Looking Ancient India through the Lens of Thiruvalluvar and Kautilya: An Exploratory Exercise

Krishna Roy (Corresponding Author)
Assistant Professor of Political Science,
St. Xavier’s University, Kolkata, India
Email: krishna.roy@sxuk.edu.in

Abstract: Ancient India is an extremely rich storehouse of knowledge. The great thoughts and ideas of the intellectual leaders about development, society and governance have been not only inspiring for all time to come but also of abiding interest since time immemorial for those who have special interest in ancient Indian civilizations. Of them two names, namely Kautilya and Tiruvalluvar, residing in two furthest corners of the country, stand out prominently. Kautilya’s Arthashastra and Tiruvalluvar’s Thirukkural are known for their wise canvas and outstanding ideas. The former served as a top counsel to king Chandragupta Maurya in Pataliputra, (modern-day Patna), while the latter was a common weaver in today’s Chennai. Apart from the numerous other recurring themes in their works, their views on polity, economy and governance are widely acclaimed and appreciated. In this paper an attempt will be made to bring together in one place and their valuable contributions and to analyse their contemporary relevance.

The objectives of the paper are:
• to call attention to the fundamental political and economic issues presented by Kautilya and Thiruvalluvar
• to ascertain their relative prominence in pre-Indo-European economic and political philosophy
• to establish the relevance of their opinions in the context of current India's political and economic structure.

Keywords: Thirukural, Arthashastra, Economy, Politics.

Introduction

India is a country in South Asia named after the Indus River, which runs through it. The term 'Bharat', not the ruler's name, is used in the constitution; 'Bharata' is a Sanskrit epic character who is an ancestor of the Pandavas and Kauravas and is mentioned in the constitution. While the Bhratas are a significant community in the Rigveda, Bharata first appears as the son of Dushyanta and Shakuntala in the Mahabharata's Adi Parva, and then again as the son of Dushyanta and Shakuntala in the Mahabharata's Adi Parva. Bharata conquered the entire Indian subcontinent and ruled it in peace and harmony, according to the “Puranas” (religious/historical writings of the 5th century CE). As a result, Bharatavarsha (literally, "the Bharata subcontinent") was given to the region. The Indian subcontinent is one of the world's oldest continuously inhabited regions, having been inhabited for approximately 250,000 years due to its long history of human settlement.

Artefacts associated with early humans, such as stone tools, have been discovered in recent archaeological digs, implying that human presence and technology in the region dates back to a very early period. While Egypt and Mesopotamia have long been recognised for their civilisational contributions; India, despite having a history and culture comparable to Mesopotamia and Egypt, has been overlooked, particularly in the Western world.

India, Pakistan, and Nepal are home to some of the world's most extensive archaeological and scholarly monuments, as well as some of the world's most ancient forefathers, in today's world. Homo heidelbergensis (a protohuman ancestor of modern Homo sapiens) lived on the Indian subcontinent for thousands of years before arriving in what is now Europe. When Harappa was discovered in 1842 CE, its archaeological significance was overlooked. Following excavations focused on locating the possible locations mentioned in the great Indian epics Mahabharata and Ramayana (both from the fifth or fourth centuries BCE), while ignoring the possibility of a much older past for the region.

Around 5000 BCE, the Indus Valley Civilization began to spread south and north, eventually reaching Malwa in India's lower Gangetic Valley. Cities during this period were larger in size, organised around cardinal points, and built of mud bricks that were frequently kiln-fired, compared to other countries. A large courtyard with direct access from the front door, a kitchen/work space for food preparation, and several smaller bedrooms and bathrooms are among the features of the houses. The courtyard in front of the house appears to have been the focal point of family activities, which matches finds from Rome, Egypt, Greece, and Mesopotamia, among other places.

