CHAPTER FOUR

POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF TIRUKKURAL

4.1. NECESSITY OF A GOVERNMENT

A famous Greek thinker has declared that man is a political animal. With his gregarious instinct man has to live with his fellowmen to fulfil his needs. In this process he has to protect himself from external threats and internal dangers. As man wants to live amicably with peace and harmony, it is quite natural for him to safeguard his personal as well as collective interest. In this sense a body to govern becomes inevitable. Whether it is ruled by one strong man known as monarchy, or ruled by a few officials known as bureaucracy or ruled by the representatives of people known as democracy, there arises a covenance between the ruled and the ruler or rulers. There are two kinds of governance based on the covenance. First, a few strong men become the sovereign monarchs and declare that all people must obey their commands. Whether people like or dislike, they establish an indirect relation with the citizens. Here individual freedom and rights are curtailed.
Another type of governance is that people have to select or elect their representatives who, in turn, have to rule for them. In either way the striking factor is the preservation of human welfare and peaceful co-existence. When man settled in various segments, he set up territories, frontiers etc. The role of the government is inevitable in the following lines:

1) to provide all human beings food, clothing and shelter incessantly,
2) to protect people from invaders and enemies,
3) to protect people from the anti-social and political forces within the territory,
4) to promote economic growth,
5) to distribute the commodities equally at all places,
6) to bring the commodities from places where there is excessive production and
7) to cherish moral values and punish the wicked ones.

The modern world which consists of high technological development, scientific advancement and mass media communication network, peak of civilization etc., require a good government. If there is no governmental machinery to look after the political activities, which in turn are connected to social, well being, then only chaos and confusion will prevail. During the period of Valluvar only monarchical form of government was in vogue and hence, he advocates the political philosophy pertaining to such government. One may ask a pertinent question here as to when
Valluvar speaks about the merits of aram (righteousness) porul (wealth) and inbam (joy), why he has to highlight about political ideals? Why has he incorporated the political thoughts at porulathikaram. If there is no good government in the state, these noble virtues go astray. In order to foster, preserve and protect the virtues a good ruling machinery becomes inevitable. If the vices like enmity, hatredness, confusion, drinking toddy, looking at other women, gambling, mean mindedness etc., prevail in the society then the noble qualities like aram etc. will be ineffective. Only might will become right thereby paving way to anarchism. No fair means of acquiring wealth will persist and no joy on perfect condition will predominate.

After realizing these situations, Valluvar has chosen a few topics like arasiyal (a section for government) amacchiyal (a section for ministerial bodies) etc. In the porulatikaram itself he elaborately deals with social morality. For political ideologies, it cannot exist away from social ideologies since ‘man’ is the common denomenator for both. “Undoubtedly man has the feeling of politics. A government should have been formed for the following reasons: when people after giving up the nomadic life, might have undertaken a vow to live in a few settlements. To protect themselves from the warring enemy groups, to keep their belongings safely, not being robbed of by thieves, to get away from fighting and quarrels, and to live peacefully an idea of government must have been evolved. A proper leader must have been emerged with a territorial frontier. Or, a mighty fellow must have established control over others and proclaimed himself as the leader to rule the rest of the people in a particular domain. The post of leadership might have been inherited from generation
to generation. In Tamil country wealthy people must have been the rulers since the term *kon* has been referred to ruler. Later the term king was used and his governing of an area became the kingdom*. (Parantamanar, A.K., 1963: 13-14)

In the opinion of Sambasadhasivanar, "species on earth came into existence after the evolution of the earth. It took a long time for the evolution of mankind starting from species with one sense and due to gradual growth. The historians hold that after many years’ people organised country, city, and village and engaged in agriculture and trade and finally settled with social and civilized life. Social life pertains to the unitive way of living by all sections of the people. The objective of social life is to utilize the ability, caliber etc. Of each individual for the benefit of the society and make everyone happy. A government is invented for the main purpose of the prosperity of mankind. Political text is simply the device to run the government efficiently for the sake of mankind. It is quite natural for the change of political ideologies in accordance to time and place*. (Sambasadhasivanar, 1960: 113). While analysing the above views a truth is revealed, i.e., a government is part and parcel of the society. It involves a domain or territory, people, constitution, executive body etc.

It is evident that a government ought to preserve the welfare of the people. There are number of theories regarding the origin of governance. A mighty person emerged as a powerful fellow to reign supreme the area by establishing a contract with the people. People have to obey his commands, shift the old leader and appoint
a new leader under this contract. In some cases people began to consider the ruler as a descent of god and the theory of divine right receives a meaning. Since people adored him as sent by God, the leader in due course obeyed only to God and did not care for the people. In ancient Tamil country this idea got intensified. In the grammar for external substance (*purapporul*), God is equated to Lord Vishnu (*Tirumal*) and the method (*turai*) is known as *Puvai Nilai*.

