

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE FIGURAL MODE IN
THE TAMIL EPIC MANIMEKALAI**

*Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University
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CERTIFICATE

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For
My Grandma

INTRODUCTION

Tamil, one of the two classical languages of India, is a Dravidian language spoken today by approximately 60 million Indians¹, mainly in Tamilnadu state, in the Southeast region of peninsula India.

This language is probably the earliest cultivated of all the Dravidian idioms and is in many respects the representative language of the family. It contains copious literature and a rich variety of indubitably ancient forms.

Tamil includes two dialects; the classical and the colloquial, or the ancient and the modern, called respectively the 'Sen- Damir' and the 'Kodun- Damir' which differs from one another so widely that they might almost be regarded as different languages.² Since Tamil exhibits a highly diglossic situation, the Europeans ordinarily named the literary dialect of Tamil (i.e. Classical Tamil) as High Tamil, as distinguished from the colloquial Tamil of the masses (vulgar or low variety).

Robert Caldwell elucidates rightly that, "Even at the time the oldest extant compositions were written, there was probably almost as wide a difference between the language of the vulgar and that affected by the literati as there is at present. It is inconceivable that so elaborately refined and euphonised a style of language as that of classical poems and grammars, can ever have been the actual everyday speech of any class of the people"³

The early classical Tamil literature (c.100 B.C-250A.D) consists of the Eight Anthologies (Ettuthokai) and the Ten long poems (Pattupattu) and the grammar called the Tolkappiyam or the Old composition. Apart from the epigraphic and the

¹ India 2002, *A reference Annual Compiled and Edited by Research, Reference and Training Division*, publications Divisions, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.

² Rt.Rev.Robert Caldwell, D.D, L.L.D, *A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian or South – Indian Family of Languages*, Third Edition, Revised and edited by the Rev. J.C. Wyatt, M.A and T. Ramakrishna Pillai, M.A, University of Madras, 1958

³ *ibid* pg.80

archaeological evidence, the classical literature is the most important native source of historical and cultural information of Tamilnadu.

The literature of Classical Tamil was later known as Sangam Literature. Sangam (which means “an academy or fraternity”) is a term usually applied to poetry. There were three Sangams or academies, lasting approximately for 4440, 3700 and 1850 years respectively, with a membership of sages, kings and poets. There were many myths and legends that swelled around these poems and poets, especially prevalent were the ones relating to the loss of a colossal portion of literature, due to a fatal flood. These myths certainly point to a long poetic tradition: with much of it lost in the course of time. All the works of the first Sangam are considered irretrievable: only the *Tolkappiyam* remains of the second; the Eight Anthologies and the Ten Long Poems belong to the third period.

The Sangam Age with its distinction in lyrics and the ethical Puritanism of the *Kural* ambience was succeeded by the Age of Epics (900A.D-1200A.D) or the (*Kaviyakalam*.) This was the most flourishing period in Tamil history, when the Cholas were outstanding in prosperity. Though the fame of the imperialist Chola Empire dissipated away into material dust, the glory of their poets has survived them. These were the times when Brahmin priests were nurtured on Aryan traditions and the Sanskrit puranic lore, which had been percolating from early days, now became the common man’s property. ⁴

Tamil literature preserved its authenticity but gladly absorbed from the Sanskrit to enrich its vocabulary and heritage. There had been an influx of Sanskrit metres and words in the *Bhakti* period, which enhanced the wealth of beautiful musical poetry. Since temples, Brahmin priests and priesthood were gaining importance; there was a tendency to overemphasize the use of Sanskrit. Therefore, the Tamil vocabulary was deluged with Sanskrit words. “So from the impact of

⁴ C. Jesudasan and Hephizibah Jesudasan, *A history of Tamil Literature,* Y.M.C.A. publishing house, Calcutta.

Sanskrit on Tamil we find the birth of numerous epics,And this period may be rightly called the Age of the Epics.”⁵

The religious and ethical strains of the period resolved themselves into the epics. There were many Jain epics, Buddhist epics, Vaishnavite epics, Saivite epics and historical epics, which reflected the vigorous literary life of the people. In number, at least the Buddhist and Jain epics are outstanding.

Tradition speaks of the five great epics in Tamil literature called the “Aim Perum Kappiyangal”, which are Silapadikkaram, Manimekalai, Valaiyapathy, Kundalakesi and Jivaka Chinthamani. These classics were inaccessible to most Tamil scholars, all through the early 19th c, though they were known and had been commented on a century earlier. “Eighteenth century Hindu scholars, devout worshippers of Shiva or Vishnu had tabooed as irreligious all secular and non-Hindu texts, which included the classical Tamil Anthologies. They also disallowed the study of Jain and Buddhist texts, which included the Twin epics.”⁶ Although, the Epics of the Jains are preserved intact, of the three Buddhist works (Manimekalai, Valaiyapathy and Kundalakesi), only Manimekalai remains to tell the grandeur and glory of Buddhism in India.

The Manimekalai and the Silapadikaram, are generally known as the Twin Epics, as there is an intimate connection between both as literary works, products of the same age, a single tradition and of a similar atmosphere. “Manimekalai’s literary affinity to the Silapadikaram, could be placed beyond doubt as one could find easily number of passages where the same ideas are expressed in identical terms.....Linguistic details notwithstanding Manimekalai may be taken to be of the same age as that of Silapadikaram...”The work Silapadikaram is a sequel to the Manimekalai, though Tamil scholars and historians argue that chronologically the latter was written earlier of the two Kavyas.

⁵ Vaiyapuripillai’s , *History of Tamil language and Literature(From the beginning to 1000A.D.)* New Century Book House Private Ltd. See Kavyakalam, pg.35

⁶ A.K.Ramanujan, *Poems of Love and War*, selected and translated from, the Eight Anthologies and the Ten Long Poems of Classical Tamil

There is however a vast discrepancy in dating both the Manimekalai and the Silapadikaram. There are two prevalent speculations held which gives the date for the Manimekalai as the second century A.D or the ninth century A.D. .In any case, it is quite apparent that the two epics were composed not long after the Sangam period. There is no information available that 'Manimekalai' was ever presented to the Sangam. Although according to Tamil tradition, the author was one of the Sangam 49. This tends to the conclusion that the epic was a product of the age, generally described as the 'Age of the Sangam', i.e. the 'Age of Senguttuvan Chera' as the dominant ruler of South India. Moreover, since the work is one of classical excellence and equals any other Sangam work in calibre it is generally called a Sangam work in that sense.

It is stated that the author 'Koolavanigan Seethalai Sathanar' was a grain merchant in Madurai. He professed Buddhism and was eminent as a logician, theologian, poet and an uncompromising literary critic. Sattanar's fame rests on this great work, the Manimekalai, which he describes as 'Manimekalaithuravu' or 'Renunciation of Manimekalai' in the prologue to the poem. It is a work, which is primarily poetic, comprised of mellifluous verses written in elegant style. However, the object of the epic is the exaltation of Buddhism.

It is believed that Sattanar was a friend of Ilango Adigal, who was the second son of the Chera King, Athan, and the grandson of the Chola king, Karikal, by his daughter, Sonai. In his youth, Ilango renounced the world and became a monk of the Nigrantha sect.

Many years afterwards when Seethalai- Sattanar visited the Chera court, he narrated the life history of Kovalan's daughter, Manimekalai, as a Buddhist nun. Sattanar was first asked to enshrine the life history of Kannagi in a narrative poem. However, the poet excused himself and replied that Ilango was better fitted for the assignment. Thus, the royal monk, Ilango conceived the idea of writing another epic poem to commemorate the lives of Manimekalai's parents, Kovalan and Kannagi. It is understood that accordingly Ilango composed the epic 'Silapadikaram' after the 'Silambu'(anklet) which establishes the fairness of Kannagi's case.

However, scholars are still debating the exact date of Manimekalai as well. It is believed that a poet Sattanar figures among the Sangam poets, though Ilango does not.

Prof. Vaiyapuripillai says that the author of Manimekalai was no doubt a Sattanar. Nevertheless, he was not the same as Seethalai- Sattanar, who probably hailed from a village named Seethalai. Though Sattanar's name is quite often cited as the Sangam poet who wrote verses for Natrinai(3), Ahananooru(5), Purananooru(1) Kuruntogai(1) as well as a verse for Tiruvalluvamalai(1) it is generally hypothesized that the author of the Manimekalai was a different person. The reason for this belief being that "Sattanar of the Manimekalai was a deeply religious Buddhist poet and secular poetry could not have attracted him."⁷

Prof. Vaiyapuripillai also says that the Manimekalai in its 29th canto follows Dinnaga's Nyayapravesa, which proves that this Kavya as also its companion (Silapadikaram) is later than the fifth century A.D. A famous couplet from the Tirukkural (55) has been quoted in the Manimekalai and in the Silapadikaram. He also claims that from a study of the chronology of the Sanskrit sources to which Manimekalai is indebted, we may gather that this Buddhist Kavya could not have been written earlier than the seventh century A.D. Citations from the early Tamil works clearly indicate that this classic could have come into existence only about the first quarter of the ninth century A.D. Therefore; he assigns the epic to the 8th-9th centuries.

From one point of view, of the twin Kavyas, the Manimekalai could be considered to be of greater importance than the Silapadikaram, for it is the only Buddhist Kavya extant in Tamil literature. The Manimekalai and the Silapadikaram both have thirty gathas or sections.

As V. Kanakasabhai in his book ' The Tamils Eighteen Hundred Years Ago' says:

⁷ Vaiyapuripillai's, *History of Tamil Language and Literature (from the beginning to 1000 A.D)*, see pg.3

“It is I believe the earliest record extant in any language, with the exception of the Buddhist sacred texts, which furnishes information regarding the objects of worship, the peculiar beliefs and superstitions and the abstruse philosophy of the followers of Buddha”.

The work is also valuable as a record of the extent to which Buddhism had spread in Southern India, Ceylon and Sumatra. From the poem we learn that the Buddhist monks were numerous in the Tamil land, that some of them at least claimed wonderful powers, such as the ability to know the past and to foretell the future; and that they believed in charms and incantations, and in the existence of spirits which could communicate with human beings.

Despite the many speculations regarding the authorship and the age of the epic, Manimekalai is undeniably a beautiful piece of Tamil literature, which has stood the test of time. Therefore, the epic Manimekalai is the reality. Seethalai Sattan plays with the Tamil language and moulds it so splendidly that the epic abounds in similes and metaphors. Any careful reader of the epic cannot escape being enthralled by the figures of speech employed in the poem, which actually redeems it from being a mere didactic religious work propagating Buddhism.

In this dissertation, I have culled out the similes and metaphors from the Tamil epic, Manimekalai and analysed the figural mode based on the model elucidated by Mammata in his Kavyaprakasha.

In India, a succession of poetics like Bharata, Bhamaha, Dandin, Anandhavardhana, Abhinavagupta, Mammata and Jaganatha have contributed a large body of literature on Indian aesthetics which is invaluable as a guide to poetic appreciation. Though their theories were involved initially with reference to classical Sanskrit literature, they can be successfully taken over and applied to any of the modern regional literatures, so that they have a national currency. Indian poetics, therefore serves as a model for poetic appreciation and also as a springboard for comparative studies, stylistic and semantic analysis.

In fact, it is quite evident while reading the epic Manimekalai in Tamil, that the native poetic genius had digested and imbibed on to the sources of Sanskrit literature, which had by then established itself in Tamil literary circles. So much so, that Kampan in his Kamaramayanam calls Sanskrit, “Devapadai”⁸ which means ‘the language of the Gods’.

Therefore, the application of an Indian theoretical framework (in Sanskrit) on a literary epic in classical Tamil, proves how wonderfully the two classical languages complement each other. Such a study, apart from establishing the validity and inbuilt potential of these Indian frameworks, also facilitates in enriching our appreciation and understanding of the poem and its excellence.

Also, Manimekalai, the epic, being a gripping literary work, has gone a long way in giving rise to a new development in Tamil literature, bringing intellectual debates, philosophical, religious tenets and canons into literary works, thereby, imparting literary grandeur to them. Such an analysis would also expand our understanding of the poetic tradition of Indian literature.

⁸ Kamaramayanam, Palakandam, Murray and Co., ed., Payiram.

Chapter 1

THE EPIC TRADITION

The work *Manimekalai* is a direct sequel to the *Silapadikaram* and both the epics show great affinity in character, scope and language. The two form a heroic poem, with the dramatic element running through them, and the narrative would be incomplete unless the two epics are taken together. The work *Manimekalai* takes up the tale from where *Silapadikaram* concludes and proceeds to deal with the life history of the female protagonist, *Manimekalai*. Thus it is evident that, “the two works ‘*Silapadikaram*’ and ‘*Manimekalai*’ were composed with a view to their constituting a single epic, though forming two works.”¹

The Story of *Silapadikaram*

The subject matter of the twin epics is of a varied character. The *Silapadikaram*, begins with the life of Kovalan, a young and affluent merchant, of Kaveripattinam. Kannagi, the daughter of another merchant of similar distinction and also the heroine of the poem marries Kovalan, in the Chola country. But soon Kovalan, abandons his wife in favour of a ravishing beauty, Madhavi, who is a virtuous courtesan of the city. He is so enamored by her, that he squanders all his wealth and being reduced to indigence, returns to his chaste wife, with an attitude of contrition. He confesses to his wife that he does not have the resources to set up his profession as a merchant. Both the husband and the faithful wife leave for the Pandya country to refurbish their fortune. Having entered the city, Kovalan leaves his wife with a shepherdess and goes into a bazaar in order to sell one of his wife’s priceless anklets (*silambu*). At the same fatal time, the Queen of the land loses her anklet. The goldsmith of the royal household to whom the pearl-anklet had been entrusted for repair meets Kovalan, accidentally and with the evil intention of appropriating the jewel in his custody,

¹ S.Krishnaswami Aiyangar, “*Manimekalai in it's Historical Setting*”, Diocesan Press, Vepery Madras, 1928-c3924

accuses him of larceny. The love smitten Pandyan king without adequate investigation orders that the alleged culprit be decapitated.

Kannagi, seethes with rage at the injustice meted out to her husband. She confronts the Pandyan king, and with fury breaks her anklet of rubies divulging its contents. The king dies broken-hearted at the enormity of his injustice

And the queen follows her Lord. However, Kannagi's righteous ire is not appeased. She torches the whole city of Madurai, which was subsequently devoured in flames of fire. Then, the poem continues with Kannagi joining Kovalan in the realms beyond. The Chera King Senguttuvan having heard of all this institutes Kannagi worship by installing in a temple, the image of the chaste lady, carved out of a holy rock brought from the Himalayas.

Madhavi who was unconditional and loyal in her love and devotion for Kovalan, having heard this appalling happening, renounces her life, in contrition for her contribution to the tragedy, and embraces Buddhism. Madhavi, has a daughter by Kovalan, who is a quintessence of beauty and wit. Just as she reaches the age of maidenhood she appears so irresistibly beautiful that the Chola prince Udayakumaran falls in an obsessive kind of love with her.

The sequel epic Manimekalai takes up the tale from here and deals with the life history of Manimekalai to the stage of her renunciation. "It will thus be seen that the story of Silapadikaram really leads up to the story of Manimekalai, and is from the point of view of epic propriety hardly complete in itself. Similarly, the story of Manimekalai would be incomplete without the introduction that is contained in the story of Silapadikaram for strict epic requirements."²

The story of Manimekalai:

The epic 'Manimekalai' commences with the preparations for the celebration of the yearly festival held in the city of Pukar, in honour of Indra, the

² ibid, pg.7

King of celestials. However, Madhavi and Manimekalai, the famous dancers of Pukar abstain from the festivities. Chitrapati, the grandmother of Manimekalai, notes this with pangs of remorse. She summons Vasanthamalai, Madhavi's friend, to persuade both Madhavi and Manimekalai. However, Vasanthamalai does not succeed in her endeavor, as they remain unyielding in their path of virtue, as shown by their preceptor, Aravana Adigal.

Hearing the heartrending fate that had befallen her father and step-mother, Manimekalai is stirred to tears and great grief. She enters the fine garden meant for Buddha's worship accompanied by Sutamati, Madhavi's companion.

The prince Udayakumaran, the heir apparent, who was already enthralled by Manimekalai controls the royal elephant Kalavegan. He discovers Manimekalai in the marble room of the garden; however, Manimekalai does not reciprocate and conceals herself in the luminous room. The dejected prince leaves vowing to find out other means of getting at Manimekalai. Manimekalai realizes that her heart had sought the company of the Prince, despite the fact that he had described her, as a lady possessed of no virtue. Just then, Goddess Manimekala the family deity of Kovalan, comes into the garden in the guise of a lady to worship Buddha's feet.

Seeing Sutamati and her companion's anxious face, the Goddess asks them why they were tarrying there. Sutamati explains the designs of the Prince and the Goddess asks Manimekalai to spend the night in the Chakravalakottam (the temple of the wheel) where they would be secure. The Goddess recounts the story of Gotamai, whose son had died of fright while walking across the burning ghat. As soon as slumber takes over Sutamati and Manimekalai the Goddess carries away Manimekalai to a remote place, called Manipallavam.

The goddess Manimekala appears before the Prince and advises him not to molest Manimekalai who has decided to renounce the world. The pillar-statue assures Sutamati that she was a sister of Manimekalai in her previous birth. Sutamati, then goes to Madhavi and appraises her of the turn of events.

Manimekalai, then wakes up from her slumber and feels as if strangely placed as a soul in a new birth. She wanders about pointlessly till her eyes fall upon the Seat of Buddha. Instantly, she begins to recollect all that had taken place in her previous existence. In her previous birth, she was Lakshmi and her husband was Rahula, who had died on the sixteenth day of their marriage due to a snakebite, and she had then ascended the funeral pyre along with him.

The goddess Manimekala divulges to Manimekalai, that Rahula had taken birth again as Udayakumaran, and hence his compulsive love for her. However she states that Manimekalai is a precious seed and should not be wasted in the desert of carnal desire. Since knowledge is important to gain true wisdom, the goddess instructs Manimekalai to learn more about philosophies.

In order to facilitate her learning, the goddess bestows three incantations, which would give her the capacity to move through the air and to assume every form she desires and the power to get rid of hunger at the thought of it.

Dipatilakai, the goddess guarding Manipallavam appears before Manimekalai, and asks her to take charge of the vessel the amuda surabhi (the begging bowl), which Aputhran had left in the Gomukhi lake. Food placed in the vessel remains inexhaustible. The goddess Dipatilakai speaks of the evils of hunger and asks Manimekalai to heal the hungry people of their dire distress. Manimekalai receives the vessel and praises the Lord Buddha.

Manimekalai along with Madhavi and Sutamati meets Aravana Adigal, her preceptor in his retreat. The venerable monk evinces great pleasure at listening to the adventures of Manimekalai and divulges the story of the previous births of Madhavi and Sutamati. In a regretful tone he elucidates that dharma has diminished in this world and that debauchery is on the rise. He says that Buddha would reincarnate and then everyone in this world would be impelled to practise the doctrine of mercy. He proceeds to explain the one supreme law of hunger and tells her that since she had obtained possession of the 'elixir of life' she should go forward and destroy hunger and its clutches on mortals.

Saint Aravana Adigal also narrates the birth and history of Aputhran who had lost the amudha surabhi in his possession and also relates Aputhran's martyrdom. He continues the story of Aputhran who comes into existence on Buddha's birthday as Bhumichandra, in his next birth.

Manimekalai takes leave of the Saint Aravana and sets out on her mission of feeding the hungry. She meets Kayasandikai who suffers from scalding pains of perennial hunger. Manimekalai declares that the first handful of alms she would receive would be from the chastest woman. Kayasandikai responds spontaneously that Adirai was the most appropriate one. Having said this she narrates how Adirai attained that eminence in chastity.

As soon as Adirai places food into it, the amuda surabhi produces large quantities of food, Kayasandikai then recounts her cursed past to Manimekalai. Healed of her endless hunger, after consuming from the begging bowl, Kayasandikai directs Manimekalai to feed the hungry people in the Temple of the Wheel.

Chitrapati is infuriated at the state of Manimekalai and her going amidst destitutes, so she resolves somehow to retrieve her. She immediately insinuates Prince Udayakumaran to distract Manimekalai from her path as an ascetic. Thus instigated and inflamed with desire the Prince, confronts Manimekalai. Finding the Prince, impervious to words of moral wisdom, Manimekalai exercises the incantation and assumes the form of Kayasandikai to escape the advances and attentions of the Prince. The prince unable to spot Manimekalai lingers on and takes a vow not to leave, till he gets Manimekalai. However, the Pillar- Statue chides him for desecrating the place. Dumbstruck the prince decides to unravel the mystery, as he was unaware that Manimekalai has taken the form of Kayasandikai.

Kanchanan, Kayasandikai's husband comes in search of his wife and approaches Manimekalai mistaking her identity. The prince still holding to the resolution of taking possession of Manimekalai returns and the maid tries to

convince him of the transience of youth and beauty. Kanchanan is incensed to see his wife ignoring him and giving undue attention to a stranger. In a fit of jealousy, he kills Udayakumaran who had returned slyly in the night after having unraveled the mystery that it was Manimekalai who was in the form of Kayasandikai.