The Harappan culture began to deteriorate around this time and eventually died out (around 1700-1500 BCE). The issue of climate change is one of the intellectual justifications offered. Increased flooding from the Indus River is thought to have forced the region's major cities to abandon their sites (as evidenced by approximately 30 feet or 9 metres of sediment at Mohenjo-Daro). Another school of thought contends that the Aryan migration was more akin to a land invasion, with a significant shift in population demographics. The vitrification of certain sections of Mohenjo-Daro, which appears to have occurred as a result of intense heat melting the brick and stone, is one of the most perplexing aspects of the site. In places like Traprain Law, Scotland, the presence of
post-conflict debris has been linked to a similar phenomenon. The idea that the metropolis was destroyed by an ancient nuclear explosion (possibly triggered by extraterrestrials) is controversial among scientists.

Northern India was ruled by Iran until 327 BCE, when Alexander the Great arrived and established a new capital in Delhi. A year later, Alexander deposed the Achaemenid Empire and consolidated his control over the Indian subcontinent. Foreign influences were brought to bear on the region during this time, culminating in the formation of the Greco-Burmese cultural tradition, which influenced every aspect of northern Indian culture, from art to religion to clothing. Buddha and other figures are dressed and positioned in a distinctively Hellenic manner in statues and reliefs from this period (known as the Gandhara School of Art). Following Alexander's defeat in India, Chandragupta Maurya's (322–185 BCE) reign saw the expansion of the Maurya Empire, which by the third century BCE had engulfed nearly all of northern India.

During the years 298 to 272 BCE, Bindusara, Chandragupta's son, ruled and expanded Chandragupta's empire. The country prospered during the reign of Ashoka the Great (304–232 BCE, reigned 269–232 BCE). Ashoka conquered the eastern city-state of Kalinga eight years into his reign after slaughtering approximately 100,000 people. As a result of his grief over the loss and destruction, Ashoka accepted the Buddha's teachings and set out on a systematic mission to spread Buddhist theory and practise throughout the world. He established a large number of monasteries and contributed significantly to Buddhist organisations financially. His zealous defence of Buddhist principles ended up jeopardising the kingdom's economy and politics, as even his grandson, the throne's successor, Sampadi, expressed opposition to his initiatives. Because of Ashoka's regular religious contributions, the government's coffers were severely depleted after his reign ended, and the kingdom fell into disarray almost immediately after his death.

The country disintegrated into a slew of small kingdoms and empires during the Middle Period, each with its own language and culture (such as the Kushan Empire). Trade with Rome increased significantly during this time period as a result of Augustus Caesar's conquest of Egypt (Egypt had previously been India's most reliable economic partner) (which had begun 130 BCE). This was a period of individual and cultural development across multiple kingdoms that culminated in what is known as India's Golden Age under the leadership of the Gupta Empire (320-550 CE).

Between 240 and 280 CE, Sri Gupta ('Sri' means 'Lord' in Sanskrit) is credited with founding the Gupta Empire. Sri Gupta's meteoric rise to prominence is particularly noteworthy because he is thought to be a member of the Vaishya (merchant) caste. Under his leadership, a government was formed that would stabilise India to the point where practically every aspect of culture flourished during the Guptas' reign. Philosophical thought and literature, as well as science and mathematics, architecture, and astronomy, developed during this time period. Art, religion, technology, astronomy, and engineering, all advanced, resulting in some of humanity's greatest achievements. The Vyasa Purans and the world-famous Ajanta and Ellora caves, known for their intricate carvings and arched passageways, were built during this time. Kalidasa composed or collected the Kamasutra, while Vatsyayana composed or collected the Shakuntala. Varahamihira studied astronomy with Aryabhatta, a
mathematician who contributed significantly to science and recognised the significance of the zero concept, which he is credited with inventing. Varahamihira is well-known for his knowledge of astronomy. Given the founder of the Gupta Empire's rejection of conventional Hindu thought, it was unavoidable that the Gupta rulers promoted and developed Buddhism as the official religion, which explains why Buddhist art predominates over Hindu art at sites like Ajanta and Ellora.