Another form of government is the mighty rule where one military leader taking over the rulership by triumphing over the weak people. The family dynastic rule emerged where the leader of the family becoming the ruler of several families and finally becoming the ruler of the country. Whatever may be the mode of becoming the ruler, the ultimate concern is to make people happy. We come across gradual or stage by stage ruling persons as per historical setting. According to this view, rulers must have emerged depending upon the situation and ruled. Due to relations, religious ends, wars or natural instincts governments must have been formed i.e., leader of the masses, religious leader, warrior and lay man, due to the desire for reigning, might have christined themselves as kings. In the historical method, this view represents the theory of evolution of government. During the era of *Valluvar* only king’s government (monarchy) prevailed and Hence, he has to state the grammar of politics accordingly. Whether the ideals expressed by *Valluvar* are applicable to democracy is to be pondered over.
besieged it, declared war and won through cunningness it should not be taken over. However there is no glory for such a fortress when the king is a coward and without an efficient army.

The next important element in the structure of a country is army. Valluvar explains the significant role of army in two chapters, padaimatchi (பதாய் மாட்சி) and padaicerukku (பதாய் இசைரூக்கு). Among all the wealth the king can possess, the most superior wealth is the army which should be well equipped so that it can triumph over its enemy. The greatness of the army men is that they sacrifice their valuable lives to save the lives of the king and the citizens. Even as many rats run away to the breath of a snake, the enemies will run away on seeing the strong army. Non-fearing is a continuous virtue to be seen among the army men. They must engage themselves in the war wholeheartedly so that even if yama (lord of death) comes in front, they can attak him too. The boosting forces for an army are valour, modesty, treking the right path and obtain the good faith of the king. Besides a huge number of army men a good commander to lead the army is inevitable to win over the battles. Here we can discern that Valluvar offers general instructions for an army but seldom does favour voluntary attack on a country. The role of the army is to prevent the entry of enemies into their own territory.

A king and his country can feel proud when an army with courageous and sacrificial mentality persists. Valluvar exclaims as the statement of army men against their enemies. "O enemies! Many have lost their lives in the spear of the
Whatever may be the form of the government, the best government is one which brings forth maximum benefits to the maximum number of people. There were kingdoms at city level and state level in those days. “When Kural was written there was no democratic form of government even for concept sake. But the terms found in the Kural such as vendan, mannan, arasan, iraivan, kavalan, though may refer to the king, we have to understand the meaning of these terms to suit to our days as the leader of governance, ruler etc.” (Sambasadhasivam, 1960: 118) Va. Suba. Manickam also expresses the same view: “When thought about olden day’s political structure, the king (vendan) appears as a visible god. The right to rule was birth right, the state etc was the king’s belonging. King was the soul for the state. The army was meant for his protection. The citizens as the bodies of the king were meant for to be ruled. First priority and speciality were for the king only. King's welfare was the state's welfare. If anyone interferes in the dynast's rule, only killing became the punishment. What he says and does become his constitution. The tax demanded by the king was spent mostly for his livelihood. In the monarchic type of rule, not only the king, the queen and the relatives were the beneficiaries. The whole world is a family; people are the members of the family. There is no difference between the ruler and the ruled. Only during the modern period such thinking emerged. In those days the small state was the world; one’s heirs were the rulers and politics was flourishing on the basis of birth.” (Manickam, Va.Suba, 1976: 203)
There are three basic features in the political thinking of Valluvar.

a) Theory of state

b) Theory of society and
c) Structure of government

Valluvar never had stated the real political set up prevailed during his time nor analysed its merits or demerits. As a true thinker, a genuine political philosopher, he insists with illustrations as to how a government ought to function. His views are applicable to all the dimensions of time - past, present and future. In this respect he differs from political thinkers like Plato, Aristotle, Confucious, Manu and Yajnavalkiya. The similarity between Valluvar and the above thinkers is that all of them were universal thinkers and their thoughts have universal appeal. But Valluvar, as a unique feature, has not mentioned anything about the modern views on tradition, social methods, laws etc., in his grand work. Though, Valluvar like any other thinker has referred to monarchical form of government, his philosophy of political right did not confine to birth, heridity or performing rituals etc. Tirukkural did not contemplate on the king's dress, ornaments, seatings, the external things used or consumed by the king or the weapon of war. Nor does it mention about the luxurious things or daily routine of the king. Had Valluvar written about these peripheral things, he would have been unpopular. Even as a house requires free air flow and light than mere bricks and mortar, Valluvar has chosen the basic ideologies required for a good government, the basic and inevitable special features and the detrimental factors etc.” (Ibid. 204)
The ancient Tamil scholars have declared that the world rests with the 'great' people. If the world which is filled with these people is to be looked after it has divisions such as countries, states etc. It is impossible to rule the entire world and hence, the world is divided as small units. Even though every human being is born as a 'world-citizen' ideologically, in actual case, he belongs to a country or state and ruled. Hence, to rule a country becomes inevitable. From Valluvar's view a country and the king are inseparable.

Although in possession of all the above mentioned excellences, these are indeed of no use to a country, in the absence of harmony between the sovereign and the subjects.

(Kural 740)

Even though a country has special features like various ruling machineries, structures, etc. they would be futile if there is no king to govern. Hence, Valluvar has taken up the significant features of a state (nadh). In Purupal, 25 topics starting from The Greatness of the king (Iramatchi) up to Hopefulness in Trouble (Idukkan aliyanai) refer to Royalty (arasiyal). From the office of Minister of State (Amaichu) up Not to Dread the Council (avai anjama) 10 topics pertain to Ministers of State (amaichiyal). A topic on the Land (Nadh) refers to Wealth (Kuliyal).

