3.0 OBJECTIVES

As objective scholars on Indian philosophy would vouch for a fact that Indian culture is not built upon only one tradition. Neither monopoly of one religious tradition within India nor of one linguistic tradition would be acceptable in the plurality of Indian traditions. Sources of Indian philosophy are spread about many religious, philosophical and moral treatises, both written and oral, in various ancient languages like Pali, Prakrit, Sanskrit and Tamil. Apart from the stereotyped treatment on dwelling only on Sanskrit tradition for Indian philosophical thoughts, this unit emphatically proclaims the deep philosophical insights embedded in classical Tamil text called Tirukkural. The objective of this unit is to bring out the moral, social and political philosophy of Tiruvalluvar. The unit would mostly avoid the introductory details about the text and concentrate fully on its philosophical insights for want of space. Such a brief introduction on Tirukkural could be found in the unit on ancient Dalit thinkers in one of the elective courses of IGNOU MA philosophy under the title, Dalit philosophy. The numbers given within bracket in the sentences of this unit refer to the number of couplet of Tirukkural.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

‘Tirukkural’ etymologically means the ‘holy couplets,’ i.e. a text having two lines with seven words each in the Tamil poetic ‘venba’ metre. It has 1330 couplets with 133 chapters each containing 10 couplets. Tiruvalluvar did not write autobiography nor any authentic biographies are available there is no perfect life-sketch of Tiruvalluvar. A few information about his life are passed on orally. He lived at Mylapore, Chennai, engaged in weaving as his profession, married to a maid known as Vasuki. Certain events that are purported to have taken place in his life seem to be unbelievable. Tirukkural is a moral compendium which has been classified under three major headings; aram (righteousness), porul (wealth), ibam (enjoyment). The ideological implication of these titles is that one must earn wealth through righteous means and enjoyment becomes imminent through that which leads to enlightenment. This view is similar to the Sanskrit tradition of dharma, artha, kama and moksa.
3.2 PHILOSOPHICAL INSIGHTS OF TIRUKKURAL

Tiruvalluvar’s philosophy is that of common man and hence he developed his ideals in such a manner that man ought to live as a true human being and cherish all the human values, promote earthly virtues, establish social harmony, engage in domestic life, follow political ideologies, develop mutual assistance, adhere to the life of renunciation, enjoy all kinds of pleasures, contemplate deeply on a few metaphysical issues etc.

In the invocatory chapter known as ‘the Praise of God,’ Tiruvalluvar glorifies the significant features of God: He is the ancient Lord or the Supreme Being; Lord with perfect intelligence; Flower decked God; He who has transcended likes and dislikes; Iraivan – the protector of the universe; unparalleled Lord; the embodiment of righteousness; Lord endowed with Eight attributes; He who has annihilated the onslaught of the senses; the great controller of the living beings.

Nowhere does the author mention the Lord with his specific name, probably to teach mankind about the relationship between God, human beings and the world. Had he mentioned the name of God, then people would think that the moral philosophy of Tiruvalluvar is based on the preachings of that particular religion whose God’s name has been mentioned. Since Tiruvalluvar wanted to establish a society where people belonging to all religious sects should lead a peaceful and harmonious life, he had explicated the need of monotheistic divinity. Still scholars taking into consideration few religious expressions found in the couplets proclaim that such expressions unequivocally indicate their God and therefore Tiruvalluvar belongs to their religious cult and his moral thought are pertaining to their religion. If Tiruvalluvar is confined to a particular religion, then the universalistic outlook of his moral ideologies would be misnomer.

In the chapter on “The Dread of Beggary,” he explains: If the Supreme Lord who has created this world has destined that man should continue to live through begging, then let that Lord wander about the world and perish.”(1062). In this verse Tiruvalluvar links the life of penury and poverty leading to the act of begging and the person who is responsible for this degradation and curses Him to go away from this world. Thus Tiruvalluvar wants to behold that mankind should have a self-contained life. Tiruvalluvar has mentioned the fact that the universe has been created by God.