South India has been inhabited for over four thousand years, and during that time it has seen the rise and fall of a plethora of kingdoms and empires. The region's history can be traced back to the Iron Age (1200–24 BCE) and up until the sixteenth century CE. Over the course of history, kingdoms such as the Satavahana, Chola, Chera, Pandyan, Chalukyan, Pallava, Rashtrakuta, Kakatiya, Seuna (Yadava), and Hoysala have reached their pinnacles. After Muslim armies conquered southern India in the sixth century, these dynasties found themselves in constant conflict with one another and other forces. Vijayanagara grew and expanded as a result of the Muslim invasion, eventually encompassing the majority of southern India and serving as a check on Mughal expansion in the region. During the sixteenth century CE, when European soldiers invaded the southern kingdoms, the southern kingdoms fought back, and certain provinces eventually came under British administration. The British established the Madras Presidency, which had direct control over the majority of south India, and divided the rest of the country into a series of dependent princely republics under British administration. When India gained independence, it was linguistically divided into the southern states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu, which are now known as Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu, respectively.

Classical literature was amassed in large quantities by these civilizations. This paper intends to contrast and compare the political and economic ideas of two Ancient Indian Illuminories who lived thousands of years apart: Kautilya and Thiruvalluvar. Politics and economics have ethical implications, according to both speakers. Ethics has a limited role in today's economic and political environment. This paper's historical analysis reveals how moral concerns have influenced economic and political research throughout history, especially in the twentieth century. However, it appears that ethics has been pushed to the margins of economic and political discourse in recent years. Ethics as a concept is no longer required as part of the basic explanation for the efficiency and viability of today's financial markets and government institutions. Classic books hold a special place in the hearts of those who have read and enjoyed them, but they also provide a rich experience for those who wait to read them until they are in the best condition possible. Classics are works that have retained the aura of previous interpretations as well as the imprints they have left on the civilizations or cultures they have passed through over time. A classic work is one that not only stands out in today's culture, but also would not exist if it hadn't been created. A classic work is one that, despite the incompatibility of the present, has stood the test of time. As a result, reading classics appears to be at odds with our fast-paced lives, which do not allow for extended periods of time or space, as well as our eclectic culture, which could never put together a collection of classic works that are relevant to our time. The importance of classical political theory cannot be overstated in the contemporary times.

The most important question is why we should bother reading these political theory classics in the first place. Dante Germino has provided some excellent counter-arguments to this topic. It's difficult to imagine a single fundamental concept in political science that did not originate in one of the classic works of political philosophy. The symbol of the state emerged as a result of the early modern attempt to free the governmental power structure from feudal and ecclesiastical control; and terms like power, sovereignty, consent, representation, tyranny, democracy, and the public interest all have precise historical precedents in the western intellectual tradition. As a result, familiarity with the classics of Western political thought can benefit any political scientist, regardless of their field of study. A specialist in public administration, for example, cannot afford to ignore Rousseau's general will; a student of comparative government wishing to develop a new typology of governments will want to explicitly refer to Aristotle and Montesquieu's earlier formulations; and scholars of international politics will want to be familiar with St. Augustine, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Grotius, and Kant's teachings on war and peace. It would also be inappropriate for students of political behaviour to dismiss theories advanced by authors such as Aristotle, Machiavelli, Harrington, Rousseau, Marx, and others throughout history about patterns of political and social change, as well as the conditions of political rule.

The study of classics confirms that politics is a far more complex activity or process than popular perception would have you believe. In any case, we can expect some authors who wrote classics in political philosophy to have laboured and odd preoccupations that are foreign to our ordinary conception of competitive electoral politics. Alternatively, it could be argued that the political conceptions established in the history of political philosophy's "great conversations" represent an expansion rather than a rejection of the widely held conventional view of politics as a whole. As a result, Plato turned to political philosophy for help in explaining the collapse of constitutional order in the fifth century B.C. Augustine did it in Athens to explain Rome's collapse to Alaric the Goth, and Machiavelli did it in Italy in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as a response to political decline amid economic and creative greatness. The English Civil War of the 1640s influenced Hobbes greatly, whereas Hegel was influenced by the French Revolution's instability as well as the aftermath of Napoleon's victories in the Napoleonic Wars. Academics in economics and politics have long emphasised the importance of ethics in the marketplace and in keeping the peace.

Contributions of these classics are significant as ethics is losing its position in today's popular economic and political theories. According to current financial theories, economics is amoral in its treatment of moral people. Amartya Sen, for example,
reminds us that economics was once considered a branch of philosophy. Asymmetry of information, moral hazards, adverse selection, and a variety of other fundamental behavioural ideas are examined when presented as incentive problems; however, the underlying behaviour is assumed to be ethically neutral in nature.

