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# **M.P. PERIASWAMY THOORAN**

**[V.RAYAPPAN]**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Poet Laureate Padma Bhushan, Kalaimamani M.P.Periaswamy Thooran is a well known person. He is the person who compiled the first ever comprehensive encyclopaedia in the Tamil language. A mammoth work spread over 10 volumes. He also compiled a smaller and highly readable children's encyclopaedia in Tamil. He has published four volumes of his own poetry, six volumes of his own short stories, three volumes of literary essays, seven plays, six books on psychology, one book on embryology, two volumes on genetics, five volumes of musical compositions complete with swara notations and many books for children. He translated a few books in Tamil. He copied some of the valuable Tamil works like Kalamegappulavar's Chithira Madal, and Avinasi Navalani's Thingalur Nonndi from the palm leaves which were about to be ruined, and had done yeoman service to Tamil. His place among the Tamil laureates of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is unquestionable. Thooran compiled Bharathi's writings including poems, essays, stories and political comments published in Tamil daily "Swadesa Mithiran" between 1905 to 1921, which were published in a book titled "Bharathi Tamizh".

In addition to this, Periaswamy Thooran did extensive research in the field of music, expounding the view that Carnatic music had its origin in “*punns*” over 1000 years old. He was actively involved in the establishment of the Tamil Isai Sangam founded by Raja Sir Annamalai Chettiar.

Thooran was born on 26<sup>th</sup> September 1908 in the village of Manjakattuvalasu near Erode. He was the first person from his village to take up undergraduate education. After the abrupt end to his academic career, he took up employment in a school near Erode. Later joined Sri Ramakrishna Mission school as warden which was started by a renowned educationist, T.S.Avinashilingam Chettiar. He then became the Headmaster of the same school. His close association with Avinashilingam was to stand him in good stead in future.

In 1947 a Tamil Academy was formed with Thooran and R. Krishnamoorthy (editor of Kalki) as Secretaries, and Thooran was appointed as the Chief Editor of the Tamil encyclopaedia the man who ought to deliver the goods. He did his job meticulously and brought out the Tamil encyclopaedia which consisted of 10 volumes, each of 750 pages priced at Rs.25/- each. A childrens’ encyclopaedia was also brought out by Thooran. For long he had held that many of poet Bharathi’s works had not been published. He meticulously set about the task of unearthing the

last articles, poems and short stories of Bharathi. He went through all the daily and thrice weekly editions of the famous publication Swadesa Mithiran from 1905-21.

Thooran's contribution to the Tamil language is immense. And for it he had deservingly received several prizes and awards including the Padma Bhushan in 1968 and Kalaimamani in 1969. He died on 20<sup>th</sup> January, 1987.

The remarkable services of Thooran to Tamil language include compilation of encyclopaedia, Bharathi Thamizh , books on Embryology, and psychology in Tamil and his role in the field of music. The man who suffered for more than two decades because of occasional fits and paralytic attack did much to his own language. This will power of Periaswamy Thooran helped him a lot to achieve his aims.

The first chapter deals with Periaswamy Thooran's early life. Second, third and fourth chapters deal with the contributions of Thooran in various fields like Tamil Literature, Music and society respectively. Finally the last chapter stands as conclusion.

## CHAPTER 1

### EARLY LIFE

The Illustrious Tamil Scholar, Periaswamy Thooran was born in a simple family in the village, Manjakkatuvalasu, about 17 kms, from Erode, on the 26<sup>th</sup> September 1908 as the eldest son of Pazhanivelappa Gounder, an agriculturist. At the tender age of two years he lost his dear mother (Paavai – Alias Smt. Pavaathal) who left her new born daughter; and the poor young Periaswamy and his sister were brought up by their maternal grandmother in the nearby Semmandampalayam Village.

The affectionate grandmother would tell these children and also their neighbours' children many a story in the nights, stories from the great epics Sri Ramayana and Mahabharatha and also several funny stories like "The Thanjavur Rogue and the Madurai Rogue", "Tall liar and Taller liar" etc. It was this experience, Periaswamy has pointed out in his autobiographical sketch (En Kulanthai Paruvum which appeared in "Gokulam" Children's magazine in Tamil) that gave him the basis for his stories, "Soorapuli", "Mayakkallan", "Nilappaatti", etc.

The young boy Periaswamy was put in a rural 'Pial School' at Modakkurichi, about half a kilometer away from Manjakkattuvalasu, on an

auspicious day, starting from “Hari Om Namo Narayanaya...” written with his index finger on sand. Soon he was taught not only the lucid and the easy verses like “Aathichoodi”, “Kondraivendhan”, “Moodhurai”, song for the children by the great ancient Tamil poet Avvaiyar, but also the difficult and terse verses like “Arappaleeswara Shathakam”, “Venkateswara Shathakam” unintelligible to children, all of which they had to memorise, Periaswamy had compared the plight of the children of those days with that of today’s youngsters (for whom so many modern poets have composed many songs) in autobiographical anecdote in “Gokulam”.

Seven year old Periaswamy was given a book (The Tamil Version of Mahabharatham by the poet Villiputhoorar) by Sri Arunachala Gounder, his father’s younger brother. The uncle also used to sing to the boy songs from “Nandhanar Charithram” by Gopalakrishna Bharathiyar. He only nurtured a zeal in the boy’s mind to write Tamil Poems.

There was yet another Arunachala Gounder, a agnate of Periaswamy. “Therkuvalavu Arunachala Gounder” as he was called, fired him with the desire to write songs in Tamil set to music and he showed him the way too.

After the first five years of schooling at Modakurichi, Periaswamy joined the sixth standard in the Mahajana Sabha High School at Erode,

and continued there upto the S.S.L.C., Examination. He was staying at a Kannadiga Naicker's house at Erode as a paying guest. The 'Pay' was only 3 bags of paddy per year. He was served three meals a day and nothing else - not any of the sweetmeats enjoyed by the children of that family. But this never pained the mind of young Periaswamy. He learnt a little of Kannada language in that house. Whenever there was an epidemic of plague in Erode, he used to stay in a relative's house in a nearby village. He always used to score very high marks in all the subjects in his school examinations and top the list in his class; especially in arithmetic, he never failed to get the first rank.

### **College Life**

Periaswamy joined the Presidency College, Madras in 1925. Periaswamy was known for his boldness and candour. During one of the annual feasts in the hostel, the warden S.E. Ranganathan the famous professor of English who was a strict disciplinarian, was coming round the dining hall and enquiring students about the dinner. While all the other students told him that the preparations were very good, it was Periaswamy who told him on his face that the whole lot was pretty bad and very much below par. "You are the only one who spoke the truth; my impression also is the same as yours", said Ranganathan and patted on his back.

## **Periaswamy and Literary Association**

Soon an association was started in the hostel premises by the youngmen with forward ideals like Periaswamy and his friends K.S. Periaswamy of Kuttapalayam, K.S.Palanisamy of Kuttapalayam, A.Alagirisamy, Aayannan of Muthayeepalayam, L.K.Muthusamy of Lakkapuram O.V.Alagesan and C.Subramaniam. “Vanamalar Sangam” (Flowers of the Forest), as it was called, had its branches in Erode, Kodumudi, Thiruchi, Madurai and Madras and was an exemplary association, with the principal aims of service to the nation without detriment to their education, blowing out the barriers of casteism, and the development of Tamil Language and getting it a place of dignity in all walks of life. And the Madras Branch of the Association was running a monthly journal with the above aims.

