CHAPTER III

THE HIGH PRIEST OF FAMILY LIFE
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It is the life-positivism of Valluvar that has attracted worldwide attention. Dr. Albert Schweitzer has compared the life-assertion of Kural with the 'Nish Kanyia Karma Yoga' of Bagavat Gita and has come to the conclusion that the contribution of Valluvar to the human thought is certainly an advancement over Bagavat Gita and hence a milestone in the history of human thought. Gita taught us to do our appointed duty without caring for success or defeat; without expecting anything in return and having full faith in the Almighty, we have to do our duty. Kural goes a step further that the richness of life is its own reward that if we live a life of virtue, our place would be among the galaxy of Gods (Kural 5).

'Vaiyattul Välvähu Välväh Vanapaiyun
Teivattul Vaikka-padum'

Albert Schweitzer exclaims: 'What a difference between Kural and the Laws of Manu which originated some four centuries before it! In Kural, Life negation is a distant cloud. With sure strokes, the Kural draws the ideal of simple ethical humanity'.

In Tamil tradition, Valluvar is pictured as a saint who led a family life; he is widely known as the
'Illara Gnani', the high priest of family life. This explains the supreme position assigned to family life in Kural.

The legend of Valluvar's life also lends further evidence to the ideal of family life. Fortunately, Valluvar was blessed with an ideal wife, Vasuki. Her devotion to her husband knew no bounds. Once when she was drawing water from a well, the call from her husband came; she threw the rope in the middle and attended to her husband. The legend has it that by the grace of God, the rope along with the bucket was hanging in the middle instead of being immersed. Such was the power of a chaste woman!

Whatever may be veracity of the legend, it clearly testifies to the fact that Valluvar led an ideal family - life and that he drew from his personal experiences. The glorification of family life found in Kural is the result of his intense personal experience.

In Sanskrit tradition also, family life finds a place. Gruhasta being a stage in one's life, Brahmacharya, Gruhastha and Vanaprastha, but the total emphasis was on the renunciation of worldly pleasures, on the negative side of life. In the Jain order of things also, family life and ascetic life were given equal importance but self-abnegation was the supreme virtue leading to Nirvana.
The glorification of family life and domestic pleasures, the purpose of life being served by its own richness, is really a Tamil ideal expanded and expounded and incorporated in the philosophy of Tiruvalluvar.

In Čāṅkāyam literature, references to ascetic life are but few, while the pleasures of married life are lovingly described with minutest detail.

Peaceful and happy domestic life has been adduced as the chief reason for youthful appearance without grey hairs by Pisir Āndaiyār in Puranānūru. When questioned about the non-appearance of grey hairs in spite of his old age, the poet says that his wife and children are full of good qualities of head and heart. His assistants act according to his mind. The king is also good natured and does not do any harm. Above all, in his village, gentleman with learning and humility abound. Domestic happiness contributes to longevity. There must also be harmony in political and social life. Pisir Āndaiyār was at peace with himself and his wife and children and with the world at large. The Tamil ideal of the harmonious family life is described here.

There is a charming description of the child's pranks in Puranānūru. The Pāndya King Arivudai Nambi has written a lovely poem.
People might be able to amass wealth and be able to dine with a large entourage, but everything will be useless unless one is blessed with a child that briskly walks hither and thither, and stretches its hand for the food. It throws out the food from the plate and then avidly takes it back and mixes everything. It throws the food all over its body, only a portion going into its mouth. If one is not blessed with such a lovely child, one's life is without any purpose.

Valluvar sums up this charming episode of domestic happiness in Kural 64.

Amilthinum Arra Inite Makkal
airu kai Alăviya Kûl

The food that has been touched by the little hand of the child is far sweeter than the heavenly nectar.

Auvaiyâr,6 the famous female poet of the Sangam Age, has sung about the sweetness of the meaningless blabberings of the child:

'To the ears of the parent, the blabberings of their child, even though devoid of any meaning, sound sweet. They may not be in tune with any music of the lyre. Nor will they be in keeping with the season or time of the day. Despite all this, a father is immensely pleased with the utterings of his child'.

Valluvar goes a step further and sings thus:
'Some are pleased with the melody of the flute or lyre and appreciate their sweetness. Perhaps they have not listened to the sweetness of their child's blabberings' (Kural 66).

According to the prevailing legend, Auvaayar was the sister of Valluvar and it was only on her recommendation that the Sangam poets of Madurai accepted Kural. It is immaterial whether Valluvar lived several decades earlier or later. It does not matter whether they were brothers and sisters. Both are soaked in Tamil tradition. That is true and enough for our purpose.

