as abashed and discomfited before the superior charms of the heroine as it is frequently described to be in later works. The reason is that the Sangam poets do not give way to extravagance of speech inspite of the intensity of feeling or exuberance of emotions evinced by the characters of their creation.

Drawing moral lessons from Nature is very rare in ancient literature as in the verse by Mutukkaṇṭaṉ Cāttānār of Uraiyūr who describes the moon as illustrating the decay, the thriving, the death and the rebirth common in life by its own example of waning to disappear on the Newmoon day and reappearing as the crescent to wax on the Fullmoon day.²

There are instances of pantheistic conception of Nature in Kaṭuvaṇ Iḷaveyīnānār’s poems in Paripāṭal. Addressing God Tirumāl,³ he says that

1. Aka. 170; Nar. 54, 83; Kuru. 392; Kall. 129.

2. உத்தராக இன்னையம் அமா அவகயம்
   உத்தராக இல்லையா அவகயம்
   அமாவா உறுப்பான அவர் கட்ட, உண்டன இணைய.

3. கோயில், கோயில் மறைய விளைய வர்த்தை தோன்
   கோயில், கோயில் மறைய விளைய வர்த்தை
   கோயில், கோயில் மறைய விளைய வர்த்தை
   கோயில், கோயில் மறைய விளைய வர்த்தை

—Purā. 27

—Pasi. 4: 25—26
His wrath and lustre are manifest in the sun, His grace and tenderness in the moon, His munificence and benevolence in rain, His protection and patience in the earth, His fragrance and brilliance in the kāyā blooms, His origin and greatness in water, His divine form and word in the sky, and His incarnation and disappearance in the wind. In another invocation, it is said that He is manifest as heat in fire, as fragrance in flowers, as light in the sun and as gracefulness in the moon; God is everything and at the same time the soul of creation. This conception of Nature which is almost deification is, as aforesaid, only very rare and is not at all characteristic of the age.

As regards the objects of Nature depicted, some are described in detail and frequently too, while some are referred to briefly and rarely. Undoubtedly one of the reasons why the poets lavish the riches of their imagination on the seasonal flowers like the mullai, the insects like the cochineal and the birds like the cuckoo is the tendency to enjoy everything that is new and fresh. The mullai blossoms not throughout the year but only in the early winter; the cochineal insects are found only in the beginning of that season; it is only in early summer that the note of the cuckoo is heard distinctly and

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1. Parit., Ramzalakkar's Commentary. (Note: The text seems to be missing or incorrect here. It should be 'Pari., Parimalakkar's Commentary'.)
2. Ibid., 'मल्लायु नर्त्य अव्यवहार' (Note: There is a typographical error here; the reference is not clear.)
3. Ibid., 'घरीप' (Note: This phrase is not clear. It seems to be missing or incorrect.)
4. Ibid., 'गुरुप' (Note: This phrase is not clear. It seems to be missing or incorrect.)
5. Ibid., 'गर्भ' (Note: This phrase is not clear. It seems to be missing or incorrect.)
6. (Note: The text is missing or incorrect here. It seems to be a reference to another source, possibly a Tamil text, but it is not clear.)
frequently. But the main reason for the frequency and abundance of the descriptions of these objects of Nature is, again, the supremacy of the human element in Sangam literature. The dancing peacock reminds the heroine of the beginning of the season in which her lover has promised to return; so also the spreading of the cochineal insect, the frisking play of the deer, the fragrance of the *piṭavu* and other blooms and the attractive colour of the *konrai* and other flowers, serve as her calendar in those days. The *mullai* blooms and reminds her painfully of the evening of that season as a clock of the modern days, and therefore deserves a more important place in Sangam literature than the lotus which blossoms throughout the year and has no such significance. The *anrīl* bird has been mentioned frequently as its cry increases the pangs of the heroine at night. Even the owl and the kite are mentioned more frequently than the domestic cock for such reasons. The sheep, the ox, the dog, etc., are only rarely brought in for they have no significant influence over the life of the characters depicted. Familiarity cannot be accounted for as having bred contempt in these cases, for the *mullai* and the kite are equally familiar and even the neglected *neruṇci* flower has been attractively painted. The main reason, as explained above, is the primary interest of the poets in depicting human feelings and passions.

Though the poets are primarily interested in man, yet their descriptions of Nature are specific and have local colour and setting. It may sometimes be felt that they have no individuality so far
as the pictures of Nature are concerned. If a few of them are found to be of the same type with several poets, as in the case of the bears scooping out the anthills of the termites, the elephants attacking and destroying the *vēṅkai* trees and the *mullai* blossoming along with the *konṟai* and other trees in early winter, it is because the country described is one and the same with almost the same climatic conditions in all parts. The political divisions of Tamilnad as Cēra, Cōla and Pāṇṭiya kingdoms have nothing to do with the uniformity and homogeneity of the aspects of Nature throughout the country.