Tiruvalluvar deliberately did not write anything about moksa or liberation. Probably, he might have thought that life on this earth is to be lived perfectly and honestly than contemplating upon life beyond death. According to the commentators, since moksa is concerned with a blissful state of experience, it cannot be explained in adequate terms. As such there are no authentic reports about the state of liberation, but many theoretical accounts are available through revelations of the mystic saints. Hence Tiruvalluvar might have thought that any one who is virtuous in his domestic, social, political and moral spheres, he will certainly experience abundant joy in every aspect of life, veedu peru. The kama or inbam (pleasure) described by Tiruvalluvar in the third section is to be understood in terms of leading to the everlasting and increasing bliss. At the worldly level we have physical pleasure and mental happiness, but at the spiritual plane, which is mystic in nature and essence, the rapture is to be experienced rather than explained. Hence
Tiruvalluvar wants every human being to concentrate on the life on earth than contemplating on a heavenly life.

Another interesting feature of this famous text is that its author has not used anywhere the terms such as Tamil language, Tamilian, Tamil country, though all the 1330 couplets are in chaste Tamil language. There are totally 9310 Tamil words used in this work. In the first couplet itself Tiruvalluvar resorts to his intention of spreading his message for mankind: “The world of sound commences with the letter ‘A’. Similarly all that exists in the world commence from the Prime Mover.”

In several places the author uses the expressions like ‘ulaku’ ‘ulakam’ ‘vaiyam’ ‘jnalam’ etc., to refer to the world. His love for mankind and fascination to find out man as living as a genuine human, without social discrimination, linguistic fanaticism, racial inequalitities, political turmoils, religious fundamentalism, moral disturbances, mental imbalances, regional dissimilarities, national prejudices, economic upheavel, geographical divisions etc., are found in every couplet. He delves deeply on almost all the aspects of human life. At several places he indicates that man should not live through the senses which is nothing but the life of brutish beasts. He expects man to use his sixth sense viz., mind to sort out all human issues and lead a life of spirituality which will bring forth a life of tranquility and solace to all human woes. In preface to his translation of Tirukkural VVS Aiyar states, “Tiruvalluvar has given to the world a work to which, in perfection of form, profoundity of thought, nobleness of sentiment, and earnestness of moral purpose…”

The last section of this grand work deals exclusively with the various aspects of domestic life especially the inner part of it known as conjugal love, He divides this section into two divisions, first speaks about pre-marital love and the second about married life. This shows that the ancient Tamils have developed grammar not only for the external life of human beings, but also for the internal living.

3.3 MORAL PHILOSOPHY OF TIRUVALLUVAR

Very cleverly Tiruvalluvar refers to virtue in two different but similar terms, viz., aram and aran. The title of the chapter is emphasis on aran which means the glorification of righteousness. The subtle difference between these two terms is that aram means the definition of virtue. For instance, avoidance of jealousy, greediness, wrath and abusive language is the best way to acquire aram (35). As contrast he reiterates that domestic life is exclusively that is practiced as aran: life not blamed by others but earning good name (49). When abundant love and aran prevail at home, they are the quality and benefit of family life (45). Promoting purity of heart without any blemish whatsoever is the best way of living; the other so called aran are nothing but empty display (34). However both these terms viz., aram and aran indicate virtue, the former is used to refer to the definition of righteousness, while the former its fulfillment or utility. However, one can notice the difficulty of the author is not giving a positive meaning or definition of righteousness. The Absence of certain ignorable traits such as anger, jealousy etc., is to be understood as aram.
In the life of a man his individual life, socio-political life, romantic life are playing a vital life. The first section is pertaining to individual ethics, with the sub-divisions such as domestic virtue, ascetic virtue and fate. The second section is concerned with political ethics which has the true meaning, poral of life. It has the headings of royalty, ministers of state and appendix. The third section pertains to conjugal love with the pre-marital love and wedded love as the divisions. The first section ends with the chapter on fate. Man has to live in accordance to his destiny. ‘Although a man may study the most polished treatises, the knowledge which fate has decreed to him will still prevail.’ (373). There are through fate two different nature in the world, hence the difference observable in men in their acquisition of wealth in their attainment of knowledge. There seems to be a contradiction in the conception of fate by Tiruvalluvar. In this chapter he holds that ‘what is stronger than fate? If we think of an expedient to avert it, it will itself be with us before the thought. (380). However in the chapter on manly effort he maintains that ‘they will labour on, without fear and without fainting will see even fate out behind their back.’ (620). In the first one the author gives a generic truth that fate is more powerful and difficult to overcome. In the other couplet he gives a specific truth that if one strive with undismayed and unfaltering mind that person will curtail the impact of fate. Hence one should not keep inactive leaving everything to destiny.