Puranānūru speaks of a heroic mother who was very much enraged when she heard that her son, while retreating from the battlefield, received wounds at his back and died an ignominious death. In fact, she wanted to cut off her breasts which fed milk to such a coward if this were true. She did not grieve at his death, but at the ignominious manner in which he died. She went in person to the battlefield and verified the truth by looking at the corpses. At last, she was able to identify the body of her son and was elated to see that her son has died like a hero by receiving wounds in his chest. The heroic mother felt more elated than even when she gave birth to her son. In Puram 277 and 278, a similar sentiment is expressed.
In Kural 69, Valluvar succinctly states the essence of this sentiment, but there is a subtle difference. The heroic quality is emphasised in Purananūra, but in Kural it is the intellectual element. When a mother is told that her son has become a learned intellectual, her joy's intensity is more than when she gave birth to him.

While comparing Āngam poems with Valluvar's couplets, we have to remember that incidents precede and generalisations follow. Incidents precede aphorisms and not vice versa.

Instances could be multiplied, but the fact emerges that the life positivism of Valluvar in general, and the supreme position accorded to family life in Kural in particular, are unmistakably derived from the Tamil tradition.

It is difficult to evaluate the system of values cherished by Valluvar as Valluvar is prone to the habit of praising or blaming the quality of concepts in each and every chapter with equal vehemence. In one chapter, he may extol the virtue of kindness and in another, heroism.

In spite of the fact that Valluvar has accorded a pride of place to family life, he is also not wanting in the praise of ascetic way of life. In the Introductory chapter itself, Valluvar has sung the praise of 'Nāttār Perumal' i.e., the greatness of those who have renounced the pleasures of the world. He also goes on in a similar
vein in the division relating to the ascetic way of life.

However, the total impression is overwhelmingly in favour of the family life. He has devoted 24 chapters to family life and only 14 to ascetic way of life besides one introductory chapter in Pāyiram.

Fortunately, Valluvar himself has compared both ways of life in his Kural and has indicated certain conclusions. Otherwise, it would be difficult for us to put forward any hypothesis in the matter. In Kural 41 and 42, it is laid down that those who lead the family life are indeed the protectors of ascetics and other saints. In Kural 46, it is stated that if one were to conduct his family life in accordance with Dharma, there is nothing to be gained from other ways of life. In Kural 160, it is conceded that those saints who forego their food and do penance are great but greater are those who bear with the hot words of their fellow beings.

The high priest of family life has proclaimed that love and Dharma are the essential quality and product of married life.

Anbum Aranum Udaitāyin Ilvālkkai

Panbum Payanum Adu' (Kural 45)
One who follows the precept of true family life, none can equal him, not even the saints who renounce sexual pleasures. In Kural 47 and 48 also, a similar sentiment is expressed. In Kural 49, true Dharma is equated with Grīhasta Dharma. In as many as six couplets, the family life is compared to ascetic life and glorified.

Next to his glorification of family life, Valluvar has extolled the virtues of the house-wife. In Valkkai Tunai Nalam' Valluvar sounds quite modern when he lays stress on the ability of the house-wife to confine her expenses within the family budget (Kural 51). In fact, she is given a somewhat equal position as she is called as life partner, 'Valkkai Tunai', she is also styled as one who lives within the means of her husband 'Vala-t-takkál'.

The success or failure of the family life depends entirely on the house-wife; womanhood is the highest bliss, provided unflinching chastity is present (Kural 54). The ideal womanhood has been well defined in Kural 56. She unflinchingly guards her chastity, tenderly looks after her husband, jealously guards the fame and name of the family and is tireless in her devotion to these ideals. Physical barriers are no guarantee for chastity — it is the will power of the woman that is the best guarantee for chastity.
Indeed, certain elements of Pattini cult are visible in Kural. The woman is expected to worship her husband. Even the rains would be at the beck and call of a chaste woman who instead of worshipping Gods, worships her husband (Kural 55). Even if the modern interpretation of Kural 55 is accepted, she is likened to the timely rains. However, the fact that she is expected to adore her husband is clear. Such a woman will be advised by the heavenly angels (Kural 58).

This is somewhat analogous to the 'Pati virada Dharma' of Sanskrit. There are no traces of this in Gaṅgā works except in Kalittogai (Kali 38:16-17). Of course, the twin epics, Cilapatikāram and Manimēkalai abound in such references. If fact Kural 55 itself has been incorporated verbatim in Cilapatikāram and Manimēkalai. Kangaki is the personification womanhood as depicted in Kural. When requested by her companion, Devanti, Kangaki refuses to worship the God of love, Manmathan, in keeping with the best traditions of a Pattini.