The pillar statue informs the Vidhyadhara that Kayasandikai is already dead. Manimekalai laments the end of the prince. The statue comforts her and recounts the story of Udayakumaran in his past birth and how he was paying the price for his past deeds. It reminds her that the consequences of a man's deeds are inevitable. The pillar statue also foretells Manimekalai's future. It declares that she would take many births, and would invariably follow the path of dharma, attaining to the position of the first disciple of the Buddha, and reach *nirvana* ultimately.

As soon as the King hears of his son's death, he consigns the Prince's body to the flames and incarcerates Manimekalai. The grieving King Mavankilli sends wise Vasantavai to console the Queen. The Queen listens to her, however dissembles her anger and resorts to various strategies to either kill Manimekalai or to rob her of her dignity. She fails insufferably in all her attempts; which makes her realize her folly. Manimekalai preaches to the Queen and saves her from the nadir of ignorance and mental delusion. Thus the contrite and repentant Queen attains peace of mind.

Manimekalai freed from the Queen flies in the air and reaches Nagapuram, the country ruled over by Punyarajan. Punyarajan meets Manimekalai and also learns about his strange birth from the Queen mother. Manimekalai travels to Vanji and worships the images of Kovalan and Kannagi. Kannagi appears before her and recounts the past life of Kovalan. She also predicts the future course of events. Manimekalai, assumes the form of an ascetic, and continues to reside in the great capital, till, by the ripening of the causes, she was ready to receive the teaching of the four great truths.

Manimekalai then gradually sets out on her mission of approaching the teachers of different persuasions. She goes by turn to logicians, Savites, Brahnavadins, Vaishnavites, Vedic philosophers, Ajivakas, Nigranthas, Sankhyas, Vaisheshikas, and Bhutavadins and listens to them elucidate their respective philosophies. Finally, she expresses her dissatisfaction with all their expositions and states that inference is of prime importance in the realization of the truth.

Manimekalai proceeds to meet her grandfather Masattuvan who speaks of his own life based on dharma and the future birth of her parents. Then she pays obeisance to the Saint and she says that the teachings of Buddha were superior to all of them and therefore requests him to initiate her into Buddhism. She says that having heard the teachings of the various other persuasions from men most erudite and competent to expound them, she felt inclined and justified to reject all of them as not showing the right path.

Saint Aravana recounts the sequence of events culminating in the destruction of Pukar. He illumines her about the Buddhist tenets and accordingly she receives the Buddhist dharma.

In conclusion, the Sage teaches Manimekalai the way to realize the Truth of Being according to Buddhist Philosophy. Her mind enlightened, Manimekalai dedicates herself to the ideal life that leads to, *nirvana* (salvation).

The Epic Tradition

“In its standard sense, the term ‘epic’ or heroic poem is applied to a work that meets atleast the following criteria: it is a long narrative poem on a serious subject, told in a formal and elevated style, and centered on a heroic or quasi-divine figure on whose actions depends the fate of a tribe, a nation, or the human race.”³ The epic, as a literary genre was ranked by the Greek theorist Aristotle as second only to tragedy and by many renaissance critics as the highest of all genres.

³ .M.H.Abrams , *Glossary of literary terms*,pg.34

A.K. Warder in the "Indian Kavya Literature" says that: "The epic is a large scale work entirely in verse, divided into cantos (*sargas*), the average number of which is in the region of twenty. The average number of verses (invariably quartrains) in a canto is probably about seventy, but any number between forty and a hundred and twenty is quite common.... As the aim here is comprehensiveness, the *kavi* displays his skill in lyric descriptions as well as in epic narrative. Nevertheless, the original inspiration for such works seem to have been the true Epic Narrative of tradition, and in outline an epic is always a narrative, a story."⁴

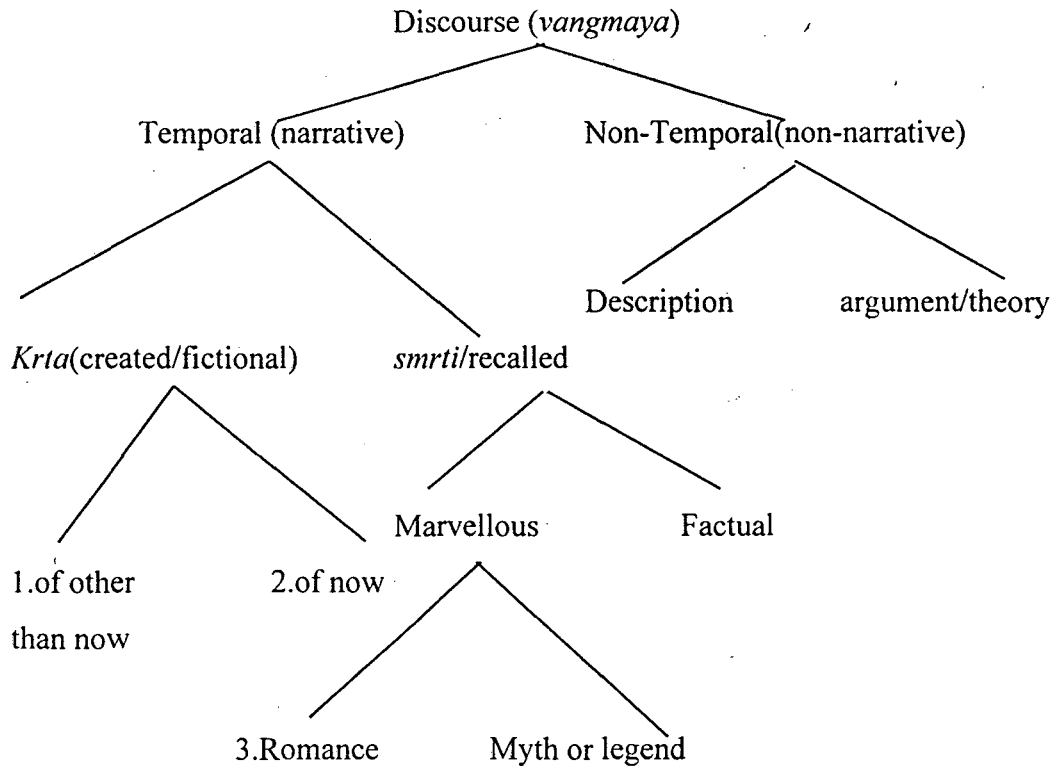
From the brief delineation given previously, it is evident that the epic, Manimekalai is essentially a narrative .It is a story composed of 4758 lines in blank verse (Tamil:*nilaimandila aasiriyappa*)and divided into thirty cantos (Tamil:*kaadai*).As Kapil Kapoor states: "The Indian intellectual tradition has relied heavily on the narrative *katha* in different forms and at different levels....To take one major example, the Mahabharata, the Indian novel/narrative par excellence, and the *Puranas* have clear ontological status in the spheres of culture and socio-geographic historical knowledge about the Indian civilisation, and at the same time, they function epistemologically as extended interpretive systems for the 'foundationalist' knowledge of the Vedas.....However, the substance, format and structure of story telling both in itself and the context of the whole text-vary from one text to another"⁵

He says that Bhoja enumerates atleast 24 categories of narrative, which are defined by one or more than one of the several parameters that have been invoked by different poeticians-language, meter, subject matter, narrator, goal, type of major protagonist, the span of time etc.⁶. Thus according to Kapil Kapoor, "in the context of Indian theory of narratives, one can postulate the following totality of discourse, in which narrative and kinds of narrative find their place:

⁴ A.K.Warder, *Indian Kavya Literature*, Vol.2 (Delhi:Motilal Banarsidass, 1974) pg.169

⁵ Kapil Kapoor:*Theory of the Novel :An Indian View in Indian Response to Literary theories.*,R.S.Pathak (ed.)pg. .84

⁶ Ibid, pg.84



So, “there are thus five kinds of narrative:

1. fictional now 2 .fictional non-now 3 .romance

4. myth or legend (viz. *puranas*) 5. historical. Of course, through interaction of types, new kinds of narratives emerge... Again, subsidiary narratives (*upakhyana*) within a narrative may belong to any of the five kinds of narratives, resulting in a rich texture of story-telling.”⁷ Taking the above typology into consideration, Manimekalai could be placed under the category of fictional non-now (*krta*), a temporal narrative.

Conventionally the original inspiration for such narratives is usually drawn from the (*Mahakavyas*) ie the Great *Kavyas* or the true Epic Narratives of tradition like the Mahabharata or the Ramayana. In the case of Manimekalai, the source has not been traced, but it is generally believed by scholars that it is in the tradition of Bodhisattva tales belonging to Buddhist scriptural lore. The Manimekalai also has a series of miracles, anecdotes of past births and

⁷ *ibid*, pg.83

predictions of future births interwoven along the course of the narrative, which is a characteristic feature of Buddhist mythology. Vaiyapuripillai further substantiates this: it is said that Manimekalai would take several births and ultimately become first among the disciples of the Buddha before attaining nirvana (21:175-179). From this we may infer that the story may be traced to an *avataraa* of the past births of either Sariputta or Moggalana, who were the chief disciples of the Buddha.⁸ Also, since the story was basically written for the dissemination of Buddhist doctrines and principles, one finds that the three cantos 27, 29 and 30 deal with the 'heretical systems', 'Buddhist logic' and the 'Teachings of Buddhism', respectively. These are evidences of the similarity of the Buddhist logic of Manimekalai to the Nyayapravesa of Dignaga. In fact, because of the heavy religious thrust in the epic, it has been criticized as being more of a religious text than a literary one. But, it is an undeniable fact that it is a characteristic feature of Indian literature that it is sometimes difficult to distinguish literature from religious documentation. "This is not because there has been an imposition of a system of religious values on the society: it is rather because religion in India is so interwoven with every facet of life, including many forms of literature, that it becomes indistinguishable"⁹

The poem no doubt is doubled with philosophy, but the epic literature blends smoothly and does not emerge as an entity distinct from philosophy, moral and religious teaching. From the story of the Manimekalai, it is obvious that the nucleus of the epic is quite simple, with the protagonist renouncing the world. However around the core has gathered a mass of varied material dealing with versatile topics which are legendary/ mythical, ethical, didactic, heroic, aesthetic, philosophical and historical. Being a temporal narrative, the epic shows constant change which in fact makes the epic more readable and saves it from predictability and monotony. As Kapil Kapoor rightly says: "the one defining proper of all narratives is their temporality –in the world of the narrative. There is

⁸ Vaiyapuripillai's, *History of Tamil Language and Literature*(from the beginning to 1000 A.D.), New century Book House Private Ltd, Madras-98

⁹ Edward C. Dimock, Jr., *Literatures of India*, The University of Chicago Press, 1974

overwhelming instability, constant change and flux. Every moment one thing becomes another”¹⁰

As we proceed through the narrative we are drawn into various sub-plots, which is significant for the way “it conceptualizes and represents an important aspect of the Indian world-view-The evolution of the soul in different births-and for its structural ingenuity in having ‘emboxed narratives’ within the main narrative.”¹¹ One can never find a prosaic or mundane moment in the epic and though the subplots are independent tales by themselves they have been interwoven into the main narrative with natural ease. “This is possible because the narrative is in graceful and limpid style which has earned for the author the sobriquet: tan-Tamil Sattan:Sattan who writes in pleasing Tamil...A steady flow of the *Aasiriyappa* (blank verse) with each line almost complete by itself most of the time gives it an upanishadic movement .The epic was no doubt meant for recitations at gatherings of the faithful to expatiate on the glory of the renunciation and underline virtues like charity and compassion. Probably, the first long poem in Tamil after the Sangham Age of lyricism, Manimekalai’s style has received uniform praise”¹²The language employed is a formal and high variety, the style is elegant and deliberately distanced from ordinary speech and proportioned to the gravity of the epic theme and architecture.

The epic shows spontaneous use of figures of speech and “epic similes assure Manimekalai a noble verbal gait”¹³. Interest is also generated and sustained by the introduction of many legends, and occasional inclusion of supernatural elements, such as the appearance of gods and their direct intervention in human affairs, thereby resembling the pattern followed in the Great Epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata.

¹⁰ Kapil Kapoor, *Theory Of the Novel :an Indian View in Indian Response to Literary Theories*,pg.86

¹¹ *ibid*,pg. 87

¹² Prema Nandakumar, *Manimekalai(translated)*, Tamil University, Thanjavur, India, 1989

¹³ *ibid* pg.xv

Though the dominant sentiment is *Karuna* (compassion) of the Buddha, the conflict of emotions, burning desire, emotional attachment etc. which are common in life, has been described in the epic with great ingenuity.

Kapil Kapoor says that the Indian narrative is always preoccupied with questions which are-“the range, the potentiality and the reality of human experience; the concept of an essential ethical order; the nature of *dharma*, both collective and individual: the conflict between man’s *dharma* in different orders and the necessity of making a choice, the need to do karma, and the nature of action, inaction and non-action”¹⁴

As explicated by him, the protagonist in the epic, Manimekalai also has the necessity of making a choice of either reciprocating to the amorous overtures of the Prince Udayakumaran, or emerging as an ascetic.

Manimekalai, however does not give in to her basic instincts and appears as a tall character, as she attains *Nirvana*.

While answering the question of whether Manimekalai adheres to strict epic proprieties, the first hurdle would be to decide if Manimekalai is a *mahakatha/mahakavya* (i.e. Tamil:*perumkappiyam*, as it is considered to be one of the five great epics: Tamil: (*Aim perum Kappiyangal*) or a *katha* (story). As a *perumkappiyam*, it must treat the life of a protagonist from his/ her birth, tracing it through all the stages to the threshold of the life hereafter. And usually the protagonist in an epic is a man.

"It must therefore subserve the four *purusharthas* or ends of existence: *aram(dharma)*,*porul(artha)*, *inbam(kama)* and *visdu(moksha)*. Therefore, it is to be a self-contained work, a heroic poem dealing with the life of the hero in its entirety".¹⁵

¹⁴ Kapil Kapoor, *Theory of the novel: an Indian view in Indian Response To Literary Theories*,pg.87

¹⁵ Krishanaswami Aiyēngar,;*Manimekalai in it's Historical Setting* ,pg. 31

Keeping these requirements in mind, there are usually two prevalent arguments:-

One claiming that Manimekalai is a *mahakavya*, the other refuting the view that Manimekalai as a single entity measures up to the requirements of a *mahakavya*, rationalising that only when coupled with its twin, 'the Silapadikaram', the two constitute a *mahakavya* or *perumkappiyam*. The first argument states that though the epic apparently commences with the protagonist in the prime of her youth, there are quite a few allusions and hints of her parentage and early life as the epic takes the reader through the various stages of the protagonists' life from the mundane to the spiritual, where she finally attains the mellowness and maturity to enter a Buddhist cloister. The last stage in her life, is when she completely renounces everything that is worldly and embraces Buddhism. Interpreted in this manner, it can be regarded that the work is a complete picture of the life of the heroine, and therefore answers to the description of a great *Kavya*.

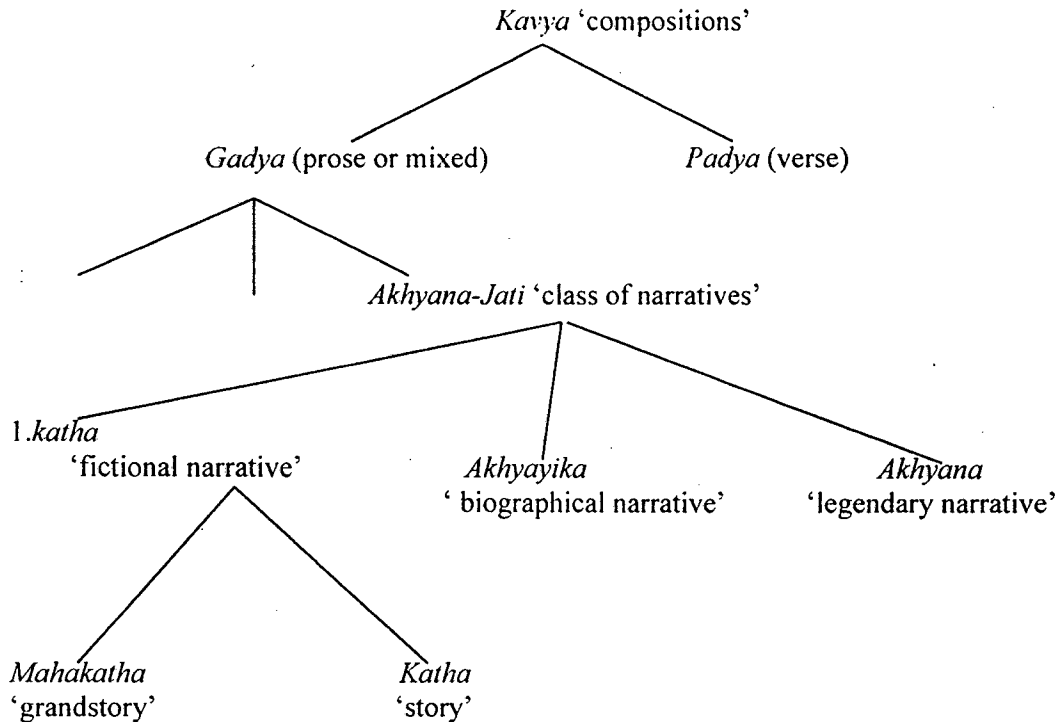
However the former claim is rather double edged and could raise an objection that the early life is treated with the least significance and glossed over with mild hints and allusions, thereby falling short of a *mahakavya*. The objection finds justification in the fact that the 'title' of the epic is not called Manimekalai, consistently, it is named "*Manimekalaithuravu*" or 'Renunciation of Manimekalai' in the prologue. Therefore, it is evident that the portion of the heroine's life where she renounces the world is the theme and the subject matter, whereas the formative phase of her life commands lesser importance.

Moreover, the second view appears more tenable because the 'Silapadikaram' in its concluding portion states that the story of the Manimekalai completes the subject matter of the 'Silapadikaram'. Adiyarkkunnallar, the commentator of the Silapadikaram takes up this stance and lays down that an epic (*kappiyam*) should subserve the four main ends of life, and therefore propounds that the Silapadikaram stops with the first three, whereas the Manimekalai treats the fourth end of life. It is believed that the two authors Ilango -Adigal and Seethalai Sattanar had an understanding and therefore the former composed

Silapadikaram after Sattan completed Manimekalai illustrating *moksha* and *dharmā* as two objects of life. It is said that Ilango wished that the two should find vogue as one *kavya*. However, as mentioned earlier, these two are regarded as two separate works because two authors composed them. So, the Manimekalai is a *katha/kavya*. (tamil:kappiyam).

The word '*kappiyam*' in Tamil is indebted to the word '*kavya*' in Sanskrit.¹⁶In Sanskrit, the word '*kavya*' means a poetic composition, while the word '*mahakavya*' means a 'grand poem'. "*Kavya* arose in the first centuries A.D as a literary style that would decide literary tastes for a millenium, and even longer through the profound influence it exerted on the literatures of medieval India. *Kavya* has also been called court poetry.... Because it exhibits a hyper-refined style of language, poetics of metaphor and simile, virtuosity of meter and precious erudition"¹⁷

Kapil Kapoor constructs the following typology of narrative types:



¹⁶ Dr.R. Kasirajan, *Evolution and evaluation of Epics in Tamil*,pg45

¹⁷ Edward c. Dimock Jr.'An overview:*The sutra in the Literatures of India*: the university of Chicago press, 1974



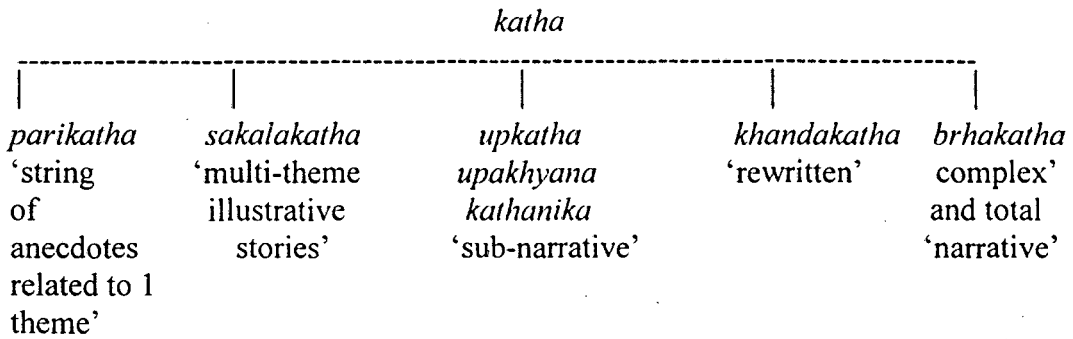
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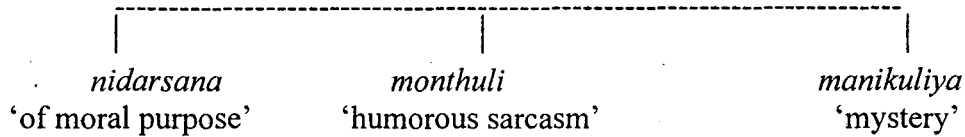
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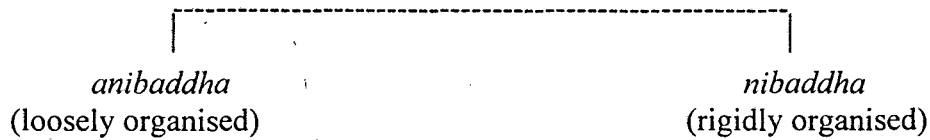
2. According to source of and relation to other narratives:



3. According to nature of subject:



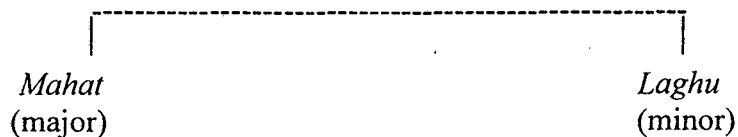
4. Organisation:



5. Original Story:



6. Significance:



It has been noted that "*katha*, *akhyayika* and *akhyana* together constitute the set *Akhyana-jati*, 'class of narratives'...with *katha*, being " an imaginary prose or verse tale"¹⁸

Katha is defined as an imaginary composition by Amarasinha in Amarakosa.¹⁹The Manimekalai falls under the category of '*katha*' or fictional narrative, because the author describes birth stories which relates to the actions of the past, curses, karma determining present life, Manimekalai's ability to fly in the air etc. which point out to the fact that regard for reality has never been the concern of these authors. It cannot be a history treating of actual events because as Vaiyapuripillai says, "In another context , Manimekalai makes Kovalan and Kannagi anterior even to the Buddha by several generations. Kannagi as a deity informs Manimekalai that to expiate her sin of destroying Madurai, she and Kovalan would be undergoing births and deaths for generations together in this world."²⁰Actually such stories of births and deaths and final release are considered to be a characteristic feature of Buddhist literature.

