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## PRANAV JOURNAL OF FINE ARTS

### THIRUKURAL AND FINE ARTS

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**Abstract :** Thirukural is a Master –piece of Tamil Literature , treasure house of Worldly Knowledge , a treatise of par excellence and a Multi- disciplinary text which deals with all subjects. The strength of a worthy Nation depends not only on its Geographical Locations , Resource of Land, Water, Minerals, Flora and Fauna , but primarily on the skills and Characters of its people, inefficiently utilizing them. Fine-Arts is one type of this skill and character. This paper is dealing with the perception of Thiruvalluvar on Fine-Arts . He has correlated Fine-Arts like Music, Dance, Painting, Dialective art, Archery, Theatre- Arts, Poetic excellence , Puppetry and so on.

**Key words :** 64 Arts - Pan- shephards Flute - Gurukula system - Genes- Dialectic- Art - Archery - Theatre – Arts – Disguise – Ornaments – Dance – Poetic Excellence - Niroshtha – Puppetry

Thirukural is the oldest surviving vernacular literature in the Dravidian language, Tamil. It is the masterpiece of Tamil literature. It is a work of intrinsic excellence. It is a treasure house of worldly knowledge. Thirukural is a treatise par excellence on the art of living. Thiruvalluvar is a multifaceted personality dealing with many subjects. This paper is dealing with fine artistic perception of **Thiruvalluvar**

#### FINE ARTS

Fine arts is an art developed primarily for aesthetics . Distinguishing it from decorative art or applied art, which also has to serve some practical function, such as pottery, etc. Traditional categories within fine arts include Literature ( poetry, drama, story and so on), the visual arts (painting, drawing, designing, the plastic arts, sculpture, paper art, glass art, sand art, woodwork).



The strength of a worthy Nation depends not only on the geographical location, resources of land, water, minerals, flora and fauna, but primarily on the skills and character of its people efficiently utilizing them. Fine arts are one of this skill and character.

## MUSIC:

Music is a protean art, it lends itself easily to alliances with words as in story and with physical movement as in dance. Throughout history, music has been an important adjunct to ritual and drama. It has been credited with the capacity to reflect and influence human emotion. Music is an universal language and can be applied to any art form. It is an art of combining vocal and instrumental sounds in a harmonious or expressive way.

## SOUND OF MUSIC

The sweetness of sound is explained through musical instruments like **flute and lute**. By referring musical instruments, music in fine arts is appreciated in kural.

The pipe is sweet the lute is sweet, say men who have not heard their children's prattle-(66)

*Kuzhalinidhu yAzhinidhu enpatham makkaL*

*Mazhalaichsol kaeLA dhavar- (66)*



In another Thirukural, he refers Lute, as a bended crooked structured musical instrument, exports beautiful, charm sound.

*Let men be judged by the kinds of their deeds manifest, for in action the straight arrow is crooked and the crooked lute upright- (279)*

*Kanaikodichu yAzkoDu sevidhu Angu anna*

*Viraippadhu pAlal kOlal – (279)*

Weigh merit by behaviour not by words, the straight arrow can kill, the bent Yaz has charm in its strings.



**RAGA or PAN**

Pan is ancient name for Raga. He says Pan are the melodic tunes. He speaks about Pan in the 573<sup>rd</sup> Thriukural.

*Not in harmony with song of what avail is melody?*

*No benign grace marked of what avail are eyes?*

The melody is lost when it is not in harmony with the song. Melody is compared to the graceful eyes.

*PaNNeNNAm pAdarku iyaipuindraael kannennAm*

*KaNNOttam illAdha KaN- (574)*

The sweet music of flute is referred in kural 1228

*The heroine says The sweet music of shepherd's flute enters my ears.*

*The cowherd's flute works the herald of even tide fine like*

*And it verily stands a weapon of killing- (1228)*

**SHEPHERD WITH FLUTE**

Other than flutes and lutes, he mentions rhythmic drums and trumpets.

*The low minded are like a drum of proclamation. For they unbosom the secrets they come to hear- (1076)*

*Araiparai annarkayavartham kaetta*

*Marai pirarkku uyththuraikka daan- (1076)*

The base are keen to proclaim secrets to others like to drum beats announcing the diktats of law.

*No hard should it be for the townfolk to draw things concealed*

*From folks of my kind that have eyes tell tale trumpet-like – (1180)*

*Maraiperal UrArkku ariduandrAL empol*

*Araiparai kaNNAr agaththu- (1180)*

My eyebrows drum up and declare my grief, can I then conceal anything from probingminds of folks around?