Kautilya

Kautilya is believed to be a teacher in the famous ancient Indian university at Takshila. He helped Chandragupta Maurya in removing the Nandas, the ruling dynasty of Magadh and establishing the Mauryan dynasty. The text of the "Arthasasthra" is attributed to Kautilya. Arthasasthra is a work in which he expresses his ideas about the state, war, social structure, diplomacy, ethics, politics, and statecraft, among other things. In addition to his sharp opinions on war and peace, human rights, international economic fairness, and world order, Kautilya was also known for his incisive writings. According to the author, the book is intended to be based on Political Realism, in which the state is regarded as supreme and the king is bound to fulfil all of his obligations in order to protect it. He defends a ruler's use of heinous practises in order to maintain his or her position of power.

Even though he campaigned for a welfare state, he advocated for war in order to maintain the authority of the state. He was adamant that the primary goal of a king should always be the consolidation of his power. Weber's notion that International Politics is morally bankrupt and that states are obligated to wage war indefinitely is consistent with the findings.

In addition, he asserted that science possesses tremendous power to transform the world. As an added bonus, he believed that strength is a form of power, and that strength has an impact on the mind. In this way, Thomas Hobbes' point of view is analogous to ours. His approach is pragmatic and practical, and he emphasises accountability and ethics in his decisions. A devout believer that in order for a king to be powerful, he must prioritise money production, maintain a strong army, and be capable of conquering in order to expand the size of his kingdom, he has made it his mission to spread this belief throughout his kingdom.

In a confrontational setting, Kautilya and Machiavelli both use the same argument to support their respective positions. They both call for the active participation of a monarchy in the science of war. Kautilya advocated for three different military strategies. The term "open war" refers to hostilities between states that are not formally declared. Concealed warfare is a sub-discipline of guerilla warfare that is practised in secret. It is fought on a continuous basis within the kingdom in order to maintain the king's rule.

A further point to mention is that Kautilya was an outspoken supporter of social organisations. He was a staunch supporter of the caste system, as well as the relative positions of men and women within it, throughout his life. He believes that the state should be defended from all angles, and that religion and morality should be used to further the goals of the state in order to achieve them. In this battle, chivalry had no role to play. He was unyielding in his pursuit of wealth and political power, and no one could stop him. He was a staunch supporter of the rational and just application of the law. He placed a high value on property rights and the preservation of one's wealth. He advocated for the abolition of corporal punishment through the use of penalties, which
he believed were ineffective. He is particularly concerned with human rights issues and the treatment of the invading ruler and his ministers. He emphasises the importance of criminal and war justice. In stark contrast to his austere and realistic demeanour, he expressed sorrow for those who had lost their lives in battle, which was unusual for him. Instead, he argued, the defeated king should be treated with reverence and be made an ally.

When it came to punishments, he believed they were a necessary means to an end, and that they were required to deter future criminal activity. As an outspoken advocate for social order, he firmly believed that Brahmins should be subjected to less severe punishment and should not be tortured. Because it involved property protection, acquisition, enhancement, and distribution, Dandaniti was extremely important to him and he valued it highly.

His knowledge of crime and justice is extensive, and he advocates for a spectrum of sanctions depending on whether the crimes were committed in the course of public service, whether they were civil in nature, whether they were sexual in nature, or whether they were religious in nature, among other factors.

Specifically, he established unambiguously that nations have always acted in their own political, economic, and military interests. The president has stated unequivocally that any foreign policy or diplomacy will be pursued solely for the benefit of the country. The idea that diplomacy is a set of activities carried out by a kingdom in order to appear stronger and capable of conquering the nation with which diplomatic relations have been established was popularised by him.