It will be easily seen that people were willing to worship a woman who worships her husband, instead of conceding equal rights to her. This comes nearer to the ideal of Milton in his Paradise Lost, 'He for God in him and she through him'. She cannot attain God independently but only through her husband. This secondary position of woman is extolled and eulogised by Valluvar.
Perimēlalagar’s interpretation of the chapter 'Pūtala varai perutal' is still more degrading. Begetting male children only matters; female children are excluded by Perimēlalagar. The name of the chapter itself suggests that it is a blessing only when a male child is born. The sexual variation 'Nakkat Ñuru' is more acceptable as it will not exclude female children. The first six couplets in this chapter apply equally to both sexes, but the last four couplets are exclusively meant for the sons only.

We need not strain ourselves to give far-fetched interpretations to justify the attitude of Valluvar to the fair sex. In respect of this Tamil and Sanskrit traditions are one in emphasising the begetting of a male child. In Puranānūru 9:4, the end and aim of life itself is referred to as the begetting of a son. If one has not given birth to a son, one’s life is an unfulfilled one; only after fulfilling this aim, death could be faced with equanimity. When Pisir Andaiyar wanted to lay down his life along with his friend Kopperun Cplan, he was advised to go back, to beget a male child and then only to come back for making the supreme sacrifice.

The duty of the father is to educate his son so as to enable him to occupy the front place in an assembly of scholars (Kural 67). The son, in his return, has to
conduct himself in such an exemplary manner as to earn the encomium that the father was blessed with such a gem of a son (Kural 70).

The beauty of the family rests on the high qualities of the house-wife; its ornament is begetting children (Kural 69). In Ainkurunuru the mother is the light of the house like the penumbral shades of the red flame. In Akananuru 184, the son is hailed as the light of the family.

'Anbu' or love is the guiding force of family life and it has been defined by Paradēlalagar as the affection shown by us towards family members, relatives, friends and all those with whom we are connected. This is nicely distinguished from 'Arul' or universal love which is shown to all even if they are not connected with us in any way.

The revolutionary concept advocated by Valluvar is that love is not only the basis for Dharma but also for heroism (Kural 76). This kind of heroism is typified in Kövalan when he goes to rescue of an old brahmin from the clutches of a mad elephant. Ilāgo uses the phrase 'Karunai Maravan' in that context — A heroism actuated by considerations of mercy.
The ideal of Tamilian hospitality has been incorporated in Kural. It is proclaimed in Puranānuṟṟu¹⁸ that even the heavenly nectar will not be eaten alone but only with guests. This sentiment is echoed in Kural 82. Even if a medicine, conferring deathless state, is offered on condition that it should be eaten without sharing it with guests, it should be rejected.

This ideal has been so much extolled in Sangam literature that it was deemed a great privilege to eat whatever is left over after serving the guests. In Kurinji-ṉṟṟṟṟu¹⁹ the lady in love desires to live a fruitful life with her lover, a life in which both are content to share whatever is left over after satisfying their guests. Valluvar extols this ideal, further asks whether there is any need to sow seeds in the fields of those who practise such highest form of hospitality. The poetic exaggeration implies that they will get effortless yield from their fields.

The idea is to have a steady stream of guests. In Aham 213 and Puram 177, the outgoing guests are looked after well and it is good to look forward to have another set of guests. In Kural 86, it is declared that those who tend their outgoing guests and wait for the incoming guests will be welcomed into heaven by the angels.
The manner of looking after guests is also laid down in Kural 90. Anicca flower withers if one enjoys its fragrance by inhaling; the guests will easily be scared by unkind looks. This golden rule should be remembered while looking after guests - in words and looks alike, one should be kind to them.

Valluvar has set very high moral standards for the family life. In the words of M. Ariel the French translator, he formulates sovereign morality and absolute reason; that he proclaims in their very essence, in their eternal abstractedness virtue and truth; that he presents as it were in one group the highest laws of domestic and social life. It is as a great moral philosopher that Valluvar has been known the world over, thanks to the Christian missionaries. In fact the ethical element in Kural has been over emphasized. Valluvar deserves to be better known as a political scientist as a great love-poet and as one who has also sung of the militant life of the Tamils who considered it a great honour to die in the battlefield.

It would be far from the truth to imagine Valluvar as a hoary idealist and his ethical code as an impractical one. Thiru T.R. Sesha Iyengar has said well: 'Valluvar is an utilitarian of the noblest type and a thinker of the loftiest order. His conception of the good of the community and the laws of service enjoined
upon that member of that community to contribute to that
good is well conceived. In his chapter on 'Oppuravartal'
In tune with the world's conventions in his sacred Kural,
Valluvar, the ablest exponent of the Dravidian religion and
philosophy formulates the most comprehensive and far reaching
ideal of service to the good of the community or the nation'.