The second section ends with the chapter on baseness, kayamai. The contents of this chapter reveal the truth that even during the time of Tiruvalluvar the society has been degraded. In any social setting if there the vile people with malevolent attitude and highly despicable character predominate, then naturally that society would lose respect. Tiruvalluvar uses highly contemptuous language to describe the attitude of the degenerates. It would be very difficult to distinguish between the men of base and honest people since the base resemble the celestials; for they act as they like. The principle of behavior in the mean is chiefly fear; if not, hope of gain, to some extent. The great bestow their alms as soon as they are informed; but the mean, like the sugar-cane, only when they are tortured to death. The base will hasten to sell themselves as soon as a calamity has befallen them. For what else are they gifted? Thus it is clear that the individuals have to promote all noble traits so that the socio-political organizations would be free from the highly despicable men.

Though Tiruvalluvar’s primary concern is to make mankind perfect and virtuous through various means, he seems to be a lover of nature. In the chapter of the excellence of Rain, he glorifies the importance of rain, water, sky, celestials, food, ploughing, clouds, annual festivals, daily worship, penance, almsgiving, duties of life which are basically related with water. The method of water management formulated by Tiruvalluvar shows his human concern. ‘By the continuance of rain, the world is preserved in existence; it is therefore worthy to be called ambrosia.(11). Further, if it be said that the duties of life cannot be discharged by anyone without water, so also without rain no flowing water is possible. (20).

One such famous chapter in the Tirukkural is ‘the greatness of the Ascetics’ wherein the author asserts the ultimate goal of life through ethical discipline mingled with renunciation. All treatises in the world uniformly emphasise the greatness of those who abide by the code of conduct unique to their state of existence who have relinquished all desires. It is not possible to describe the measure of those who have renounced. If done so, it would be like counting the dead. Those who have realized the importance of the two-fold nature of existence will excel
others. He who controls his five senses by the look of wisdom will be a seed in the world of heaven.

Indiran, the Lord of the celestial is the best example for strengthening his will by way of controlling the five senses. Only the men of wisdom can achieve greatness, while the men of mean mindedness can seldom achieve. He who knows the qualities of taste, sight, touch, audition and smell alone can abide by the intricacies of the world. The greatness of the men of efficient knowledge through hidden language can be revealed by their inspiring utterances. It would be impossible to resist the wrath even for a moment of those who have scaled the mountain of goodness. The Andhanars are none other than the men of virtues since they show kindness to all living species.

The moral philosophy of Tiruvalluvar is found in all the sections such as domestic virtues, ascetic virtues, fate, royal virtues, appendix etc. The individual virtues which are essentially ethical are associated with social and political morality since both these institutions are meant for promoting the welfare of the individuals. Life starts with love. As a essential feature of all aspects of life is love. Since love is related to virtue, Tiruvalluvar maintains that virtue will burn up the human person which is devoid of love even as the Sun burns up the creature which is without bones, (worms). Most of the problems emerge due to the usage of abusive language. Tiruvalluvar insists that one should always utter pleasant words and should refrain from using filthy language. Here also Tiruvalluvar combines the notion of virtue. The sins of a man will vanish and the virtues in crease provided he cultivates the habit of speaking sweet words. We should also not forget the favour received from some one since gratitude is related to the knowledge of benefits conferred. He who has annihilated every virtue may yet survive; there is no redemption for him who has killed a benefit.

Impartiality is a moral virtue which expects all human beings to treat others like themselves which is especially applicable to the merchants. The ornament of the wise is not to deviate from impartiality and maintain balance like the ever-fixed scale. One must possess self-restriction to lead a peaceful life. Like the tortoise one must control the five senses; the role of a man with self-restriction is greater than mountain. All problems emerge due to the non-control of tongue and hence one must guard his tongue. Discipline and decorum are very essential for a human being since they are treated greater than life. Propriety of conduct is the seed of virtue; impropriety will ever cause sorrow. Not coveting another’s wife, the possession of patience or forbearance, not envying, not coveting, not back biting, the not speaking of profitless words, the dread of evil deeds, the knowing of what is suitable for a man’s status, offering, fame are some of the virtues associated with family life.