According to Kautilya, the presence of Rajrishi is essential for a good monarch. A striking resemblance exists between this concept and Plato's 'philosopher king.' In this concept, Kautilya outlined the characteristics of Good Governance. Among these indications are the following, which are just a few:

- A perfect king must strike a delicate balance between his individuality and his kingly responsibilities.
- The role of a manager is to provide appropriate direction.
- The role of a perfect ruler is to refrain from extremes while maintaining objectivity.
- The salary and allowances for the king and other government officials must be determined.
- The primary responsibility of the King and his deputies is to maintain law and order. Salary payments to the king and his staff should be used to compensate for losses incurred as a result of theft and corruption.
- The king’s primary responsibility is to replace his ministers with more suitable ones.
- A well-organized existence guided by a code of conduct for monarchs and officials.

Furthermore, Kautilya gave top priority to the appointment of Amatyas, who are the highest-ranking officials in the government. These individuals were selected on the basis of their deservingness as well as the persuasiveness of their arguments.
Thiruvalluvar

Thiruvalluvar is one of the most celebrated poets in Tamil Nadu who wrote Thirukkural in the form of couplets, a highly regarded ethical work in Tamil literature. It is considered as prima facie evidence of intellectual tradition of Tamil society. Its period of composition is unknown but it is considered to be more than 2000 years old. It is respected by the Tamils irrespective of their caste and culture. Thirukkural's prehistoric ethical writings are considered to be among the most important prehistoric ethical texts in the world. Thirukkural is the literature belonging to the Sangam period, Tamil Nadu's golden age. Among the most notable works of the Sangam period are Akattiyam, Paripadal, Madunari, Tholkappiyam, Pattupattu, Ettuthogai, and Padinenkilkanaku. Thirukkural is contained within the Padinenkilkanaku, and as such represents a very small portion of sangam literature in its own right. Nevertheless, due to the universal nature of the wondrous concepts enshrined in Thirukkural, the world is witnessing the beginning of the modern era. In this magnificent book, one can find information which maybe applied to every country in the world. It has the appearance of a miniature ocean. Throughout its history, this book has been a source of living light, beginning with its creation on palm leaves and continuing to the present. Thirukkural is a collection of 1330 couplets divided into 133 chapters of ten couplets each. Thirukkural is written in the Tamil language. This book has chapters that are entirely dedicated to one specific topic. In total, the book is divided into three sections: Aram (virtue), Porul (wealth), and Inbam (righteousness) (love and enjoyment).

Part II, which is wealth, will be discussed in greater detail in this essay. Wealth, as is the case with the economy, is intertwined with the state and the federal government. The economy was completely under the control of the government. A consequence of the interconnectedness of economic and political issues is that they are debated at the same time. The political and economic aspects of Thirukkural are highlighted in this section. Each kural possesses a characteristic that is infused with virtue. This differs from Kautilya's approach in that, while both emphasise the importance of effective government and administration in ensuring the safety and well-being of the people, Valluvar emphasises the importance of the subjects' harmonious coexistence with one another.

When his views on statecraft are closely examined, it becomes clear that he shares some of Kautilya's pragmatic beliefs, which are discussed in Arthasatra. Thiruvalluvar's rajrishi, in contrast to Kautilya's rajrishi, provides a thorough examination of the characteristics of a king. He had a great deal of respect for the king. In Kural 381 he writes:

‘padaikudi kuzhamaichchu natpurer arum
Udaiyan arasul eru’

(‘A king who is a lion among kings possesses an army, citizens, resources, ministers, allies, and strongholds.’)
It is essential for a monarch to be able to command a large army; citizens and resources are two of the most important components of any state's infrastructure. The allocation of resources should be done in such a way that just practises are maintained and citizens remain loyal to the monarchy, without resorting to civil war. An individual who successfully manages all of the characteristics of his or her state is regarded as the world's best king. In Kural 384, he made reference to

“When a monarch protects the people and maintains his moral character, he is worthy to be the world’s best king.”

Unlike the king of Kautilya, who resembles an absolute monarch, the monarch of Thiruvalluvar embodies an ethos that is more democratic than the monarch of Kautilya. A ruler is only taken into consideration when he or she is following through on his or her promises. He used his valour to protect the general public while still maintaining his moral character and integrity. If the ruler fails to carry out this order, he will lose his position of authority. As a result, the king must work hard to earn the respect of his subjects.