### MUSIC BY HEARING METHOD

In ancient times, music is learned through **Gurukula system**. As there were no texts, or notations for music, it was learned through oral method. The students learnt orally by hearing. Today also, learning through oral hearing is appreciated. Thiruvalluvar says

*Wealth of wealth is the wealth earned by ear  
That wealth stands first among all wealth- (411)*

The gift of good listening is a basic wealth that affords other forms of wealth, and hence the best of wealth

*Selvatthul selvam sevichchelvam achchelvam  
selvatthul ellaam thalai- (411)*

He also says even if u miss education, listen to and heed the wise that will be a saving and service staff in terms of need.

*Let a man listen unlearned through he be,  
Which in days of decline will prop him up – (414)*

*Katrilan Ayinum ketka agthouruvarku  
Orkaththin ootnAm thunai – (414)*

### MUSIC THROUGH ANCESTORS (GENES)

Now it has been proved that the music knowledge is hereditary. It is passed on to next generation through **genes**.

*The learning a person acquires in one birth  
will secure his good through all the seven- (398)*

*Orumaikkan than kattru kalvi oruvarkku  
Ezhumaiyum emAppu udaithu – (398)*

Thiruvaluvar refers ezhumai for future generation and future seven birth. Not only music all the Finearts are hereditary in nature.



### **FINE ARTS AND PRACTICE**

Practice and repetition makes anything perfect. Deep learning gives best knowledge.

*Thottanaitthu Urum manarkeni mAndarkku*

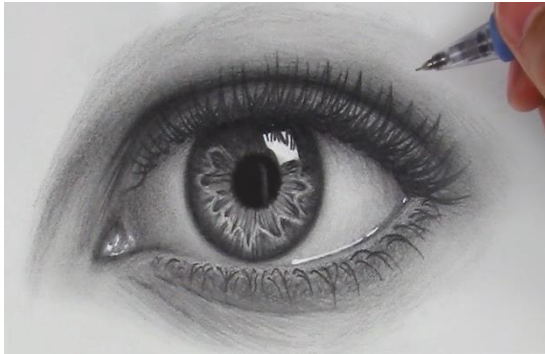
*Kattranaitthu Urum arivu – (396)*

*Water wells up in the sandy soil to the extent dug  
knowledge accumulates in proportion to learning- (396)*

Deeper you dig the sand, the higher a spring flows,  
Ardour you devote to learning, the fuller is the knowledge.

The deeper we dig the ground , we get more water like that by more and more learning , the knowledge gets elevated, the art becomes perfect.

### **DRAWING OR PAINTING**



Drawing and painting are important form in the visual art. It is an art or technique of producing images on a surface by means of marks usually of ink, graphics(pencil), chalk, charcoal or crayon.

*ezhudhunkAl kolkANAk kannaeOl konkan*

*pazhikAnaen kaNda idatthu- (1285)*

*The faults of my Lord I see not when I see Him*

*As does the eye that sees not the pencil that paints it – (1285)*

My eyes cannot see the brush or pencil when painting . The heroine says during make up, when I paint my eyelids or eyebrows, I cannot see the stick or pencil which paints. When we draw something on a paper surface, we will not be able to see the brush or stick which we use for painting. Our eyes visualize only the drawing.



Beauty and stature of the one, without mental acumen of learning is like a terracotta doll painted bright. The painted doll will be bright and beautiful . Without a acumen of learning , a person will be like a painted doll.

## DIALECTIC ART

A discussion and reasoning by dialogue as a method of intellectual investigation specifically the Socratic techniques or exposing beliefs and eliciting truth. It is also called logical argumentation.

*Artin alavarindhu karka avaijanjA*

*MAtram kodutthal poruttu – (725)*

1. *For you to address the queries in councils undaunted*

*Be learned in the lore of logic in due measure – (725)*

Learn the logic and substance of good speaking to counter and convince an assembly by arguments.

2. *Vagaiarindhu vallavai vAisOrAr sollin*

*Thogaiarindha thooimai yavar – (721)*

*High minded men falter not in councils of mighty folks grounded in discourse and versed in councils moods that they are – (721)*

Strength of pure knowledge fails not on the power of words and a mode of delivery to suit the mood of the council.

3. *Arangindri vattAdi yatre nirambia*

*Nulindrik kotti kotal – (401)*

*To venture into an assembly on a squareless board – (401)*

The uneducated venturing a debate with a wise is like playing chess without squares on the board.

## ARCHERY

It is an activity of searching for something. It is one of the sports, needing more concentration. It is one of an art of skill. It is with weapons like







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bow, string, arrow which are capable of long range indirect fire at a target too distant to be seen.

A person who shoots arrows with a bow is called archer. Archery is one of the oldest art form. It is featured prominently in many legends, as a symbol of strength and skill.