In the ascetic virtues we have the following chapters; The possession of benevolence, the relinquishing of meat, penance, inconsistent conduct, the absence of fraud, veracity, the not being angry, non-indulgence of evil, non-killing, instability, renunciation, knowledge of the true, the extirpation of desire and fate. Among the above topics, the term ‘vaymai’ is significant in the sense that it is equated with truth commonly. But Tiruvalluvar gives a unique definition of ‘vaymai’ thus; ‘veracity’ is nothing but non-utterance of words causing evil to other. Purity of the external body is caused by water and inner purity is caused by veracity. Now it is clear that unless a person develops inner purity he cannot but resist the usage of abusive words. Only a
3.4 SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY OF TIRUVALLUVAR

As it is generally known social ideologies cannot exist and survive without being followed and patronized by individuals. Tiruvalluvar’s message for the social well-being of people is found in several couplets. In the chapter on cherishing guests. It is not proper to keep the guests outside his residence even though he were eating the food of immortality. (82). He who having entertained the guests who have visited him, looks out for other guests to visit, will certainly be a welcome guest to the celestial beings. (86). In the section on wealth in association with political thought Tiruvalluvar speaks of social virtues. The process of getting education, non-learning, listening to others, the possession of knowledge, the correction of faults, seeking the guidance of great people, avoidance of mean minded people, acting after realization, knowing the power, knowing the place, knowing the time, clarification with enlightenment, engagement after-realization, cherishing one’s kindred, unforgetfulness, unsluggishness, personality endeavours, withstanding in trouble, method of acquiring wealth, friendship, investigation in making friendship, familiarity, evil friendship, unwanted friendship, folly, ignorance, hostility, the might of hatred, knowing the efficiency of enmity, internal enmity, non offending the great, being led by women, wanton women, non drinking of toddy, gambling, medicine, nobility, honour, greatness, perfectness, noble qualities, wealth without benefaction, shamefulness, the way of maintaining the family, agriculture, poverty, mendicancy, the dread of mendicancy and baseness.

The literal meaning of the word ‘porul’ is wealth. But it also indicates the meaning of life. Tiruvalluvar expects that human beings must live with fellowmen amicably and peacefully. The first and foremost requirement for executing this ideal is education which is the manifestation of perfection already in men. Every one should learn the subject matter without any blemish, and learn selectively, but ultimately his conduct should be worthy of his learning (291). Water will emerge from the sand-well in proportion to the depth to which is dug; likewise knowledge will flow from a man in proportion to his learning. According to Tiruvalluvar illiteracy leads to ignorance and it is a sin. As beasts by the side of men, so are other men by the side of those who are learned in celebrated works. (410). As a method of learning and acquiring knowledge Tiruvalluvar emphasizes the process of listening. In his opinion the wealth of wealth is that which is heard by the ear; that wealth is the major wealth. (411). He condemns the people who tastes the food seriously than tasting the message heard through the ear. (420).

The culmination of education, listening etc, is nothing but the possession of knowledge, leading to wisdom. The frequently quoted verse (423) declares thus; To discover the truth, uttered by any person, listened to by any person, is real wisdom. Most of fear what ought to be feared is folly; it is the work of the wise to fear what should be feared. (428). The noble gesture of the men of wisdom is to correct the faults of fellowmen, as well as in themselves. Those who fear guilt, if they commit a faulty small as a millet seed, will considered it to be as large as a palmyra
tree (433). In a society none can decide anything individually. Seeking the aid of great men is essentially required for guidance and decision making. This quality is to be preferred by the rulers. So to act as to make those men, his own, who are greater than himself is of all powers the highest (444). To achieve this welcome virtue one must avoid the company of the mean minded fellows. This is no greater help than the company of the good. There is no greater source of sorrow than the company of the wicked. (460)

No action should be performed in haste but after due consideration of the pros and cons of that action. Tiruvalluvar insists that before engaging in an action one should contemplate seriously and then proceed. After having undertaken it, to say, “we will consider” is a stupid way of talking, (467), one must realize his power and ability before executing an action. Even if the peacock feathers are loaded excessively, the axle of that vehicle will break (475). Equally one must realize the appropriate time while performing an act. If a person acts in the right time and at the right place, he can conquer the world and accomplish it (484). Similarly is the case in knowing the right place for action. Tiruvalluvar substantiates this view: Wide chariots with mighty wheels will not turn on the ocean; neither will the ships that traverse ocean, move on the earth (496). One must know and realize the conditions of life which are based on righteousness, wealth, pleasure and fear of life (death). For trusting a fellow without examination and outing a fellow after choosing for the assignment, both will create irremediable sorrow. (510). Similarly one should realize and employ right person for right action. After having considered, ‘this man can accomplish this, by these means,’ let the master leave with him the discharge of that duty.