To add to it, he speaks glowingly about a benevolent king in Kural 387.

“When the universe will bend to the will of a generous dispenser of pleasant words.”

Not through military force, but through kindness, the king can win the support of his subjects, and it is essential for the monarch to be well-liked by his subjects in order to be able to rule effectively.

Thiruvalluvar was more democratic in spirit than the ruler of Kautilya, who was more autocratic in nature. Thiruvalluvar's politics are centred on the ruler, whereas Kautilya's politics are centred on the subject matter. According to Thiruvalluvar, punishment was an unavoidable evil. He shared this view with Kautilya.

He writes in kural 561,

“When a ruler in that he conducts thorough investigations and applies deterrent and reasonable sanctions.”

The author is a proponent of proportional punishment, believing that crimes should be thoroughly investigated and that the penalty imposed should be justifiable and commensurate with the nature of the crime in order to deter offenders from committing the same or similar crimes in the future. Thiruvalluvar, in contrast to Kautilya, did not
make a connection between caste and punishment, believing that punishment should be determined by the nature of the offence, rather than the perpetrator's caste, as Kautilya did.

He states in kural 563,

“Veruvanda seydozhugum venkolan ayin
Oruvantham oiaik kedum”

(“A tyrannical king who rules via fear and brutality will quickly vanish.”)

While each author emphasised the critical nature of ethical political behaviour in his or her own way, they both emphasised the critical nature of ethical political behaviour in their respective works. Both wished for moral government and a fair distribution of resources from their masters, and both were granted these wishes. It is important to remember the ancient classics in today's world, especially in light of the recent allegations of corruption against a monarch. The ancient classics emphasised the qualities of a monarch such as bravery, honesty, intelligence, and selflessness.

It is worth noting that Kautilya's responses to unethical economic behaviour, including corruption, are markedly different from those found in a large body of other ancient Indian literature, which is significant. Thiruvalluvar, known as the South Indian equivalent of Kautilya, was a poet and philosopher who was born in 31 BC in Mylapore, a town near modern-day Chennai, and died in the city of Thiruvalluvar. Thiruvalluvar was most likely a weaver rather than a Brahmin, but when he presented his famous work, Tirukkural, to a gathering of Tamil intellectuals in Madurai for approval, his popularity quickly surpassed that of other ancient South Indian philosophers. Thiruvalluvar was most likely a weaver rather than a Brahmin. Tirukkural, in contrast to Arthashastra, which was pragmatic in its pursuit of religious truth, is spiritually ethical in its pursuit of religious truth. In his book, he emphasised the importance of the fundamental element of success, emphasising that it is dependent on three factors: farmers' land, merchants' money, and moral individuals' labour (Tirukkural, chapter 74). Valluvar asserts that wealth is the source of all of life's pleasures: "Wealth is the source of all pleasures in life." "An individual's social standing is elevated when he or she has wealth; wealth that has been acquired properly results in virtues and happiness. Everyone despises poverty, but everyone extols the virtues of those who are well-off. There is no more effective weapon for deflating an adversary's ego than wealth on the battlefield. It is only when wealth is directed toward a great cause that peace and prosperity can be achieved. The affluent man gleams in the reflected light of his wealth. He takes pleasure in life and travels to far-flung countries to see places he admires (Tirukkural, chapter 76).

Thiruvalluvar made it clear that he believed that wealth accumulation was necessary and justified, and that he should not be mocked for it. Thiruvalluvar also considered "squandered wealth" in “Tirukkural Chapter 101”, which can be found here.
"He who hoards wealth and does not enjoy it or use it to benefit others is as good as dead, and his wealth is a waste of time and resources."

Following Thiruvalluvar, agriculture is the most productive occupation; certain characteristics of Tirukkural, with the exception of high yielding seed varieties, are comparable to those of India's "Green Revolution," which occurred between 1960 and 1970. These characteristics include the amount of ploughing done, the use of manure and fertilisers, the timely weeding of crops, and protection against pests and diseases.

The saying goes, "If a man does not personally tend to his land, it will behave as an irritated wife, bringing him no pleasure" ("Tirukkural, chapter 104").