While addressing himself to those leading a family
life, Valluvar has formulated the rules of conduct in eleven
chapters in a positive manner - love, hospitality, speaking
sweet words, gratitude, impartiality, humility, moral
behaviour, patience, adjustment with worldly conventions
charity and fame. Here again the positive element predomi-
nates as there are only six chapters of a negative nature
Not desiring another man's wife, absence of jealousy,
Not coveting other's property, Refraining from carrying
tales, avoiding useless speech and shunning the evil.

When ripe fruits are available, who will hanker
after unripe fruits? When sweet words are there in plenty
why do you choose harsh words? (Kural 109). Humility and
sweet words are the true ornaments of a gentleman
(Kural 95).

The virtue of gratefulness is the hallmark of
a family man! doing good help without expecting anything
in return is deeper than oceans (Kural 103). Though not
a recipient of any previous help, if one lends a helping hand, it is indeed greater than the heaven and earth (Kural 101). Timely help, even though on a small scale, is far greater than this world (Kural 102). It is indeed directly proportional to the gentle nature of those who have received such help (Kural 104).

For violations of all moral concepts, there is a way of salvation, but for ingratitude there is no salvation (Kural 111). This couplet 'En Nanri Konarkkum Uiyundam Uivillai - Cey nanri Konra Makarku' is considered to have been alluded in Puranānūru. Injury to the sacred cow, causing abortion, killing of brahmins all these sins could be atoned by various methods, but there is no method of atonement for ingratitude.

'Citi Konpōrkku uiti Illana
Aram Padirē Ayilai Kanava'

'Aram' or Dharma alluded to there is considered to be Kurial itself; if this were so, Puram 34 must be interpreted as an expansion of Kurial 111. It is also quite possible that 'Aram' does not refer to Kurial and to some other ethical code which might have existed at that time and which is not available now. Kurial also refers to 'Aram' in Kurial 183 'Aram Kūrum Ākkam ūram'. Parimōḷalagar has also interpreted 'Aram' as ethical codes.
Applying the psychological principle 'from concrete to the abstract', it is more reasonable to hold the aphorism of Kural as of later origin. Concrete offences have been listed in Puranānūru and hence it must be older than Kural.

Further it is logical to hold that some moral codes like 'Aram' might have preceded Kural. The code of Valluvar is so comprehensive, so all embracing and so excellent that it could not have been the first of its kind in Tamil. Numerous are the references in Kural to other works. There are two references to Vedas in Kural 543, 583; three references to moral codes 133, 21, 322; and five references to codes of politics 531, 440, 636, 683, 743. A book of medicine is referred to in Kural 941.

This testifies in unmistakable terms to the eclectic tendency of Valluvar. It is quite clear that he has chosen the best out of every work and compiled his code with a rare sense of vision.

The Puranānūru Poet Karikilar has admired the impartiality of the Pandya King Palyākasālai Mudu Kudumip Peruvāluti and compared him to a balance which shows the substance without fear or favour. In Kural 113, the same simile is employed to bring out the virtue of impartiality. Partial conduct will affect the well-being of one's descendants (Kural 114).
Humility leads to heaven, and the absence of it to hell (Kural 121). It is specially required for the rich (Kural 125). The God of Dharma will enquire and enter the abode of the learned men with humility (Kural 130).

Moral and righteous conduct is more precious than life itself (Kural 131). If the brahmin forgets his Vedas, he can re-learn it at any time, but if his conduct degenerates, it cannot be regained (Kural 134). Learning is of no avail unless one knows how to adjust himself to the world's conventions (Kural 149). Here again, Valluvar qualifies his ethical exhortations with an appeal for conformity with the social environment.

Valluvar takes up cudgels against the seduction of another man's wife in his chapter on 'Piranil Vilaiyāmai'. Seduction of another man's wife is against all canons of moral conduct. Valluvar's injunctions are in sharp contrast with Vatsayana's kama Sutra which deals with erotology. Vatsayana reaches the depth of his degradation when he formulates the technique of seducing the wife of another. It was meant to induce, incite and prolong the sex passion. It deals with physical acts, manipulations and postures in sex unions and abounds in revolting descriptions and obscene situation. We have none of these in Piruvalluvar'.
For bringing the virtue of patience Valluvar employs the simile of the earth which supports even those who are digging it. So also we must put up with those who insult us (Kural 151). In Tolkāppiyam, there is a sub-division of 'Puram' in which patience with wrong-doers is considered as a kind of victory 'Vegai'. Such equanimity is a virtue which is praised high not only here in this world but in the other world as well.

Those who are sure of their worth never lose their equanimity. There is a reference to it in Naṟṟinai. This sentiment is echoed in Kural 158. In Kural 159 and 160 putting up with harsh words is valued more than doing penance.