Benignity is a grand virtue. For kind loons are the ornaments of the eyes. Those who devise to cultivate that degree of civilization which all shall prefer, even after swallowing the poison served to them by their friends; such persons will be friendly even with them. (580). Tiruvalluvar also insists upon developing strength and energy to fulfill one’s mission on earth. With an analogy he elucidates this concept. Even as the flower stretches asper the depth of water, the greatness of human beings will be determined by their mental strength. (588). This virtues is followed by unsluggishness. People are expected to give up idleness and be brisk always. Those who through idleness and do not engage themselves in dignified extension, will subject themselves to troubles and reproaches. (608). Promoting power and untiring activities will culminate in personality development. To encourage people Tiruvalluvar brings in divinity. Even if something could not be achieved by divine sources, one can triumph and obtain the reward through constant labour and continued bodily extentsions. (618). Even if fate confronts a man with suffering one should not give up hope. In troubles too one should develop steadfastness and try to wipe out troubles. Such people will give sorrow to sorrow itself who in sorrow do not suffer in sorrows.

3.5 POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF TIRUVALLUVAR
Man is a political animal; for peaceful living in a social good governance is a pre-requisite. To protect people from external dangers and internal threats, people need a good state with all equipments. Tiruvalluvar devotes several decades of verses to highlight the salient features of political ideologies.

The section on wealth commences with the significant features of royal personality especially the greatness of a king or ruler. A king has to possess an army, citizens, wealth, ministers, friends and a fortress. Such a king will be treated as a lion among kings. This is the grammar of politics. (381). A ruler must promote the quality of manly modesty and should not swerve from virtue but refrain from Vice (384). The ruler who spends his time and energy with duty consciousness in protecting his subjects will be adored as a God among men. (388). The other virtues elucidated for social well being of people are equally applicable for the king and ministers too. While seeking the guidance of great men, a king must be always in the company of noble men selected by him for the prosperity of his domain. Otherwise, he will perish even though there be no one to defeat or destroy him. (448).

A ruler must be vigilant and always be aware of the poor of his army, his enemy etc, before venturing into any act. There is nothing which may not be accomplished by those who, before they attack an enemy, make themselves acquainted with their own ability, and with whatever else is needful to be known, and apply themselves wholly to their goal. (472). Equally is important the intend of knowing the appropriate time. Valluvur explains this virtue with an analogy. A crow will conquer an owl in the day time; thus a king has to analyse the suitable time before conquering his enemies. (481). While selecting the ministers the ruler must be very conscious of their skill and ability. According to Tiruvalluvar, let a minister be chosen, after he has been tried by means of the following four qualities, virtue, attachment towards money, indulgence in sexual pleasure and fear of losing life. (501).

In the chapter on the Right scepter Tiruvalluvar gives a vivid picture about the method of ruling the country. Even as the living beings live happily when there is good down-pouring, the citizens will live happily when the king rules his domain justly. (542). Again for a king to punish the criminals with severe punishments, is like the pulling up of the weeds in the green field. (550). Similarly a king is to avoid the quality of the cruel scepter. The country of the king who does not daily examine into the wrongs done and distribute justice, will daily fall to runit. (553). Again when the people shed tears unable to bear the torture from a cruel king, on that day itself the wealth of the king will vanish. (555). Another important duty of the ruler is to protect his domain from terrorism. If he could not control and contain the onslaught of the terrorists, Tiruvalluvar warns that peace will be out of focus from his territory. The king should engage detectives to check the activities of the unruly masses and bring forth peace in his country. He is a spy who watches all men, to wit those who are in the king’s employment, his relatives and his enemies. (584).

In the sub section on Ministers of state, Tiruvalluvar emphatically asserts the office of the minister of state to assist the smooth administration of the kingdom in association with the king. He is one who is able to comprehend the whole nature of an undertaking, execute it in the best manner possible and offer assuring advice in time of necessity. (634). A minister must have the ability to communicate powerfully so that he can win over the confidence of his matter and
fellowmen. It is impossible for any one to conquer him by intriguing who does possess power of oratory and is neither faulty nor timid. (647). Tiruvalluvar elucidates the purity of action, the power of action and the method of acting.