Imitation is, according to Edward Young, only inferiority confessed, and the ancient poets are not culpable in this respect. Nature is an open book and every poet can read from its pages. When any parallelism is found in the works of any two poets, however close it may be, it is probable that they have independently seen and imagined and painted the scene or the picture in the same manner.

There are only very few expressions which are frequently repeated, as for example, karuṅkōtu, *ciriyilai,* and tirimaruppu, but there is no tiresomeness felt because they are not too numerous. As a whole literary epoch is under consideration here, all that can be said is that these common phrases of descriptions have

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1. Conjectures on Original Composition.
2. *குருங்கோடு.* —Nar. 249, 311; Kuru. 128
3. *சிரியிலை.* —Aka. 242, 284; Nar. 64, 103; Ain. 339
4. *திரிமருப்பு.* —Aka. 34, 183, 184, 804. 388, 371
occurred to the poets from their own independent first-hand observation of Nature. This also applies to the comparisons found to be similar in the descriptive of different poets. But it must be noted that in such a vast field as of nearly two thousand and four hundred verses and nearly five hundred poets, the similitudes or parallelisms are very few, compared to the innumerable expressions of originality as in the case of comparing the retractable eyes of the marine crab to the nocci buds¹ and those of crab in the agricultural region to the neem buds.²

The merit of many of the poets of the Sangam age as Nature-poets was recognised by the scholars immediately succeeding them as proved by the epithet they employed to distinguish their names and by the phrases used to baptise them and to remember them when their proper names came to be forgotten. The value of many of the verses as depicting Nature has also been established by the titles of those poems. Many of the phrases serving as the names of the poets or as the titles of their works are artistic phrases of descriptive touches in the passages concerned and are the very essence of the word-pictures of Nature depicted in them. Thus, Sangam literature has already been valued and appreciated for its treatment of Nature by many critics even in those days when the works of different poets were collected, arranged

¹ "nocci" buds
² "neem" buds

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1. "..." — Nar. 167

2. "..." — Aka. 176
and grouped into the different anthologies by the redactors of a latter day.

As regards the quality of the pictures of Nature in these works, it may be said that most of them are simple and some of them complex. Some of the long poems such as the idylls in Pattuppāṭṭu are strings of pen pictures. The various regions are painted with a wealth of detail. Sometimes the beauty of the landscape influences the painters themselves and has led them to use of details not necessary for their illustration. Nevertheless, there are no conventional or irrelevant details, but only a coherent delineation of minute points of observation of Nature in its various phases and forms. The poets were generally wary of superlatives or exaggerations. When the poet compares the shoulder of the heroine to a luxuriantly grown bamboo, he describes not only the bamboo and its attractive aspects but also the mountain slope where it grows and the fragrance of the flowers that blossom there.¹ These details do not seem to be relevant for the progress of the plot or for the development

¹These details do not seem to be relevant for the progress of the plot or for the development

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1. அகா. 47
2. Ibid. 172
3. Ibid. 271
of the characters themselves, but betray the associative imagination of the poets. It is natural
that the trees with low branches or bent trunks have a stronger impression on their memories
than those grown straight,¹ and so when they recall the connected scenes while depicting some
actions, they inevitably refer to the relevancies though a little extra detail serves no purpose in
the picture either as background or illustration. In any poetical composition, there is room for such
a daily with Nature by reason of the play of associative imagination which consists of a train
of images linked by contiguity or resemblance. The child-like imagination of the poet sallies and
takes the liveliest forms when necessity arises. As explained by F. C. Prescott, every poet has
accumulated a great number of images and feelings which, as from a sort of reservoir, may flow
in many directions through the various channels of a net work of associations.²

Sometimes the poet seems to be encumbered by his materials and consequently crowds his
canvas. Though it appears to be devoid of artistic reservations, the presentation seems full and
realistic, as for example in the catalogue or summary part of the description in Kūriṅcipāṭṭu.³
Yes such long descriptions are of importance as

1. —Aka. 10
   —Ibid. 344
   —Ibid. 352
   —Nar. 384
   Porun. 180
2. The Poetic Mind, p. 165
3. Kūrincip.61—95.
showing the alertness and abundance of the poet's knowledge of Nature. The phrases and epithets considered separately have literary quality and prove his remarkable power of word-painting as in the list of flowers in Nappannaṇār's poem in Paripāṭal.¹ Even when the descriptions seem over-elaborate, they are not ineffective, but show the poet's close knowledge of natural phenomena and real interest in them, as, for example, in the list of sounds heard in the mountain depicted in the idyll Malaipāṭukaṭām.²