The Fortification (aram) and way of Accumulating Wealth (porul seyal vahai) indicate the section of fortification (araniyal).
Two topics on, The Excellency of an Army (padaimatchi) and Military Spirit (padaic cerukku) refer to the section on army (padai-iyal). From friendship (natpu) to medicine (marundhu) 17 topics point out the section of friendship (natpiyal) Nobility (kudimai) to Baseness (kayamai) 13 topics refer to the people (kudi-iyal).

Parimelalagar, the commentator calls the last section as olipiyal (appendix). The reason he gives is that those ideas which cannot be included under royalty and essentials of the state are appended in a separate section. But Valluvar in 'The Greatness of a King' refers to people or citizen (kudi) as a part of the Kingdom. Hence, many scholars refuted the contention of Parimelalagar and calls that section (Appendix) as a section on people (Kudiyal) and people cannot be included under the topic on the land (nadu).

4.2. THE STRUCTURE OF KINGDOM

The vital role played in politics is the land or state. It becomes clear when Valluvar has not mentioned anything about the world, but has devoted a topic to discuss on the state. Hence, the special feature of the state is revealed. The foremost requirement of a state is food and the producers of food items form the basic unit of the state. Only when people are fed and live without hunger, they can contemplate on aram etc. An empty stomach will resist any advice. A state is to be filled with the followers of aram. People have to work hard and acquire wealth through perfect
means. So in a state the manufacturers, followers of aram and men of unblemished wealth live together. Even people of other countries prefer a state where prosperity is filled with.

Tiruvalluvar's polity in essence does not contemplate a 'police state' always in surveillance over the ruled or a 'belligerent state' always at discard with others or even a 'weak state' torn by divisions, treachery, divided courses or the tyranny of the princes, which keep the door open to an aggressor. Tiruvalluvar's concept is that of a state in which people live in harmony among themselves with the prince and at peace with neighbours, but strong, united and upholding the highest ideals of righteousness and goodness and correct economic doctrines and free from want and disease where men have freedom to rise to the full stature of their human excellence. Tiruvalluvar has visualised the ideal of a welfare state which may not be the same as it is conceived of today because Tiruvalluvar believes in a manly society which raises its own economic and human resources and what is more important its moral stature, instead of the state becoming the universal provider by working economic lovers reducing the citizenry to a stereotyped society of taxpayers and producers for the state". (Murugesan Mudaliar, N., 1971: 514).

A state is meant to obey the king and periodically pay the taxes and live joyously with the king even welcoming men and animals coming to ones domain. What is abhorred in a state is excessive poverty, ever affecting diseases, and continued enmity. Besides these, a king should triumph over controversial
expressions, internal enemies, murderers etc. A best country is one which is not ruined by enemies, but ever showing the sign of prosperity. As the components of a country, according to Valluvar is water flowing through rivers, rain etc., natural fortress, mountains and flowing water from them etc.

Waters from rains and springs, a mountain near, and waters thence;

These make a land, with fortress’ sure defence.

(Kural 737)

The following add glory to a state always: (a) life bereft of diseases, (b) wealth, (c) growth of commodities (d) pleasant life styles, (e) excellent security. Wealth must naturally flow than accumulated with bitterness by citizens.

"Valluvar who had offered higher messages all over the world, had not written a topic on 'world' (ulakam), but had expressed his views on a topic called nation (nadu) which stands as a testimony to his scholarship. Though mankind is one in essence, still there is natural variation due to changing climate, nature of the soil, the colour, personality, dress, ornaments, language, food, art, routine acts etc. Hence, the world is looked as different nations. We can say that Valluvar is written a topic called nadu simply to show that it is impossible to unite all the nations and rule as one country". (Sambasadhasivam, 1960: 130). Eventhough a nation is filled with immumerable natural resources; it would not be treated as a good country if it does not have (a) a ruler (king), (b) government (c) ministers etc.
Though *Valluvar* had explained social morality in the *Porutpal*, he has included the characteristic features of the king, minister, spy, ambassador and others who constitute a government. Basically, they too are human beings; Hence, it is obligatory on them to acquire good qualities before venturing in political arena. Hence, we can categorise that the *Porutpal* contains (a) generic true characters and (b) special true characters. In the topic on *iraimatci* (இரைமதிக்க) the qualities of the king are prescribed. The Sanskrit text called *Arthasastra* mentions about seven elements including the king. But *Tirukkural* excluding the king sanctions only six elements, and separately states about the king. The government is the union of *arasu* + *angam* (*arasangam*).

He is a lion among princes who is endowed with (1) army (2) citizenry (3) resources (4) ministry (5) allies and (6) fortifications (*Kural* 381). "The *kural* identifies the king with the state while Kautilya treats the king as only a limb of the state. The *kural* makes the king the most important of the seven elements of sovereignty and considers the rest as subordinate to him. This significant distinction by the great author of the *kural* throws much welcome light on contemporary political thought. The king was the main pivot of the administrations, and the strength and durability of the government very much depended on his personality. "(Murugesar Mudaliyar, N. 1971: 569 - 570).

