

An Ecocritical Study and Anthropological  
Concerns of Classical Sangam Poetry  
Translated by A. K. Ramanujan

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ABSTRACT

*Sangam literature is an assortment of poetry written by Tamil literary scholars who lived around the time of 300 BCE to 300CE. The poems incorporate the values, sentiments, lifestyle, emotions, and intellect of the inhabitants in connection with their landscape. The poems are divided in two thematic categories such as akam and puram. Akam could be translated as inner-self, or interior or love. In general, akam poetry would personify the matters of heart and emotions. Puram could be translated as external-self or exterior or war. In general, puram poetry would portray the intellect and external activities. The concepts through which these poems would engage are through space, time, god, food, occupation, flora and fauna, code of conduct, characters etc. This genre incorporates more imagery and symbolism through its concepts, inhabitant and landscape which demand readers intellect. The landscape of this genre is divided into five categories such as Kurinchi, Mullai, Marutham, Neithal and Pallai. The intellects are applied to human emotions, not as a burst of sentiments but as a preach on the ways of lives with nature at its center. Through these aspects, this paper aims at conducting an ecocritical study and anthropological concerns on selective works of classical Sangam poetry translated by A. K. Ramanujan. The ways in which this paper achieves its aim is through understanding the lifestyle during Sangam literature, the universality of Sangam poetry and incorporating*