



SNS COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

An Autonomous Institution

Coimbatore-35



Accredited by NBA – AICTE and Accredited by NAAC – UGC with 'A+' Grade
Approved by AICTE, New Delhi & Affiliated to Anna University, Chennai

DEPARTMENT OF IT

III YEAR/ VI SEMESTER

19HST105 ESSENCE OF INDIAN TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE

UNIT 2 INDIAN LITERATURE, CULTURE, TRADITION, AND PRACTICES
Sangama Literature



Tamil or Sangama Literature

Tamil as a written language was known since the beginning of the Christian era.

Poets who in these assemblies were patronised by kings and chieftains produced the Sangama literature over a period of three to four centuries.

Such assemblies were called -Sangamas, and the literature produced in these assemblies was called -Sangama literature.

In ancient times the association or academy of the most learned men of the Tamil land was called Sangam (or 'Cankam'), whose chief function was promotion of literature. Later Tamil writers mention the existence of three literary academies (Sangams) at different periods. The last academy is credited with the corpus of literature now known as 'Sangam Works'. It is, however, almost certain that some noteworthy literature existed even before the Sangam era. Dr K. K. Pillai, a renowned Tamil historian, is of the view that academies of the type of the Sangam must have flowered under an earlier designation like Avai or Kudal. Naturalism and romanticism were the salient features of the poems of the Sangam bards. Excepting *Tolkappiyam*, the earliest work on Tamil grammar and poetic techniques, no other works attributed to the first two Sangams have come down to us in their entirety. However, from the titles of writings traditionally traced to these Sangams, it is evident that they dealt with music and the art of dancing.



Tolkappiyam, the name signifying the ancient book or ‘the preserver of ancient institutions’, was written by Tolkappiyanar and is the oldest extant Tamil grammar dating back to 500 B.C. It lays down rules for different kinds of poetical compositions drawn from the examples furnished by the best works then extant. *Iyal* is elucidated clearly and systematically in *Tolkappiyam*. Containing about 1,610 *suttirams* (aphorisms), it is in three parts-*ezhuttu* (orthography), *Sol* (etymology), and *porul* (literary conventions and usages)-each with nine sections. While the first two parts are interesting from both linguistic and philological points of view, the third, *poruladhikdram*, is most valuable as it gives a glimpse of the political, social, and religious life of the people during the period when the author of this treatise lived.



THANK YOU