We come across in the *Tirukkural* more views about the functioning method of a government than mere political theories on politics. *Valluvar* in the *Porutpal* has
analysed seriously about the virtues to be possessed by those who are in the realm of ruling, then skills and scholarship, the security of the state, and qualities of the citizens. A king ought to possess certain noble traits such as fearlessness, generosity, knowledge and perseverance. These qualities must be naturally cherished than acquired through training. A king should not be away from the following three qualities: (i) quick disposal of matters (ii) education and (iii) vision.

A sleepless promptitude, knowledge, decision strong:

These three for aye to rulers of the land belong.

(Kural 383)

Also he must follow for ever the path of aram and for no reason he should deviate from it. Similarly whatever is non-virtuous the king must leave it instantly and possess valour and modesty.

The whole world will exalt the country of the king who is easy of access, and who is free from harsh language

(Kural 386)

People will hail the land of the king who, as a simple person listens to the grievances of his subjects, never uses harsh language etc. Though these characteristic features are applicable to all people in all strata, they are especially required of the rulers. Then only they would be appreciated by the people. Such rulers would be treated as noble ones with royal affection. Instead, showing rough face and using abusive language would be the symptoms of tyranny. A king when rules his domain with love and affection, uses sweet language, all his ambitions would be fulfilled and fame and glory etc., voluntarily would reach him. "For a vast landscape, a great leader is
inevitable to rule with courage. This leader has been designated by Valluvar as Vendan, Mannam, Arasan, Iraivan, Kavalan etc. About kingdom the epithets used by Valluvar are different from what are uses now. But without any linguistic difference, leadership is inevitable for a country. Do we differ from the contents of the Kural in politics? ‘He who lives with moral code will be treated on par with God’ (Kural 50) and ‘with lower knowledge who says no will be treated as a waste in the universe’ (Kural 859) are the examples for praise and lowering the status of men in politics.

That king, will be esteemed a God among men, who performs his own duties, and protects (his subjects.)

(Kural 385)

Look at the subtle way of expressing that a born king may not be adored as God, but a king who protects the citizens appropriately would be treated on par with God. To treat a king as God and venerate him are not the Tamil custom.

Subjects sadly say ’cruel is our king' - Kural 564
A king with harsh forbidding countenance - Kural 565
Subjects dread of cruel wrongs of a king - Kural 563
An unwise and ignorant king - Kural 638
A king with partial attitude will ruin himself - Kural 548

Thus Valluvar blame the tyrant king and the Tamil tradition makes a king God by birth. Here the statement of Elangovadigal is to be remembered that ‘the king as transcendent the state of advice’, ‘useless king’ “ (Manickam, Va., Suba., 1976: 205).
A true ruler is one who seldom thinks himself of God, but raises to the level of God through his untiring service, dedication, education and other good qualities. Even the world will come and rest in the umbrella of protection of the king who bears the filthy language spoken in front of him. The foremost duty of the ruler is to develop charity, grace, and benign rule and with these he must protect the people. Such a king would be the beacon light for other kings.

Many topics discussed in the section on politics contain general virtues to common man and specific qualities to the politicians. For instance in the topic on Surranthalal (Cherishing one's Kindred) the purport of the couplets are applicable both to the king and the public. But, at the same time.

Many relatives will live near a king, when they observe that he does not look on all alike, but that he looks on each man according to his merit.

(Kural 528)

Every ruler even to-day has to observe the contents of this kural. The citizens can not be of the same type. Each one will differ in one respect or the other from others. The king has to find out the unique feature in each individual and his basic qualification without treating all people alike. The psychological phenomenon involved here is that some men with some special talents will receive royal patronage which will give a fillip to his personality traits. When the general public happen to see the generous
and appreciable nature of the king, certainly they will not hesitate to accept him as one among their kith and kin.

In the structure of the government next to the king, the minister becomes an important and foremost component. Without a minister, the king becomes inefficient. A genuine minister is one who advises the king, safeguards him during the time of crisis, preaches about righteous principles, occasionally advises him severely. A minister has to resort to the following techniques in his profession. (a) the objects meant for his job, (b) the appropriate time (c) the method of execution, (d) the nature of the deed, and (e) deep contemplation before execution. Besides these five characters, the minister has to cultivate the following qualities: (i) fearlessness, (ii) protecting the citizens (iii) clarity in learning and (iv) serious efforts. Also, a true minister must leave the company of unsuitable companions, protect his fellowmen always, bear with the fellows who left his company etc., are some of the indications to characteristic a good minister and minister must be a man of wisdom; preach good things to the king; talk polite words; know the entire secrets in the domain; efficient function of duties etc.

No conspiracy can withstand before the natural subtle knowledge of a minister besides his knowledge of sacred texts which promotes righteousness. A minister has to equip himself with wider world knowledge whose foremost duty is to advice the king in the proper path and analyse the consequences of other’s advice. Precisely a minister is to support the king in all the realm of administration. *Valluvar*
sarcastically says that any minister who does injustice to the king through ill-advice is worst than seventy crore enemies. The idea that we understand is that the king must be cautious in selecting his minister and be more vigilent towards one who acts against his interest.