The second parameter for classification of narratives is of 'scope and relationship to other narratives' as shown in the chart. "*Parikatha* is a series of anecdotes illustrative of one theme, generally related to one of the four goals of life-righteousness, wealth and power, desires and wishes, and salvation, liberation-like a pearl garland strung on a string. *Sakalatha* on the other hand ,is a much larger work-it has a series of anecdotes/stories illustrative of all four goals of life. *Upakatha* is a sub-story- a story that is enclosed in the main narrative....*Khandakatha* is an interesting category. It is a story based on a small part- an episode or character of a larger work...*Brhatkatha*, is a *katha* if we follow Dandin and Bhamaha ...it is well structured with several divisions, has striking effects(*adbhutartha*) including the marvellous, has a huge theme or

¹⁸ Kapil Kapoor ,*Theory of the Novel An Indian View in Indian Response To Literary Theories*,pg.89

¹⁹ *ibid.* .pg. .90

²⁰ Vaiyapuripillai,*History of Tamil Language and Literature*, pg.25

subject(*mahavisaya*)and is composed in a vernacular language.”²¹The Manimekalai coupled with its twin, the Silapadikaram could be classified as a *sakalatha*, however it does not precisely fall under any of the above mentioned categories, which are not water tight compartments in any case. The epic, Manimekalai , is a single long story revolving around a strong character and the other characters merely act as props in propelling the story towards the one ultimate goal-*vidu/moksha*. This literary epic has a female protagonist where the conception of heroism and human greatness, which the protagonist symbolizes, is not completely similar to those of the other conventional epic heroes. This type of epic presents a protagonist who is like a symbol or even an ideal, a person who represents moral strength as opposed to the physical strength and valor which epic heroes usually display on the battlefield. The poet’s intention is to point to a moral, and therefore the story line commands secondary importance as compared to the primary objective, which is basically a representation of the poets vision of life, his convictions and his religious leanings.

“The third parameter is the nature of subject/ interest. A story that has a definite moral purpose is *nidarsana*. It may take the form of a fable, allegory or it may be a straightforward narrative”²²The Manimekalai, is a straightforward narrative and therefore falls in this category because the purpose is to instruct human beings about the importance of the virtue of compassion and mercy.

“The next broad division is on the basis of their organisation: there are some loosely strung compositions-*anibaddha* and rigidly organized *nibaddha*”.²³Tamil epics generally contain major divisions and further sub-divisions. Manimekalai is rigidly organised (*nibaddha*)into thirty divisions or ‘*kaadai*’(*rhythmic poem*) which does not impede the flow of the narrative. All parts or divisions of the Manimekalai are named *kaadai* .All of them are composed of *niilaimandila assiriyappa* verse that ends with the morpheme ‘en’.

²¹ Kapil Kapoor ,*Theory of The Novel ;an Indian View in Indian Response to Literary Theories*, pg,92

²² *ibid.* pg.92

²³ *ibid.*, page 92

As far as Manimekalai is concerned, only some *kaadai* are in indirect narrative speech. (1,4,8,18-20). The rest of the *kaadai* are replete with the utterances and direct speeches of the epic characters covering a whole range from the speech of Madhavi, Chitrapati, expressions of Sutamati, sacred words of goddess Manimekala and goddess Dipatilakai, the sagacious discourse of the saint Aravana, the prophesies of the Pillar statue to the expositions of the various philosophies of their respective schools of thought. It also contains a prologue/*patikam* which comprises a brief summary of the epic poem, and a concise note on the poet. The epic poets themselves did not compose these *patikam*/prologues, it is believed. In the prologue of Manimekalai, the theme of the poem is also pithily introduced in the last few lines.

"Finally there is a broad classification into a story- which is created by the writer, i.e., *utpadya*"²⁴. The Manimekalai, is a story which is created by Sattan and not adapted from available sources, i.e. *anutpadya*. In Tamil, the *utpadya*, is called '*viruntu*' or '*muttal-nuul*', in the Tolkapiyam. "It is identified, as a kind of poem in which the various kinds of verse-form were introduced newly by the author of his own will. In this type any one of the ending letter, syllable, foot and metrical line of a verse will be used to begin the next verse...in '*viruntu*', the ancient tradition in prosody is changed and a new method followed".²⁵ In a '*viruntu*' or '*utpadya*', the poet refrains from following the shadow of the ancients and follows an authentic and individual style in composing poems. So, the classical story and modified retold classical story are not used in poems of this type, but the author himself creates a story and uses it in his poem with continuous narration. So, *utpadya/viruntu*, it is understood is clearly different from *anutpadya*(adapted), and the '*viruntu*' is called the 'literary epic' in the western tradition.

²⁴ ibid,pg.93

²⁵ Dr. Kasirajan, *Evolution and evaluation of epics in tamil*,pg.92

Kapil Kapoor cites nine criteria,²⁶ which are usually taken into consideration in the process of definition of these categories mentioned above which could be applied to the Manimekalai as well.

They are:

1. Language of composition-which is tamil.
2. Medium-verse.
3. Scope- it is a minor (*laghu*)-as it only revolves around renunciation of worldly life, as opposed to a major (*mahat*) work, which has narratives pertaining to all the ends of life, and affords the whole range of psychical experience (*rasa*).
4. Narrator-is the author himself.
5. Type of protagonist: she is a *sthitaprajna*, of stable, liberated disposition (as Rama) unlike a man of energy and action (as Harsa).
6. Relation to ends of life (*purushartha*): the whole work relates only one of the four ends of life, i.e. release (*moksha*).
7. Subject of the story: the events are new and imagined by the writer.
8. Characters: there are gods and goddesses, ordinary men, women, kings, legendary heroes and heroines.
9. Organisation: *kaadai* (in tamil).

“It is clear that like everything else in the Indian literary theory, the analysis of narrative is a descriptive analysis based on a available body of work. The richness and precision of these categories and sub-categories suggest the pre-existence of a massive body of literature”²⁷

Tamil also had been developing its own literary forms which are peculiarly its own. “But at the same time, literature written by Indians is Indian, no matter what the language or what the audience, and the Dravidian writings are not foreign to northern India. By retention of its peculiarities and its own genres

²⁶ *ibid*, pg. 93

²⁷ Kapil Kapoor, *Theory of the novel an Indian View in Indian Response to Literary Theories*,pg. 93

and literary concepts, Tamil contributes importantly to Indian Literature as a whole".²⁸ So, though it is seen that the epic tradition, classification, and categories in Sanskrit can be applied with natural ease to a literary creation of any Indian language there are certain characteristic features which are language specific, generally observed in Tamil epics some of which are rather universal. These will be discussed briefly with reference to the epic, Manimekalai.

There are the other techniques of narration also which poets have strategically employed along the course of their narration in order to give greater force, intensity, gravity and distinction to their classical works. Amongst the many used, the crucial ones are flashback, repetition and dramatic irony.

The western epics begin in *medias res* (in the middle of things), which is the most emotionally charged portion, and so it is very essential to use some technique to arrange the events, which had already, preceded. "The Indian epic narrates some events which have already happened and foretells the events which are to happen"²⁹. This is called the flash back technique which occupies a prominent place in Tamil epics. In Manimekalai, it is employed while Madhavi narrates the fatal death of Kovalan and Kannagi, which actually moves Manimekalai to renounce worldly life. This technique helps in ensuring continuity, especially in this case, with its twin, Silapadikaram. This avoids the monotony in the epic narration; it enlightens some characters and also helps in drawing some characters to their natural end- such as justifications for the manner in which death devours a person, which is believed as being a direct consequence of one's deeds in his previous birth, like the life of Rahula or Prince Udayakumaran, Aputhran and also the cause of Kayasandikai's perennial hunger in the Manimekalai.

C.M.Bowra considers repetition as one of the most important characteristics of a heroic poem. He holds that in many epic poems a passage is

²⁸ Edward C. Dimock jr. *An overview: the sutra*, pg.23

²⁹ Dr. Kasirajan- *Evolution and evaluation of the Epics in Tamil*, pg.285 Mathy pathipakam, Madurai (1990)

repeated almost word by word, very soon after its first appearance: but the poem does not lose its capacity to interest the reader.³⁰ A special type of repetition, which seems to be a marked characteristic of Tamil epics is that an action itself is repeated. In *Manimekalai*, the previous birth of Manimekalai, Madhavi and Sutamati is mentioned many times (Mani:7:98-110,9:38-53,10:20-74,12:15-17). Similarly the news about Aputhran's mother is repeated in two places in one *kaadai* (ibid: 13:4-10; 72-79). Some critics are of the opinion that this kind of technique is redundant and that it tends to reduce the literary grandeur and taste of the epic. Another perspective is that repetition actually adds to the emphasis and ensures a link or continuity to the otherwise long poem with several digressions.

The protagonist of an epic is usually projected as being superior to other human beings because of the possession of supernatural qualities. These supernatural qualities are closely connected with characters and events to give a sense of elevation to the epic. In the epic *Manimekalai* also, the heroine has three mystic incantations given to her by goddess Manimekala which would enable her to travel by air, change her form and go without food.

It is a tradition in Tamil epics that the future of the characters is foretold when they are born. Dr.R.Kasirajan says that this aspect of prophesying the future of the epic characters is found in epics like the *Perunkatai*.³¹ Here the future of the child is foretold when it is an embryo in the womb of its mother, through a dream. When Manimekalai is born, Goddess Manimekala appears in a dream to Kovalan and Madhavi and informs them that Manimekalai is to perform penance in life (Mani: 7:37:29:31-32).

Many western epics excel in portraying their main characters as possessing powerful weapons, horses and armours. Similarly, the things possessed by the main characters in Tamil epics are pictured to have strange and peculiar powers. Manimekalai possesses the vessel, *amudha surabhi* which has a

³⁰ C. M. Bowra-Heroic Poetry pg. 254-291

³¹ Dr.R.Kasirajan, Evolution and Evaluation of the epics in Tamil, Mathy Pathipkam,pg 287

perennial supply of food (Mani:kaadai:11). Thus in epic characterization, it is beautifully portrayed that there is immense power in the characters and in their possessions. Many actions of the epic heroes are considered symbolic and often the same action is repeated in many Tamil epics.³² In order to save the life of the old Brahmin who comes to get gifts, Kovalan catches hold of the tusks of the balmy elephant and subdues it. (Cilap:15:45-53). In a similar style, the Prince Udayakumaran in Manimekalai tames a frenzied elephant.

31. "Caught as it was in a grim tornado,
32. The royal elephant Kalvagan
33. was in rut, the attendants were helpless....
43 Udayakumaran, son of the king
44 Whose white umbrella outstrips the sun's sheen
45 Galloped hither speedily on his horse
46 And brought the pachyderm under control."

This action is considered to be symbolic of the frenzy and fanatic obsession for Manimekalai which the prince is unable to bridle, instead he ends up controlling an animal which is in a similar state. Symbolically, one may stretch this further to say that the hero must control his lust-frenzy and only then he can attain liberation. In the case of the Prince Udayakumaran this lust drives him to his doomsday when Kayasantikai's husband slaughters him. Moreover this action helps in magnifying the prowess and valour of the epic heroes.

Many epic heroes often fly in the air. This is a special element, which one finds in Silapadikaram as well. Kovalan after his death along with Lord Indra comes down to the earth in a divine aircraft and takes Kannaki in it to heaven (Cilap:23:125-200). Similarly, in the Manimekalai also, the protagonist takes flight in the air very often. (Mani:11:127)

"Manimekalai soared towards the sky"

"She then flew high in the air and came down". (Mani 24:163)

³² *ibid*, pg. 287

business of life is drawn into the story, so that it finally has a cathartic effect on the reader.

Moreover Sattan by giving splendid descriptions of the city, festivals and descriptive portrayal of men and women characters. There are also other elements like the oracle, the scene of the crematorium and the idea of rebirth which looms large in the epic.

The oracle plays a prominent role in Manimekalai. "The word *acariiri* in Tamil means oracle. It denotes a divine spirit as well. It is otherwise termed as '*acariiri vakku*' meaning words from the invisible spirit and '*aakaacaa vaani*' meaning words from the sky.³⁵ The oracle foretells coming events, portrays the merits of particular characters. It also manifests the divine power, leads the characters to action and at times even decides the destiny of characters. In the Manimekalai (16:37-44) the chastity of Aathirai is clearly depicted through an oracle which has no form. When Aathirai decides to succumb to the flames of fire, at the news of her husband's death, a voice resounds from heaven:

"Aathirai hear, your husband was
Lead by ocean waves to the mountainside
Where he has joined the naga tribesmen.
He will not be there for many years,
He is sure to return in the ship
Of the merchant Chandradatta. You too
Will be freed of this terrible sorrow"³⁶

The Manimekalai as an epic does give pleasure to the reader, however it emphasizes the transience of life, beauty, youth and all the futility of indulging in a hedonistic life. The perishable nature of human life is represented through the symbol of the 'crematorium'. There are few references of the crematorium in epics like the Silapadikaram, Civaka Chinthamani, and Perunkatai. In the

³⁵ . M.Venkada Swamy Nadaar and Auvai S. Duraiswamypillai, *Commentary on Manimekalai: (16:44)*, pg.71

³⁶ Dr. Prema Nandakumar, *Manimekalai*, pg 80

Manimekalai, the scene of the crematorium is narrated elaborately. Sattan describes the four gateways to the crematorium, the different types of graves built in bricks for the dead ascetics, kings and chaste wives. He gives vivid descriptions of the scene of cremation exquisitely and remarks ironically that mortals, who find separation insufferable, always preferred to vacate from the scene of death as soon as they buried their young ones. Thus, he suggests that humans find death morbid and sinister and never liked to be reminded that the axe would fall on them some day. So he says:

“69. But none of them has the desire to tarry for long
70. Funeral drums that sound deep the message
71 of mortality to the living ones”³⁷

He drives home the fact that death never discriminates and strikes the mighty and the meek. So he says:

“Death makes no distinction between god-men,
The rich, post-natal young women, children,
He spares neither the aged, nor the young,
The terrible reaper kills large numbers.
Even after watching the firemouth
Of the cremation-ground gobbling, people
Drink and dance and live not the dharmic life
Are there greater fools than these same mortals?”³⁸

Sattan with these lines endeavours to awaken the conscience of the people and advises them to follow the virtuous path while alive. It is said that among all Tamil epics, “Manimekalai stands first in portraying the crematorium symbol in the most effective manner”³⁹. Sattan also elucidates “the meanness to which the body is subjected to after death”⁴⁰

³⁷ Dr. Prema Nandakumar, Manimekalai, 6:69-71, pg35

³⁸ ibid, pg.35

³⁹ Dr.R.Kasirajan, Evolution and Evaluation of the Epics in Tamil, Mathy Pathipakam, pg.70

⁴⁰ ibid, pg. 70

Another characteristic feature of Manimekalai is the idea of rebirth, which is basically due to the influence of Buddhist religious thought. The previous births of most of the characters like Madhavi, Manimekalai, Sutamati, Udayakumaran and Aputhran are mentioned. It is revealed time and again that the state of a person in his previous birth is always a consequence of the deeds he performed in his previous birth.

The epic Manimekalai, is basically didactic and ethical in spirit, and was meant to propagate Buddhist teachings. However, it shares the common characteristics of all the Indian epics in that it stresses virtue over vice and carries the same message that ultimately truth will triumph. There are exquisite touches of true poetic feeling and display of familiarity with the most refined emotions of the human heart. Apart from its artistic and literary merits, it is highly valuable in another respect as well. It seeks to hold out lofty ideals in an individual. The Ramayana, "is in fact, an epitome of Indian civilization, for the highest spiritual and metaphysical ideals are also set forth, stressing the transience of life, so full of misery, and the eternal nature of the soul. While fate is recognized as extremely powerful, good actions and penance are stated to be means of overcoming it. Complete surrender to God is laid down as the way to attaining the summum bonum of life, *moksha*⁴¹". Though the Manimekalai does not measure up to the literary standards and grandeur of the Ramayana it cannot be denied that it carries the same message and spirit.

⁴¹ Cultural heritage of IVol5, *Language and Literature in India*

Chapter 2

AN ANALYSIS OF SIMILES

It is believed that language is the dress of thought, and style is the particular cut and fashion of the dress. The cut or fashion can be looked at from different points of view. Each literary genre has its own appropriate style; the style of a tragedy is different from the style of a pastoral as they have different subject matters; and this does not rest completely with the private tastes of the author, but could be a part of the nature of things. However, style is sometimes also seen as largely dictated by the nature of the author himself.

Whatever view we may take of its nature, it is clear that in talking about style we are talking about choice-choice between lexical and syntactic resources of a particular language. The primary choice is that of subject matter, which is one of the four *purusharttas* i.e. *vidu/moksha* in the epic, Manimekalai. The secondary choice is the stylistic one. This is the choice of the best verbal means to express a pre-determined subject matter. This could be conditioned by the subject-matter and the age or the era in which the poet wrote the literary piece, or conditioned by the character, temperament of the author, his philosophical and religious leanings. Therefore, careful readers would be led back from the work to its genesis in the author's experience; they may examine the philosophic or religious ideas that it embodies; they may concern themselves about its moral or social effects. But, a reader who is interested in the maker's art itself, rather than the causes or its effects, will inquire into the particular verbal means or stylistic choices by which the total form has been achieved.

This is the scope of the study, to analyze the figural mode in the Manimekalai and prove how the organic unity of a work of literature like this epic is not something which is ready-made but it is made in a variety of ways, by the choice of the figurative language strategically such that it illustrates clearly

that figures of speech are not just adornments or embellishments but they are modes of perception as well.

“The figurative language is a departure from what users of the language apprehend as the standard meaning of words, or else the standard order of words in order to achieve some special meaning or effect. Such figures were long described as primarily poetic “ornaments”, but they are integral to the functioning of language, and indispensable not only to poetry, but to all modes of discourse.”¹

Traditionally it is believed that figures of speech make their appeal through novelty. There has been a distinction between figures of speech and figures of thought which was standard in ancient rhetoric but there has never been a full-fledged agreement upon the differentiation. Quintilian says that the figures of speech may be changed or removed without removing the sense of what contains them, but figures of thought cannot be so changed. According to him figures of speech are either grammatical/rhetorical (as anaphora, antithesis, isocolon, anaphora). Whereas figures of thought are words or expressions used in different senses from those which properly belong to them (as metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, irony) and they are frequently classified as tropes when they approximate metaphors.²

Study of the various figures was originally a branch of rhetoric but came to be included in poetics. Longinus considered that the figures of rhetoric were controlled by what was known to be true and thought to be probable, but the use of similar figures in poetry was to be governed by other considerations, and particularly by their effectiveness in achieving elevation and transport.

That figures of speech are ornaments has been a dominant idea of western criticism. Through many centuries the mastery of figures of speech was considered a sign of virtuosity, and much of the pleasure of reading was thought

¹ M.H.Abrams, *A glossary of literary terms*, pg.67, Eastern Press, Bangalore.

