

**DISCOVERING DIVINE SWEETNESS - BHARATHIDASAN
AN ARDENT DEVOTEE OF TAMIL LANGUAGE**

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*Bharathidasan and his recuperative poetic venture
Heard melodies are sweet but those unheard
Are sweeter:*

Abstract

True to this poetic perception of Keats, Bharathidasan, the bard of universal significance strives to explore the unfelt, unheard and the hidden, innate sweetness of the ancient Tamil language. The seed from which the fragrant, pleasant blossoms of his poetic composition sprout is undoubtedly, his intense passion for Tamil language. Poets are individualists. No doubt in it. But the personality of a poet, to some extent is molded by the literary, social, historical and political background of the age in which he lives. The thematic network of a poem is framed by the cherished ideals of the community or the clan to which the poet belongs. This literary feature of a bard makes him play a vital social role as a revolutionary or as a reformer with recuperative objectives. Based on this perspective it would be appropriate to presume that Bharathidasan evolved as a powerful force of literary significance with a dominant literary objective to uplift on to raise Tamil language to a higher moral, social and cultural level and to regain or recuperate its classical antiquity.

Keywords: Keats, Bharathidasan, literary, Sanskrit, Hindi, English

There can be a literary dichotomization of his poetic concerns as (i) recuperative concerns and (ii) innovative concerns. His literary works on the creativity and clarity of Tamil language and literature lend a quintessential expression to his recuperative concerns. His innovative concerns take shape in his works on social evils, religious dogmas and British imperialism.

Language lies at the root of every culture. It is the symbol of national identity. Bharathidasan has an obfuscating obsession with Tamil language. His pre-occupation with language was caused by the prevalence of the social powerlessness of Tamil language reinforced by the intrusion of other languages like Sanskrit, Hindi and English.

Moreover, he had Bharathi, the renowned poet before him as his literary predecessor in the line of Tamil literary tradition who inspired him with his fiery passion for Tamil language. Tamil language is not merely a means of communication but it is a cultural manifestation of the ancient heritage of Tamilians. Bharathidasan poured out his intense passionate thunder-like outburst of his deep feelings in the following lines:

மொழி என்றால் உயிரின் நரம்பு – நல்
முத்தமிழ் மொழியோ தமிழர் வரம்பு
மழையால் நள்செய் ஆகும் கரம்பு – நின்
வாழ்நாளெல்லாம் வைத்துத் தமிழை விரும்பு!

When he gives vent to his attachment toward Tamil language he appears as a libertarian who cannot be circumscribed by any narrow limitation. He exercised entire

literary autonomy without being assailed by the harrowing barriers. His words and phrases tingle with utility and warmth, with sonorous, majesty and stern inflexibility.

தமிழை இகழ்வோன் மடையோன்!
தமிழில் தமிழினைக் காணான் கடையன்
அமிழ்தில் சுவை காணான், எவ்வறிவுடையான்!
அழிப் பாணை, மகனே! ஆழித்திடத் தடை ஏன்?

Socio - historical perspectives on Bharathidasan's contribution to Tamil language and culture.

The beginning of the 20th century witnessed Tamil Renaissance which exercised a remarkable influence on every aspect of Tamil language, literature and culture. As a poet who lived during that time Bharathidasan strived to revive the study of the classics in Tamil and he insisted on the revival of the glorious past. His literary works brought out an intellectual and spiritual awakening in the minds of the Tamil people. The renaissance spirit and rationalistic approach dominate in the poems of Bharathidasan. His plea for the necessity of learning Tamil was sweet, spontaneous and full - throated. He explained in his creative work 'Azhalagin Cirippu' that Tamil the elixir of human life, a symbol of the heritage of virtuous Tamilians has got the immoral characteristic of individual and independent existence without the intrusion of other languages. He insisted on the need for improved intellectual activities of Tamilians and for greater literacy in Tamil. He proclaimed that Tamil language should be used for all purposes - political, cultural economic and social. As a revivalist who has contributed to Tamil literary Renaissance he dreamt of Tamilnadu as a district linguistic entity with historic past. The spirit of renaissance and the fervency of nationalist movement pervade in his creative writings.

Bharathidasan emerges at a devout follower of Bharathi who was known as 'Teciyaakavi', a nationalist poet. As a passionate lover of Tamil, Bharathi said "Tamil has the same historical status as Sanskrit, and Tamil can well be the vehicle of modern thought and must be the medium of government and of education. Tamilnadu has been in the forefront even of Indian Renaissance". It gave recognition to Swami Vivekanandha even before Bangal gave him due recognition". Bharathidasan, too as a sincere devotee of Bharathi glorified Tamil language and its ancient heritage. He sings:

தமிழ்நாடே வாழ்க! எம்
தாய்நாடே வாழ்க!
அமிழ்தாகிய இயல், இசை, கூத்து என்னும்
தமிழாகிய உயிர்தழையும் விழுமிய தமிழ்நாடே! வாழ்க!