Jealousy is the breeding ground of poverty. Lakshmi, Goddess of wealth, will depart from jealous people and her elder sister, Mādevi, Goddess of poverty will descend on them (Kural 167).

Coveting another man's property is equally obnoxious as it will in the end bring about the ruin of the family of covetous (Kural 171).

It is better to die rather than live by carrying tales (Kural 183). We are quick to find out the faults of others and how well it would be if we are able to realise our own follies also! (Kural 191).
Useless and notorious chatter-boxes cannot be classified as human beings but they are like chaff (Kural 196).

If one conspires to do harm to others, Dharma will see to it the he comes to grief (Kural 234). Poverty will be no excuse for wrong doing (Kural 275).

In modern criminal law also, the motive for which the crime has been committed is irrelevant but while the court determines the quantum of punishment, it is relevant to some extent.

In Poruṭpāl, Valluvar has clarified this concept and has cautioned against wrong doing even if one's mother is hungry (Kural 636). Even to relieve mother's hunger, wrongs should not be committed and there is no justification for the commission of wrongs whatever may be the motive.

Valluvar belongs to the purely ethical school of thought. Modern socialistic thought takes a lenient view of wrongs like theft and prostitution born out of poverty. It is considered as the failure of the society to abolish poverty. Abolition of poverty alone could bring about a crime-free society.

The chapter on 'Opuravarital' is a discretionary quality when no rules of conduct have been framed by
ethical codes; one should give freely in commensurate with his means. Don't expect anything in return. Does the rains receive anything in return from the earth? (Kural 211).

Benevolent charity and the resultant fame are the twin objectives of life for ancient Tamils. In 'Padantina', these qualities have been enshrined by the Tamil grammarians.

Begging was considered as beneath one's dignity; but giving alms was considered as dignified. This philosophy of Puramānūru has been expanded by Valluvar in his chapters on 'Ekai', 'Iravu', 'Iravacean'.

Vedic scholars regard receiving of alms as a conduct leading to the heavens, but Valluvar regrets it as an evil. Giving alms is good for it is known as a way of going to heaven. Valluvar strikes a different note and asserts that even if there were no heaven, it is good to be charitable.

The Sangam poets considered the benevolent act of relieving hunger as a Godly act. This ideal is a common chord frequently touched by the Puram Poets and highlighted in the phrase, 'Pasi-pinī Maruttuvan Illam - Anitto Ciāytō Kuruma Namakkana' 'Please tell us whether the house of the Physician who has the remedy for hunger is near or far from here'.
Valluvar refers to this noble ideal of relieving hunger in three couplets (Kural 225, 226, 227).

Charity was considered as an end in itself. It is not to be practised because it is a passport to heaven. There is immense pleasure in giving. The Aham Poet also refers to this great pleasure. Valluvar queries 'Are they not aware of the pleasure in giving? - they amass wealth only to loose at the end (Kural 228).

In Puranāṇūru, there is the proud story of Kumāṇan who was prepared to part with his head for the sake of giving wealth to a poet. Kumāṇan was banished by his younger brother and was living in exile in a forest when he was approached by a poet for favour. Meanwhile his brother had announced a reward on his brother's head. When Kumāṇan saw that he had nothing to give, he offered his own head and asked the poet to sever it and to receive the stipulated award from his brother.

Valluvar sums up the feelings of Kumāṇan. There is nothing which is more painful and bitter than death; but even death is sweet and preferable when one has nothing to give when asked by the needy (Kural 231).

The end and aim of life on earth is the name and fame one leaves behind oneself. The quest after fame
is mentioned in Maduraik Kāṇi 205 and Aka Nānūr 377-145. In this fleeting world, nothing remains as constant as fame (Kural 233). Similar sentiments have been expressed in Čāṅgāl classics also. Those born in this world must earn fame, otherwise they need not have been born. The very aim of birth on earth is fame (Kural 236). Many kings have lived and they are now dead and gone; only some who have done good to humanity are remembered. This is how Puranānūrī 32 expands the ideal.

Thus it is seen that Valluvar has drawn upon Tamil tradition in his life - positivism in the following chapters: 'Il vālkkai', 'Vālkkai Tunainalam', 'Putalvarai-pa-perutal', 'Virundombal'; 'Ceyanai arital', 'Ākai' and 'pukal'. The essence of Tamil culture is for the glorification of family life and is having an universal appeal.

Judging by the extant Tamil works Valluvar was the first to codify the moral precepts in the following chapters: 'Anbudaimai', 'Iniyavai Kūral', 'Naduvu Nilamai', 'Adakamudaimai', 'Olukkamudaimai' 'Pirainil vilaiyamai', 'Poraiyudaimai', 'Alukkaramai', 'Venkāmai', 'Puraṇ kūrāmai', 'Payanila Collāmai', 'Tivinai Accam' and 'Oppuravarital'.