The ruler is expected to maintain good relationship with the neighbouring countries and mutual friendship and territorial integrity are to be preserved. For this purpose the role of the envoy becomes inevitable. Since Tiruvalluvar has realized this necessity in ten couplets he describes the feature of sending emissaries to the neighbouring countries for peaceful coexistence. The qualifications of an ambassador are love of fellowmen, a fitting birth and the possession of abilities being acceptable to royalty. (681). A person who does possess the following virtues alone is eligible to be sent on a mission to foreign countries: an embodiment of wisdom, natural temperament for investigation and excellent learning. (684) The minister is always expected to be in the company of the king and advise him during the time of crisis. An excellent comparison is made by Tiruvalluvar regarding the relationship between the king and the minister. Ministers who serve under the fickle-minded monarchs should be neither too far nor too near like those who warm themselves at the fire. (691). While in the presence of the sovereign, ministers should neither whisper to nor smile at others. (694).

Another essential requirement of a minister is to know through indication. According to Tiruvalluvar, the minister who by looking at the king understands his mind without being told of it will be a perpetual ornament to the world which is surrounded by never drying ocean. (701). The minister also should have a thorough knowledge about the movements of his subordinates. This kind of understanding will enable him to be cautious about the spies and internal dangers. For a to blunder in the presence of those who have acquired a vast store of learning and know the value thereof is like a good man stumbling and failing away from the path of virtue. (781). Also the minister is not expected to exhibit any kind of dread before the council. In order to reply fearlessly before a foreign court, ministers should learn the logical method according to the rules of grammar. (725).

In the sub-division of the essentials of a state Tiruvalluvar first defines what is a state. A state is constituted of perfect cultivation, virtuous persons and merchants with inexhaustible wealth. All these must be good together always. (731). Again, freedom from epidemics, wealth, produce, happiness and protection to subjects are the fine jewels for a country. (738). Tiruvalluvar also portrays the nature of a fort. A fort is that which has an extensive space within, but only small places to be guarded and such as can destroy the courage of the besieging foes. (744). The minister should also know the technique of accumulating wealth. The chief wealth of the king is an well equipped army which completes its mission in the battle field without fear of wounds. (761). The kingdom should fear proud about its military spiritu. It is more pleasant to hold the dart that has missed an elephant that which has hit a hare in the forest. (772).

Tiruvalluvar brings to light the deep intricacies of masking friendship after proper investigation whom we have to consider as our friends. He wants people to give up evil friendship which may drive people to untold sufferings. He also distinguishes between genuine friendship and unreal friendship. In several couplets he describes various facts about familiarity. Intimate friendship is that which cannot in the least be injured by things done through the right of long standing intimacy. (801). He also elucidates the significant features of folly, ignorance, hostility, the
might of hatred, knowing the ability of hatredness, enmity withing, not offending the great, being led by women, wanton women, not drinking toddy, not indulging in gambling and medicine. In the last chapter the author suggests various means to avoid diseases, the method of treatment, diet etc. Let the physician enquire first into thanature of the diseace, its cause and its method of cure and treat a patient faithfully according to methical rules. (848)

In the section on appendix Tiruvalluvar discusses about the general issues which are to be realized by the citizens for a comfortable and peaceful living such as nobility. The high born will never deviate from these three virtues; good manners, truthfulness and modesty (952), honour, greatness, perfectness, courtesy, wealth without benediction, shamefulness, the way of maintain the family, agriculture, povery, mendicancy, the dread of mendicancy, and basensess. The whol ambit of this work is to make people perfect int heir endeavours and free freom base mentality. He contemptuosly scolds the mean-minded fellows. In contrast to the perfect ones, he holds (1078). The great people willbestow their alms as soon as they are informed; but the mean, like the sugar cane; only when they are tortured to death.

3.6 LET US SUM UP

*Tirukkural* reflects the genius of the Tamils in a remarkable way. It is at once ideal and practical, of the earthy as well as highly imaginative, simple as well as subtle, prosaic, matter of fact, earnest and forthright as well as highly poetic and emotional as is apparent in the third book dealing with love. Tiruvalluvar’s moral philosophy is anthropo-centric exclusively since its focus is on life on this earth rather than aspiring for heavenly abode. Tiruvalluvar is more concerned with the problems of life and ideal solutions of for socio-political and moral issues. He was totally opposed to absolutizing and idealizing the problems and making it a other worldly affairs.

3.7 KEY WORDS

*Aram*: Righteousness  
*Porul*: Wealth  
*Inbam*: Happiness  
*Veedu*: Release or Liberation

3.8 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES