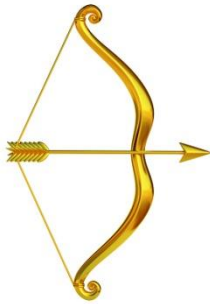
*Thavam marainthu allavai seidhal pudhal maraindhu*

*Vettuvan pulchimizhnd dhatru – (274)*

*Pursuit of things unrighteous under the ascetic veil*

*Is like a flower cover pelting kinds in thicket – (274)*

Here a stealthy hunter is mentioned.



Structure of bow is mentioned in 827 couplet

*Solvanakkam onnArkan kollarka vilvanakkam*

*thEngu kuvitthamai yAn – (827)*

Know the evil intent of the bow pliant as you do

Take not the words pliant coming from the hostile folk

Mentioning of Arrow.

1. *Kanaikodidhu YAz kodu – (279)*

*Let men be judged by the kinds of their deeds manifest*

*For in action the straight arrow is crooked and the (crooked) lute upright – (279)*

2. *An elephant fights to its reputation, unmindful of arrows, the courageous relent not in adversities, the elephant stands fast at the strike of arrows deep – (297)*

3. *KAna muyal eidha ambinal – (772)*



*Higher does it merit to hold the lance that missed an elephant  
Than to keep the arrow that hit the woodland hare – (772)*

## THEATRE ARTS (PERFORMING ARTS)

The performing arts are arts such as music, dance and drama which are performed for an audience. The theatre art is a collaborative artform which combines words, voice, movements and visual elements to express meaning.

### DRAMA

*KoothAttu avaikkuzhA thatre perunjselvam – (332)*

*Wealth's increase is like a throng at a theatre*

*It outgo is like the throng breaking up – (332)*

Like a theatre crowd at a passing show, wealth gathers slowly melts away fast. In a theatre, the crowd will disintegrate when the show was over.



### DISGUISE (ACTING)

It is to change the appearance, sound, etc of somebody, so that the people cannot recognize him. It is one of the main aspects of Drama. A disguise can be anything which conceals or changes a person's physical appearance.

Thiruvalluvar speaks about many disguises.

1. *Mazhitthalum nEttalum vendA ulagam – (280)*

*Disguising oneself with tonsuring head or tangling hair are of no avail if what is condemned as evil is not renounced.*

*Steered clear of things the world has disapproved of*

*Matted hair or shaven head adds nothing whatever – (280)*

He says outward appearance is of no use.

2. *Valiyil nilaimaiyAn valluruvam petram*

*Puliyinthol porthu maeyn dhatru – (273)*







*The posture of might by a weakling*

*Is like a cow grazing in tiger's garb- (273)*

The weakling's posturing sainthood, is like a cow grazing with the disguise of tiger's skin. There people hide their wickedness in false exteriors.



**TERRACOTTA DOLL**

2. *NunmAn nuzhaipulam illAn ezhilnalam*

*ManmAn punaipAvai yatru – (407)*

*One's imposing looks sans subtle perceptive mind*

*Is like a clay doll grandly decked – (407)*

Beauty and stature of the one, without mental acumen of learning, is like a **terracotta doll**, painted bright .

## MAKE UP

Make up is one of the main criteria of Drama. Without makeup, a drama or dance cannot be performed.

Thiruvalluvar speaks about the make up of a spy

1. *KadA uruvodu kananjaadu yAndum*

*Uga amai vallade otru – (385)*

A spy wear unsuspected guise, knows no fear and reveals no intelligence, is a perfect and true one. Unsuspected pose and guise, fearless face, and resolve to guard secrets bring success to an able spy.



2. *EzhudungAl kol kaaAa kannae pol konkan*

*PazhikAnen kanda vidatthu – (1285)*

This thirukural speaks about the make up for eyes and eyebrows. The heroine says she could not see the brush while painting her eyebrows and eyelashes.

*The faults of my Lord I see not when I see Him*

*As does the eye sees not the pencil that paints it – (1285)*

### **DANCE**

In the field of dance Eyes shows all the meaning through expressions. The dancers are able to express Navarasas through eyes. Eyes are the important source of expressions to reveal the meaning of the story. Thiruvalluvar says

*Kurppir kurippuharaa Ayin uruppinul*

*Enna payatthavo kan – (705)*

Of what avail are eyes of all one's parts

If they cannot divine another's mind by gestures.

The eyes among senses are not useful if they cannot read a mind through symptoms on the face.