His poems on Tamil, Tamilians and Tamilnadu gave impetus to Tamil historical research-the need of studying Tamil literature for its literary and religious values. Bharathidasan, as a disciple of Bharathi had written many patriotic poems during the nationalist movement. By sthis literary activity he had considerably enriched and enhanced the validity of Tamil language. In his song which was published in 'Deca Seivakan' he eulogized a valorous Tamil soldier in the following lines:

எங்கள் இளந்தமிழர் வீரர் - அவர்
இப்புவி வீழினும் வீரர்! வீரர்!
சங்கப் படையினைப் போலப் - பகைத்
தீயை எதிர்த்திடும் வீரர் அவர்

He concludes the song by adoring the race of Tamil youth

வாழ்க தமிழ்க் குல வீரர்! ஆந்த
வன்மைத் தமிழ்க் குலம் வாழ்க! வாழ்க!

Bharathidasan's indefinable affinity to the Tamil language, character, and country of the Tamils always merged with Indian nationalism.

Bharathidasan insisted on the effective use of Tamil language for mass communication. The publication of a number of journals in Tamil and his various kinds of creative writings during nationalist movement contributed to the revival of Tamil language and literature.

The introduction of compulsory Hindi was opposed vehemently by Bharathidasan. He fought for the cause of Tamil Language and culture with self determined will. He stood against any kind of rival language which treated Tamil Language with enmity. During Anti-Hindi agitation his songs advocated the antiquity of Tamil language.

இந்திக்கு தமிழ் நாட்டில் ஆதிக்கமாம் - நீங்கள்
எல்லோரும் வாருங்கள் நாட்டினரே!
செந்தமிழ்க்குத் தீமை வந்தபின்னும் இந்தத்
தேகம் இருந்தொரு லாபமுண்டோ?

He stood foremost among the opponents of the introduction of compulsory Hindi. He fought with firm conviction against the displacement of Tamil by Hindi. He emphasized the importance of Tamil language which is the soul of Tamil culture in the following lines.

செந்தமிழ்க்கு நின்ற உயிர்
இந்தி வந்தால் நின்றாவிடும்.

He Co-operated with E.V. Ramasamy Periyar when he started Self-Respect Movement. As an active member of Self-Respect Movement Bharathidasan provided his whole-hearted assistance to anti-Hindi agitation. When he was imprisoned as one of the Anti-Hindi. Volunteers, the prison appeared as a pleasant garden of flowers filled with the musical notes of cuckoo. He says beautifully;

மாங்குயில் கூவிடும் பூஞ்சோலை - எமை
மாட்ட நினைக்கும் சிறைச்சாலை!
ஏங்கவிடோம் தமிழ்த்தாய்தனையை - உயிர்
இவ்வுடலைவிட்டு நீங்கும் வரை!

He insisted on the advancement of Learning Tamil. His dominant desire was that education in Tamil Language should be given to all children in Tamilnadu and Education in Tamil should be made imperative in Tamilnadu.

Bharathidasan has been one of the staunch supporters of Tamil Icai movement. The movement to popularize the singing of Tamil songs in the Carnatic music concerts performed in Tamilnadu came to he called the Tamillcai movement. The propounders of this movement were Dr.Raja Sir. Annamalai Chettiar of Chettinad and Sir.R.K.Shanmugam Chettiar. They were encouraged and assisted by great thinkers and artists like Periyar E.V.Ramasamy and revered Moodharingar Rajaji. Bharathidasan participated in many conferences conducted by the great supporters of Tamil Icai movement. He has composed several Tamil songs portraying his plea for the inclusion of Tamil songs in musical performances. He argued against the introduction of Telugu and Sanskrit elements into Tamil music system; He expressed his desire to listen to his mother tongue set to music

which was better than mere musical sounds; He argued that the introduction of Tamil into musical system was not anti cultural; He vehemently propounds his desire thus:

ஏழிசை வடவர் கண்டிலர்! அன்றியும்
யாழிசை அறியார்! குழலிசை அறியார்?
இனிமைத் தோன்றப் பாடுதல் அறியார்
ஆதியே! தமிழர் அறிந்தவர் இவைகள்!

Bharathidasan's participation in all kinds of Tamil cultural movements explicates his affinity to Tamil language. He was fascinated; to a great extent by the Tamil purism movement of Marai Malai Adigal, his attachment towards Tamil language finds expression in his book 'Tamiliyakkam'. Bharathidasan, as a great playwright proved his immense love for Tamil. He has depicted various characters as devotees of Tamil language and as significant promoters of Tamil Icai, Tamil civilization and culture. In his play piciranthaiyar; the dialogues are the illustration of the greatness of Tamil language. Piciranthaiyar says;

“தமிழின் உயிர் தமிழே ஆகும். தமிழில் பற்றில்லாதவன்
தமிழன் அல்லன்: அவன் உயிருடையவனும் அல்லன்”.

Bharathidasan calls a man without devotion for language as a corpse. Tamil is the inner soul of every Tamilian which imparts life to him

As an active participant of many social-cultural and socio-historical movements Bharathidasan stamped his image as a unique poet with strong individuality and fierce sincerity. His captivating appeal to everyone to do service to sacred Tamil forms the core of his literature. He bids everyone in the following lines;

தமிழுண்டு தமிழ் மக்களுண்டு - இன்பத்
தமிழுக்கு நாளும் செய்வோம் நல்லத் தொண்டு.ய

His name and fame will remain with eternal glory in the history of Tamil language and literature.

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