² Alex Pemingert jr., Frank Jwarne and O.B.Hardison jr, Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics, published by Macmillan Press.ltd.1975.

to depend on the pleasure of discriminating among the devices. Both Longinus and Quintilian argued against the use of figures of speech according to fixed rules. Puttenham in his *Art of Poetry* (1589) says that poetry took feeling and nature as its guides, decency and decorum were proposed as laws of nature, and figures of speech, formed according to the demands of feeling and decorum were employed in order to achieve "good grace". His theory stressed the ornamental aspect of the figures.

Paradoxically, in later times, in the western tradition, figures of speech are often taken to be the quintessence of poetry and modes of perception when in the past they were primarily valued as ornaments to meaning or the substance of style.

In the Indian tradition of criticism, from the very beginning the speciality of poetic speech was understood most characteristically as the figures of speech (*alamkara*). Traditional Indian scholarship has emphasized the importance of the figures to the point of giving the name *alamkarasastra*, to the whole study of poetry. The *alamkaras* not only constitute an original problem of Indian poetics, but are a continuing preoccupation within the tradition. The view of the early Indian poetics is that "poetry can be taken as the exploitation of language for its own sake and poetics as the investigation of language in so far as it escapes the immediate limitations of utility and achieves a condition of self-illumination which we might call beauty."³

In the Indian tradition the *upamana*, is admitted, as the fourth source of knowledge by Nyaya, Mimamsa and Vedanta schools. "For early Nyaya, it is that knowledge which we gain about an unfamiliar thing on the basis of its similarity (*sadrasyata*) with a familiar thing. For later Nyaya, it is the knowledge of the denotation of an unfamiliar, word on the basis of the knowledge of similarity and difference with a familiar object. As against this, for the Mimamsa and

³ Edwin Gerow, University of Washington, *A glossary of Indian figures of speech*, 1971, Mouton.

Advaita schools, *upamana* is the knowledge of similarity about an absent object obtained from the perceived similarity of a present object”⁴

Generally these figures are not specialized in its application. A simile , to use the formal terminology of the Indian poetic, is a statement about two terms (*upameya, upamana*)i.e. subject and object of comparison, sharing a common property and expressed through the use of some adverbial particle indicating ‘likeness’. This pure formalism of the figures caused considerable confusion, as some scholars believed that the essence of poetry (beauty) cannot be showed on this level of formalism i.e. propositions alone.

Among contemporary Indian critics, V.Raghavan appreciates the formalist view; “So poetry requires not only fact and feeling but a beautiful form also; it has not only to be useful, but primarily attractive. And “poetry is not mere thought...it will be easier to dissociate love from its physical aspect than to keep the concept of poetry aloof from its form”⁵. “Professor S.K.De (1925) traces the origin of the formal theory of poetics to the discussions in early grammarians and etymologists about *upama* ‘simile’, which evidently is not just the figure of figures in Indian poetics but also a crucial organizing principle-the principle of similitude which establishes relationships among different objects and structures them into a taxonomic system.”⁶He says that the word *upama* is found as early as the RigVeda and also traces of poetics in the theory of poetics in the Nighantu and Nirukta. Professor De also traces the growth of this concept among grammarians. “Panini defines various terms connected with *upama* and incidentally discusses from the grammarian’s point of view, the influence of the concept of comparison on different parts and areas of language”⁷

In the later philosophic schools, the *upamana* has been established as the fourth epistemology and its creative and interpretive functions are recognized.

⁴ Kapil Kapoor, *Analogy as an argument in Adishankaracharya’s* , Vivekacadamani, vol.39,1996, Oriental Journal

⁵ Edwin Gerow, *A Glossary of Indian Figures of Speech*, 1971.

⁶ Kapil Kapoor, *Analogy as Argument in Adishankaracharya’s Vivekacadamani*,39,1996, Oriental Journal, pg 3

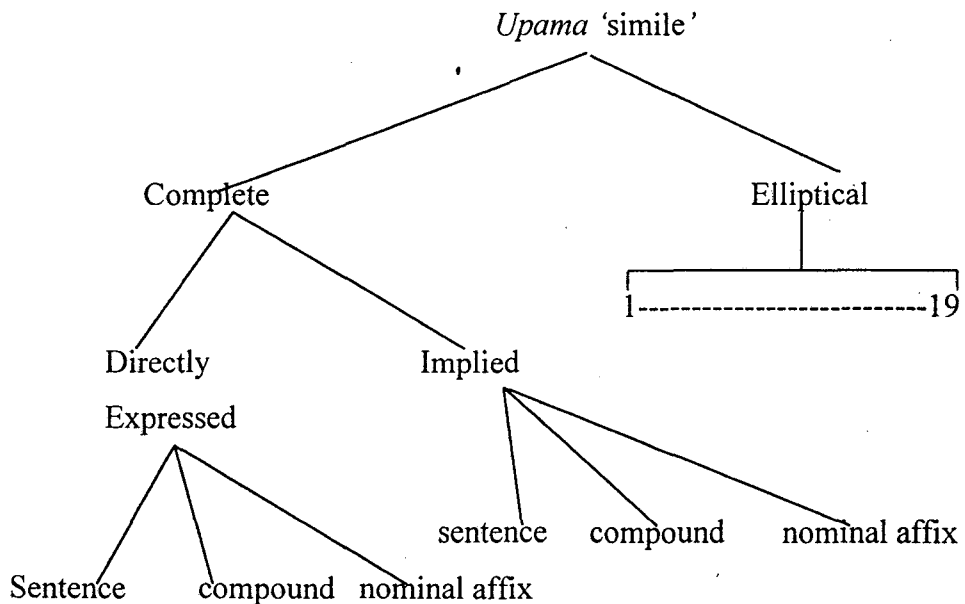
⁷ *ibid*, pg 4

“These discussions in grammar and philosophy , undoubtedly made it possible for poeticians like Mammata, to analyze and describe so well the structure of similes”⁸.

The Indian poetician , Mammata gives the following definition of simile: “When there is similarity of properties while there is difference(between the objects themselves), it is simile. What the text is referring to is the similarity of the properties belonging to the two objects of comparison(the object compared and the object compared to)-and not those belonging to the cause and effect, and such other correlatives; so that it is a case of *Simile* when the said objects of comparison are related to some common property.”⁹

Mammata, has given the following typology of *upama* (simile), which has been applied in order to do a critical analysis of the similes in Manimekalai

TABLE:



Critical Analysis of Similes in Manimekalai:

Mammata constructs the following typology of Similes:

Similes are divided into main categories:

⁸ ibid, pg 4

⁹ Mammata (tr.), Ganganatha Jha, *Kavyaparakasha*, pg.349.

Complete and Elliptical:

Complete similes are further divided into:

a. Directly Expressed

b. Implied and these two can appear either in a sentence or in a compound or as a nominal affix.

Elliptical Similes can be divided into nineteen types:

1. Omitting the common property, and directly occurring in a sentence.
2. Omitting the common property, implied in a sentence
3. Omitting the common property directly expressed in a compound.
4. Omitting the common property, implied in a compound
5. Omitting the common property, implied in a nominal affix
6. Omission of object compared to-occurs in a sentence
7. Omission of object compared to- occurs in a compound.
8. Omission of term expressing similitude-in a compound
9. Omission of term expressing similitude –affix is used in the sense of accusative
10. Omission of term expressing similitude- affix used in the sense of location
11. Omission of term expressing similitude-affix used in the sense of nominative
12. Omission of term expressive of similitude-substantive used accusatively.
13. Omission of term expressive of similitude-used nominatively
14. Omission of common property and term expressive of similitude-occurs in the affix ; ‘kvip’
15. Omission of common property- occurs in a compound.
16. Omission of common property and object compared to occurs in a compound.
17. Omission of common property, object compared to, occurs in a sentence.
18. Omission of term expressive of similitude and object compared, it occurs in the affix ‘kyach’
19. Omission of term expressing similitude, common property object compared to- occurs in a compound.

Other varieties are:

- a. *Malopama*: string simile
- b. *Rashanopama*: girdle simile
- c. *Ananvaya*: Comparison Absolute
- d. *Upameyopama*: reciprocal comparison
- e. *Utpreksa*: poetic fancy
- f. *Sasandeha*: doubtful

Mammatt says that “it is a case of Complete Simile, when all the factors are mentioned-

- 1) the object compared
- 2) the object compared to
- 3) the common property
- 4) and the terms signifying similitude.

The Complete simile is either a.)directly expressed
b.)implied and

appears in a sentence, or in a compound, or in a nominal affix.”

“As matter of fact, that object is recognized as the object compared to, in connection with which such terms expressive of similitude as *yatha*, *iva* and so forth are used ;and in this sense these words serve to qualify the ‘object compared to’...they directly express relationships that in a passage where these terms are present, it is a case of Directly expressed simile.”

In the case of Tamil, terms expressive of similitude such as ‘*pola*’, ‘*pondru*’, ‘*ena*’ which means ‘like’, ‘just as’ or ‘as’ respectively.

An analysis of the complete simile, directly expressed , occurring in a sentence:

2. uuralar uraiththa kaadai/A web of rumours.

73. *oongudirai perungkadal viilthhor ponru*

74. *maiya nenjamodu vayandamaalayum*

75. *kaiyatru peyarndanal kaarigai thirathen.*

73. Vasanthamalai, grew melancholy at heart like one,

74. Who had lost a priceless jewel in the sea.

The Chola King Thodi-Thol Sembayan decides to celebrate a twenty – eight day festival in honour of Lord Indra. The citizens are in a festive mood, however the only blotch is that they miss the presence of the celebrated dancers of Pukar, Madhavi, Manimekalai. Vasanthamalai ,the friend of the lovely Madhavi goes to persuade her to participate in the celebrations.

Vasanthamalai is heavily distressed as she looks at the frail form of Madhavi who had excelled in arts, music, rhythm, song varieties of lute , dance, and in other erudite and intellectual pursuits. She bemoans that all the superb attainments of Madhavi should go futile because of her renunciation.

Here, Sattan compares Vasanthamalai(*upameya*) and her distressed, melancholic state to the grief suffered by a person who had lost an invaluable possession(*upamana*) in the sea. The sea is symbolic of the sea of renunciation in which Madhavi had voluntarily decided to plunge herself. The loss of a priceless jewel in the sea shows that it is irretrievable. Vasanthamalai's emotional state reflects the great sense of loss, and helplessness. This also portends the fact that Madhavi has made an irrevocable decision to renounce the world and never to return to a life of carnal pleasures.

In the eyes of the courtesan and grandmother Chitrapati, this act of Madhavi appears almost suicidal and self-destructive.

Sattan, often uses jewelry, precious gems and stones as the objects of comparison in his similes. This could be a reflection of the Tamil culture which has always accorded an immense value to gold , more so as a symbol of prestige and status.

Considering the formal aspect of the simile, it contains both the subject of comparison, object of comparison, the shared common property(which is the sense of loss) and the term expressing similitude which is *pondru*/like.

4.palikkarai pukka kaadai/4.Entry into the marble room.

92. *panmalarth poompolir paganmulaitathu pol*

93. *poomarach cholaiyum pudaiyum pongarunth*

94. *thanaraich chengan parappinan varuum*

91. Like a sun

92. Penetrating the grove rich with flowers

93. He entered and searched with his lotus-eyes

94. The trees around and artificial hills.

Prince Udayakumaran has an obsessive kind of love for Manimekalai. As soon as he is aware that Manimekalai is in the garden, he hastens to seize her. Hearing the chariot wheels of the prince, Manimekalai conceals herself in the marble room of the garden.

The grove is rich, dense and dark with trees, blooms water-birds, the music of cuckoos on branches and crystalline waters in the lake. Because of its dense foliage it almost appears like night taking a retreat in the grove ,pursued by a troop of sun's rays filtering in between the tiny spaces.

The Prince Udayakumaran and his entry into the grove is compared to the luminous sun. Just as the powerful, radiance of the sun's rays tears through the garden in the marble room, the majestic and invincible prince makes his entry. This simile imparts a formidable, intense and effulgent quality to the prince as he is compared to the brilliant sun. The sun, also has the symbolic touch of the divine, as it is not just a heavenly body, but also has the status of a Sun-God, a life-giving omnipotent source, radiating as a ball of fire and spouting intense heat. Thus the simile ennobles the stature of the Prince to that of a divine, or a heavenly body such as the sun.

The Prince's eyes pores over the marble room and quickly scans the place, just as sunlight gets dissipated all over the surface. His sharp eyes are compared to the red colour of the lotus to show that they were burning red with the heat of passion and desire for the maid. The colour red also symbolizes blood,

rebellion, violent passion and amorousness. The intensity of the emotion which the Prince is experiencing is reflected through the redness of his eyes. Though Sattan does not overtly mention the colour in the simile it is implied as the poet uses the elliptical compound simile 'lotus-eyes' within a directly expressed complete simile. The term expressing similitude is pola/like.

11. pattiram pettra kaadai/Receiving the vessel.

115. *thimbaal surappol tanmullaip pondray*

116. *nenju valipaduum vinjaip paathiraththu*

117. *akansuraip peida aaruyir marundavar*

118. *mugankandu surathathal kaandalwaytkaiyein yena*

115. As the breast of a mother when she yields

116. Sweet milk out of love for her new born babe

117. I wish to see this vessel gush forth food

118. For those poor people in like manner.

The Goddess Dipatilakai informs Manimekalai that after Aputhran had placed the amudha surabhi(the divine vessel) in the Gomukhi lake, the vessel had been surfacing on the birth anniversary of the Buddha. She feels that the auspicious time has come and Manimekalai was the chosen one who should take charge of it. Manimekalai takes possession of the vessel, venerates Lord Buddha and sets out her mission of relieving hungry people of their distress.

Here, Sattan compares the breast of a mother to the amudha surabhi, the divine vessel , which perennially supplies food. The symbol of the breast is usually employed to evoke sensual and erotic images. In this instance, it is a symbol of life, nourishment and fecundity. The divine vessel is like a life giving medicine as it has the ability to suffice the hunger of all the mortals. Manimekalai wishes that this divine vessel should not just produce food mechanically, but should sustain and nurture like the unconditional love of a mother who instinctively turns to her new born babe in order to feed the child with the sweet milk from her breast. The milk which she feeds is so pure and nurtured with love,

affection and endearment. Such should be the role of the divine vessel in satisfying and fulfilling the gnawing hunger of the poverty stricken masses.

The image of the mother could be compared to the role of Manimekalai, and her inclination to feed the multitude to that of the maternal instincts of a mother to feed her hungry child. The image of the mother as being a source of unconditional love, support and compassion is a universal feature of all cultures.

Sattan also brings in the dominant sentiments of the whole epic, which are mercy and compassion of the Lord Buddha. He is adept at employing the parts of the human body as objects of comparison. As one reads through the epic, one is struck by the fact that the parts of the body are a favourite domain of the poet. The breast of the mother is compared to the divine vessel though it is incomparably superior, as it has the quality of being 'holy'. However, it wonderfully illustrates the common property of providing nourishment.

The term expressing similitude is 'yena'; which is equivalent in meaning to 'as'.

16. adirai pichchayitta kaadai/Aadirai gives alms.

68. *enhutan pinavodirundhadu polap*

69. *pendudan irunda pettri noki*

66. The leader held court along with his spouse

67. Looking like a bear and its female.

Adirai's husband is ship wrecked and he lands on an island inhabited by Nagas. The uncultured naga tribesmen leave him unharmed as he was able to converse in their language. Saduvan is taken to meet the Naga king and queen of the island. The chief and his wife are surrounded by left-overs and remnants of a feast that had just preceded. There was dried blood and bleached bones, with the strong stench of blood and wine. The whole atmosphere was crass and vulgar. The leader was entertaining his spouse and they appeared like a male and female bear, playing in gay abandon in the forest. This comparison underlines the brutal and uninhibited indulgence of their basic instincts, which makes them appear like

a pair of animals remote from enlightened humans. This scene is also a reflection of their primitiveness and barbarity .Therefore Saduvan, through discourse educates and enlightens the killer-eyed Naga chief to follow the path of Buddha. The stench of blood and wine signifies the moral debauchery, violence, ruthlessness and hedonism in the beast like behaviour of the spouses.

Sattan even through such unpredictable and distant comparisons is always able to delight the reader. Quite often, he reaches out to the animal kingdom and compares man to the beast. This is an externalization of the image of the brute which is deep inside every man, which given the circumstances arises unless reined strictly.

The term expressing similitude is pola/like.

20.udayakumaranaik kanchanan vaalaal erinda kaadai/Kanchanan kills Udayakumaran.

104. venjina arava nanjcheyiru arumbath

105. tanperu vehuliyin elundupai virithena

106. irundon elundu perumbin sendravan.

102. The Vidhyadhara who was hidden there

103. Thought: "Ah, he comes for this lady". Like

104. An incensed serpent which bares its poison teeth

105. And raises its hood upwards, he got up

Manimekalai takes the form of Kayasantikai, Kanchanan's wife so as to escape the covetous desires of the Prince Udayakumaran. Udayakumaran is puzzled and decides to return in the night , so that he could unravel the mystery. Manimekalai, in the form of Kayasandikai, with the divine vessel, amudha surabhi in her hand persuades the prince and endeavours to convince him of the transience of beauty and impermanence of youth. In the meantime, Kanchanan mistakes Manimekalai in Kayasantikai's disguise to be his wife .Therefore he addresses her in terms of endearment .Manimekalai not knowing Kanchanan, is

vexed by his unsolicited entreaties. She moves away from him and gives sound advice to the prince.

Kanchanan is exasperated and green with envy. He impulsively concludes that his wife has rejected him in favour of the handsome and rich prince. So, just like an irate serpent which waits in hiding to strike with its poisoned fangs, Kanchanan seething with rancor and brimming with jealousy, rises upwards like a snake rises from the ground with its spread hood and slays the prince with the sword.

The incensed snake signifies the angered husband, who feels wounded. He is poisoned by jealousy, and though he does not possess the poisoned fangs of a snake, the lethal sword is instrumental in the act of killing. Moreover the act of taking away the life from a person is itself venomous .

The prince's pitiable death is also justified as being the consequence of his unfair deeds in his previous birth.

Sattan once again employs an animal such as the snake, which crawls with its belly on the soil as the object compared to a human dripping with the poison of envy. This is obviously a simile which belittles the subject and shows him in a bad light. This also reflects the beast like nature of man, who even kills, without the slightest qualm, just as animals fight and kill each other, for a mate. The term expressing similitude 'yena'.

25. Aaputhranodu Manipallavam adaindha kaadai/With Aaputhran to Manipallavam.

134. *mannavan, mannavarkku*

135. *ulandah piraviyai uyarmanip piidigai*

136. *kaiyagath thewduththu kaanbore mugaththai*

137. *maiyaadhu mandilam polakk kaatta.*

134. To the king

135. The jeweled seat showed his past births just as

136. A spotless mirror held in hand reflects

137. The face of the onlooker.

The King Punyarajan learns all about his strange birth and desires to renounce his kingdom, his secular life and to embrace a life of spirituality. The minister Jnanamitran pacifies him and assures him that the fecundity and prosperity of his country all depended on his presence and his good governance. The king then makes a brief visit to Manipallavam and is enlightened of his past births from the seat of Buddha.

The seat of Buddha is compared to a spotless mirror. When held in one's hand just as it reflects the onlooker's face, the jeweled seat also reflected the past births of the king. The jewelled seat of Buddha is an object which is far superior to a spotless mirror. However, the emphasis here is on the clarity, precision, pristine quality of the spotless mirror which reflects accurate and flawless images. Similarly the Seat of Buddha illuminates the King, fills him with wonder, as he goes through an experience of being a spectator, viewing his own life in the previous births, without any obscurity. This in turn reflects the transcendental and miraculous quality of the holy seat of Buddha. The significance of this image lies in the fact that Sattan effectively uses the medium of literature for a didactic purpose of glorifying Buddhism. The King of Manipallavam attains eternal peace of mind and is relieved of his sorrows after this revelation. Thus Sattan imparts the lesson that the only way to salvation and release from sufferings is through following the path of the Buddha.

The Elliptical Simile, directly expressed, omitting the common property and occurring in a in a Sentence.

4. palikkarai pukka kaadai/Entry into the marble room.

30. *koombumudal muriya vingupani avilndu*

31. *kayirukaal pariya, vayirupaal pattangu*

32. *ithaisidainth tharpath thiraiporu munniiir*

33. *iyanguthisai yariyaa thiyanganum odi*

34. *mayangukaal eduththa vangam polak*

35. *kaalor kaiyara, melor indrip*

36. *paagin pilaivir pinamugand thidaitththu*
 37. *koviyin vidiyum kodithor vidiiyum*
 38. *piidigaith theruvum perungalakuttrah thangu*
 39. *irupaar peyaria urugelu moodor*
 40. *orupaar padadu oruvalith thangaadu*
 41. *pagum paraiyum,parundum pandadam*
 42. *aadula maakalum alavuttru villippa*
 43. *niila maal varai nilanedu padarndhdena.*
 26. Like a ship whose captain is in deep fright
 27. It's mast broken, the knots of sail loosened
 28. And hang awry, it's deck splintered all over
 29. The torn sail swishing, its tosses helpless
 30. All over the sea with no sense of course
 31. caught as it is in a grim tornado
 32. The royal elephant Kalavegan
 33. Was in rut, the attendants were helpless,
 34. The mahout nowhere it deterred the blood
 35. That flowed from a facial wound, and traversed
 36. Like a blue mountain walking on the earth.