“A minister must treat all people alike, but must be vigilant with the king and must have the ability to know through indications. He should behave like a stupid man with stupid fellows and like a scholar among the scholarly fellows. Valluvar warns the king also to watch the behaviour of his minister and throw him out when his behaviour becomes suspicious. Efficiency in speech, knowing the assembly and fearlessness of the assembly are meant mainly for ministers and not for common man to specialize in oratory. They are the hints that how a minister does boldly delivers his speech with clarity as to be acceptable to all. Even Parimelalagar insists this idea". (Parantamanar, A.K., 1963: 23-24).

Another factor in the kingdom is the fortress which protects the territory, people and the king. Valluvar classifies the fortress as natural and artificial. Undried water, open space, mountaineous regions, huge forest etc., constitute the natural fortress. Scholars will refer to the fortress which is with height, widened, strong and well built and cared for. The constructed fortress must create dread on sight among the enemies. The word aram outwardly means fortress, but it refers to protect the people inside the fort. It should also contain selected soldiers to safeguard the people during emergencies. The fortress must withstand any trial even when the enemies
besieged it, declared war and won through cunningness it should not be taken over. However there is no glory for such a fortress when the king is a coward and without an efficient army.

The next important element in the structure of a country is army. Valluvar explains the significant role of army in two chapters, padaimatchi (படைம்பாத்தி) and padai cerukku (படைசறுக்கு). Among all the wealth the king can possess, the most superior wealth is the army which should be well equipped so that it can triumph over its enemy. The greatness of the army men is that they sacrifice their valuable lives to save the lives of the king and the citizens. Even as many rats run away to the breath of a snake, the enemies will run away on seeing the strong army. Non-fearing is a continuous virtue to be seen among the army men. They must engage themselves in the war wholeheartedly so that even if yama (lord of death) comes in front, they can attak him too. The boosting forces for an army are valour, modesty, trekking the right path and obtain the good faith of the king. Besides a huge number of army men a good commander to lead the army is inevitable to win over the battles. Here we can discern that Valluvar offers general instructions for an army but seldom does favour voluntary attack on a country. The role of the army is to prevent the entry of enemies into their own territory.

A king and his country can feel proud when an army with courageous and sacrificial mentality persists. Valluvar exclaims as the statement of army men against their enemies. "O enemies! Many have lost their lives in the spear of the
leader of our army. If you want to live, do not come in front of our chieftain. It is
good to aim at the elephant even though the mark is missed than attacking the rabbit
perfectly. Similarly it is good to be defeated by attacking the strong army than
attacking them when they are not prepared for a fight". A true soldier will calculate
his days as wasteful when he had no wounds on the body besides attacking the
enemies with spears and arrows. The king has to remember and honour the solider
that had lost his life in the battlefield especially his efficiency and sacrifice with
gratitude. In such cases one can invite such deaths. To put it precisely the service of
military personal must cause grateful attitude in the mind of the ruler. *Valluvar's*
approach towards armoury is realistic, optimistic, and moral based and honesty
oriented.

"Army is an essential factor of a king. The safety of the country depended on
the courage exhibited by the army. In those days there were vehicle army, elephant
army, horse army and human army. The primary army comprising of the kith and kin
of the king was the supreme army. *Tirukkural* holds

An army can triumph (over its foes) if it is free from diminution;
irremediable overson and poverty.

*(Kural 769)*

Even if the army is reduced to thin, if it does not indulge in evil deeds such as
insulting womenfolk, then that army can win over any amount of enmity. *Tirukkural*
emphasises on the non-retrenchment of army. Even though today countries speak
about retrenchment of army personal, each country is interested in increasing the
dreaded weapons. How would it be possible in those days to reduce the army? 
Valluvar opines that reduction of army resources is dangerous. The foremost virtue
for an army is discipline and it must desist from indulging in immoral deeds like
seducing womenfolk etc. The army should not suffer due to poverty. Due to these
reasons, nowadays the governments provide with food, shelter and dress and above all
salary of army men so that the soldiers must live without worries” (Parantamanar,

Valluvar’s conception of a state with reference to its structural basis is based
on a stable and generous government which can concentrate on the welfare measures
of the public. When there are lacuna in the structure viz., fortress, army, ministerial
bodies etc., then peace will be at stake and morality will be in cross roads. As
Valluvar’s social and political philosophy is to find out a perfect way of living, the
political set up enables human beings to focus on the main goal of life without any
fear of enemies from outise or internal dangers from any political outfits.

4.3. THE FUNCTIONS OF THE STATE

The dynamic force of a government is the effective and prominent function of
its constituting agencies. The efficiency of the government machinary alone can
bring forth glory to the government. In this context duty becomes the primordial
factor. The king, ministers, ambassadors, spies and army men have to realize their responsibilities and discharge their duties to the best of their abilities so that the entire nation gets the benefit. The state rule has a two-fold way-positive and negative. Positive approach in ruling constitutes the right sceptre while the negative method leads to the cruel sceptre. The former technique is appreciable, while the latter method is detestable.

In the topic on unforgetfulness (*pochcheramai*) Valluvar insists that a duty-bound king must be free from forgetting. If a king becomes a victim to pride due to excessive joy, then the king will pave the way for his defame and destruction. But when a king wants to live with stable fame has to remember those who have been ruined by neglecting their duties. It is easy for the king to achieve whatever he may think seriously. Only a king who is free from tiredness and without becoming slave to fame can give good governance. Hence, *Valluvar* is correct in placing the right sceptre next to unforgetfulness.