### **ORNAMENTS**

There are many as 17 couplets dealing with adorning eyes, lips and other parts of the body with their beauty enhanced by jewels which are exclusive compliments to ladies. The following couplets has ornaments as words (95,115,575,911,919,1081,1089,1101,1102,1110,1113,1114,1124,1134,1135,1202,1273,1275 and 1329)

1. Its humble bearing and sweetness of tongue

That make for one's ornaments true as no other does- (95)

2. Decline and prosperity are not things unnatural

Swerving not from justness is sage man's adornments –(115)

3. Looks of compassion are eye's adornments true  
Want of which shows them sores on the face –(575)

4. Disgrace the honeyed words of women with exquisite **bangles** -(911)

5. The tender arms of licentious women exquisitely bejewelled –  
(919)



6. Whatever is that woman with heavy **pendants** decked?-(  
1181)



7. What for should one deck her with adornments extraneous-(1189)

8. She with lustrous **bracelets** holds altogether-(1101)

9. The bejewelled maid the ailment- giver is healer as  
well- (1102)



10. Shoot is her fame, **pearls** are her teeth, fragrance is  
her body's odour

And lance her painted eyed-(1113)

11. I stand no equal to the eyes of this maid exquisitely jewelled – (1114)

12. She with choice ornaments adorned in my life – (1124)

13. She decked with the string of **bracelets** garland – (1135)

14. She looked at her **bracelets** – (1279)



15. May the bright jewelled one – (1329)

### POETIC EXCELLENCE OR PROSODY

Prosody is the study of all the elements of language that contribute towards aesthetic and rhythmic effects.

#### Excellence through syllables:

A syllable is a unit of pronunciation. Each letter can be called as a syllable

1. Couplet coined with short vowels or syllables : The whole couplet is constructed with short syllables. There is no long syllables. Only through transliteration, we can observe this specific nature of short syllables.

*Karka kasadara karpavai katrapin*

*Nirka adharku thaga – (391)*

Couplets coined with long syllables: This can also be observed through transliteration only

1. *YAgAvAr Ayinum nAkAkka kAvAkAl*  
*SOkkAppar solliluku pattu – (127)*
2. *KAnAdhAn kAttuvAn thAnkAnAn kAnAthAn*  
*KandAn Am tAn kanda vAru – (849)*



### RHYTHMIC SYLLABLES

Rhythm is created by the pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in a line or verse. A letter or a word repeated consecutively in a line or verse to form rhythm.

1. *ThuppArkku thuppAya thuppAkki thuppArkku*

*ThuppAya thUvum mazhai- (12)*

Here in this couplet, “Thup” is repeated throughout the verse.

2. *Patruga pattrattrAn pattrinai appattrai*

*Patruga patru vidarku – (350)*

Here “patr” is repeated

### NIROSHTA

This is one of poetic excellence where the whole verse was coined in such a way that the lips are not used while pronouncing.

1. *YAdenin Aadenin nEngiyan nodhal*

*adanin adanin ilan- (341)*

2. *IrandaAr iranAar anaiyar sinathai*

*ThurandaAr thurandaAr thunai ( 410)*

3. *Eytharku ariyadu iyaindakkal annilaiye*

*Seytarku ariya seyal ( 489)*

4. *NokkinAl nokketir nokkudal tAkkangu*

*TAnaikkon dannadu udaitthu ( 1082)*

5. *Thaniye irundu ninaitthakkAl ennai*

*Thiniya irundadu en nenje ( 1296)*

While pronouncing these couplets the lips are not used. This is poetic excellence of appreciation..

### PUPPETRY ART

Puppetry is a form of theatre or performance that involves the manipulation of puppets. Often resembling





some type of human or animal figure that are manipulated by a human called a puppeteer. It is one of the oldest art forms in existence and is practiced all over the world.

### **Puppets and couplets:**

The movements of folks bereft of shame within

Are like wooden puppets worked with strings into life delusive- (1020)

Movements of deeds without any sense of shame is like

Puppet shows manipulated by strings

The expensive earth with cool springs destitute of suppliants

would resemble the stage where wooden puppets came and go – (1058)

When takers are scarce in this kind great world, lacking the pleasures of giving, people move like puppets.

### **CONCLUSION :**

As Thirukkural is a multi-disciplinary text , in this paper I have brought out and highlighted some interesting aspects of Fine-Arts. On Musical side it explores many features like Musical Instruments ,Pann , Teaching Methods, Heredity, Hearing and practicing and so on. In Theatrical arts it discloses Drama , Dialectic art, Acting, Dance, Makeup, Ornaments , puppet- show, and so on. In poetry it reveals some poetic excellences Like long syllables, Rhythmic Petterns, Niroshtha Pattern, and so on. This proves beyond doubt and confirms Thiruvalluvar's knowledge of multi – discipline art forms.

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