The royal elephant, Kalavegan is in a mad frenzy causing panic among Kaveripoompattinam's festival crowd. On hearing this, the brave Prince Udayakumaran rushes to the place and subdues the elephant.

The royal elephant, Kalavegan is compared to a ship, which tears across the sea with no sense of direction. The mad frenzy of the animal is compared to an inanimate ship, which having no mind of its own, and having no master or captain to direct it, goes reckless. This shows that the animal is in a deranged, and unbalanced state, entirely bereft of reason. Just as the ship caught in a grim tornado is swirled, tossed and torn with its mast broken and deck splintered all over, Kalavegan was moving around in his hysteria, with a facial wound spouting blood. The attendants were helpless and unable to bridle the unhinged animal,

which because of its huge size and colour appeared like a mobile blue mountain traversing the earth.

In this simile, the movement of the ship is overtly compared or directly expressed in a sentence, though the common property is not mentioned.

Sattan brings in this image of an animal in a hysteric state to signify the ecstatic, passionate and almost delirious state of the love smitten prince. The simile is beautifully developed later on into an irony, as Sattan extends this image illustrating that the Prince who is unable to rein in his maniacal love for Manimekalai however succeeds in harnessing a reckless and strong animal.

The term expressing similitude is pola/ like.

12. Arvanar tholudha kaadai/Worshipping Saint Aravana.

75. *irulparandu kidandha malarthalai ulagaththu*

76. *virikadirch selvan thondrinan enna*

77. *iirenootrodu iirettaandil*

78. *perarivaalan thondrum :adar pirpaadu.*

74. In reply, like a sun with many rays

75. Appearing on a world of darkness,

76. The Wise One will incarnate after

77. A thousand six hundred and sixteen

78. Years:

Manimekalai pays homage to the Saint Aravana. He enlightens her by confirming that it is true that Buddha had incarnated and shown the Right Way. But due to the apathy and torpor of human beings, the truth had become murky. Saint Aravana states that the Buddha would re-incarnate and exorcise all the evils and ills from this world.

The Buddha who is an embodiment of Dharma had taught the world righteous living, but the people did not prosper as the way to liberation was hindered by evil ways of ignorant, sinful men. So, he would re-incarnate and appear as omnipotent, luminous and effulgent as the bright sun which dawns on a world of darkness. The million dazzling rays of the radiant sun are compared to

the magnificent and profound wisdom of the Buddha. The image is one of glory, honour and exaltation of the holy Buddha in all grandeur and resplendence. His arrival would dispel darkness just as the sun illuminates the world. Darkness is obviously a reference to the abyss of ignorance, the nadir of evil, through which only a powerful source of light and wisdom, such as the Buddha could break in.

This image vividly arises before our imagination with natural ease as Sattan skillfully uses, the figure of speech ,*upama* to create a clear mental image.

Though the shared attributes of the Buddha and the sun are not ostensibly expressed any discerning reader would perceive the implicit comparison in the simile.

Sattan, uses his favourite technique of comparing the subject with a heavenly body. In this comparison , both the *upamana* and the *upameya* are not debased but each adds luster to the other.

The term expressing similitude is *pola/like*.

18. Udayakumaran ambalam pukka kaadai/Udayakumaran comes to the assembly hall.

11. *kaadhalan viiyak kadunthuyar yeithip*

12. *podal seiyyaauyirodu pulandu*

13. *nliyirum poigai yaaduar pola*

14. *mulyeri puhuum mudugudip piranda*

15. *pathini pendir al laim.*

11. We are no chaste wives from noble houses

12. Who when their husbands die and themselves live

13. Are disgusted with their life

14. So they enter the flaming pyre as if

15. Moving into the waters of a cool lake.

Chitrapati, the grandmother is infuriated because Manimekalai had become a mendicant. She vows to the assembled group of courtesans that she would put an end to the farce into which her granddaughter was getting entangled.

She rationalizes that it is unbecoming and inappropriate of a courtesan to behave like chaste wives. As soon as death devours their husbands, chaste wives find their lives meaningless and repulsive. They decide to annihilate themselves and move into the flaming pyre graciously as if they were dipping into the waters of a cool lake.

Here, the blazing fire and the smoldering heat are compared to the cool and refreshing waters of the lake. This suggests that the woman, who ascends the pyre, believes she is joining her husband in glory, and therefore even the deadly flames are as soothing as ever to her. This it is believed can be achieved only by chaste women who remain committed and faithful to their husbands.

Whereas, a courtesan entertains many men, gives pleasure and abandons them as soon as their wealth runs dry. There is absolutely no loyalty or genuine, emotional intimacy in the relationship. It is also conventionally understood and accepted that a courtesan would gratify the carnal wants of a man, and therefore the relationship is based on needs of the flesh.

Feminists of today and most people may not however appreciate the thoughts behind this figure of speech, because chastity need not necessarily be self-destructive. However, this simile is interesting in a way in that it shows how socially sanctioned and glorified customs of ancient India, like Sati, arouses different emotions in contemporary India. This simile is also representative of the cultural norms of the Tamil land where it is considered the duty of the wife to live exclusively for the husband in order to love and serve him. This sort of single minded devotion was considered to be a laudable and honorable virtue.

Elliptical Similes with omission of common property and term expressing similitude implied in a compound.

10.mandiram koduthththa kaadai/Incantations bestowed

4. *poruvaru poongkodi boomiyir polindana*

5. *vandu thondriya manimekala deivam*

4. Holding scented flowers she descended

5. On the earth as a creeper in full bloom

The Goddess Manimekala returns to Manipallavam and venerates the Seat of Buddha. The beautiful goddess Manimekala makes her descent on the earth, holding fragrant flowers. She is compared to a creeper in full bloom. The first suggestion is one of the Goddess's feet touching the earth just as a creeper touches the soil. The other more delightful image is one where the stature and figure of the Goddess with all its well-proportioned curves is compared to that of the slender creeper. It is conventional in many Tamil poetic works to compare the perfect form of a woman to a creeper. The blooms on the creeper accentuates the beauty of the creeper and it makes it more attractive because of the fragrance exuded by the blooms. Thus, the blossoms held in the hands of the Goddess are compared to the creeper in full bloom, thereby making the visual image complete.

At a formal level though the common attributes, the term expressing similitude are all omitted, the elliptical simile is an economical ,yet potent device. It is compact and pithy, and still gives ample room for the reader's imagination. Moreover, this type of simile, is the favoured and most frequently occurring one in the epic, as it fits in with natural ease into the verses of the epic.

20. **udayakumaranai kanchanan vaalaal yerinda kaadai/Kanchanan kills Udayakumaran.**

45. viralvir puruvam ivaiyum kaanaai

45. No more mighty brow eye-brows

Manimekalai after having assumed the form of Kayasandikai, tries to dissuade the Prince Udayakumaran. She endeavours to discourage his amorous advances towards her. She sets off on her mission by pointing to an old crone and explaining how old age has withered her away. Thus, she illustrates the transience of beauty.

The eyebrows which were once like a mighty bow while the lady was in the prime of her youth had become like dried up shrimps. The comparison of the

eye-brows to the mighty bow evokes many images as well. The first and most explicit one is the marked resemblance of the well-defined eye-brows to the well-crafted, carved bow. The other is symbolic of Cupid's bow or Kama's bow and arrow, which is in fact more applicable in the Indian context. The mesmerizing curve of her eyebrows could have won the hearts of many men just as Kama's bow and arrow were instrumental in causing amour.

The other image could be that of the bow and arrow being a symbol of the archer, it signifies valour, heroism, might and masculinity. The man, the wielder of the bow and the arrow falls under the spell of the exotically beautiful and mighty bow - brows of the young damsel. Here, the might in the case of a man is associated with strength and power and in a woman with the ability to enthrall and enchant.

24. aaputhranodu adainda kaadai/Towards Aaputhran's kingdom.

8. *araver alkul arundava madavaar*

8. By ladies possessing snake-graces.

This is a description of Lord Indra's world, where he rejoiced among all the beautiful damsels in the universe. These women were not just gorgeous to look at; they were excellent in arts, music and dance. They are compared to snakes as their dance movements were so supple like the movements of a snake, which had the ability to allure. Moreover the snake when it dances to the rhythm appears beautiful and draws people towards it, in a mysteriously charming way which attracts though one is aware deep down that this thing of beauty could be venomous and therefore fatal. Similarly the beautiful women had such exquisite graces which were almost hypnotic, but they also had the potential to kill with their beauty, the attraction towards such women with snake-like graces could be suicidal as they were the femme fatale.

23. sirai vidu kaadai/Released.

66. *ponner annaiaai*

66. Lady wealth goddess

The Queen, mother of Prince Udayakumaran incarcerates Manimekalai and tortures her. Ultimately, after many failed attempts she realizes her folly and repents for her merciless behaviour. The Queen then asks for contrition to Manimekalai, the ascetic addressing her as the wealth goddess, Lakshmi, thereby according her the status superior to that of the Queen herself.

Sattan implies here in a subtle manner that despite having renounced all worldly possessions and becoming an ascetic, Manimekalai was still resplendent and shone divinely bright like the wealth Goddess, as she was rich not in an earthy, material sense but in a spiritual manner. So, he creates the situation where the Queen who is immersed in pomp and luxury bows down to an ascetic, as she ultimately realizes the worthlessness of mundane things which would turn to dust someday.

20. udayakumaranaï kaanchana vaalaal yerindha kaadai/Kanchan kills Udayakumaran.

51. *ilavidalch chevaai kaanayonii*

51. Whither the silk-cotton flower lips.

While talking of the impermanence of beauty, Manimekalai compares the well-shaped full lips of the haggard old woman in her youth to that of a silk-cotton flower. Just as the silky petals of a flower, the lips had a gloss, a sheen and softness. They were so gentle and flower like, that they would quiver when in the throes of passion, just as the petals shiver in the breeze. The dark red colour of the flower is compared to the colour of the lips. The colour red is sensual, attractive and is also a sign of passion.

Thus, Sattan compares the body parts to various elements in many of his similes. The *upamana* 'flower' is compared in other instances to the feet, to the eyes, to the hands and also to the entire form of a person. The shared attributes in the comparison are usually the fragrance, the softness, gentleness, the colour and the gloss.

Though the common properties are not mentioned it is implicit and can be unraveled tactfully.

Elliptical Simile-with omission of term expressing similitude and occurring in a compound (with the presence of a shared common property). There are sixteen instances of this type of simile in the epic-See appendix.

3. malarvanam pukka kaadai/Entry into the flower garden.

159. sendalir sevadi nilamvadu uramal

159. Her red rose feet gently treading the earth.

Sutamati and Manimekalai set out to gather flowers from the garden, which is meant for the veneration of the Lord Buddha.

Manimekalai's feet gently tread the earth as she bows at the entrance, before making her entry into the garden. Her feet are compared to the beautiful red rose. The red colour of the feet shows the tender, soft, gentle quality. It also expresses her feminine gait, with soft feather steps which had the entire lady like grace of a person of good pedigree.

The red rose quality is also characteristic of the fact that Manimekalai had until then never been exposed to hardships or even any traces of indigence. The redness of her feet is the colour of blood, good health, nutrition, happiness, optimism and also an indicator of the sheltered and pampered life that she had led.

Sattan frequently exploits images from nature and his objects of comparison are also from nature, such as in this case where the part of a body is compared to the colour of a rose.

There are also other instances of similar types of similes where the lips are compared to the red colour of coral, hands are compared to the pink colour of kantal blooms and eyes are compared to the redness of the lotus.

This is an instance of an elliptical simile, which also expresses the common attribute embedded aptly inside the compound.

22. siraisei kaadai/Imprisoned.

194. *madimarul, venkodai mannaa!ninmagan*

194. O! King with a moon white umbrella.

Prince Udayakumaran impelled by fate enters the assembly hall, hoping to captivate Manimekalai. However the Vidhyadhara Kanchanan, who is Kanchanan's husband, misunderstands the prince's motives. He misunderstands that the prince was making advances to his wife. He is also reproachful that the Prince should behave in such an unbecoming fashion, unlike his father whose reign and character were without blemish.

The king's umbrella is compared to the whiteness and the pristine quality of the moon. The image is one of a fair and just king, who is a provider, protector, one who provides shade and shelter under his umbrella, which refers to his golden reign. The moon –whiteness also refers to the spotless purity and untainted image he has as a ruler, who metes out justice to one and all in a disinterested manner.

The colour white also refers to the luminosity and radiance which reflects the glowing brilliance of the king's administrative abilities. Moreover, the colour white symbolizes peace, which is an obvious indicator of the king's governance that had ensured a good sense of peace and harmony prevailing in the land.

This simile is brought in to show that though the father had an untarnished reputation of goodness, the son would have to pay for his own deeds.

24. aputhranodu adainda kaadai/ Towards Aputhran's kingdom.

85. *sutamatikku uraiththu*

86. *valiyari kombin variundi, meinadungi*

85. She then spoke to

86. Sutamati, who shook like a wind swept creeper

Sutamati hears that the Queen has imprisoned Manimekalai, and therefore struck by remorse and panic she shivers and trembles like a creeper that is brushed by a cold draft of wind.

It is not just Sattan but many other Tamil poets traditionally compare women and their forms to creepers. One suggestion is that the slender, curvaceous female build is similar to the delicate structure of the creeper. The other is that of the slender, soft and fragile quality of a creeper needing support, as it is unable to stand on its own. This reveals the psyche of the men of former times and the social attitudes that were prevalent during the epic age. It was believed that women were too dainty to handle an emotional crises or a scene of violence. Just as in the western Victorian novels where dainty ladies swooned when they heard news of tragedy, in Tamil epics the women shivered and quivered helplessly in a rather vulnerable fashion.

Sattan uses the creeper as an object of comparison and conveys different meanings .Sometimes it is the tenderness (tender creeper/*ilangkodi*), the loveliness (lovely-creeper lady/*poongkodi*), the quality of being precious, magnificent and invaluable(*jewelled creeper/manippoong kombar*), the quality of being well-defined(*dark creeper brows/karungkodi puruvaththu*),at times it is the glory, resplendence and beauty, thereby creating a complete image of grandeur as in(*creeper in full bloom/poongkodi*).

Elliptical simile , omitting the common property and implied in a sentence.

14. paathira marbu kooriya kaadai/On the nature of the vessel.

99. *gunaththisaith thondrik kaarirul seethuk*

100. *kudaththisaich chendra jnayiru pola*

101. *manipallavaththidai mannum pitthuth*

102. *tanniyaa mannuyir thangum karuththodu*

99. As the sun rises in the east

100. Destroying East, and then sinks in the West

101. He left his body in Manipallavam

102. Desiring to be guardian of lives.

Aaputhran, with the aid of the divine vessel, the amudha surabhi performs charity. Pleased with his benevolence and moral excellence, Lord Indra comes down to the earth and offers him boons. Since Aputhran already felt a sense of fulfillment with his work of feeding the poor, he rejects the offer. The infuriated Indra sends copious rains down, and as a consequence the land was fertile and people rejoiced in the prosperity. So, Aputhran's vessel was no longer needed. Aputhran, is crest-fallen, and decides to give up his life. He chooses to be a martyr rather one who would use the vessel for his own benefits. So, he floats in the vessel in the Gomukhi Lake and draws his last breath.

This is a beautiful simile where Aputhran's life and death is compared to the glorious scene of the rising and setting sun. He appears like a life giving source, brings brightness into the life of the emaciated, by nourishing them with an incessant supply of food. Just as the sun at dawn dispels darkness, he destroys the gloomy darkness and indigence.

Just as the radiant sun, pales all over and sinks in the west, he also fades away, as his duties are no longer cherished.

However, what is worth noting is that the image of the Sun shows that though the sun sinks in the west, it rises again, and another day is born. This underlines the Buddhist belief in future births. Thus, Aputhran, the provider and guardian of lives would reappear in his next birth because death does not signify the end.

Aputhran appears in his next birth, as the King Bhumichandra's son, Punyaraja thus fulfilling the message implied in the simile. The term expressing similitude is pola/like.

15. paathirang kondu picchai pukka kaadai/Begging with the bowl.

75. *kulanaith thamarai kolumalar naapan*

76. *oruthani oongiya thirumalar pondru*

77. *ponthiru karpin maniyurai pondru*

78. *taantani yongiya tagaimayal andrao*

79. *airai nalaal aval mani immanai*

75. First, A voice announced: 'As in a lotus pool

76. shines forth the tallest and loveliest bloom

77. Among the chaste women who cause rain to fall

78. Is pure Adirai, the most gracious

Manimekalai, who had once been the object of a prince's attention, becomes a mendicant. Her heart leaps with a rare ecstasy as she is walking the path shown by her preceptor. She decides that it is proper to beg from a virtuous wife initially, then the food would multiply and she could feed the ravenously hungry masses. Just then a voice announces that she should receive food from none other than Adirai; who stands as the epitome of chastity. This was uttered by Kayasandikai who herself was inflicted by severe pangs of endless hunger.

The immaculate Adirai is compared to a flower which is the tallest and loveliest in the lotus pool. This creates the image of the flawless Adirai shining forth as a symbol of charity, towering over all other women in the world. This appears hyperbolic but Sattan emphasizes and celebrates the virtue of chastity, and Adirai almost personifies it.

It is generally believed that an innocent person, inclined to doing only good deeds has the effect of causing rainfall, as the Gods would be pleased with their sinless lives, and therefore bless the earth with cool showers. Similarly Adirai because of her moral excellence is considered the most gracious.

The poet very often compares women to flowers. The symbol of the lotus is used as it has an association with Buddha, moreover it a flower which is indigenous to the nation as well. The shared property which the tallest and loveliest bloom shares with Adirai, the most gracious is the quality of being unrivalled and unsurpassed, which is clearly understood as it is implied in the sentence.

3. malarvanam pukka kaadai/Entry into the flower garden.

3. *maamalar naatram pon, manimekalaikku*

4. *yedu nikalchi yethirndulla tathalin*

5. *venthuyir idumbai sevyaham vedupak*

6. *kaadal nenjam kalangik kaarigai*
3. Manimekalai's fate being near
4. Even as the scent when the flower
5. Is ready to bloom, her soul was aflame
6. When she heard of the terrible sorrow
7. That had stung her parents.

As Madhavi recalls and narrates the tragic past of the unfortunate death of Kovalan and Kannagi, Manimekalai is moved to tears. Her loving, tender heart melts away in pain, and her soul was aflame in grief.

This is a crucial turning point in the epic, as Sattan uses this simile to herald Manimekalai's calling in the future.

The fragrance exuded from a beautiful flower that is ready to bloom, shows that the flower when completely blossomed would appear exquisitely attractive and redolent. In a similar way, the change of heart and her emotional state, reflects her soul, and paints a picture of her as being an individual of lofty ideals. It is also symbolically illustrated, that she is ready to be initiated onto a path which transcends all worldly pleasures.

Manimekalai is compared to a lovely flower and the transformation taking place in the flower that is ready to bloom is subtly compared to the spiritual transformation that is taking place in her soul. The tears of her grieved soul are compared to the sweet smell of the bloom.

This is an interesting simile, which shows the transcending experience which an individual experiences. It depicts how Manimekalai gradually shifts from an earthly life on a mundane plane to the life of a Buddhist nun on a spiritual plane. Sattan keeps the suspense alive, by hinting that a change for the better is imminent, by using the *upamana* of a blooming flower exuding fragrance. As one moves towards the later sections of the epic, the gravity of this simile as foretelling the future course of events becomes evident.

The term expressing similitude is *pondru*/like.

10. mandiram koduththa kaadai/Incantations bestowed.

10. sudarvalak kaattruth thadumaaru kaalaiyor

11. ilavala jnayiru thondriyaadu yena

12. niyo thondrinaai.

10. Where no lamp shone to show the dharmic way

11. You were born as the lovely morning sun.

The goddess Manimekala makes her descent to the earth and pays homage to the miraculous seat of Buddha. She regrets that humans had lost their dharmic sense as they refused to pay heed to righteous advice, and had sunken into a pitiable state of debauchery. She rejoices, however that the Buddha appeared as a Saviour to obtain salvation for mortals in order to inject goodness amidst moral poverty.

So the Buddha is compared to the resplendent morning sun, spreading its thousands of rays, illuminating the world with the light of wisdom and goodness, thereby dispelling the darkness of ignorance. Mankind had sunk into the nadir of depravity that even a saint, was not born to show the right path. The Buddha appears formidable and unsurpassed in glory, brilliance and power like the sun to enlighten the world.

The common property of light dispelling darkness, and the Buddha dispelling ignorance, and spiritual aridity is not overtly explained, but the power of the comparisons used is such that the message reaches the reader who does not have to strain himself to comprehend the hidden meaning.