An honest king who governs his territory with impartiality without leaning towards any side like the needle of a balance is called a ruler of the right sceptre. *Valluvar* defines the right sceptre as the method resorted to by a king while enquiring into the blunders committed by his subordinates. The king has to show impartiality before punishing the culprits.
When there is rain, the living creation thrives, and so when
the king rules justly, his subjects thrive,

(Kural 542)

In this couplet two facts are clarified: First, if there is no rain, no creature on earth can survive. This is natural justice and condition for life on earth. When no rain, there will be no growth of vegetation which leads to the perishing of species. ‘The world cannot exist without water’ Secondly, the human justice is that the entire mankind has to depend on the ruler even as the living beings get glory due to rain. That ruler must be just, impartial, duty bound and easily accessible to people.

The virtuous persons called the andanars too have to depend on the right sceptre for only when perfect governance and peace prevail in a country can the andanars perform their routine righteous deeds. People will always adore the holy feet of the king who rules his domain in the right sceptre. In such a state only prosperity will prevail; monsoon will not fail and growth of grain will be excessive. The king who endeavours to protect the world (his territory), his just thought word and deed would protect him. Instead, if a king rules in an unjust way, he will be ruined. The duty of a king is two-fold. Firstly, he has to protect his subjects from internal threats and external dangers. Secondly, he has to punish the criminals. The technique of punishing the wicked is a duty which is to save the good people. This is like plucking away the weed in the field for the effective growth of paddy.
"When a king deviates from the righteous path, then it becomes the cruel sceptre. When the king or the leader forgetting the duty and responsibility of punishment for the crime, but due to power mongering and egoity makes the people suffer, he becomes worst than the dreaded murderer. The murder due to enmity will take place once, but evil due to power mongering will occur always. There is no difference at all between a way robber who threatens the people and demands their belongings and the cruel king who forcibly takes away the property of his subjects. How long a dynasty can sustain with the strength of the army? The tears shed by the people daily who could not bear such torture will not go waste. This is the great army to destroy the pompous life of the cruel king. Like the saw which cuts of huge trees, the tears shed by poor people will reduce the wealth of such a king. Poor people cannot revolt against the king and fight, but their tears will create more devastation than real combat. With the weapons of war the bodies can be perished. But seldom can they destroy the hearts of the courageous and straight forward people? They may cause several revolutionary changes with their tears.

The close associates will turn as foes to the cruel kings. The submissive people start to revolt against him and control him. Hence, to the destitute, their tears alone will develop the skill and efficiency to destroy the cruel king in the minds of several people. The strength of the cruel king’s army may perish like the destruction of wealth. Valluvar seriously warns the cruel king not to ignore the tears of the poor people. The tears will be equal to a huge army. What a foresight Valluvar had even before the world revolutions take place to enunciate political philosophy several years
ago! He had the forethought of three dimensions of time through his subtle intelligence besides revealing the same to the people in the world. What an amount of social and political knowledge he had!” (Arunuga Mudaliyar, 1971: 85-86).

If the king rules his dynasty with justice and righteousness, abiding glory will reach him. On the contrary, if he tries to rule with unjust or cruelty, naturally decay will be the result. Even as rainfall fails only adversity and suffering will haunt the people, in the non-gracious rule of the king the citizens will experience only sorrows. Usually affluent life will give joy while poverty will yield pathos. Valluvar changes this general trend and holds that in the rule of the cruel king even wealth will give distress for ever. In the domain of an unjust king rain will not fall and hence, there will be excessive pain, the capacity of milk from the cows will be reduced, the andanars will forget to learn the sacred scriptures.

Next in the section on 'Absence of Terrorism' Valluvar maintains that no king should indulge in the deeds dreaded by the citizens. “As cruel sceptre is to be shunned and right sceptre must predominate in a country, the people, ministers, other political leaders the employees and others should be vigilant in not allowing any cruel and fierceful event taking place. Even as criminals are unpunished because of mercy and affection, it is wrong to torture the people with pride and excessive power leading to egoity. Hence, once the culprits are punished after due consideration of the nature of the crime and with impartiality, they must be given a chance to reform by not repeating the same crime. When punishment is given, it must appeal as severe, but
mild in execution. If this approach is pursued, it will pave way for constructive designs in the long run.

Let the king who desires that his prosperity may long remain commence
his preliminary inquiries with strictness, and then punish with mildness.

(Kural 562)

In this couplet Valluvar has highlighted his method of punishing the criminals”
(Ibid. 87).

No other scholar in the globe has established a theory of punishment than
Valluvar. The three major theories viz., deterrent theory, reformatory theory and
retributive theory are included in the single theory expounded by Valluvar.

Let the king, who desires that his prosperity may long remain,
commence his preliminary enquires with strictness,
and then punish with midness.

(Kural 562)

The culprits are to be paid their dues but not heavily. What an excellent
theory of punishment! If the subjects are troubled without proper enquiry, then
naturally the ruler becomes the embodiment of cruelty. His longevity will also be
reduced. He will lose his title as the king but will be renamed as a tyrant. Harsh
words and extreme forms of punishment will be the file that destroys the monarch's conquering might. The tyrant king will accommodate illiterate fellows as his companions instead of scholarly people. These fellows are like the heavy burden of waste materials on the empty soil. A king must work hard without lethargy; otherwise the same lethargy will make him as a slave to his opponents.