The manner of laying down moral injunctions is also note-worthy. In Čāṅgāl literary conventions,
the transience of this world's nature is emphasised. Before our end comes, let us do good to our fellow human beings. This is the trend of thought in Kānci tīnaḻ poems of ĉaṅgaṉ Age.33 This is, indeed, the basis for the moral teachings of Valluvar.

Another method of driving home moral injunctions is to mix religion with morals. Good conduct will lead us to heaven while evil doing will take us to hell. There are numerous references34 in Kural to this common mode of laying down morals.

However, Valluvar has done a salutary job in separating morals from religion. The carrot and stick policy of brandishing heaven and brandishing hell will not hold good for all intellectuals. That is the reason why Valluvar has advocated goodness and charity for its own sake and declared that even if there were no heaven, it is good to share whatever one has with others. There is intrinsic pleasure in making others happy.

The total impression one gains about the methodology of Valluvar in laying down moral precepts is that Valluvar constantly appeals to the conscience of man.

While delivering Srimathi Sornammal Endowment lectures on 'The ethics of the Tirukkural',35 Professor
V.A. Devasenapathi has stated: 'By the pictures he paints and the principles he enumerates, Tiruvalluvar offers guidance on moral life. He does not give us a set of rules or a set rule for application to every difficulty. On the other hand, he wishes to develop our powers of moral insight and moral initiative. Above all, Valluvar seeks to create a new will in human beings - a will for goodness. A good will has been compared by Immanuel Kant to a jewel that shines by its own light.' So also, Tiruvalluvar, the high priest of family life, has propounded a philosophy of life assertion in which the simple pleasures of a domestic life are glorified; his theory of life is a jewel that shines by its own light.

According to Tolkāppiyam, the foster mother is duty bound to give proper advice to the newly married couple. She would recall past experiences to throw light upon the past, to offer guidelines for the present problems and to foresee the situations that may arise in the future and to counsel how to deal with them. She would prescribe certain positive rules of conduct for implementation and proscribe certain other undesirable activities. In short, she is assigned the role of the mentor of the family. Ilampūranar has cited three couplets of Kural to illustrate the type of advice that could be given by the foster-mother.
or 'Cevili': Kural 51 of Illaṟaviyai speaks of the ideal wife who lives within the means of her husband; Kural 55 indicates the cult of the Pattini who refrains from worshipping God and instead worships her husband; and Kural 56 defines the ideal wife as one who guards her chastity, looks after her husband and strives hard to keep up the reputation of the family.

It is quite relevant to recall here again that Valluvar has laid great stress on chastity only for women. No doubt, Valluvar has by covert implication underlined the need for men to be chaste in his Negative chapters, 'Piran manai Vīḷaiyāmai' in Arattuppāl and 'Varaivin makalir' in Porutpal. He has prohibited extra-marital intercourse with another's wife as it is against the tenets of the moral code which he has propounded, and he has vehemently urged men to avoid sly prostitutes as they are intent only on making money and their protestations of love and affection are hollow. The inescapable inference is that Valluvar has enjoined upon menfolk also to seek sexual gratification only through lawful channels. However, it is not possible to imagine what prevented Valluvar to issue a positive command for men also to conduct themselves on the basis of moral principles. Dr. K. Mohan Raj also has stated in his thesis, 'Tolkāppiyam and Tirukkural—Or oppāivu' that Valluvar has not openly advocated
chastity for men even though there is enough material in Kural to regard that Valluvar expected his hero to observe moral scruples in seeking pleasure. The true house-wife is also one whose chastity is above board as seen from the chapter of 'Vaṅkai-t-tunai nalam' in Illaraviyal. This is common to both Aham and Puran traditions. What is uncommon is the prescription of chastity for men. Perhaps, deep-rooted tradition prevented Valluvar from coming out openly in favour of chastity or Karpu for men also.

In Abattinai, the role of the friend 'Pāhkan' is commendable even though the role assigned to the lady companion 'Tōli' is more pronounced. In pre-marital intercourse, the hero tells his mind to his companion who helps him to meet lady-love and also to arrange for their marriage. In the post-marital life also. 'Pāhkan' acts as a friend, philosopher and guide. The duty of a true friend is to condemn the conduct of the hero when he thinks of departing from his wedded wife in search of a prostitute. This may happen either during pre-marital or post-marital life.

Tolkāppiar has laid down that 'Pāhkan' may have to contradict the hero 'talaivan' if he goes astray. Valluvar has not assigned any such role to 'Pāhkan'.
either in Kāmatuppāl and Illaraviyal, but he has made it clear that the end and aim of true friendship is to take up cudgels against a friend if he deviates from the righteous way and not merely to converse and to enjoy laughter (Kural 784).