Sattan is very skillful in the strategic use of these figures of speech .He employs these devices so that they are not just ornamental but also act as modes of perception and helps in deepening our understanding of profound religious or spiritual ideas in a lucid manner. Again, he uses this simile to preach Buddhism and to exalt the glory and grandeur of Buddha as one who brings redemption for humanity. The term expressing similitude is yena/just as.

12. aravanarth tholudha kaadai/Worshipping Saint Aravana.

51. *aadung koothiyaraniyap pola*

52. *vettror aniyodu vandiro?vena*

50. Have you come as dancers do?

51. In a different dress

Manimekalai along with Madhavi and Sutamati meets Saint Aravana at his retreat. He recounts the story of their past births. He tells them that he had met Duhsaya who lamented that his wives, Tarai and Veerai, had died. Now the ladies had taken another birth, and come to him as Madhavi and Sutamati, like dancers who have changed their dress.

Here, the ladies are compared to dancers who change their dress, as they are in different roles and different attires in their present birth. However, the enlightened sage with his wisdom about the cycle of births recognizes them instantly.

Sattan frequently emphasizes the idea of rebirth, as the belief is deep rooted in Buddhism. Throughout the narrative, the idea of rebirth is expressed through many comparisons: the rising and setting sun, waking and sleeping etc. All these are images of birth and death, which continues as a cycle, and which conveys the message that death does not signify the end. The underlying message in all these similes is that the Buddha would also re-incarnate and bring salvation for the world.

18. udaykumaran ambalam pukka kaadai/Udayakumaran comes to the assembly hall.

18. *paanmagan paatulip paaduim paanmayil*

19. *yaalinam polum iyalpinam andriyum*

20. *narunda thundoo nayanil kaali*

21. *varumbooth thurakkum vandoo polgavam*

22. *vinaiyolikaalith thiruvil selvi*

23. *anaiyemaagi aadavarth thurapom*

17. We are like a lute that is not destroyed

18. When the lutanist dies, also, like the
19. Bee which moves away from the bloom
20. Emptied of honey as in times of loss
21. The goddess of wealth abandons humans
22. We give up men when they are of no worth.

Chitrapati is incensed when she hears the news that Manimekalai is taking the path of an ascetic. She takes pride in the fact that both Madhavi and Manimekalai are not gorgeous courtesans, but also sophisticated, cultured, refined in finer arts, music and dance. So she considers it an insult when she is informed that her granddaughter, Manimekalai, the paradigm of beauty, had decided to accept the garments of a nun.

Chitrapati's lovely face is fringed with small beads of sweat. She dreads the idea of becoming the laughing stock among the common man, because they would find it incredible that a courtesan is joining a nunnery.

She compares the life-style of a courtesan to that of a lute, which does not get destroyed, even though the lutanist dies. Here, the suggestion is that the courtesan can never become the personal possession of any master or man eternally. Just as a lute would continue to produce music, when the strings are plucked by another lutanist, so would a courtesan give pleasure, when she is in the arms of another man.

The second comparison is to a bee which moves away from the bloom devoid of honey. The courtesan's behaviour is similar to that of a bee, she moves away from one man to another as soon as she realizes that his coffer is empty. Here, the courtesan is compared to a bee, the man to the bloom, and honey to money.

The third comparison is to the Goddess of wealth, Lakshmi. Whenever an individual is steeped in indigence, it is said that the Goddess has shunned him and moved to another household. This implies that the halcyon days are over and days of adversity had come to stay. Chitrapati says that the courtesan is similar to

the Goddess of Wealth in that the dancers give up men who materially possess nothing. The comparison which is made to the Goddess actually does not degrade the goddess of wealth, but rather serves in ennobling the courtesan which is a skilful way of justifying her nature, thus serving Chitrapati's purpose.

The common property which underlies all these comparisons is that a courtesan has no loyalty and never gets emotionally attached to the man she entertains. She understands the professional norms and abandons him as soon as she has sponged his wealth from him. This has been socially sanctioned in ancient India, and devdasis/courtesans existed as an accepted institution. Through these comparisons Chitrapati clearly defines the role and nature of a courtesan. Not surprisingly, she is crestfallen, that two women of her own blood should go against established conventions.

Observing the simile at a formal level, as Mammata says this is a : “*malopama*, string simile, where a single object is compared to several objects...one in which there is a common property”.¹⁰

However, the *malopama* can in any case be subsumed under the elliptical simile, omitting the common property, implied in a sentence.

¹⁰ Mammata, *Kavyaparakasha*, translated by Ganganath Jha, Chapter 10, pg.363-364.

Chapter 3

ANALYSIS OF THE METAPHORS IN MANIMEKALAI

A metaphor is defined as: “A condensed verbal relation in which an idea, image or symbol may, by the presence of one or more other ideas, images or symbols, be enhanced in vividness, complexity or breadth of implication”¹

The nature and definition of metaphorical terms and of the relations between them have been both matters for considerable speculation and disagreement. The metaphorical relation has been described in many ways as comparison, contrast, analogy, similarity, juxtaposition, identity, tension, collision, fusion etc. and there are different views regarding the nature, operation and function of metaphor in poetry. Because of this, any specific definition of metaphor is not entirely accepted, whether it is in the western tradition or Indian tradition. For instance another definition of the metaphor generally accepted universally would be: “In a metaphor, a word or expression, which is literal usage, denotes one kind of thing or action, without asserting a comparison”.²

In recent years the view has gathered weight that the metaphor is the radical process in which internal relationships which are peculiar to poetry are achieved. Some critics maintain that the metaphor marks off the poetic mode of vision and utterance from the logical or the discursive mode.

The traditional view however is that metaphor is a figure of speech, involving two occasionally (four) operative terms, and that it is used for adornment, liveliness, elucidation or agreeable mystification.

The view of metaphor in the western tradition as being a trope, can be considered first. For this view, Aristotle is taken to be the prime authority. Aristotle’s doctrine of metaphor was far more comprehensive than any other

¹ Alex Preminger, *Princeton encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*.

² M.H.Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms* pg.67.

thinkers. He had also said that “ the greatest thing by far is to be master of metaphor. It is the one thing that it cannot be learnt from others; and it also a sign of genius, since a good metaphor implies an intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilars.”(Poetics 1458b, cf Rhetoric 1405).

Usually, grammarians have insisted upon the harmony or congruity of metaphorical elements and upon a massive of visual clarity. Hence, there is a traditional condemnation of “mixed metaphors” and the linking of the metaphor to a descriptive or expository function. However, the grammarians who noticed the logical incongruity between the elements in metaphor, have also suggested that the metaphor not only transfers and alters meaning but may also pervert it.

The conventionally accepted notion regarding metaphor is that it is a “trope of transference in which an unknown or imperfectly known is clarified, defined, described in terms of a known”.³

In the English literary criticism, the metaphor did not occupy a high status, though it was basically studied in the context of cognitive processes. For instance, Addison , in the eighteenth century “in discussing both imagination and wit, takes recourse to the concept of resemblance. Observation of resemblance between art and nature is part of imagination: the observation of resemblance, which is internal to a poetic composition –between two parts, for example is a part of wit. He makes a distinction between wit and judgement –wit is synthesizing but judgement is analytical”⁴. Thus, it is rather conspicuous that thinkers of the Age of Reason were suspicious of the metaphor as they distrusted inference and speculations. English Criticism is indebted largely to I.A.Richards who not only extensively discusses the framework of the metaphor but also describes it as “the supreme agent by which disparate and hitherto unconnected things are brought together in poetry”.⁵The western philosophers and poetics have considered all language and all thought as being metaphoric which is quite

³ Alex Preminger, *Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*.

⁴ Kapil Kapoor, *Metaphor in Sanskrit and English Criticism*, pg.30.

⁵ I.A.Richards. *Principles of Literary Criticism*(New York,1929)pg.240

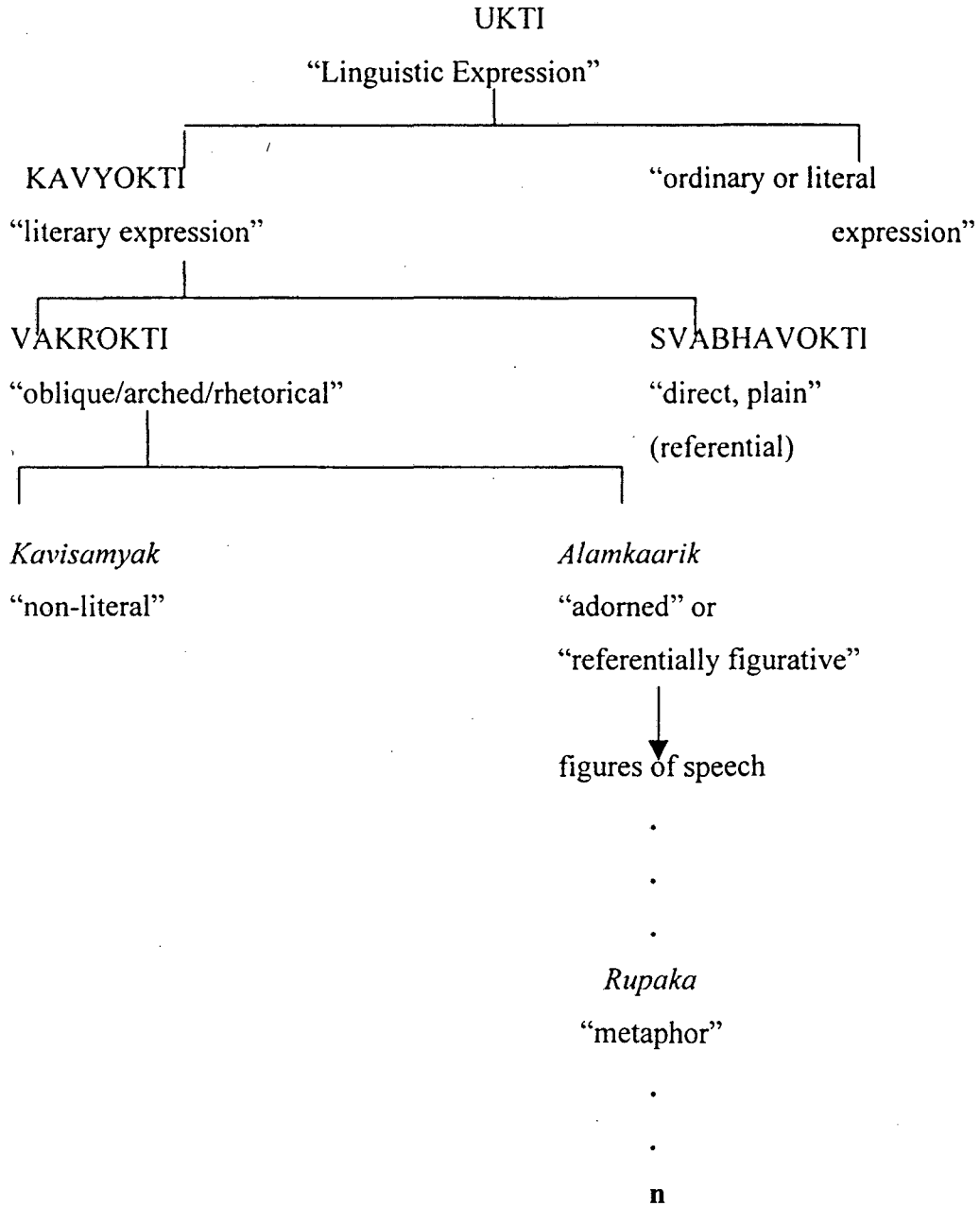
different from the views of the Indian poetics on the metaphor. "Metaphor, in the Indian tradition, constitutes a twilight zone between valid perceptual knowledge and illusion:

- a) This rope is like snake. (Perceived similarity-the basis of a simile)
- b) This rope is a snake .(inferred similarity-the basis of a metaphor)
- c) This is a snake. (said of a rope, with full conviction- invalid cognition , basis of illusory knowledge).

In a metaphor, inferential validity contradicts perceptual knowledge, with the proviso that for the metaphor to succeed, perceptual knowledge does not supersede the inferential cognition. But the tension between perception and inference is there –and in the Indian scale of epistemologies perception ranks above inference in all systems of philosophy”⁶

In the literary theory of literary expression, as it has been discussed in Chapter 2, it is generally believed that poets use various devices of adornment, in order to create beauty and to accentuate the aesthetic effects. Rupaka or metaphor is considered to be one such device. Kapoor presents the status of metaphor in general theory of literary representation in the following manner:

⁶ Kapil Kapoor, *Metaphor in Sanskrit and literary Criticism*, pg.31.



In the Indian tradition, the elements which comprise the simile are also present in the metaphor such as *upameya*-“the subject compared” and *upamana*-“the object of comparison” .So there is obviously the function of comparison but, in a metaphor the differences between the *upamana* and the *upameya* are negated. So, “the *upameya* and the *upamana* are brought together on the basis of any of these five relations: -

- 1) *sadrasya* – ‘apparent similarity’
- 2) *gunasamyā* – ‘equivalence of attributes’
- 3) *tadrūpya –pratīti* – ‘perception of sameness of form’
- 4) *sambhandha* – ‘qualified- qualifier configuration’
- 5) *kavya-karana bhav-*‘cause-effect’ homogeneity”⁷

The poet Sattan in the epic Manimekalai, uses relatively lesser metaphors as compared to the similes. This is a pan-Indian phenomenon as it is generally observed that Indian poetry and works of literature abounds in similes, whereas the metaphor has been a preoccupation with the west. However, the metaphor is also a powerful figurative device, which deepens one’s understanding of a context, with natural ease. It not only serves as an ornamental device but also serves as a mode of perceiving of the world as portrayed by the poet through the medium of literature. I have critically examined the metaphors in the epic Manimekalai, using Mammata’s model :-

Mammata’s definition of *rupaka* is: “When there is non-difference between the ‘object compared to’ and the ‘object compared’ it is Metaphor. What is meant by ‘non-difference’ is that idea of ‘non-difference’ which is based upon extreme likeness between two objects, whose difference is not entirely concealed”.

He classifies them into various kinds: -

1. “In cases where what is imposed is directly expressed, it is Metaphor Universal. In cases where, as the objects imposed upon, so the objects imposed also, are directly mentioned by words, it is Metaphor which is called ‘universal’-in the sense that the whole (*samasta*) of what is imposed (*nyasta*) is its expressed objective (*visaya*).
2. In a case where what is imposed is directly expressed as well as indirectly implied it is the Partial Metaphor.

⁷ Kapil Kapoor, *Metaphor in Sanskrit and Literary Criticism*, pg .33

Where some of the imposed factors are directly expressed by words, while some are cognized only through the force of the meanings of the words,-it is 'partial', 'ekadeshavivvarti'-so called , because of its functioning directly (*vivartana*) in one part (*ekadesa*).

The two kinds of metaphors described above are equipped with all its constituents,(i.e. in these what is imposed is not only the object compared to, by itself alone, but along with all its accessories.)

3. That which is devoid of all its constituents is the Pure Metaphor.

(When the object alone by itself is imposed)

Just as in the String simile so in the string metaphor also, the character of several objects is imposed on a single object.

4. Where as a means of the desired imposition, there is imposition of something else; it is the consequential metaphor: -

Where the expressive word is either 'coalescent' (in pun) or 'distinct'.

An Analysis of the Metaphors in Manimekalai:-

String Metaphor:

4. pallikarai pukka kaadai/Entry into the marble room.

113. *vinaiyin vandadu vinaikuvalai vaayadu.*

114. *punaivan niingir oulaarpurath thiduvadu*

115. *moopuvili vudaiyadu:thiipini irukkai*

116. *pattrin pattridam,kuutrak kolkalam*

117. *outtradang karavir settrach seekai*

118. *avalk kawai kaiyaaru alungal*

119. *thavalaa uland thanpaal udaiyadu*

120. *makkal yaakai idhuvana unarndhu*

121. *mikkoi!edanai puramari paarai."*

113.This body is caused by previous deeds

- 114. It is a field for further karma
- 115. Sans décor, mere meat to be cast off
- 116. Subject to age; receptacle of ills;
- 117. Cause of desire; container of misdeeds;
- 118. A pit that hides the snake known as anger
- 119. Within it is the heart tossed by sorrow
- 120. Fear, helplessness and endless pain
- 121. Knowing this look close at the inner truth.

Sutamati points to the heart-warming sights of nature in the garden to Manimekalai. The garden is dense with foliage and trees. Birds, bees and beasts sport themselves in gay abandon. The royal elephant Kalavegan, is however in a mad frenzy and the Prince Udayakumaran subdues the animal. The prince pierces through the marble room and scans over the place endeavouring to locate Manimekalai. Just then his eyes fall on Sutamati, therefore he inquires her the reason behind Manimekalai's retreat in this flower garden.

He described the beauty of Manimekalai in an explicit manner, which reflects his intense desire and physical attraction for her. He is stirred and excited by her rounded, fully developed breasts, the childish prattle, which has undergone a transformation and had become mature and mellifluous like the voice of a young maiden and her pristine pearly white teeth. He is acutely aware that her large expressive eyes transcribed the message of Cupid's bow, as it tugged at his heart.

Sutamati is heavily distressed when she realizes that the Prince entertains a flaming passion for Manimekalai. Therefore, she dissuades him from making amorous advances and indulging in pursuits of the flesh. This she does by speaking on the perishable nature of the body.

Here, Sattan brings in a string metaphor. The body is compared to a battlefield for further karma. The body is also a consequence of previous deeds. Here, the Buddhist belief in karma, and the circumstances in which one has one's present birth as being the outcome of deeds committed in one's past birth is

emphasized. As soon as the life passes out of the body, it has no status other than being mere flesh, which would give off a foul odour. Then man is debased to the state of meat, which is worth being cast off or burnt. The body is subject to age, senility and along with it all the signs of withering thereby illustrating the ephemeral nature of beauty. It is a receptacle of ills, maladies and infirmities. It is the root of desire, as the voluptuous body is extremely suggestive, erotic and the cause of arousing earthy and licentious feelings. It is the container of misdeeds, malice, mischief, abomination and cruelty. It is also a deep pit, an abyss that conceals venomous snake-like anger, fear, vulnerability, insecurity, and insufferable pain.

Sattan thus imposes upon the single object body, the character of several objects such as a pit containing a snake, a receptacle of ills, a container of misdeeds, a battlefield for further karma, when one has to make a choice between truth and evil. This is a magnificent string metaphor which in a lucid manner speaks of the fleeting nature of the flesh and how humans are susceptible to be sensually allured and fascinated by the body. But, the lines spoken by Sutamati clearly conveys the Buddhist message of desire being the root cause of all evil and therefore that the only way to obtain salvation would be to renounce the carnal desires and attachment to worldly possessions.

The Metaphor Universal:

5. Manimekala deivam vandu thondriya kaadai/The manifestation of Goddess Manimekalai.

109. *pulavarai irandha pukaarenum puungkodi*
110. *panmalar siranda naneer agalip*
111. *pulloli siranda thellarich silambadi*
112. *jnayil inji nagaimani mgalai*
113. *vaayil marung kiyarra vaanpanaith tholi*
114. *darunilai vachiram, enaviru kottam*
115. *ediredir oongiya kadirila vanmulai,*
116. *aarpunai ventharkkup peeralavu iyattri*

117. *uuli enni niidunin rongiya*
 118. *oruperung koyil thirumuga vaatti.*-
 109. Pukar's damsel's fame is beyond our ken.
 110. The moat with pure water and blooms , her feet.
 111. The song of birds, her anklets sweet music.
 112. Her waist band is the fort well –bastioned
 113. The entrance gates are her lofty shoulders
 114. Twin temples of the Tree and Thunderbolt
 115. Face each other as healthy youthful breasts
 116. Her auspicious face is Chola's palace
 117. Immensely proportioned to last aeons.
 118. And well- known in fame all over the world.

As soon as the Prince leaves the marble room in the garden, after vowing to find out other means of getting at Manimekalai, she emerges out of her hiding place. She confesses that despite the Prince's referring to her as a courtesan, her heart had leaped and reached out to him. She is perturbed by such an unsettling desire, and tries to extinguish it. Just then Goddess Manimekala, the family deity of Kovalan comes into the garden to worship Buddha's feet.

At this marvelous moment, when a divine creature makes her descent on earth, Sattan vividly describes the city by comparing it to a youthful maiden. In the process, he negates the differences between the object compared (city) and the object compared to (the youthful maiden). The moat of Pukar city with pure water and blooms are compared to the maiden's feet. The chirping and twittering songs of the birds of the city are compared to the twinkling sounds of sweet music emanating from the anklets of the maiden. The well-bastioned fort is compared to the waistband of the lady which not only adds to the beauty and has an ornamental value but also has a protective function. The entrance gates are compared to her lofty shoulders. The twin temples of the Tree and the Thunderbolt are compared to the healthy and proud uprising breasts of the youthful maiden. The palace of the Chola King, great in glory and grandeur is compared to her auspicious and well-proportioned face.