Another important function of the state is spying. A king must treat the spy who always watches the enemies, administrators and friends, and the moral texts as his two eyes. The most important duty of the king in the daily routine is to know the messages from the spies about the events taking place in all sections of people without partiality. A king who ignores the role of the spies and analyses not the activities and the fruits of spying cannot succeed. A spy is one who, not leaving any one being the industrialists, labourers, kith and kin, enemies, but watching them closely and carefully and inform the king about his findings. The first and foremost quality of a spy is that none should doubt his movement, none should identify his appearance, fearlessness, not revealing the secret truths he has found out. A good spy is one who collects the informations by asking about the concealed facts and engage in action boldly without an iota of doubt. The facts may be concealed forcibly by others or concealed by themselves.

The psychological measures advocated by Valluvar in the act of spying are really fascinating. If a king has to rule his dynasty perfectly, he should not trust any spy instantly, but should know about the veracity of that spy through other spies and
estimate the truth. At the same time, the ruler should not praise and honour any spy in front of others. This attitude will endanger the integrity of the country since the king has to reveal most of the secret messages hidden in the interest of the country. This will result in agony to the king. The ruling leader as well as other leaders should possess adequate knowledge about the events taking place in nooks and corners of the state, different parts of the country, and foreign country and some persons who are to be watched under cover. A king cannot by himself enquire about the above through observing and listening. The political treatises elucidate such leaders as 'knower through the ears'. They see through the eyes and speak through the eyes since they do not instruct through the mouth but through gestures through the eyes. While living in his territory or in other countries, spies become inevitable to the rulers. In the two world wars the role and rare deeds of the spies of the alliance nations are remarkable. The spies ought to watch not only the enemies, but those of friends and relatives". (Ibid. 91-92).

Besides the secret missions to be launched by the spies, another category of informers to the king is the envoy that does the job diplomatically. To describe the grandeur of one's own country in other countries, and reveal the greatness of other countries in his own country, envoy becomes inevitable. As usual, Valluvar prescribes the qualifications of the envoys thus: (Chapter 69)

(a) Loving heart

(b) Good parentage and heredity

(c) Admired by the king
(d) Fulfilling the royal obligations

(e) Affection towards one and all

(f) Wide range of intelligence

(g) Fact-finding and revealing efficiently

(h) Occupying a leading place in other countries

(i) Involved in glorified deeds to the king and country of his origin

(j) Proficiency in moral texts and the knowledge about them will be exposed while moving with the scholarly ministers.

(k) Must possess natural wisdom

(l) Good physique and gigantic appearance

(m) Education with critical evaluation

(n) Inform the king about his observations and heard facts without confusion and complication.

(o) Avoid harsh words in utterances

(p) Speak sweet words

(q) Speak boldly to the enemy king and impinge upon the truths

(r) Acting according to the warrants of time with responsibility

(s) Must realize the time, space, appropriate ideas before explaining to the kings of other countries

(t) Must possess pure discipline and courage

(u) Even if life is threatened, the envoy has to reveal the truth and bring glory to his country.
From the above narration, it becomes crystal clear that Valluvar was an exponent in statecraft. Carefully he has analysed and stated the essential qualifications, features, etc., of the envoys, emissaries, diplomats, ambassadors who serve as the bridge between their countries and other countries in several ways. Valluvar is also careful in pointing out the endangering factors to the country. The topics on 'The Right of the Hatred', Knowing the Quality of Hateard' and 'Enmity Within' speak about the enmity which may cause danger to the king's administration and detrimental for peaceful coexistence. The entire mankind has been divided by Valluvar as two groups—one the strongest and the second, the weakest. Valluvar's approach is really wonderful in the sense that the weaker section must avoid developing enmity with the stronger section. Similarly the stronger group should not foster enmity with the weaker group. If this trend is promoted in a state, then certainly peace and perfection will be the predominant factor. Some times it is wiser to be submissive and some times it is expedient to declare enmity. If the enemy is stronger, avoid a conflict and if he is weak, court the fray and pursue till he is vanquished. This is not unethical because a weaker person has no business to be impudent. An enemy who is unjust and who has no supporters deserves to be routed. All these are intensely practical. They breathe more of dignity of the lion than the cunning of the jackal. He is a craven who lacks sense, understanding, liberality and he will be an easy prey to enemies.” (Murugesu Mudaliyar, N., 1971: 610).

A citizen must have affection towards his relatives, good companions and courageous people. If one lacks these, it would be difficult to win over the enemies.
On the contrary if, a person is full of fear, ignorance, not moving closely with others and not helping others, he becomes easily susceptible to the enemies. A man filled with excessive rage, not mastering moral treatises, not engaged in righteous deeds by utilizing good opportunities, not carrying for his own misdeeds etc., will be a simple pray to the enemies. If one multiplies vices and crimes without adding good qualities, none will assist him, but he becomes an assistant to his enemies. Valluvar, while describing the rudiments of state-craft and its function never has failed in insisting upon the underlying theme of his grand work viz., moral perfection.