Dr. N. Subba Reddiar in his research paper on 'Tiruvalluvar's philosophy of Education' has stated:

"Tiruvalluvar may be regarded as an idealist in the sense that he believed that the true or real is essentially spiritual or mental in nature. We cannot put any brand to his idealism; once we do so, we are treading on rather a slippery ground. But we may generally say that he belonged to the school which affirmed that reason and consciousness constituted the essence and complete nature of reality".

It is in his concept of the family-life, i.e., 'Illaraviyal' that Valluvar appears as the idealist par excellence. His concept of womanhood is glowing with idealism. He has not cared to see the darker side of womanhood. It is true that he has roundly condemned prostitutes for their moral turpitude and feigned happiness in search of money. The hallowness of the nature of the love and affection shown by the
prostitutes has also been brought out in Kural. In the chapter on 'Peh valicēral' he has imposed a blanket ban on listening to the counsel of women. Perhaps Valluvar had in his mind characters like Kaikhēyi in Ramayana when he imposed such a ban on feminine advice.

In spite of all this, Valluvar's idealism knows no bounds in 'Illaraviyal' or 'Arattuppāl'. He has defined the ideal wife as one who lives within the means of her husband. How many of our women conform to this kind of definition? In Arattuppāl, especially in 'Illaraviyal', Valluvar has prescribed the loftiest ideals of individual morality. In his unbridled enthusiasm, he has painted a bright and perfect family life which is indeed a rarity in practical life. Perhaps Valluvar was motivated by his own personal experience.

However, it would be misleading to label Valluvar as an idealist par excellence. In Porupūl, Valluvar grows more and more realistic in his attitude towards life because he is quick to realise the truth that in the struggle for existence, only the fittest will survive and the weaklings will perish. That is reason why he relaxes his strict moral standards while
prescribing the manner of dealing with enemies, as we shall presently see in the following pages. There is ample evidence in the chapter 'Pēṉ Valiccēṟal' that Valluvar was aware of the hard reality. He has advised against acting according to the dictates of one's wife as it may prove harmful to the family as a whole. The vision of a woman is somewhat narrow and limited and certainly does not include the interests of her mother-in-law. Parimēḷalagar's interpretation of 'Pēṉ valiccēṟal' is that instead of the wife taking orders from her husband, the husband takes orders from his wife due to over indulgence of sexual gratification. This state of slavery in expectation and in return for sexual gratification is compared to a kind of prostitution and hence is highly reprehensible.

Though the idealistic factor is an all pervading one in Arattuṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟ所所, it is good to remember that Tirukkural was meant to be a guide book for practising life and never to be kept in the museum as some lofty mental speculation enshrining soaring idealism.

Indeed, Tirukkural is a practical book of wisdom which contemplates many trying situations in life and offers guidance. Instead of learning by
by trial and error, one may confidently look forward to Valluvar for solving his day-to-day problems. When troubles besiege the family, Kural gives us the courage to face the turbulations and fluctuations of fortune with boldness and equanimity.

The genius of Valluvar defies classification. He looks like a meditating saint philosopher in 'Pāyiraviyal' and 'turavapaviyal'. The soaring idealism of Valluvar, in 'Illaraviyal' is too apparent to be unnoticed. In Poruttapāl a growing tendency of pragmatism is noticed. While laying down the methodology of dealing with one's enemies, Valluvar becomes a hard hearted realist who did not hesitate to lay down questionable means to defeat one's enemies. In the depiction of the heroic traditions mainly derived from Tamil culture, Valluvar appears to be a vigilant warrior. In the treatment of love and its subtle nuances, the romantic spirit of Valluvar finds its noble expression. A rare sense of the psychology of sex is also noticed in Kāmpattupāl.

Tiruvalluvar is a multi-faced genius who cannot be branded with any of the 'isms'. This is all the more evident not merely in the versatility of the subject matter, but also in the perfection
he has attained in the manner of laying down his dictums. Justice V.V. Srinivasan in his foreword to Krishnampettai Kuppusamy Mudaliar Edition of TIRUKKURAL has remarked:

"Scholars have often wondered which in TIRUKKURAL is the more marvellous, the matter or the thought, content or the manner, so absolutely perfect. You cannot take out a word or syllable without ruining the thought; you cannot alter or substitute a word or syllable without distorting the meaning. You cannot re-arrange a word or syllable without affecting or falsifying the suggestion; the verse may be said to be dichotomous and instead of the monotony which the scholar or student expects to find in couplets, each verse would seem to have a rhythm or a cadence of its own, with initial and internal rhymes and subtle and suggestive alternations. But for a full and delicate engraving in each verse, we need the adventitious aid of a magnifying glass."