The whole image of the woman and the city, illustrates how the well planned city matches completely with the well –proportioned body of the woman.

Sattan employs his favourite ploy of using parts of the body to compare it to the portions of the city. He starts the description downwards from the feet, to the ankle, waist, shoulders, breasts and finally the face.

This is an instance of a Metaphor Universal i.e. in these what is imposed is not only the object compared to, by itself alone, but along with all its accessories, as in the property of chimes of music, loftiness, and good proportion are all mentioned in the metaphor. Sattan skillfully uses metaphor as a device, to create the image of an immensely well-proportioned city, that would last aeons, and be celebrated in fame all over the world.

119. *gunathisai marungin naalmudir madiyum*

120. *kudathisai marungin sendruviil kadirum*

121. *vellivenn thotoru pottrodaaga*

122. *ellaru thirumugam poliyap peidalum.*

119. While the full moon in the east and

120. The red sun that speeds to dip in the west

121. They are ear-drops made of silver and gold

122. Gather brilliance to her faultless face.

This is an extension/continuation of the previous metaphor. However, Sattan uses his favourite ploy of employing celestial bodies such as the sun and the moon as the objects of comparison. The full moon in the East and the red sun speeding to dip in the west are compared to the precious metals of silver and gold. They serve as the ear-drops on either side of the impeccably beautiful face of the city. The palace of the Chola king is therefore compared to the flawless face of the maiden, with the full moon and sun dangling on either of her ears as silver and gold ear-drops.

Sattan in this metaphor in fact exploits from all the three of his preferred domains-The parts of the body (face), celestial bodies (sun and moon) and precious metals (gold and silver).

6. sakkaravaalak kottam uraitha kaadai/The Temple of the Wheel.

97. *davathurai maakal, migaperunj chelvar*

98. *iittrilam pendir, aattraap paalagar*

99. *mudiyor, ennaan:ilaiyor ennaan:*

100. *koduntholilaalan kondranan kuvippa:ivv*

101. *valavaaich chudalai thinnak kandum*

102. *kaliperunj selvak kallaattu ayarnthu*

103. *mikka nallaram virumbaadu vaalaum*

104. *makkalir sirandha madavor undo?*

97. Death makes no distinction between God-men

98. The rich, the post-natal young women, children

99. He spares neither the aged, nor the young

100. The terrible reaper kills large numbers

101. Even after watching the fire-mouth

102. Of the cremation-ground gobbling people

103. Drink and dance and live not the Dharmic life

104. Are there greater fools than these same mortals.

As soon as Goddess Manimekala is informed of the Prince's designs the Goddess suggests that Manimekalai and Sutamati should hide themselves in the Temple of the Wheel. She also narrates the story of Gotamai whose son had died of fright while walking across the burning ghat. She goes on to elucidate one's helplessness against the finality of death.

Here, she talks of death and the indiscriminate impartial manner in which it devours all mortals. It strikes one and all, the religious, the immaculate, the affluent, the young and the old. The axe falls on all human beings some day or the other in an unpredictable manner very often. So, death is the terrible reaper, which sickles away human beings mercilessly and ruthlessly, just as one reaps away sheaves of grain when the time is ready for harvest. The cremation ground where dead bodies are burnt is compared to a fire mouth that devours, gobbles and wolfs down mortals ravenously. The image is one of a mouth swallowing mortals voraciously.

Sattan uses this morbid image to reinforce the impermanence of life. He mocks the folly of humans who drink, dance and make merry in the wine of lust, completely oblivious of the immanence of death. Therefore, he advises them to follow the dharmic life, as that would be the rightful path that would leave them to salvation.

11. paathiram pettra kaadai/Receiving the vessel.

76. *kudippirappu alikkum;villupam kollum*

77. *pidiththa kalvip perumpunai viduum;*

78. *naanani kaaliyam;maaneni sithaikkum*

79. *poonmulai maadarodu purangkadai niruthum*

80. *pasippini ennum paavi.*

76. The evil that hunger is, destroys noble birth

77. It kills the good nature of those high-born

78. Makes them shameless and strangers to beauty

79. Drags them to the streets along with their wives.

Dipatilakai, the Goddess guarding Manipallavam appears before Manimekalai and learns about her. She tells Manimekalai that after Aaputhran placed the amudha surabhi in the Gomukhi Lake, the vessel had been surfacing on the birth anniversary of the Buddha. She says that the time has come once again, and that Manimekalai was the chosen one. The maid receives the divine vessel and glorifies Lord Buddha. Dipatilakai speaks of the evils of hunger and asks the maid to relieve the hungry of their dire distress.

Here, Sattan equates hunger to evil, which destroys the blue-blooded, exalted and high-born. It affects the rich and the poor, and even kills the good nature of those who are of good pedigree. Such are the flames of hunger, that humans would stoop to the level of beasts in order to claim their major share of food. Hunger divorces them from the staff of knowledge, as the fool and the intellectual when starved for days would be so low in spirit so as to bend or crawl or even makes compromises of any sort. Hunger makes people shameless and strangers to beauty. Extreme state of ravenousness blinds the eye and therefore

humans have no time to appreciate or indulge their aesthetic sensibilities. Hunger destroys households and families, as it also signifies poverty, famine and destitution.

Therefore Goddess Dipatilakai says that only the virtuous can cause destruction of hunger, and save the helpless. Sattan uses this metaphor to underline the dominant sentiment of mercy and compassion which is the message of the Buddha.

18. udayakumaran ambalam pukka kaadai/Udayakumaran comes to the assembly hall.

25. *madhavi iindra manimekali valli*

26. *poodavil selvi porundudal virumbiya*

27. *udayakumaranum ulakaal vandin*

28. *skdaiyaa ullam sevidin arundhak*

25. The creeper Manimekalai born to

26. Madhavi has now bloomed: a royal bee

27. Udayakumaran wants to join

28. That bloom with a single mind.

Since, Manimekalai has decided to wear the weeds of a nun, Chitrapati, her grandmother is infuriated. She insinuates Udayakumaran and pleads to him to not be a passive spectator. She waxes eloquent on the unfaithful nature of courtesans and rationalizes that it is only natural for them to abandon a man after sponging away the wealth from him. She is unable to digest the fact that Manimekalai and Madhavi have not conformed to the norms which a courtesan is expected to adhere.

Therefore, she says that the beautiful and delicate structured Manimekalai, born to the exquisite Madhavi had reached the prime of her youth.

55. *ariduperir sirappir kurugukaru uyirra*

56. *oruthaniyongiya thirumanik kaanji*

57. *paadalsaal sirappir bharadath thongiya*

58. *naadagam virumba nannalam kavinik*

59. *kaamar selvik kadimalar avilndadu*

60. *udayakumranenum oruvanduniiiya*

61. *viraivodu vanden.*

55. The swaying creeper has given birth

56. To a priceless jewel a waist girdle

57. Ripe and lovely, that jewel is welcomed

58. By the art of dancing in our land

59. Rich with music and poetic lore

60. To help the bee, Udayakumaran.

Chitrapati, the grandmother is apprehensive that she would become the laughing stock of the common man. So, she approaches the Prince Udayakumaran.

The Prince Udayakumaran describes Madhavi a swaying creeper. He compares the supple dance movements of Madhavi to the slender-structured creeper, which sways in the wind. He says that the swaying creeper has given birth to a priceless jewel, a waist-girdle, which is Manimekalai. Here, this metaphor shows the excess of love that he had for the protagonist, and also his desire to possess her as one would possess an invaluable possession. He is titillated, and stimulated at the ripe and lovely form of Manimekalai. Therefore, he makes an advance to her, as one would make to a courtesan. He welcomes the gorgeous Manimekalai to his kingdom which was rich with music, dance and poetic lore, in order to help him satisfy his sensual appetite. Prince Udayakumaran considers it his privilege by virtue of his position as a king to summon a courtesan to her profession. Here, Sattan calls Udayakumaran, the bee intentionally so as to create the image of a bee deflowering the bloom Manimekalai.

134. *keetadu moliven, kevi yaalaril*

135. *thootta seviyai nii yaaguvai yamenin-*

136. *piraththalam muuthalum pinipattirangalum*

137. *irathathalum udaayadu: idumbaikkolkalam*

138. *makkal yaakai iduvena unarndu*
 139. *mikka nallaram virumbudal purinden;*
 140. *mandamar murukkum kalirinai yaarkku*
 141. *pendir koorum perari vundo?*
 134. If you would listen to discerning words
 135. I shall certainly answer your doubts
 136. Birth, ageing, torture by sickness
 137. Death; such is the holder vase of sorrows
 138. Having learnt the nature of this body
 139. I decided to walk the path of dharma.

Manimekalai is enlightened that the Prince Udayakumaran was her husband Rahulan in his previous birth. Though, he speaks of her as being a licentious woman, her heart unconditionally goes out to him. So, she suffers from moral pangs as she had rejected him. She has qualms about speaking ill of him and therefore she trembles in fear.

The Goddess comforts her and advises her to pay heed to her discerning words. She speaks of the nature of the body, which serves as a holder or receptacle of sorrows, birth, senility, and torture by sickness and death. The body is perishable and susceptible to temptations of the flesh. Therefore, she advises her to be determined and willed towards right action.

Moreover, she describes Udayakumaran as an animal in all ferocity, as he destroys enemies as a pachyderm kills unscrupulously. Thus, she suggests that wisdom cannot be imparted to him.

19. siraikkottam araikottam aakiya kaadai/Prison becomes refuge.

17. *pryarvon thannai*
 18. *agalvaai jnalam aarirul unnap*
 19. *palara sottip,panayelund taarppa*
 20. *niila yaanai melor indrik*
 21. *kaamar sengai niiti, vandupadu*

22. *puunuuru kadaam serkki, kaalkilarndu.*
17. The black elephant, night followed him
18. Keeperless, it's forehead the evening,
19. The crescent moon its tusk, desire its trunk,
20. Flower scent its ichor, wind-swift , fearsome
21. Evening drums sounding its triumphant march
22. As it had defeated the king of day
23. And makes the enormous earth food for night.

Prince Udayakumaran in his lust frenzy vows in the presence of the Goddess that he will not leave the place until he spots Manimekalai. The Pillar statue reprimands him for desecrating the divine place. The disturbed Prince returns to his palace promising to himself that he would unravel the mystery later on. As he departs from the palace, night slowly sets in. Sattan brilliantly uses a metaphor to describe the scene of the dusky evening and the night enveloping the land. He compares the pitch darkness of night to a huge, black elephant. Since evening precedes night, the forehead of the elephant is compared to the evening followed by the formidable night, which spreads all over, as it has no keeper to control it. The crescent moon in all its brilliance and whiteness, makes its appearance in the night. The celestial body moon is tactfully compared to the ivory coloured tusk. Moreover, the shape of the crescent is compared to the crescent shape of the tusk. As soon as the sun sets, many a man thinks of his paramour and the desire to spend a night of pleasure looms large in his mind. So, the poet associates desire with night, and compares it to the trunk of an elephant. The trunk could also be symbolic of the phallus. Just as the jasmine flower gives off a wonderful aroma in the night causing a titillating feeling, the blood which like the ichor, the fluid, which flows in the veins of the animal, is scented. The poet once again brings in the image of desire, and passions when he mentions the scent of flowers, as they arouse stimulate and accentuate desires.

Night appears overwhelming fearsome, and wind swift and devours the enormous earth making it its food. Thus, the poet creates the image of night swallowing earth in its darkness, metaphorically making earth its food.

Sattan excels in his use of metaphors and is at his poetic best, where he refers to the brilliant, blazing sun as the King of Day. Just as every empire has its rise and fall, the sun, is also defeated by the triumphant night.

Sattan is a little more creative than usual and gives an edge to his favourite ploy of comparing parts of the human body to objects. In this metaphor, he compares the parts of the body of an animal, such as a huge elephant to the dark night.

This is a universal metaphor, as the object imposed upon, the object imposed and its accessories are all directly mentioned. By employing such a metaphor Sattan paints a picture in such a poetic manner that no reader can escape being enthralled by his wonderful sense of imagination and his adroit handling of the device, *rupaka*.

Pure Metaphor:

11. paathiram pattra kaadai/Receiving the vessel.

23. *ariviyang kilavon adiyinai yaagiya*

24. *piravi ennum perungkadal viduum*

25. *aravi naavaai aanguladu aadalin.*

23. The feet of the Lord who stood by Dharma

24. Are impressed on its top and appear

25. As a boat to help us cross the sea of birth.

The Goddess Dipatilakai guarding Manipallavam appears before Manimekalai and learns about her. She herself has come recently from Ratnadvipa after worshipping the feet of Buddha impressed upon the Samanoli Mountain.

She exalts the feet of Buddha, which she had just then venerated. The Goddess compares the feet to a boat, which helps one to cross the sea of birth. The genesis or birth is compared to a vast expanse of the gushing sea. In a metaphorical sense, what Sattan means is that all mortals are subject to trials,

tribulations, tornadoes and hassles, just as a sea rises tumultuously and subsides calmly. If one does not follow a sinless path, one is susceptible to drowning into moral debauchery, as one sinks in the deep sea.

So, the enlightened, wise and Holy Buddha appears, as a life-saving boat helping us to float across to our destination which is *nirvana*/salvation.

This is a pure metaphor because though the object imposed and object imposed upon are mentioned, it is devoid of other constituents and shared properties, which are usually implied from the context or the force of the meaning of the words.

Such a pure metaphor appears to be too thrifty and precise however, it gives ample scope for interpretation and unlimited imagination. These figures of speech could create wonderful figures of thought, which are not just profound and meaningful, but serve as powerful devices in communicating religious convictions without sounding didactic.

18. ambalam pukka kaadai/Udayakumaran comes to the Assembly hall.

103. *naadavar kaana, nalarangu eri,*

104. *aadalum, paadalum, alagum kaattich*

105. *suruppunaan karuppuvil aruppukanatyh thuuva*

106. *serukayal nenungkan surukkuvalai paduthuk*

107. *kandor nenjum kondagam puukup*

108. *pander moliyir payanpala vaanagi*

109. *vandin thurakkaum kondin magaliraip*

110. *paanmaiyr pinithup padittrurai adakudal*

111. *konmurai yandro, kumararkku?endralum-*

103. In public view are dancing women,

104. Spread their music, dance and beauty on the stage

105. Send forth the net of their long-lashed eyes

106. Into the hearts of men who look on

107. To help Cupid work with his bow and arrow

108. And with sweet words take away their riches

109. Leaving them bee-like, when they are poor.

The Grandmother Chitrapati is infuriated that Manimekalai should enter a Buddhist nunnery and wear the weeds of a nun. So she elucidated the nature of a courtesan who entices and allures men and deserts them after stripping off their wealth. She proclaims that it is unbecoming of Madhavi and Manimekalai to behave as if they were virtuous and chaste wives, who were faithful and loyal to a single man.

The courtesan is a woman who dances and displays her beauty in public view. Sattan, metaphorically states that the courtesans use that 'net of their long-lashed eyes' into the hearts of men. Just as a net is thrown into the sea or set in a jungle as a trap for an animal, so does the courtesan with her long attractive lashes mesmerizes the man and traps him emotionally. Then, love takes over, as Cupid works with his bow and arrow. The man completely becomes a slave to the seductress who gradually with sweet nothings and suave manners sucks him away to indigence. Therefore, the relationship is a rather parasitic one, with the courtesan being the treacherous parasite, and the fatally attracted man being the willing host.

22. sirai kaadai/Imprisoned

19. *indray yalla; ippadhi marungil*

20. *kandriya kaanmak klla tayarndu*

21. *pathinip pendir paarsen ranugiyum*

22. *nattravap pendir pinnulam pookkiyum*

20. This city has seen much self-destruction

21. By many who had drunk the wine of lust.

The Vidhyadhara, Kanchanan, slaughters the Prince Udayakumaran. The ascetics learn from Manimekalai about what had happened and inform the king, after preparing him for the bad news by pointing out the example of his ancestor Kagandhan who killed his own son for doing evil.

The King's reign had been a golden one, as he was fair and just to all citizens. The ascetics however talk of the past when the city had seen immense self-destruction as many men had tasted the wine of lust. Here, what Sattan seeks to express is that just as wine intoxicates and throws a man out of his senses, debases him to the state of an animal, in a similar way, lust intoxicates, blinds and leads to destruction.

23. siraividu kaadai/Released.

138. *jnana naneer nakanam thelithu*

139. *thaynaar oodi sevimudal vaarththu*

140. *maganthuyar vneruppaa, manamvirgaga*

141. *aganjchudu venniaayilai avippath.*

138. As she sprinkled the waters of knowledge

139. Pouring the nectar into the Good Queen's ears

140. She put out the inner fire that had burnt

141. The wood of mind by the flame of the son's loss.

As the Queen listens to Manimekalai, her anger is gradually dissembled. She realizes her folly and the maid tells her how mental delusion leads to evil results and speaks of the need to gain freedom from ignorance. The Queen attains peace of mind ultimately.

Sattan metaphorically captures the transformation in the Queen, when she says that Manimekalai sprinkled the waters of knowledge, and poured the nectar in the good Queen's ears.

Here, Manimekalai's words of wisdom are compared to the waters of knowledge, which extinguished the anger of the wounded Queen. The Queen was burning with rage and fury as she feels that her son was unjustly killed. Her mind becomes unreceptive and hard as wood. The loss of her son makes her blind with anger. So her fury is compared to fire and Manimekalai's wise words are compared to that of the water, which extinguishes fire. The fury also burns her mind, which had turned wooden, because of the flame of her son's loss.

CONCLUSION

"I would like to maintain that to formulate observation by means of words is not to cause artistic beauty to evaporate in vain intellectualities: rather it makes for a widening and deepening of the aesthetic taste. It is only a frivolous love that cannot survive intellectual definition: great love prospers with understanding."

-Leo Spitzer

Poetics (literary theory) proposes models of description which when applied to different literary works show what is common among the works, and in what ways they differ from each other. The object of poetics is to enable us to explain and analyze the work. Poetics as a discipline has a long history in the west with Aristotle's poetics being the first of its kind.

However literary theory has a greater antiquity in India. "A ninth century B.C. text of interpretation (Yaska's *nirukta*) is concerned with the problem of meaning in Vedic hymns (poetry), its symbolism and examines in one of its sections, the structure of the two major figures of speech-simile and metaphor".¹

So, the part of poetics which deals with the figural mode is accorded the status of a *sastra* (*alamkarasastra*) in the Indian Tradition. This is an indispensable discipline which enables one to appreciate the beauty of the literary work.

There has always been a question of what advantages could be derived from an analysis of the language-it was believed that it could be for the logical formulation of thought, for correctness of style, above all for the understanding of classical writers; regarded not only as literary models but as literary norms.

Apart from all these conventional beliefs, the most important advantage of a literary or stylistic analysis of a particular text is that it enriches one's

¹ Kapil Kapoor, *Literary theory, Indian conceptual Framework* pg.8

understanding as it also concerns itself with interpretation and determination of meaning.

There has been a criticism that the literary language and language of poetry are contrived specializations which appear detached from living reality; and therefore cannot be analyzed to give fruitful and meaningful results. I would beg to differ on this point because though the language of the poet may be ornamental, it is still soaked in human emotions, perceptions and strivings. It is true that the litterateur makes a voluntary and conscious use of language and with an aesthetic intention strives to create beauty with words, as a painter does with colors or a musician with sounds. However, his objective is not just to provide embellishments, but to employ those adornments tactfully so that it deepens and widens our perceptions, modes of thought, simultaneously ensuring enough room for the reader's imagination.

Thus, in this work, I have critically examined the figural mode employed by Sattan in the Tamil epic, Manimekalai. Keeping in mind the non-native speakers of Tamil I have used Dr. Prema Nandakumar's translation of the Manimekalai in order to facilitate better understanding of the epic. I have analyzed it using Mammata's model in *Kavyaprakasha*. Though the model is written in Sanskrit, since both the languages (Sanskrit and Tamil) are Indian, there is a cultural closeness, which facilitates his framework to be applied with natural ease on a Tamil literary work.

In this work, initially the age in which the Manimekalai was written has been delineated, followed by the speculations on the authorship. Then, it concentrates on the epic tradition with particular emphasis on the narrative tradition in Sanskrit. The common characteristics between the Tamil and Sanskrit epics are elucidated, which is followed by an illustration of certain characteristics which are most commonly found in Tamil epics.

The second and third chapters comprise an analysis of the similes and metaphors respectively, as mentioned earlier. The main objective has been to

inquire how a specific configuration of language is used for a specific aesthetic purpose, or how the figure of speech serves in deepening our perception of a particular idea, apart from adding beauty to the work.

The claim of such an analysis rests essentially on the proportion that the farthest ranges of a writer's art, the depths of emotional experience, the heights of spiritual insight, are expressed through words, and can be apprehended wonderfully through a discerning examination of the verbal art.

Any careful reader would observe that Sattan is more prone to using similes than metaphors. This however is not surprising as in the Indian context the *upama* is considered to be the 'figure of figures' as opposed to the west which is preoccupied with the metaphor.