One should realize that enmity breeds evil and even for sports sake he should not prefer enmity.

Though you may incur the hatred of warriors whose ploughs are bours, incur not that of ministers whose ploughs are words.

(Kural 872)

In this couplet the term “நெதுவார் தண்ணீர்” refers to the warriors in the battle field who harvests the heads of the enemies with bow and arrow. The term ‘நெதுவார்’ indicates the scholars who speak good words, removes the weeds of ignorance and grow the plants of good conduct and harvest perfection in the society. Valluvar is of the opinion that we can bear the wrath of the warrior, but seldom can we bear the enmity of scholarly persons. A king should not always develop enmity. He should find out the means to make enemies as friends. This attitude is not only good to the king, but the entire world would be benefited. This advocacy of Valluvar is relevant
today since the nations, instead of accumulating lethal weapons to kill the masses, must be friendly with other nations for a prolonged peace and prosperity.

A king must be watchful and cut off the enmity in the commencing state itself. If it is allowed to grow, it will give unsolvable woes. If you want to remove a thorny plant, you must cut it when it is in a tender stage. If it grows as a tree, it will be difficult to remove it. At the same time it will wound the hand of the cutter himself. When a king is capable of destroying his enemies, but did not do so, it makes no difference whether he is dead or alive. A king must be cautious about his internal enemies. The outer enemies who fight with swords can be daringly and directly met with. But one has to dread for the dangerous approach of the enemies who act as our ‘men’ and act cunningly. Water and shadow are good for human comfort, but when they create disease, they are to be treated as unwanted. When the friends become foes, the king has to eliminate their friendship since they may cultivate evil, besides several crimes. Men with internal enmity seldom unite with themselves. People must inculcate the quality of living together for which ‘similar heartedness’ is inevitable. Without mental adjustment and equanimity people trying to live together will be like living with snake in a hut.

A Government is an institution which has to protect the virtuous and punish the wicked and remove evils so that peaceful living can be ensured. Rulers may come and go but the government should remain for ever as a service-oriented institution. The people seriously and sincerely connected with the ruling machinery have to seek
the guidance of elders, find out the appropriate time, place, one’s power, enemies’
power etc., and if engaged in actions then, victory is certain. Simultaneously, the
government has to eliminate the riots, chaos, fighting, drinking habits, gambling,
prostitution etc. Then only the government can establish perfection.

"The government must have emerged in the historical method; a government
comprised of landscape, citizens, ruling structure and empowerment with total
freedom; the major objective of a government is the welfare of the people; what the
Tirukkural describes is about monarchical government; the components of a
government is state, king, ministry, fortress, army, wealth, friendship with allied
nations; state is with a landscape which has richness, devoid of diseases etc., filled
with perfect persons; the king must have education, knowledge, discipline, listening
to advice etc; the minister must not leave the path of righteousness, but at the same
time must be skilled in statecraft and a responsible person; the fortress must be
conducive for the safety of the domain; the revenue for the government are the hidden
treasures on the earth (minerals etc), taxes, toll, land taxes etc; the king has to avoid
enmity with the fellow kings and be friendly with them; Valhuvar speaks about the
important role of investigation wing and envoy; the domestic principle is welfare of
the people, the foreign principle is not to covet the other countries and be without
enmity; the government should concentrate on the elimination of intoxicating drinks,
prostitution, gambling, poverty and begging; Tirukkural speaks about the planning of
curing the diseases, production of food grains etc; finally, the citizens living under
the governance of the king should not be men of baser tendencies, but men of
constant efforts to become cultured and perfect citizens and bring glory to the government; the king, minister, envoy and the soldier must flourish with righteousness and grace, and the polity envisaged by Valluvar is based on the Path of virtue. One must realise that the political ideology of Valluvar is the government following the path of righteousness". (Parantamanar, A.K., 1963: 39-40).

"Tiruvalluvar devotes a large portion of his treatment of polity to the qualities of a good citizenry, and gives as much importance to it as he gives to the qualities of the prince, the ministers, the army and so forth. It is a common saying that the people will get the government they deserve. The power and quality of the state, therefore, reside in the people, but it is an axiom of political science that the people cannot govern themselves and therefore require a government to regulate their affairs. A government can, however, misgovern either by the imperfections of its institutions or the lack of quality of the rulers. The interaction of the people on the government and of the government on the people is organic. It is like the interactions of the body and the mind. The health and tone of the body politic depend on this inter-action. In modern times, it is assumed to be achieved by representative government. Mere mechanical representation by counting of heads does not bring about this consummation. The rulers and the people must be governed by the same ideals and impulses, the same ethics and high souledness and the same realisation of the high human destiny. The meaning and value of democratic order and its perfection in practice is only the progress of the human mind. This is the message of Tiruvalluvar." (Murugesamudaliyar, N., 1971: 619).
To conclude, it may be said that Valluvar’s ambition was to establish a society free from social disharmony and political bickering. He is very clear in his message to mankind that not only the citizens, but the rulers also must be virtuous in all respects, and strive hard for establishing social norms. The political philosophy envisaged by Tiruvalluvar is not utopian, but though appears to be idealistic in essence; it is really realistic in application and actual enforcement.