Thiruvalluvar's preoccupation with wealth may have had an impact on his attitude towards poverty ("Tirukkural, chapter 105"). True liberty, according to libertarians, is defined as the absence of poverty. Poverty robs a person of his or her dignity. Because of poverty, people resort to beggaring as a means of alleviating their suffering: "There is nothing more heinous than beggaring; there is nothing more foolish than beggaring to alleviate poverty's pains" ("Thirukkural, chapters 106-107").

According to Kautilya, excessive disparities, which Thiruvalluvar considered a pragmatic counter-measure to corruption, were opposed by Thiruvalluvar. As a further point of clarification, Thiruvalluvar, like Buddhist thinkers before him, recognised that unfulfilled desires and greed are the root causes of life's unhappiness and pain, and thus wealth was justified solely for the purpose of alleviating poverty.

Thiruvalluvar's conclusion was noteworthy: he asserted that ethical principles and a strong economy are inextricably linked, and that a free market is essential; humans, on the whole, are naturally good and contribute positively to the economy; and that the free market is critical. Obviously, analogies to Enlightenment philosophers such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) and British economist Adam Smith (1723-1790), as well as his utilitarian successors in the nineteenth century, such as Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) and David Ricardo (1772-1823).

Thiruvalluvar's philosophy is based on the concept of inherent nature in man. Thiruvalluvar, like many Enlightenment philosophers, saw the state and its resulting society as the primary source of destructive tendencies and avarice. By neutralising the state's and society's unnatural pressures and allowing for the emergence of one's natural real self, life can be altered and refined, enabling a robust mental attitude, eliminating greed and emphasising unequivocally. "Everything is good as long as it is not in the hands of the Author of things; everything degenerates in the hands of man" (introduction to J.J. Rousseau's Émile or de l'éducation, 1762). Thiruvalluvar, on the other hand, stated that the "nature of things" is discovered only after "much thought, preparation, and analysis," and that "any hesitation or delay is suicide" after a decision is made.

The Rule of Law would predominate in a natural society, allowing for effective government by law based on the ideals of "equality before the law" and "equal
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"The government's natural responsibility is to respond to citizens' concerns, to protect them, and to bring criminals to justice. An association between a just government and the natural phenomenon of "rain" was made by Thiruvalluvar, who wrote as follows: "As the earth would be without rain, so would the country be under the rule of an unjust administration.

Southeast Asia underwent a period of division during Thiruvalluvar's reign. "Justice" and "a just government," on the other hand, were symbolised as natural beings by the "monarch." Everything is interconnected: the king's justice ensures a plentiful supply of rain and harvests, for example. It is possible for the entire country to implode if corruption exists at the very top of the decision-making pyramid.

According to Thiruvalluvar, who agrees with Kautilya on the importance of government officials abstaining from abuse, only personal transformation can resolve the problem: "The enlightened and unblemished in positions of power fear abusing their positions for baser ends." To the contrary, Kautilya's emphasis on increased remuneration is significantly more pragmatic than Thiruvalluvar's emphasis on spirituality and entirely ethical approaches.

Tamil philosopher Thirukkural is a philosophical work that emphasises the importance of good human behaviour as well as education, citizenship, and an austere way of life. Thiruvalluvar mentioned that wealth is necessary but not sufficient in and of itself, reasoning, "If you survive, live for glory and fame; if you don't, it's better to die."

Following are the words of Dr. Schweitzer (quoted by Varadarajan, 1988, p. 171): "If, as in the Bhagavad-Gita, it is argued that remaining active in one's life is consistent with God's plan for the universe, the Kural makes the same argument – what a breakthrough! – in regard to one's own sense of ethical behaviour. Profitability and labour enable mankind to do good in the world ."

Conclusion

The two ancient philosophers Thiruvalluvar and Kautilya provided with rich work on philosophical pragmatism. To sum up, every society must "choose between the creation of a man and the creation of a citizen," as Rousseau put it. Man's destructive tendencies, according to Kautilya, can only be corrected for the greater good by transforming him into a citizen who works for the greater good, as embodied by the ruler. This necessitates the selection of the best social institutions that take into account man's inherent flaws and mitigate them for the greater good.

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