“Pitthan”, started as a handwritten magazine with Periaswamy as publisher form came out in print from the Sadhu Press run by Thiru Vi.Ka., the famous Tamil Scholar, Patriot, Social Reformer and the Pioneer of Labour Movement in Tamil Nadu in 1928-29. When questioned why he gave that name (“Pitthan” meaning “the mad man”) to his journal, Periaswamy said that it was authored by people who were mad after the emancipation of the nation and the great heritage of Tamil language.

The parents of Periaswamy and his friends, however were very much against their involvement in this journal. The publication, nevertheless, was continuing. The Annual subscription was Re.1/-. The British rulers (who were lien to any patriotic movement) started watching the movement of those who contributed articles to Pitthan and the magazine started being published from Gopichettipalayam. Periyasamy also started writing under the pen name of Thooran which denoted his social group. Hereinafter, we shall also call him Thooran. When Bhagath Singh and his associates who fought as revolutionaries for freedom were hanged by the British Government, Thooran decided to stay away from his final examinations, as a mark of revolt against the government's decision. He worked for sometime as an untrained assistant in the Diamond Jubilee High School at Gobichettipalayam.

Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya was started at Podanur in 1930 by T.S.Avinashilingam Chettiar. After a few years, the school was shifted to Coimbatore. When the school needed a headmaster, C.Subramaniyam (the then secretary of the school) and his friend Dr.L.K.Muthusamy of Erode introduced Thooran to Avinashilingam and recommended his name for that job. Thooran joined the School as a teacher and wrote his B.A. Degree examination and also got through the L.T. (Licentiate in Teaching) Examination to qualify himself for that post, and also became the warden

of that school. He then became the headmaster and served in that capacity from 1933 to 1947.

As an ideal headmaster, Thooran always strove to foster in the minds of his pupils good qualities like purity, nobility, honesty, sincerity hard work, serviceability, devotion to God and to the Nation, respect for elders and teachers, etc., and constantly kept his school and his students 'high above the daily trifles' of casteism and narrow mindedness. Mahathma Gandhi visited the school and was overwhelmed by the atmosphere of harmony and the absence of communal feelings in the school and the hostel.

Thooran learnt carnatic music from N. Sivaramakrishnan, one of the teachers in that school. He used to compose his songs even in those days. Both of them used to sit together and set those poems to tunes in classical music. Thooran also tried to learn to play some of the musical instruments.

At that time a competition in Tamil songs was conducted by Annamalai University. Thooran's students asked him to send his compositions to Annamalai University. Although he initially refused to

participate in the competition, he finally yielded to the repeated requests of his students, and he got the first prize from the University for his work.

Thooran was married on the 30<sup>th</sup> April, 1939. When the Congress party formed the ministry in Tamil Nadu in 1946, T.S. Avinashilingam became the minister for education and he came forward to bring Tamil language as the medium of instruction in schools and later in the colleges, and to develop the great language in all the different fields. The Tamil Academy was inaugurated in 1947, and it was decided by the academy to bring out an encyclopaedia in Tamil.

Periaswamy Thooran was uppermost in the minds of its members who wanted to select a person who would undertake the full responsibility of publishing the encyclopaedia. And the credit of making the ten volumes of the encyclopaedia see the light of the day goes entirely to Periaswamy Thooran.

**Note:** In the later years C.Subramaniam and O.V.Alagesan entered politics and became Union Ministers. K.S.Periaswamy was elected to Tamil Nadu Assembly. K.S.Palanisamy became a judge in Madras High Court. L.K.Muthusamy became a famous medical practitioner in Erode.

## CHAPTER 2

### THOORAN'S CONTRIBUTION TO TAMIL LITERATURE

A Language is not considered to be good and rich when it has only a spoke form. It is considered to be rich when it has alphabets towards the written and the people who speak that language are considered to be civilized by the historians. Because, they alone can transfer their thoughts and their values in life to their posterity. A language that could be written can keep records of important events of the past. From the records kept they can inform their posterity the manner of progress in political and economic activities of life and how they overcame the difficult periods and suffering in their national life.

Thus, a rich language would have many and valued literature on all aspects, like politics, economics, literature, science and etc., English is considered to be the best and the richest language since it has good literature on all aspects.

But, Tamil though considered to be one of the ancient languages in the world is not having good books on many subjects, because of its people servitude under foreign rulers. Sangam literature proclaim that during Sangam period there was much literature on medicine, art, politics,

astronomy and religion. Many of them were lost due to the superstitious belief of people. The obstacles that came in the growth of Tamil were removed by people like Bharathi and U.Ve.Swaminatha Iyer and others. Bharathi exhorted that we should translate scientific literature of other languages into Tamil. Thooran who was a great admirer of Bharathi followed that and sincerely made admirable contribution to the Tamil Language. Thooran realized that an encyclopaedia in Tamil was very important for its growth. There was no book on psychology and embryology in Tamil, realizing the paucity of such books in Tamil, Thooran strove hard to write such books in Tamil and did yeoman service to Tamil.

Thooran and Kalki R. Krishnamoorthy who were the Secretaries of Tamil Academy, in the beginning, convened Tamil conference every year, and through that they made others to realize books in Tamil on Science subjects were badly needed and every one should rise to the occasion to satisfy the need. The conference was first held in Madurai, the seat of the renowned sangam. Thereafter it was held in Thiruvarur, Coimbatore, Madras and Delhi. It was also held in Ceylon. These conferences are the fore runners of the subsequent world Tamil conferences held in various parts of the world. Ma.Po.Sivagnanam the renowned Tamil scholar observes, that by convening Tamil conferences, Thooran sowed the seed in the minds of the Tamil Scholars to think that literature in all aspects of

Tamil is a must and need of the time and they should work for it. After that many books were written on various science subjects. Thus Thooran is mainly responsible for making people to realize books on Science in Tamil will enrich the language. Thooran himself wrote many books on various subjects. Thooran was a poet and wrote many poems. Wordsworth said “Poetry is the Spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings”. A poet cannot directly make others to realize his feelings fully. For the purpose of making others to realize his feelings fully he uses many devices in his poetry in the forms simile, metaphor, onomatopoeia, hyperbole etc. Thooran’s poems have all of them and make the readers to feel exactly what he felt. Thooran’s place among the Tamil Laureates of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is unquestionable. Among Indian languages encyclopaedia was published in Tamil first. Avinashilingam Chettiar conceived the idea of publishing encyclopaedia in Tamil and Thooran planned it and meticulously worked according to his plan successfully brought it out.

## **THOORAN’S SERVICE TO TAMIL**

### **Thooran the Architect of Tamil Encyclopaedia**

T.S.Avinashilingam Chettiar brought Thooran who was working as Head Master in Ramakrishna Vidhyalaya at Coimbatore to Madras and entrusted him with the stupendous task of compiling encyclopaedia in

Tamil. This is a turning point in the life of Thooran. On the auspicious day of Vijayadhasami in the month of October 1947, the work of compiling encyclopaedia was started by Madras University and Thooran was the editor then; before its publication, a small brochure was published in December 1948. It contained information regarding the forthcoming encyclopaedia like how the pictures would be published, the model of the contents of the encyclopaedia and the manner of presentation, the subjects dealt with. Then with small modifications to the original place indicated in the brochure the first volume was published in the year 1954. Its 10<sup>th</sup> volume was published in the year 1968, to subsequently Thooran undertook the work of Children's encyclopaedia and completed it by publishing its 10<sup>th</sup> and last volume in the year 1976.

N.D.Sundaravadivelu the former Vice-Chancellor of Madras University, while praising the stupendous and the wonderful work of Thooran said, 'compiling encyclopaedia is like the attempt of Bhahirathan to bring Ganga to the world, and publication of encyclopaedia cannot be done by one or few, however scholarly they may be the cooperation and support of scholars in various fields are necessary for it. And to get the cooperation and support they need great skill, endeavour, energy and the editor Periyasamy Thooran had all the qualities and he was active like small ants and selective like honey bee and quick in his onerous job, and

completed his task successfully in record time. The encyclopaedia published by Thooran is the first of its kind in Indian languages and its size and quality are appreciable. Ten years were taken to publish Chambers encyclopaedia in English and fifteen years were taken to publish 9<sup>th</sup> edition of encyclopaedia of Britanica after its necessary modifications and corrections. Twelve years were taken to publish the encyclopaedia in Japanese languages containing 10 volumes. In Italian language 9 years were taken to publish the encyclopaedia. Comparing with the time taken for compiling the above said encyclopaedia by the people who were advanced in science and printing technology, the time taken by Thooran who did not have the modern technology and facilities is not long and it is to be taken as one finished within a short time. Though Thooran took 14 years to complete the encyclopaedia when his task is compared with the task the compilers of the above said encyclopaedia who had good facilities for collecting the information required and the advantage of the modern printing technology. Thooran's work is commendable, and it is to treated as one done in short time.

'Though Avinashilingam was the guiding factor Thooran who was the moving factor, without any interruption completed the Himalayan Task of compiling Tamil encyclopaedia' said M.R.P.Gurusamy. What was U.Ve.Swaminatha Iyer to publication of Tamil Literature, Thooran was to

encyclopaedia. Thooran was described as the servant and the hero of Tamil growth said M.R.P.Gurusamy. The work of encyclopaedia is a new attempt in Tamil. Thooran had to request thousands of people on various aspects of its contents and he had to correct them and compile them in alphabetical order and subject wise. To do the same the editor must have knowledge on all the aspects and subjects. Not only this as observed by A.S.Gnanasambandam “He must have oceans of patience and equanimity”. He further observed, it is wrong to say that he had patience in abundance but he is the patience personified. Thooran did not take the work of encyclopaedia thrust on him. But he liked the job and it was sweet to him. If only one has that mental set up then only one can work for 24 hours, and energetically worked, without chiding or disliking others.

In asking others to write and putting in the presentable form be fitting to the work like encyclopaedia is not an easy job. The people who contribute their writing may not be well versed in writing. Their writing may not be easily understandable to common man. Too much of technical words are also to be avoided. But the person who contributes may not admit, that he is not a good writer. Sometimes the writer may insist that his writing should not be edited. In compiling the work like the encyclopaedia Thooran had to face all the problems and at times he would be driven to the verge of his patience. During those times Periaswamy

Thooran the Scholar would transform himself as a humble editor, whose only aim was to publish the encyclopaedia.

While reviewing the Tamil encyclopaedia N.S.R wrote in Indian Express as follows. “It is significant to indicate the volume of labour involved to realize, what the editor Mr. M.P.Periaswamy Thooran and his staff took upon themselves, the Tamil encyclopaedia is meant to be consulted for information and knowledge on every conceivable topic. There is none too abstruse for it, for it expounds the mysteries and horror of atomic science. There is none too small for it, and there are more than 15,000 topics, which of course, deal with lesser connected themes. About 1,200 scholars have been laid under contribution from all parts of the world. The editor told me, but with no anger at all, that most of these contributions, even from Madras State, were in English and were translated. He has gone to the authorities themselves. Who but Mr.B.G. Biggs, Lecturer in Maori at the University of New Zealand, could write with authority on the Maoris”?

The editor of the encyclopaedia Thooran explained in an interview to the ‘Hindu’ daily newspaper that works of the nature of an encyclopaedia had not been known in Ancient India. Though the *puranas* could to a certain extent be described as encyclopaedia compilation adopted to

Hindu culture, essentially they were didactic epics expounding legendary lore. The encyclopaedia of today had been described as “a marvel of human ingenuity, industry and skill, bringing together the knowledge of the past, information on thousands of particulars of vital interest contributed by specialists with thousands of pictures, charts, diagrams and maps within the covers of a single organized set of usually finely made volumes”.

The Tamil Encyclopaedia brought out and published by the ‘Tamil Academy’ on the model of western encyclopaedic consists of ten volumes each of 750 pages. The topics, arranged in alphabetical order, cover all the subjects under the sun, from agriculture to zoology, the treatment being stated to be clear, comprehensive, authoritative, accurate and provided with adequate bibliography.

Thooran was very careful and anxious that nothing be left out in the encyclopaedia. Once Thooran’s eldest daughter was ill some months after her marriage. Doctors were losing their hope. Whenever he reached her room upstairs in his house, he could speak only after taking 5 minutes rest. At the time the doctor who came to attend his daughter was of opinion that his daughter was suffering from Kala-Azar fever. As soon as the doctor left Thooran referred the encyclopaedia and found, the information regarding

kala-azar was not included, so he immediately noted it down in his pocket note book which he kept for the said purpose.

While Thooran was compiling Tamil encyclopaedia All India Radio Madras offered him a good job with a handsome salary. Though Thooran was receiving lesser amount as salary, Thooran turned down the offer and said that the work on hand was very important and the salary, he was receiving was sufficient for him. Thooran's total involvement in his work and his sincerity were the main reasons for the successful compilation and publication of encyclopaedia in Tamil. The encyclopaedia a treasure like the general Tamil, the children's encyclopaedia in Tamil, also becomes the treasure of knowledge. In fact Thooran himself said "The work of children's encyclopaedia was more difficult and complex". According to him the publication of children's encyclopaedia was more important than the other one. In spite of his failing health cause by occasional fits, Thooran completed the work with unflinching enthusiasm.

Thooran's another service to Tamil is the compilation of Bharathi's writings including poems, essays, stories and political comments, published in Tamil daily "Swadesa Mithran" between 1905-21. Thiru-Vi-Ka a noted Tamil Scholar told Thooran that the writings of Bharathi in the above said period were not compiled and published. After getting

introductory letter from Thiru-Vi-Ka., Thooran went to the office of Swadesa Mithiran to collect the material in the relevant period. The store room where the papers were kept was full of dust, inhabited by cockroaches, lizards, paper eating ants, and centipedes and foul smell was emanating from the room. But Thooran worked for many months there, he copied all the essays by hand. Thooran himself wrote all these things in his essays "Bharathiyarai Thedinen". He published a book called 'Bharathi Tamizh' running to 700 pages, containing the essays gathered from Swadesa Mithran. In appreciation of his work the Tamil writers guild honoured him by giving him a gold medal. But for his hard and onerous work one third of Bharathiar's writings would not have reached the present generation. S.Vaiyapuri Pillai wrote in 'THE HINDU' in appreciation of his book 'Bharathi Tamizh' as follows."This volume is a real contribution to Bharathi Literature. It has added substantially to our knowledge of Bharathi. His journalistic activities are also chronologically detailed. Fearless criticism of men and things though well known in a general way are here instanced by Bharathi's own writings. His humour is exemplified in 'Ullasa Sabai'. His patriotism, his flare towards the real brotherhood of Indians without distinction of caste or creed, his hatred of all social evils, his desire to make his motherland independent and his great care of mother tongue, his enthusiastic endeavours to enrich it in every sense of the word in fact, everything which has made the name of Bharathi the

charm that it is, vividly brought to our vision at one reach through this remarkable collection". Ma.Po.Sivagnanam acknowledged the help he received from Thooran's 'Bharathi Thamizh' in doing research on Bharathi, by saying that people like him were immensely benefited by Thooran's 'BHARATHI TAMIZH' in publishing research work on Bharathi. The honour of publishing Bharathi's prose topic should also go to Thooran.

### **Thooran's Science Writings**

Books on Genetics and Psychology were in English, German and French languages. Indian Scientists who are well versed and learned in these subjects did not care to translate them or to write new books on these subjects in their mother tongue, to help others to know the subjects in detail. Bharathi's ardent wish of translating scientific works in Tamil from other languages was fulfilled to some extent by Thooran, in translating books on Genetics, Environment, and Evolution in Tamil from foreign language. It is more difficult and onerous to write them in Tamil and that too in easy style so as to be understood by all. But Thooran the scholar did it in a remarkable manner. In his book on hereditary, he lucidly and clearly wrote how the embryo took shape, its mental aspects, body, growth, colour, and capacity determined by the genes of its parents. By giving a number of illustrations and charts he had explained how the

environment helps the child to adopt and perfect its genetic quality. He also clearly established that environment and hereditary depend on each other. He says, that if any one of them acts independently the proper result would not be got. He also explained, what is evolutionary growth. In another book titled 'Petrar Kodutha Perumakodai' he dealt with some of the aspects discussed in the book 'Parambariyam' in detail.

On embryology he wrote a book 'Karuvil Valurum Kuzhandai'. In this he described the growth of the child in the womb from its inception. He explained in detail how the ovum reaches the womb, its growth, the way in which it receives its food. He also dealt with the importance of breast milk and the various kinds of food that the mother should take.

### **Books on Psychology**

As mentioned earlier his books on psychology have been prescribed for the degree courses by the Madras University. The books written by Thooran on Psychology are "Manamum Athan Vilakkamum", "Kumara Paruvam", "Adimanam, Kuzhandai Ullam", "Manam Ennum Mayak Kurungu", "Kuzhandhai Manamum Adhan Malarchiyum". To write these books Thooran read books on adolescence psychology, and adolescent development thoroughly and mastered the subjects. With the knowledge

gained from the books he read on psychology and from his own experience and knowledge he wrote the above mentioned books in Tamil. Before him no one wrote any book on Psychology. In his books he explained the mind and brain are different. His exposition on conscious mind, subconscious mind, mesmerism, hypnotism and the relationship of mind and dream in his books on psychology are not only remarkable but also easily understandable. He also urges that one should take care of his mind as he takes care of his body. Inferiority complex and the reason for its onset and the importance of subconscious mind for inducing inferiority complex were beautifully explained by Thooran in the light of the findings and opinions of the great psychologists like Freud and Alter. In his book on “Thazhvu Manapanmai” Thooran explained the good and bad effects of sub-limation that is necessary for eradicating inferiority complex.

He also deals with subjects like, id, ego, super ego, and sublimation in detail and explains how they help and prevent the work of subconscious mind.

In his books ‘Adimanam’, “Manamum Adhan Malarchiyum”, Kuzhandhai Ullam he explains the mind of the children and the manner in which they should be brought up. In them he also deals with the mind of adolescent of both sex and how their parents and others should move with

them. To become full fledged male or female one should pass through the adolescent age from childhood. The character and conduct symptoms and feelings and nature and behavior of the adolescent period are fully explained in his book 'Kumaraparuvam'. The matter dealt by him was very interesting and they are conclusion arrived at after much research on the subject.

## **ESSAYS**

The word essay is used in a new sense of Tamil likewise literary work in essays is also new to Tamil. That type of literature has been there for a very long time in English. In English only after the full fledged growth of essay literature the short story literature began to burge on. Even before the essays in English reflecting the feeling and mentality of the individual, there were short story literature in Tamil. There might have been some essays in Tamil exceptionally. But the essay literature did not reach the stage as the short story literature reached. There were essays on economics and moral teachings. We have seen them before but the opinion was that the essay must be a thought provoking one. In those essays on should not see the mind and feelings of an individual.

It is very interesting to investigate the subject on which essays should be written. If one ask whether the subject like truth and ethics are proper for writing essays one will be tempted to say yes, but when it is

seen in the light of the subjects of the essays written in western countries one would doubt whether truth and ethics are good subjects. But one can write on any subject and when it is so written, it must be a repository of one's own mind and feelings. For example A.G.Gardinar the well known essayist in English, wrote an essay by name 'my traveling companion' about a mosquito.

In one night he was traveling in the railway compartment in which there was none except Gardinar and a mosquito. In the said essay he had depicted his feelings and thoughts at that time. A number of essays in such vein can be shown in English. Those essays were written on travel subjects.

"It is very important that the writing must be artistic and of literary taste. If they are there one can write on any subject." Thooran observed so in his introduction to his book "Poovin Sirippu". The books Poovin Sirippu, Thein Sittu, Kattu Vazhithaniley which are the collection of Thooran's essays could be easily and equally compared with the essays of English essayists like R.L. Stephenson, Charles Lamb, Addison and A.G. Gardinar. And infact Thooran followed the manner and style of the said English essayists. Thooran's essays are not only sweet and interesting to read but they are also thought provoking ones.

## **THOORAN'S WORKS FOR CHILDREN**

Our growth is remarkable since our independence in many fields. But if we look at this growth from the point of view of the saying that a nation's growth can be measured from the contributions it has made for the growth of children, our growth still lags behind, yet, because of Thooran's works we can feel proud over our growth of the nation in this field also. All his works for children whatever they may be, poems, stories just aimed at making the children the best citizens of the nation. One can realize this when he reads Thooran's works for Children. "Soorapuli", "Mayakallan" and such stories are solid examples of this. In his "Parakkum Manidhan" he clearly gives man's efforts to fly and its various results in a very suitable style for the kids.

### **Translations**

#### **Kadal Kadantha Natppu (Judy and Lakshmi)**

This is a translation of the work after the keen observation of our life and culture by the famous novelist "Naomi Mitchison" the sister of reputed biologist J.B.S. Haldane.

### **“Kanagathin Kural” (The Call of the Wild)**

This is the translation of the best sold work in European Countries by Jack London. The Story deals with a dog which becomes wild and ferocious because of man’s mistakes.

### **“Paravaigalaip Paar’**

A book on the life of birds. A work which will naturally make the readers kind towards birds. Translated by Thooran and was published by the National Book Trust.

### **Other Books**

#### **Katril Vandha Kavidhai**

Almost a dictionary of folklore. The country-side pure love, the farmers’ attitude and the peoples’ joyful mentality during festival seasons such as Pongal etc. are seen in this work.

#### **Palm Leaves Scripts to Paper work**

There was a lot of literary works of the past that were seen only on palm leaves. They had every chance to be ruined completely. Thooran took special pains and transferred some of them to print and thus he was able to preserve this prestigious gift for the coming generation. First among them can be quoted is “Chitra Madal”.

## **1. Chitra Madal**

This was a work done by Kaala Megha Pulavar. Thooran brought it to paper. He also compared it with many other such works and he made the poetic scholarship of Kaala Megha Pulavar more enjoyable by himself giving some explanatory notes.

## **2. Thingalur Nonndi - By Avinasi Navalan**

### **Nonndi Nadagangal**

These are very peculiar plays. One robber will be there. He will earn some money by robbery but being much tempted by a girl, he goes to her but there he loses all his earnings. Then he wanders in streets, begins to hate such ladies. Again he gets chance for another robbery and becomes rich. This time also the previous story is repeated. He loses all the wealth now too. Then again goes for robbery. But this time he is caught. He is punished by the Government. He loses one hand and one leg and thus becomes lame. Now he comes across the wise men who not only treat him but also guide him towards God. Then he gets enlightenment and reaches some temple and becomes a pious and noble man. He gets God's mercy too. His injured limbs are cured miraculously by God. These plays which show a sinner turning towards God and realizing him are more autobiographical and in easy flow. Though they start with a thief's life they clearly as well as appreciably show God's mercy towards the sinner. The

sinner realizes God at the stage when he is limping because of his sinful activities so far. That is why these plays were named “Nonndi Nadahangal” meaning limping plays. The limping man himself will sing and act the play.

Important Nonndi Nadahangal are

Thiruchendhur Nonndi Nadagangal

Seedhakkadhi Nonndi Nadagangal

Kullathur Ayyan Nonndi Nadagangal

Thirumalai Nonndi Nadagangal

Pazani Nonndi Nadagangal

Among these “Thingalur Nonndi Nadagam” is 150 years old. The author is Avinasi Navalan. V.R. Deiva Sigamani Gounder gave the palm leaves of this work to Thooran.

### **Plays**

“Aadhi Aththi”, “Kadhalum Kadamaiyum”, “Manakkugai”, “Soozhchi” and one act plays like “Azahu Mayakkam” and “Illam Thuravi” are the plays given by Thooran. In these plays we clearly see the psychological knowledge of the author. Moreover the plays have fast moving stories and bring before the reader a clear picture of what they read.

## **Pongal Greetings**

Vanamalar Sangam used to have weekly discussion on literature related topics. No doubt they were really hot arguments. Once there was an argument whether to have pongal greetings like Christmas greetings, of course, it was opposed by a few who felt that it was only an emulation of English way of living. But, with a firm desire to adopt a good practice which is peculiar to Thooran, he started sending such Pongal Greetings to Prof.Namachivaya Mudhaliyar, Kalki R.Krishnamoorthy and Thiru Vi Ka who later welcomed and encouraged this habit. Thus this habit of sending pongal greetings has been introduced to the Tamil world by Thooran.

## **Thooran's Poems**

Thooran's Poems are noteworthy. They make others to realize Thooran's feelings. Thooran used many devices in his poetry in the forms of simile, metaphors, onomatopoeia, hyperbole etc., for the said purpose. The following poems stand proof :

“Nandha ezhil arasi  
Naanamudan udal valaithe  
Sindha Muruvaludan  
Selgindrai Kouviriye”

Here poet Thooran describes the river Cauvery. First he says the river is a beautiful queen. Then he compared the curves in the flow of river

to women's modesty. The bubbles at the brink of the river bank are described as attractive smile of the beautiful lady.

In his poem entitled "Cheri Vilaiyattu", the poverty and slave mentality of the slum dweller are condemned. The children are playing as if they are making their own toy hut and making their food with the help of glass pieces, small stones etc., brought from the streets. Then they say after taking their toy food they must rush at once for doing some hard work, failing which they may get a severe punishment from their rich boss. Poet says, that the slum childrens imaginations as well as expectations don't go beyond this due to their poverty and slave mentality. He says in this poem

Idindha Suvar Vizhu Koorai  
Erumbu Valai Pazankanchi  
Madindhaval Panriyalal  
Matrenna Kandullar?

With a lamenting tone the poet asks what else the slum children see except damaged wall and roofs, always about to fall, ant's nest, old food, pigs with curve tails.

Thooran says in his poem 'Azhum Kuzhandai',

Poovulagai Paarka Vandha  
Ponnattu Thoothenave  
Mevum ilang Kuzandhai yaza  
Vidalamo?

Which means –

The messenger from the Golden Country who came to see this earth is this child and can it be allowed to weep.

Here comparing the child to the messenger from the Golden Country, clearly shows the pure and holy mind of the child and shows it is from the golden country which is heaven. Here we can understand and enjoy the fertility of poetic thought with similes etc.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **HIS CONTRIBUTION TO TAMIL MUSIC**

He has contributed invaluable writings and books in Tamil like Tamil encyclopaedia, poems, essays, translations, dramas which are to be preserved for future generation. Thooran also contributed much to Isai Tamizh (Tamil adopted to music) and endeared himself to the hearts of millions of Tamilians. In his early age his paternal uncle Arunachala Gounder and his agnate Arunachala Gounder known as south house (Theerku valavu) Arunachala Gounder were the source of inspiration to Thooran for writing poems lyrics and also getting interest in much.

Thooran learnt music from N.Sivaramakrishna Iyer, the music teacher at Sri Ramakrishna Vidhyalaya where he was working from 1933-47. Thooran wrote many kirthanas during that period and composed music for them in consultation with N.Sivaramakrishana Iyer. Thus his interest in music began to grow.

Then, during that time Annamalai University announced prizes for good songs. Some of the students of Thooran informed him about this and requested him to send his kirthanas to Annamalai University. But Thooran refused to send his devotional songs to Annamalai University for the purpose of getting prizes. But one of his students implored him to send his songs to Annamalai University. In compliance with this request of the student Thooran sent his Kirthanas to Annamalai University, which not only gave first prize to them but also published them. These Kirthanas were published by Annamalai University under the title "Tamizh Isai Padalgal". In the beginning of Tamil music movement those who opposed it questioned whether there were any Tamil songs which could be

melodiously sung. People who answered in the affirmative made arrangements to sing the songs of Gopala Krishna Bharathi, Ramalinga Swamigal, Kavimani Desika Vinayagam Pillai, Mayuram Vedanayagam Pillai and others in the platforms of Tamil music guild. Then so many poets appeared to establish that the creative power of composing musical songs in Tamil was not lost. Among them the foremost name to be mentioned is that of Periyaswamy Thooran said Ma.Po.Sivagnanam.

In India there were many people who composed music on divinity and its grace and by that they attained the lotus feet of God. Their contribution to the divine art of music is commendable. In fact, they framed rules for carnatic music, so as to preserve its purity. Among them Thygabrahmam, Muthusami Deekshidhar and Shyama Sasthiri called the trinity of divine music are in the fore front and it was they who are responsible for the purity and pristive glory. Their division of Raga into Lakshna yuktham and Isaikattam and their divine songs on the deities they worshiped are the cementing force of the carnatic music and kept it way from any dissonance in the future. Among the trinity Muthusamy Deekshidar visited all the holy temples in India, and sang in praise of presiding deities in them. Following those great musicians many creators of musical works were born in India and spread the art of music and the Bhakthi cult. Thooran followed their footsteps and composed many devotional songs in praise of lord Muruga whom he worshiped, with out any distinction of creed and religion. Thooran composed many devotional songs on deities worshiped by Hindus, and also Jesus Christ. He used to sing those songs in his sweet tone and with atmost devotion.

Kalki wrote about Thooran's songs in 1951 in his weekly 'KALKI' as follows. "Thooran songs have all the qualities of good songs composed for

the purpose of reciting with music. The Tamil words he employed in the songs are not only simple but also sweet. It is full of emotion and poetic calm. In composition of the said songs Thooran followed the cultural and refined method of his predecessors. His songs are easily understood by the present day people. He put new ideas in ode (Pallavi) and the stanza immediately follow the ode (Anu Pallavi) and the other lines (Saranam) in the poem which it is sung will keep the tempo till the end. I am able to foresee the future Tamilians who are going to live in this world after many centuries enjoying the music of Thooran, while sung by musicians and students of Music.”

By 1948, Thooran had already become widely known as a writer. When he was with the Tamil Academy working on the Encyclopaedia, he found less time for his literary work. Yet he wrote a poem every day, as part of his morning pooja. In the preface to one of his books containing his compositions, he has stated that there is nothing like “singing in praise of God almighty for it gives you all kinds of pleasure and helps you to lead your life in an orderly way.” Emphatic in his view that “music and divinity are inseparables,” he has written numerous devotional songs, addressed to Lord Muruga mainly.

Though he has written nearly three hundred songs, setting them to music was mostly been the work of his music teacher, N.Sivaramakrishnan of Coimbatore, “I had the pleasure of learning music from him,” says Thooran. And further says “we used to sit together and prepare the notations for my songs. Though it was my guru who set the lyrics to music, he always consulted me and no composition was complete unless it satisfied both of us, “Palghat K.V.Narayanasami, T.K.Govinda Rao, T.M.Thiagarajan, T.V.Sankaranarayanan, Kumbakonam Viswanathan and

Vanaja Narayanan have also helped Thooran in tuning some of his compositions.

Thooran's song, "Aadu Raattee Suzhandradu raattee" made him popular initially during the days of the freedom struggle, thanks to the silken voice of N.C.Vasanthakokilam in whose concerts the song was used to be a 'must'. School children and even workers used to sing or hum the song. Later, when Mahatma Gandhi died in January 1948. Thooran wrote another memorable song, "Kanbadendru Namm Inimel Gandhiyaippoloru Santha Mahatmavai" (when again will we see another gentle mahatma like Gandhi) – which was a rage with the masses.

The Annamalai University has published two volumes containing 150 of Thooran's songs. The Alliance Company of Mylapore and the Tamil Isai Sangam have produced one volume each. All the four books give full notation for all the songs. These have helped in furthering the cause of Tamil Isai. His compositions were demonstrated in one of the Tamil Isai festivals by a team of six musicians led by Kalpagam Raman and received much acclaim. Musiri, GNB, Chembai, Ariyakudi and Dandapani Desigar used to include Thooran's compositions in their concerts, he has a composition on the Kanchi Paramacharya, 'Punniyam Oru kodi'. It was tuned and sung by Palghat K.V.Narayanaswamy in the immediate presence of the Paramacharya in the raga Keeravani. Radha and Jayalakshmi have cut a disc with Thooran's compositions, Sama Ghana Priye (Anandhabhairavi), Muruga Muruga (Saveri), Konji konji Vaa Guhane (Khamas) Kaliyuga Varadhan (Brindavana Saranga) Thaye Tripurasundari (Suddha Saveri), Harihara Sudane Ayyappa (Abhogi) Muraleedhara Gopala (Mond) are some of the highly popular songs of Thooran, which often find a place in a concert.

Although Thooran has felt that the rendering of his songs by so many illustrious musicians is his best reward, recognition for his literary achievements as well as his composition of lyrics has come from reputable organizations as well. Among them; a prize for his musical compositions from the Annamalai University; the title of 'Isai Perarignar' from the Tamil Isai Sangam in 1972; and the title of 'Kalaimamani' from the Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Manram in 1970. In 1978 the MAC Charities presented the Raja Sir Annamalai Chettiar Award of Rs.10,000/- to him. Thooran has placed the full amount in a trust and from its earnings he arranged a couple of Carnatic music concerts every year.

The Government of India has also recognized Thooran's services to Tamil literature and Carnatic music. In 1968, it awarded him the "Padma Bhushan". Periaswamy Thooran is a lover of Classical Carnatic music and a concerned participant in it. He observes: "There is no doubt that our Carnatic music is the greatest among the various systems of music in the world. But it is losing ground slowly. The most important one is that the younger generation is not much in the world. But it is losing ground slowly. The most important one is that the younger generation is not much interested in Carnatic music. Moreover they are attracted to other kinds of music."

"Merely saying that our music is incomparable is not of any use. If we don't get the next generation involved in this music, it will have no future. How are we going to do this? No art can thrive without public patronage."

"For nearly thirty to forty years, I have delved deeply into the music of our great trinity and still I have not discovered all its greatness. Year after year, I find new pleasures tastes and nuances. But the present generation, leading a life of speed, haste and tension, is too impatient to get involved in our music. How then are we to attract the youngsters?"

“Let us start with simple things and gradually take them to the Himalayan heights of Carnatic Music. There is no point in taking someone to the ocean for a bath when he is afraid to take a dip in a small stream. Once the youngsters discover the pleasure of a dip in a stream, they will themselves seek the greater depths of Ganga, Jamuna and Kaveri. So the first step would be to make them enjoy the traditional beauty of Carnatic music through simple songs. I greatly admire the contribution of the music Trinity and mine is only the initial step in the direction of approaching the Trinity. My effort is like a tiny stream compared to the mighty ocean of Carnatic music. I want our younger generation to begin with a dip in this stream”. says, Thooran.

The “stream” that Thooran talks about is neither thin nor shallow, consisting as it does of several works of considerable merit. These include Navamani Isai Malai, Isai Mani Manjari, Murugan Arul Mani Malai and Keerthanai Amudam. They contain his simple compositions in Tamil, forty five to fifty in each with full musical notations. He has offered them to upcoming musicians free of cost, as an encouragement to them.

Old stalwarts like Musiri, Semmangudi and P.Sambamoorthy have appreciated Thooran’s services to music with their balanced forewords to his books. According to the late Professor Sambamoorthy, the bhakti element pervades Thooran’s lyrics and Sahitya and sangita have merged, as if in a flowing river. The late Musiri Subramania Iyer commended the simple language of Thooran’s songs which made them easily understandable and enjoyable. According to Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, while Thooran’s songs reveal variety – they include Kriti-s, Viruttam-s, Kavadihindu-s, and Navaragamalika-s-. Their simple language is amenable to a musical set-up with apt rage bhava and laya elements :

The great musician S.Ramanathan wrote about Thooran. “Thooran handled various musical songs. His deft handling of Varnam, Kirthanas, mixture of Ragas, Thillana and Patham are remarkable. He also earned fame by composing Kavadichindhu. He used some rare rages like Vandhanatharani, Vilasini besides the ancient ragas like Severi, Kambhodhi, Sankarabaranam, Kapi, Sakaravaham in his songs.”

Sandilyan said while referring to Thooran’s Kirthanas thus: “Once Thooran asked someone to sing his Kirthanas and asked his (ie. Sandilyan’s) opinions. He himself would have sung it. But Thooran would not set foot in matter in which he was not an adept and that is why he asked someother vidhvan to sing his song. Many would not have restrain and repression. Many people torchered me by singing the song by them. But Poet Thooran did not cross his limit though the limit was great and deep. The songs written by such people add more flavour and joy in obundance to Tamil.”

Thus he sowed the seed for the research of Tamil tunes and wrote number of kirthanas and tuned them. He published many books on music, with Swara and Thala notations, and did a yeoman service to Tamil Music. His name and fame will live as long as the Tamil and Tamil Music live. In appreciation of his devotional songs in 1971 the pontiff of Dharmapura Adhinam conferred the title “Senthamizh Kalai Selvar” on him in 1971.

### **Research on Tamil *Punns***

Thooran did a thorough research on Tamil *Punns* and came to the conclusion that carnatic music had its origin from these *punns*. He presented a paper on History of Tamil *Punns* in 1949 at Tamil Isai Sangam. Prof.Sambamoorthy presented a paper on *Punns* and present day Ragas. This paved the way for *Punn* Research in Tamil Isai Sangam.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **SERVICE TO SOCIETY**

The experience of Thooran both in British India and Independent India induced him to work for the eradication of social evils and maladies from this country. He wanted to see and establish a casteless, creedless society. His stories and poems aimed at it. In fact he himself followed these principles in his own life and worked for the upliftment of the society.

When Thooran was the warden of the hostel in Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidhyalaya, Gandhi came to this Vidhyalaya to collect donations for Harijan uplift. Then Vidhyalaya was an elementary school having only 50 students. Students and teachers lived in the hostel without any difference on the basis of caste. Brahmin and non-brahmin students were there. The students themselves would cook and in fact there was none who could be called a servant in the hostel.

Before the visit of Mahathma Gandhi to the Vidhyalaya it was decided to give food to all those who come there. to meet Gandhiji. But it was proposed to bring cooks from Coimbatore for preparing food as it was thought students could not cook food in large scale to meet the needs of the expected visitors.

It was also decided that the students would look after the works of cutting the vegetables, serving the food, and the other miscellaneous works. Cooks from Coimbatore arrived as planned. Then came a problem.

One of the cooks approached Thooran and said, "We have no objection to the Harijan boys helping us : But when some the visitors come to know that they are Harijans, we will never again be called for our professional work during functions anywhere in this district."

Thooran was now at a fix. He didn't want to segregate the Harijans, as that would go very much against his own conscience, apart from vitiating the atmosphere of the hostel which was hitherto most congenial and exemplary. Meanwhile the student leader brought forth a set of students. These students had their bath early in the morning, applied sandalpaste and kumkum on their foreheads and came to assist the cooks. Some of them were Harijans. But on seeing those students the cooks accepted their help without any hesitation and the function went on smoothly. Thus, Thooran escaped from telling them a lie and at the same time preserved his principles and policies. This incident left an indelible impression in Thooran's mind. One of his Pongal Songs runs thus:

“Pirivugal Pesiye Poossalittu – Pazham  
Pethaimai Thalliye Anaivarum  
Oru Thanikkudumbamai Vazhinthiduvoam – Nammul  
Otrumai Oangida Cheithiduvoam”

In his stories and dramas he condemned the caste system and thereby created social awareness and worked for unity of all. Thooran respected all religions. In his book titled 'Poovin Sirippu' he wrote: "As far as I know I can say without any hesitation that not only Hinduism but also other religions like Buddhism, Jainism, Islam and Christianity consider loving others as the main principle and path of life." Thooran had a great respect for Hinduism. He had deep belief in Hindu Puranas and epics.. Through his writings Thooran not only depicted the cancerous malignity of society caused by the differences of caste and religion, but he also did not fail to describe how an individual should behave in the society. He thought each individual must follow an ethical code of conduct.

Thooran was a Gandhian whose life is a good example for any society to follow. Thooran washed his clothes even when he was not keeping good health. He always wore Khadhi cloth and lived a simple life. When his dhotis became torn he used them as towels, when these towels became torn he used them as handkerchieves.

Even when he was severely affected with physical disabilities, he did not stop writing his thoughts and books on Bharathi.

He dictated his thoughts to his daughter Saradhamani and other volunteers like Murugan. Murugan was sent by Arutselvar N. Mahalingam Thooran's indefatigable will power and his untiring work gave us many good books on various subjects. Thooran, wrote many books on Bharathi, when he was bed ridden with paralytic stroke which affected one half of his body.

As man's skill at high flown orations is seldom so good an index of his character and seldom elevate him to great position in life, as exalted thought and exalted way of life.

When Karl Marx was asked about the difference between his teachings and that of college professors, he replied that he had come not only to teach but also to practice what he taught. Thooran not only preached through his speeches and writings but also put them into practice.

Natarajan, the director of Coimbatore station of All India Radio said that 'whenever he read stories and poems of Thooran he was able to feel and see the heart of a true patriotic poet and the heart of a mother who is very much keen on social reform, and everyone who read them would also feel and see the same as he felt. Through his poems, 'Ilam Thamizha' 'Illamai' (youth) 'Azhaippu'

(Invitation) Thooran gave good advice to younger generations. The poem 'Jai Hindh', 'Veeran Kumaran' (Brave Kumaran) 'Kizavium Raanavum' (Old lady and Rana) would prove the deep patriotism of Thooran. Gandhiji taught Ahimsa to the world. Thooran, who strictly followed the Gandhian principles, severely condemned the proliferation of atomic weapons and the tragedy and the distraction that might be caused by them. He said that all those weapons should be thrown into the deep sea.

Thooran was a great lover of all his fellowmen; his mind knew no distinctions or barriers. His was a religion of love, compassion and service. He held that any society would be considered a civilized one only if it felt pained at the sufferings of people in any part of the world. "Bombs, tanks and submarines alone are not the wealth of a nation," he said, "and mankind can attain salvation only through practice of universal brotherhood". His poems always depicted love for the entire human race, may in fact for all living beings in Nature and he strove ceaselessly for the progress of all.

Thooran was a keen observer of all the strata of the society. He brought out the good and evil of the same and used his thoughts in his writings, which were aimed at good wishes, reconciliation and comradeship in humanity.

## CONCLUSION

Thooran, at his tender age lost his mother. And he was brought up by his maternal grand-mother. She would tell many stories. In fact, it was this experience that gave him the basis for his stories. It was pointed out by Thooran in an article which came in Gokulam (Tamil, Children's magazine), Moreover, his paternal uncle Arunachala Gounder and agnate whose name is Therkku Valavu (South House) Arunachala Gounder nurtured a zeal in the mind of Thooran to write poems and the desire to write songs in Tamil set to music respectively. These things enabled Thooran to write poems even in his school/days. There was none to take care of Thooran's education. Though Thooran's father sent him to school he did not, pay due care about his studies. But Thooran himself moulded his career. Thooran was the first person to complete his under graduation in his village. After this he joined Coimbatore Ramakrishna Mission School as warden and later became the Headmaster of the same school. He got first prize for his songs from the Annamalai University which conducted a music competition. His songs were also published by the Annamali University which conducted a music competition. His songs were also published by the Annamalai University. When the Tamil Academy was started in 1947 he was appointed as the Secretary. He took the full responsibility of publishing the Kalaikkalanchiyam (Tamil encyclopaedia). He brought out both General Encyclopaedia and children's Encyclopaedia with meticulous care. The compilation of "Bharathi's Tamil" which consists of Bharathi's poems, essays and political comments was done by Thooran which were originally published in Swadesamitran, a Tamil daily. He induced the Tamil scholars to write books on various fields such as psychology, embryology through his books in the aforesaid field. He felt this was an essential one for the development of language. He also copied

some valuable works like “Poet Kalamega’s” Chithramadal, and Avinasi Navan’s Thingalur Nonndi from the palm leaf – manuscripts and did yeoman service to Tamil. In fact all his works enriched the Tamil language and literature.