But most of the landscape pictures are highly artistic and are painted in accordance with a principle of wise eclecticism, rather than by an accumulation of details. The striking features are singled out and by virtue of them the whole picture is clearly imaged in the reader's mind. There is no wasting of words over the description; the pictures are outlined with a few incisive strokes. In such pictures the poets do not present everything in detail but only the best of everything. They select and combine and present what is characteristic only, and the simplicity and directness of touch by which these characteristic details are made to stand for complete pictures are remarkable. The picture of a hare by the poet Tамиlk-kūttaṇār of Madura may be cited as an

¹. ¹. Part, 17, 75-79
². ². Malal. 294-348.
example.\textsuperscript{1} In one single line of four simple attributes and four small nouns—\textit{tūmayirk kūruntāl netuńcevik kūrumuyal} (the short hare with pure fur, short legs and long ears)—the complete picture of the animal is drawn. Such simple and direct phrases have a suggestive magical power.

The difference between unimaginative treatment of Nature and imaginative treatment is, according to Winchester, the difference between trying to describe all one sees and rendering in a few epithets or images what one feels.\textsuperscript{2} Generally the pictures of the Sangam poets consist of a few vivid features of nature enough to interpret and communicate their emotional experiences. They drop out of their pictures all irrelevant and unpleasant details so that the reader’s attention is concentrated upon the few features that give him a powerful and characteristic impression. Through single lines, or sometimes single epithets, the poets flash upon the reader’s imagination the whole pictures. Such pictures are rather their interpretations than descriptions. They paint with the “hues borrowed from heart” and communicate to the reader with convincing force. Hazlitt appreciates such a picture in Milton’s Lycidas and remarks that in a single couplet in it there is more intense observation and intense feeling of Nature than in twenty volumes of descriptive poetry. The paintings of Nature in ancient Tamil literature are of this type of artistic interpretation. As such,

\textsuperscript{1} \textbf{Some Principles of Literary Criticism.} p. 182

\textsuperscript{2} \textbf{Some Principles of Literary Criticism.} p. 182
there is no room for exaggeration in the descriptions of Nature. Even when their is intensity of feeling and imagination, it never deteriorates into exaggeration.

What Arnold says in appreciation of Wordsworth as a poet of Nature\(^1\) applies to the Tamil poets Nakkirar, Kapilar, Perun'kaṭuṅkō and others. He says that Nature herself seems to take the pen out of Wordsworth's hands and to write for him with its own bare, sheer, penetrating power, and accounts for this as arising from two causes; from the profound sincerity with which the poet feels him subject and also from the profoundly sincere and natural character of his subject itself. Both these apply to the Sangam poets as well.

The importance of their poems in the evolution of the poetry of Nature rests on their early date and antiquity. Even in its earliest stage, Tamil literature is fortunate enough to have evolved so high, as far as Nature-poetry is concerned, that even after the lapse of these two thousand years, these word-pictures of nature seem as if they might have been written today. In spite of so many political, social and religious influences that have considerably changed life and literature in this country during these two thousand years, these descriptions of Nature are not only artistic and attractive but also full and fresh to the modern reader.

Tamilnad, in spite of the species of plants and animals that have become extinct, is still the

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1. *Essays in Criticism, Second Series, pp. 158, 159*
republic of birds and flowers, the earthly paradise of cows, sheep, goats, deer and hares, the friendly meeting ground of Nature and man. Nobody could now identify and name all the shrubs and creepers that are found in the countryside. But the ancient poets have revelled in them; they have watched Nature with a keen interest. A leaf could not rustle in the branches, a fragrance could not exhale from the blooms, a bud could not unfold its tints to the stars, nor a pearl-like drop patter in the stream, but it has been noticed by these minute observers and wrought up into some delicate word-pictures. Nothing in the natural world has been trivial to them or to be neglected. The earliest poets of every nation, even Homer and Chaucer, have delighted in rural sights and sounds in their own ways of feeling them. And the ancient Tamil poets of a country where all is sunshine, bird-song and flower-bloom, have revelled in such sights and sounds of Nature as proved by the artistic descriptions of them in Sangam literature.

Many of these beauties of Nature, of the sky and the earth and of the flora and the fauna are even now pages of an open book, within the reach of every one in this country. But the daily task, the monotonous round of everyday life absorbs one's time and energies and one has to feel along with Wordsworth that,

The world is too much with us; late and soon
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
This sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not.1

This is even truer of today than of the days when
Wordsworth wrote it, the days when there were no
such great bustle of industrial and commercial life
as at the present day and no such scientific
inventions of advanced type as aeroplanes,
cinemas and radios.

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