Thus, it is hoped that a work of this kind would serve in deepening one understanding of the poem, and aid in the appreciation of its beauty and substance as well, thus proving as Anand Coomarswamy says that the figures of speech are actually figures of thought.

APPENDIX-SIMILES

Examples of Elliptical Similes- with omission of common property and term expressing similitude, occurring in a compound. The poet Sattan employs this type of simile twenty -six times in the thirty sections (kaadai) of the Manimekalai.

1. uuralar uraitha kaadai/ 2. A web of rumours.

16. *ponner annaiaa*

16. Goddess like maid.

2. malar vanam pukka kaadai /3.Entry into the flower garden

20. *manimekalai tan muganth tannul*

20. Manimekalai, the moon-faced one

7. thutyil yelupiyya kaadai/Waking.

80. *idikural mullakathu idimbali oodaiyum*

80. Offer self-sacrifice with thunder voices

8. manipallavathu thuyaruttra kaadai/Sorrowing at Manipallavam

11. *aralvilakku nilaamanal narumalarp pallith*

11. On the lined moon-sand's flower strewn bed.

9. piidigai kandu pirappunarnta kaadai/Recognising the past

4. *mulaimer , kalulndu muthaththiral uguththadin*

3. And pearly-tears falling upon her breasts

3. malar vanam pukka kaadai /3.Entry into the flower garden

42. *manipung kombar*

42. jewelled creeper

119. *karungkodi puruvathu*

119. dark creeper brows

119. *marungkuvalai pirainudal*

119. crescent-forehead

5. manimekala deivam vandu thondriya kaadai/The Manifestation of Goddess Manimekalai

84. *palikarai thiranthu, panimadi mugaththu*

85. *kalikayal piralaak kaachiyal aagik*

84. Opening the marble room, her eyes still

85. On her cool moon face, in a trance

7. thutyil yelupiyya kaadai/Waking.

88. *murinder ilanagai niiingip puumpolill*

88. Her peacock feather-teeth.

10. mandiram koduthththa kaadai/Incantations bestowed

4. *poruvaru poongkodi boomiyir polindana*

5. *vandu thondriya manimekala deivam*

4. Holding scented flowers she descended

5. On the earth as a creeper in full bloom

11. pathiram annai! tetra kaadai/Receiving the vessel.

10. *porkodi annaai! porundik keelaai.*

10. Golden lady! Listen to me with care

18. *poongkodi annaai! yaar , nii? endralum*

18. Lovely creeper-lady! who are you?

15. paathiram konu pichai pukka kaadai/Begging with the bowl.(c,p0

1. *innung kelaai, ilangkodi maaday*

1. Hear more of this, O tender creeper girl

18. udayakumaran ambalam pukka kaadai/Udayakumaran comes to the assembly hall.

81. *ponthigal mayni oruthi thondrich*

81. There came before me a golden woman.

20. udayakumaranai kanchanan vaalaal yerinda kaadai/Kanchanan kills Udayakumaran.

43. *pirainudal vannam kaanaaiyo nii*

43. Don't you perceive her moon -forehead?

45. *viralvir puruvam ivaiyum kaanaai*

45. No more mighty brow eye-brows

47. *kaluniir kankaan, valuniir sumandana*

47. The lotus-eyes water in sickness

49. *niraimuth thanaiya nagaiyum kaanai*

49. No more you see a smile with pearly-teeth.

51. *ilavidalch chevaai kaanayonii*

51. Whither the silk-cotton flower lips.

58. *viildena ilaveyath tholum kaanaai*

58. Those same bamboo-stem shoulders

23. sirai vidu kaadai/Released.

66. *ponner annaiaai*

66. Lady wealth goddess

24. aaputhranodu adainda kaadai/Towards Aaputhran's kingdom.

8. *araver alkul arundava madavaar*

8. By ladies possessing snake-graces..

25. aaputhranodu manipallavam adainda kaadai/With Aputhran to Manipallavam.

88. *narumugai amilthurund thirunagai arundhi*

89. *madimugak karunglat sengakadai kallaka*

91. Reddening the dark eyes on moon –faces.

28. kachimaanagar pukka kaadai/Entering the city of Kanchi.

26. *vellikkundram ulkilndenna*

25. She reached the fort gate

26. That was like a divided silver hill

115. *pangayach chevadi, vilakkip paanmayin*

115. Ascetics washed their lotus-feet.

Elliptical Simile-with omission of term expressing similitude and occurring in a compound (with the presence of a shared common property). There are sixteen instances of this type of simile.

3. malarvanam pukka kaadai/Entry into the flower garden.

159. *sendalir sevadi nilamvadu uramal*

159. Her red rose feet gently treading the earth.

117. *pavalach chevvaith thaval vaal nagai*

117. Coral red lips.

120. *kaantalanj chengai*

120. Hands like rosy kantal blooms.

4. palikarai pukka kaadai/Entry into the marble room.

94. *thamaraich chengan parappinan varuum*

94. He entered and searched with red lotus-eyes.

10. mandiram kodutha kaadai/ Incantations bestowed.

22. *idangkali kaamamodu adangkaanaa yavan*

23. *madandai melliyal malaradi vanangulich*

21. With desire

22. Overwhelming, he sought to quieten you

23. By worshipping your flower-soft feet.

18. udayakumaran ambalam pukka kaadai/ Udayakumaran comes to the assembly hall.

194. *madimarul, venkodai mannaa!ninmagan*

194. O! King with a moon white umbrella.

24. aputhranodu adainda kaadai/ Towards Aputhran's kingdom.

85. *sutamatikku uraiththu*

86. *valiyari kombin varundi, meinadungi*

85. She then spoke to

86. Sutamati, who shook like a wind swept creeper.

3. malarvanam pukka kaadai/Entry into the flower garden.

166. *yerimalar ilavamum*

166. Fiery blossomed silk cotton.

5. manimekala deivam vandu thondriya kaadai/The Manifestation of Goddess Manimekalai.

60. *kadirsudum amiyaththu panimani mugaththon.*

60. When the sun is hottest, the cool moon faced one.

106. *erimanipp poongkodi*

106. Glowing jewelled creeper.

7. thuyil yelupiyya kaadai/waking

78. *pulikanathu annor boodha sadukathu*

78. The king's soldiers heroic-tigers

10. mandiram kodiththa kaadai/Incantations bestowed.

43. *velli vensudai iligiya maadathu.*

43. A gate with spaces all white washed, with silvery lime.

15. paathiram kondu pichai pukka kaadai/Begging with the bowl.

1. *innung kelaai, ilangkodi maaday*

1. "Hear more of this, O! tender creeper girl."

18. udayakumaran ambalam pukka kaadai/Udayakumaram comes to the assembly hall.

48. *thulangumaa nuurdith thuurmalarpp palli*

49. *vendirai birinda vennirach saamarai*

50. *kondiru marungum.*

48. Here on a couch held up with lions

48. Reclined, the prince fanned by lovely damsels.

50. With milky white foam waves-yaktails.

70. *oththilir pavalththu ullolli sirandha*

71. *muththuk koorthena mulleyittru amudham.*

69. A smile

70. Blossomed in between the coral-red lips

71. Revealing pearly white teeth.

81. *ponthigak mayni oruthith thondri*

81. There came before me a golden -sheened woman

20. udayakumarana kanchanan vaalaal erinda kaadai/Kanchanan kills Udayakumaran.

41. *thannaral vannand thirithu veraaghi,*

41. Look how her gleaming-black sand hair.

Elliptical similes, Directly Expressed, omitting the common property, occurring in a sentence.

3. malarvanam pukka kaadai/Entry into the flower garden.

12. *thaamarai tanmadi serndadu polka*

13. *kaamar sengaiyir kanniir maattrith*

11. Madhavi looked into the pretty face of

12. Manimekalai and as a lotus

13. Close to the moon wiped the tears with her hands.

7. thuyilyelupiya kaadai/Waking.

128. *evuru mangaiyin inaiaindhadi varundha*

129. *managar viidhi marungirp poghip*

128. As a peacock stricken by an arrow

129. Sutamati walked with paining feet to the city.

9. piidigaikandu pirapunarndah kaadai/Recognizing the past.

44. *niilapathiyenum nerilai vayittril*

45. *kaalai jnayittru kadirpol thondriya*

46. *Rahulan thanaku pukayn.*

44. Siddhipuram known as niilaapthai

45. To her was born as a rising sun Rahula.

10. mandiram koduththa kaadai/Incantations bestowed.

46. *kandaaaliyin kaliperu vithor*

47. *venduru vengalar viilvadu ponmena*

48. *arathin vithaangahiya unnaiyor*

49. *thiram padarkku eduvaaich, cheiyilai seithayn.*

46. I thought a seed of dharma like you

47. Could be wsted in desire like the seed

48. Of kandasali in salty soil

49. To make your life purposeful have I acted.

11. paathiram pettra kaadai/Receiving the vessel.

7. *kalangavil magalirin vandiingu yeidiya*

8. *ilanguthodi nalaai !yaar nii?endralum*

7. She asked: Bejewelled lady who are you?
8. Who have come here as from a sunken ship?

12. aravanarth tholudha kaadai/Worshipping Saint Aravana

79. *perungkula marungil surungai siruvali*
80. *irumparu niitham puguvadu pola*
81. *alavaach sirusevi nallaram*
82. *ulmal uvagaiyodu u\yirkolap pukuum*
78. Then will the teaching of dharma
79. Stream as through a canal into large
80. Lake, pass through the small ear-holes of men.

Elliptical Simile, omission of the common property, implied in a sentence.

6. sakarvaalakottam uraiththa kaadai/The Temple of the wheel.

3. *saandron tan kan yeidiya kutram*
4. *thondru vali vilangum*
5. *maasaru vsumbin marunilang kilaa*
6. *aasara vilangiya anniir thnkadir*
7. *velliven kudaththu pal sorivadu pol.*
3. Like the fault of one born in a noble
4. Family seems appears extra offensive,
5. The moon's dark sytain showed up in the clear sky,
6. But the cool rays of the moon were faultless,
7. Drizzling here and there in the garden
8. Like milk flowing from a silver white pot.
9. Appearing in a form lightening bright
10. All gorgeous sheen with rainbow colours.

16. aadirai pichchai yitta kaadai/Adirai gives alms.

86. *pirandavar saadalum, irandavar piraththalam*
87. *urangalum, vilithalum, pondradu unmaiya.*
86. The death of those who are born and the birth of those who are dead .
87. Is like sleeping and waking.

20. udayakumaranai kanchan vaalal erinda kaadai/Kanchanan kills udaykumaran.

94. *uurthuusi yaamathu oruthani elundu*
95. *velam vetelum vempuli pola*
96. *koyil kalindu vaayil niingi*
97. *aayilai irunda ambalam anaiththu*
98. *vega vennii nagam kidandha*
99. *poguyar puttralai puguvaan pola*
100. *aagam thoindha saandaklar uraththa*
101. *uuladi ittaden ullagam pugudalum*

94. When the city slept, started alone,
95. Like a tiger on an elephant kill,
96. Left the palace entrance and reached the hall
97. where the maiden was like one entering
98. A high ant-hill within which lay hidden
99. A venomous snake, he stepped silently
100. Into the inner apartments, while his
101. Body exuded fine sandal paste scent.

Given below are some of the Complete Similes, Directly Expressed, occurring in a sentence, which gives the poem its noble gait:

2. uuralar uraiththa kaadai/A web of rumours.

73. *oongudirai perungkadal viilththor ponru*
74. *maiyaal nenjamodu vayandamaalaiyum*
75. *kaiyattru peyarndanal kaarigai thirathen.*

73. Vasanthamalai, grew melancholy at heart like one,
74. Who had lost a priceless jewel in the sea.

4.

5. malarvanam pukka kaadai/Entry into the flower garden

94. *alukkudai yaakaiyir pugundha numuyir*
95. *pulukkarai pattor pondrullam vrundhaadu*
94. Torture not the life that has entered

95. Your body as one condemned in a cell.

6. palikaari pukka kaadai/Entry into the marble room.

15. *vayanggoli malungiya maadarnin mugampol*

16. *viraimalah taanmarai krainin rongiya*

17. *kodudai thalaik kodumada lavilnda*

18. *vaalven kannu maadiyadidu kaan.*

15. Like your face that has lost its brightness

16. Due to the road dust whirled by moving wagons

17. These lotuses are dulled by the pollen

18. That has drifted from those fragrant screw-pines.

92. *panmalarth poompolir paganmulaithathu pol*

93. *poomarach cholaiyum pudaiyum pongarunth*

94. *thanaraich chengan parappinan varuum*

91. Like a sun

92. Penetrating the grove rich with flowers

93. He entered and searched with his lotus-eyes

94. The trees around and artificial hills.

105. *podiyaraip pattor ponrullam varundhi*

106. *madhumalar sutamati yuraikkum*

105. Sutamati wearing flowers on her hair

106. And distressed as in an airless dungeon.

75. *kodumalai kiliyum madiyum pola*

76. *maada viidiyin manither kadaik*

75. He drove his chariot through the main road

76. Like the moon that cuts across speeding clouds

86. *sutamati ketuth thulakuru mayil pol*

86. Sutamati like a frightened peacock.

7. thuyiyelluppiya kaadai/Waking.

132. *nanmani ilanda naagam pol*
133. *tanmagal varath thanithuyar ulappa*
134. *innuyir ilandha yaakaiyin irundhanal*
135. *thunniyadhu uraiththa sutamati thaanen.*
130. The mother was flung
131. Into great sorrow for the daughter's absence
133. As a cobra that had lost its jewel
134. As for Sutamati who had witnessed
135. She was like a body sans life.

11. pathiram pettra kaadai/Receiving the vessel.

115. *thimpaal surapol tanmulai ponray*
116. *nenju valipaduum vinjaip paathiraththu*
117. *agansuraip peiyda aaruyir marundavar*
118. *mugankondu suraththal kaandalvait kaiyen ena*
115. As the breast of a mother when she yields
116. Sweet milk out of love for her new born babe
117. I wish to see this vessel gush forth food
118. For those poor people in like manner.

13. aravanath tholuda kaadai/Worshipping Saint Aravana.

83. *kadhiron thondrum kaalai, aangavan*
84. *aviroli kaattum maniye ponru*
85. *maiththirulkuurndha manmaasu thiirapp*
86. *buddhajayiru thondrung kaalaith.*
82. When the sun rises, the sun-stone reflects
83. Brilliant sunlight: unlit minds of men
84. Will receive the true illumination
85. When the sun of Buddha reveals himself.

14. paathira marabou kooriya kaadai/On the nature of the vessel.

70. *thiruvinnel selvam perungkadal kolla*

71. *oruthani varuum perumagan pola*

72. *thaanay thamiyan varuvon*

70. He walked all alone like a rich man.

71. Whose wealth had all been lost in the sea.

16. adirai pichchayitta kaadai/Aadirai gives alms.

33. *viraimalarth thaamarai oruthaniyirundha*

34. *thiruvini seiyol pondrini thiruppa*

32. She shone brilliant

33. Like the goddess of wealth seated upon

34. The sweet scented lotus exuding grace.

68. *enhutan pinavodirundhadu polap*

69. *pendudan irunda pettri noki*

66. The leader held court along with his spouse

67. Looking like a bear and its female.

17. ulagavravi pukka kaadai/In the assembly hall.

1. *pathhini pendir paathoon ettra*

2. *pichchai pathira perunjchottramalai*

3. *arathin eettiya onporul aravon*

4. *thiraththu valipaduum seigai pola*

5. *vanguvai varundha manuyir kaliththu*

6. *thaantholai villaath thagaimi noki.*

1. Seeing how the alms-vessel received food

2. From the chaste wife released mounds of meal

3. Much as the wealth of an honest worker

4. Continues to increase to help others

5. And how hands grew tired receiving, yet

6. The divine pot continued to produce.

19. siraiikottam arakottam aakiya kaadai/Prison becomes refuge.

8. *udayakumaran ullam kalangip*

9. *podiraip pattor ponrumei varundhi.*

8. Udayakumaran was much troubled
9. Like one thrown in a dark airless dungeon.

61. *punarthunai niingiya poigai annamodu*

62. *madamayir pedaiyum thogaiyum, koodi*

63. *irusirai viriththaangu elundhudan kottpana*

64. *orusiraik kandaangu unmahilvu yeidi*

65. *maamani vannanum thamunum pingaiyum*

66. *aadiya kuravi ikktdaam ena nokiyum*

60. The nightingales sang and the peacocks danced

61. In a corner with a swan sans its mate

62. Danced a peacock and its hen in rhythm

63. Going round and round their large wings unfurled:

64. The gracious King watched the sight with pleasure

65. As if it were the grace of Lord Krishna

66. With his elder brother and Nappinai.

20. udayakumaranaik kanchanan vaalaal erinda kaadai/Kanchanan kills

Udayakumaran.

55. *irumbudhu saandra mulaiyum kaanai,*

56. *verumpai pola ,villnduveraayina*

55. No more you see the proud uprising breasts

56. They hang loose and limp like bags grown empty.

104. *venjina arava nanjcheyiru arumbath*

105. *tanperu vehuliyin elundupai virithena*

106. *irundon elundu perumbin sendravan.*

102. The Vidhyadhara who was hidden there

103. Thought: "Ah, he comes for this lady". Like

104. An incensed serpent which bares its poison teeth

105. And raises its hood upwards, he got up.

22. siraisei kaadai/Imprisoned.

70. *pettang kollugum pendiraip polka*

71. *kattaa thunnaiyen kadundholir paasam.*
70. The dread noose in my hand cannot bind you
71. As if it would women of loose character.

89. *punaiyaa ooviyam purampond thennai*
90. *manayagam niingi ,vaanudal visaagai.*
89. Like a non-coloured drawing walking out.
90. The beautiful Visakai left her home.

23. siraividu kaadai/Released.

142. *therupadu sinniir polath thelindu*
143. *maarukon dora mthinal aagi*
142. As water treated with clearing nut
143. The Queen's mind became crystalline.

24. aaputhranodu adaindha kaadai/Towards Aaputhran's kingdom

83. *manimekali thiram madhavi katuth*
84. *thunikayam thugalpadath thulangiya adhupol*
85. *thelyach sindhaiyal sutamatikku uraiththu*
86. *valiyeri kombin varundhi, mei nadunghi.*
83. Madhavi heard of Manimekai's
84. State; her heart was confused as the waters
85. Of a lake struck by dust. She then spoke to
86. Sutamati, who shook lie a wind-swept creeper.

159. *venduru ponpol vilkadir maraindha*
159. In the evening when the sun vanished
160. Like molten gold.

25. Aaputhranodu Manipallavam adaindha kaadai/With Aaputhran to Manipallavam.

134. *mannavan, mannavarkku*
135. *ulandah piraviyai uyarmannip piidigai*

136. *kaiyagath thewduhthu kaanbore mugaththai*

137. *maiyaadhu mandilam polakk kaatta.*

134. To the king

135. The jeweled seat showed his past births just as

136. A spotless mirror held in hand reflects

137. The face of the onlooker.

194. *mannavan maganukku uttradu poraan*

195. *namani yilandha naagam pondru*

196. *kaanalum kadalum karaiyum thervuli*

194. The king was inconsolable by the son's loss

195. Like a snake that had lost its jewel.

196. He searched all over mountains and sea-shores.

28.kachimaanagar pukka kaadai/Entering the city of Kanchi.

2. *vanguvir ranai vanvan vnjiyin*

3. *vettru mannarum ulignaivem padiyum*

4. *por puranj chuttriya purakuddi kadandu.*

2. She crossed the outer cantonment

3. That was crowded as if the king's soldiers

4. And enemies were battling for the fort.

29. davathiram poondu darumam ketta kaadai/Manimekalai receives the Dharma.

41. *vettrurukk konu , veveve ruraikkum*

42. *nootrruraich samaya nunporulketay*

43. *avvuru venna aivagaich samayamum.*

43. In disguise the inner truths of systems

44. That speaks in varied ways in scriptures

45. I did not welcome to my inner mind

46. The five that seemed as false as my dress.

353. *yathondru yadhon ramurthamadhu nitham*

354. *buthipol endraal*

353. Whatever is formless

354. Is eternal like the intellect.

APPENDIX – METAPHORS:-

Metaphor Universal:

4. palikkarai pukka kaadai/Entry into the marble room.

3. *kulalisai thumbi kolithik kaata*

4. *malalai vandinam naliyaal seiyya*

3. Here the bees are the sounds of flute

4. And their fledglings are the strings of lute.

12. aravanarth tholudha kaadai/Worshipping Saint Aravana.

119. *madiththa thiik koliya mannuyir pasikeda*

120. *eduththanan paathiram elangkodi thaanan,*

119. So, inspired the maid lifted the vessel.

120. To rid the world of the flames of hunger.

Pure Metaphor:

12. aravanarth tholudha kaadai/ worshipping saint Aravana.

10. *yaavarum yethum irungalai niyamathu*

11. *devi sindha vilakkuth thondri*

10. The goddess who is the light of wisdom,

11. Of the artistic temple whom all worship.

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