In the field of Music Thooran’s place is commendable. He wrote more than 300 songs with swara notations. He encouraged the younger generation to play their role in the field of Music. Thooran gave books which consists of his songs with swara notations free of cost to encourage the younger generation. He only initiated the research on “*punn*”. Thooran was also a good painter.

Thooran was also a keen observer of all the strata of society and brought out the good and evil of the same and used his thought as ink in his writings which were aimed at good wishes reconciliation and comradeship in humanity.

Thooran’s services to Tamil language, literature, Tamil Music and to the society are noteworthy. He led a simple life and showed no partiality to anyone on the basis of caste creed and religion. He gave due respect to all the religions. Without taking into consideration of his health problem for more than a decade he went a long way and achieved a lot. His Encyclopaedia, Bharathi Tamizh, his songs set to music and his principle of loving all made him immortal. In conclusion it can be said that Thooran was a beacon light to the Tamil world.

## **APPENDIX –I**

### **TAMIL BOOKS WRITTEN AND PUBLISHED BY THOORAN**

#### **I. Four Volumes of Poetry**

1. Ilanthamizha
2. Minnal Poo
3. Nilap Pinju
4. Patti Paravaigal

#### **II. Six Volumes of Short Story Collections**

1. Thanga Changili
2. Pillai Varam
3. Maavilakku
4. Kaalingarayan Kodai
5. Urimaip Penn
6. Thooran Ezhuthoviyangal

#### **III. Three Volumes of Literary Essays**

1. Thein Chittu
2. Poovin Sirippu
3. Kaattu Vazhithanile

#### **IV. Plays**

1. Azhagu Mayakkam
2. Ponninyin Thyagam
3. Choozhchi
4. Ilan Thuravi
5. Aadhi Aththi
6. Manak Kugai
7. Kaadhalum Kadamaiyum

## **V. Books on Psychology**

1. Kuzanthai Ullam
2. Kuzanthai Manamum Athan Malarchiyum
3. Thazhvu Manappanmai
4. Adi Manam
5. Manamum Adhan Villakamum
6. Kumara Paruvam

## **VII. Book on Embryology**

Karuvil Valarum Kuzhandhai

## **VIII. Book on Genetics**

1. Paarambariyam
2. Petror Kodutha Perung Kodai

## **IX. Books for Children**

1. Songs
  1. Aanaiyum Poonaiyum
  2. Nalla Nalla Pattu
  3. Mazhalai Amudham
2. Animal Stories and Other Stories
  1. Natya Rani
  2. Jimmy
  3. Nila Paatti
  4. Olai Kili
  5. Thambiyin Thiramai
  6. Kadakkitti Mudakkitti
  7. Manjal Muttai

### 3. Long Stories for Children

1. Maaya Kallan
2. Soorap Puli
3. Kollimalai Kullan
4. Sangagiri Kottaiyin Marmam
5. Tharangambody Thangappudhaiyal

### 4. Science Book for Children

Parakkum Manidhan

## **X. Musical Compositions with Swara Notations**

1. Two Volumes published through Annamalai University Containing 150 songs
2. Isai Mani Malai
3. Isai Mani Manjari
4. Murugan Arul Mani Maalai
5. Keerthanai Amudham

## **XI. Folk Songs**

Katril Vandha Kavithai

## **XII. Translations from English to Tamil**

1. Kanagathin Kural (Original – Jack London’s call of the wild)
2. Kadal Kadandha Natppu – (Original Naomi Mitchison’s Judy and Lakshmi)
3. Paravaigalaip Par – (Original Jamal Aara’s Watching Binds)

## **XIII. Editions**

1. Bharathi Tamizh

2. Thakurin Aimperum Katturaigal

#### **XIV. Published from Palm Leave Manuscripts**

1. Poet Kalamega's Chithira Madal – Published with Anotations and Explanatory notes – (Poetry)
2. Vadivel Pillai's Mohini Vilasam (Dance Drama)
3. Avinashi Navalan's Thingalur Nonndi Nadakam – (Folk Song)

#### **XV Books on Bharathi**

1. Bharathi Noolagal Oru thiranaivu
2. Bharathiyarin Nagaichuvaikum, Naiyaandiyum.
3. Bharathiyum Ulagamum
4. Bharathiyum Kadavulum
5. Bharathiyum Samoogamum
6. Bharathiyum Thamizhagamum
7. Bharathiyum Paattum
8. Bharathiyum Paapaavum
9. Bharathiyum Pennmaiyum
10. Bharathiyum Bharatha Desamum

#### **XVI. Compilation of Encyclopaedias**

1. General Encyclopaedia, 10 Volumes
2. Children's Encyclopaedia 10 Volumes

## APPENDIX – II

### AWARDS OF MERIT RECEIVED

1. Awarded a gold medal by the Tamil Writers' Association for unearthing the hidden articles. poems and short stories of Poet Subramanya Bharathi and Publishing them in a book of 700 pages.
2. Awarded a prize of Rs.500/- by the Central Government for writing about the Neo- literates on Embryology.
3. Awarded a prize of Rs.500/- for his book of songs for children by the Madras Educational Department.
4. Awarded a prize of Rs.500/- for his book of stories for children by the Children Writers' Association, Madras.
5. Awarded a shield by the Bharathi Sangam, Madras, for his contribution to Bharathi Literature.
6. Awarded a shield by the Children's Writers' Association of his contributions to Children's Literature.
7. Awarded Padma Bhushan by the Government of India in 1968 for his distinguished service to Tamil Language and Literature.
8. Awarded a prize for his book of musical composition by the Annamalai University, Chidhambaram.
9. Conferred the title 'Perunthamizh Selvar' by Nakkeeran Kazhagam, Madras.
10. Conferred the title of 'Kalaimamani' by the Iyel, Isai, Nataka Mandram, Madras for his contribution to the Carnatic Music.
11. Conferred the title of "Senthamizh Kalaichelvar" by his Holiness Sri la Sri Subramanaya Desika Paramacheerya Swamigal, Head of the Dharmapura Adheenam, for his contribution to Tamil Literature and also to devotional songs.

12. Conferred the title “Tamizh Aringar” by Nanneri Kazhagam, Coimbatore for his contribution to Tamil.
13. Conferred the title “Isai Peraringar” by the Tamil Isai Sangam, for his contribution to Carnatic Music.
14. Conferred the title “Kavidha Sudharnava” by the Murali Art Ravali for his contribution to Tamil Literature.

### **APPENDIX – III**

#### **POSTS HELD**

1. President of the Tamil Writers’ Association.
2. Member of the Central Advisory Board, AIR, New Delhi.
3. Member of the Advisory Board, AIR, Madras.
4. Member of the Iyal, Isai, Nataka Mandram, Madras.
5. Member film Censor Board, Madras.
6. Member, Text Book Committee, Educational Department, Madras.
7. Member Sahitya Academy, Regional Branch, Madras.
8. Secretary, Tamil Academy (Started in 1947) from the very beginning.
9. Member, Advisory Committee, Central College of Carnatic Music, Madras.
10. Member, Academic Council, University of Madras.
11. Hon. Advisor, Tamil Encyclopaedia II Edition.
12. Member Tamil Isai Advisory Committee.
13. Member of the Executive Committee, All India Writers’ Sangam.
14. Chairman, MAC Charities Awards Committee.