Of the family life of Valluvar, The Rev. Dr. J. Lazaras in his paper on Kural in the Tamilian Antiquary has summed up beautifully.
'The Poets' life was a poem in itself'.

The high priest of family life, Tiruvalluvar has developed his poetic life into a magnificent epic.

The quaint domestic pleasures Valluvar conjures up in the chapters, 'Ilvālkkai' 'Valkkait tunai nalam' and 'Patalvaripperutal' are a dainty dish for the literary critic as well as for the ordinary man. The lofty ideals that he has set for the conduct of family life in 'Anbudaimai', 'Virugtōmbal', 'Iniyavai kūral' are a source of inspiration to every householder. The moral injunctions in 'Cey Naṇri Arītal', 'Naduva Milaimai' 'Adakkamudaimai', 'Oḷukkamudaimai', 'Piranil vilaiyamai', 'Poraiyudaimai', 'Alukkarāmai', 'Vehamai', 'Puraṅkūramai', 'Payanila collamai', 'Tūvinai accam' and 'Oppuravarītal' are certain rules of conduct for securing harmony in human relations. 'Tukai' and 'Pukai' are the twin objectives of life to render service for mankind. We have already noted in another analysis of the chapters in 'Illaraviyal' that the positive element is dominating.

Dr. U.V. Swaminatha Iyer has noticed that while laying down moral principles, Valluvar emphasises the same concept in positive and negative modes, very often adopts one moral principle as a simile for
underlying another and in his moral fervor, discarded some words like Alkul. Dr. U.V. Swaminatha Iyer also seems to be nearer the truth when he observes that Valluvar has just mentioned 'Parattai vayirpiriva' or separation due to harlot but has not expatiated upon it as he considered it as repugnant.

The common portrait of Valluvar suggests that he ought to have been an ascetic who had renounced the worldly pleasures and is somewhat misleading. Acharya Narendra Dev in his introduction to the Hindi Translation of Arattuppal has remarked that Kural is a common scripture written by a saint. Valluvar was not merely a saint but one whose family life was of an exemplary nature. The Tamil phrase 'Illara gāhani' or 'a saint in family life' adequately brings out the character of Valluvar as gleaned from his work, Kural.

Dr. P.S. Sastri has pointed out that the suffix 'Kal', the form of 'När' instead of 'Niýir or Nivir' are not found in Tolkāppiam, Pattu-pāṭtu and Etṭṭuṭṭogai but are used by Valluvar and Kalittokai. Not only in form but also in content
Kalittokai is akin to Kural. Despite the fact that Kalittokai contains love songs, several concepts are catalogued in Kalittokai 39. The simile 'Aran-ecarān Mūppē pōl' bears close resumblance to 'Tamiyal Mūttarrū' in Kural. Impartiality or 'Naduvu Nilaivai' is spoken of in Kalittokai 42. 'Iravu' and 'Arāi' are expanded in Kalittokai 47. Humility or Adakka-mudaimai is also mentioned therein.

There is also striking similarity between Kural and Kalittokai in describing the reactions of the heroine who meets her spouse after long separation. In fact, she wants to quarrel with him, but she is not able to, as her heart craves for immediate union (Kalittokai 67: 12-13, 21-22 and Kural 1234).

The didactic element is also permeating in Kalittokai 120 and runs parallel to many a couplet in Kural in 'Iravu' and 'Iravaecam'; so, too, is the case of the Nayaki's dreams when separated from her husband. The disease of desideratum is a peculiar one - the more one gets near one's sweetheart it disappears, the more one moves away from the spouse, it spreads agony. Surprisingly many moral concepts like 'Anbu' 'Ariva' 'Murai' 'Porai' are defined in Kalittokai 133.
The parallelisms in Kalittokai and Kural point to the proximity of the time of their origin. However, there is no instance of verbatim repetition of Kural as in Cilapatikāram and Manimākalai. The nearest approach is to be found in Kalittokai 142 and Kural 1163 while describing the conflict of emotions. The inevitable conclusion is that both are soaked in Tamil tradition.

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NOTES

5. Puranānūru 183.
6. Puranānūru 92.
7. Puranānūru 277-278.
11. Cilappatikāram 9:60-64.
13. Parimēlalagar, Commentary on Kural, 'Putalvaraiperutal'.
15. Ainkurunūru, Stanza 495.


25. Tolkāppiyam, Purattinai Iyal Mūrpa 75.


27. Tolkāppiyam, Purattinai Iyal Mūrpa 78.


31. Puranānūru 164.

32. Puranānūru 76.

33. Puranānūru 194, 195.

34. Kural 385, 919, 234, 986, 1323.

35. V.A. Senapathi, The ethics of Tirukkuṟaḷ, Srimathi Sournamal Endowment lectures, page 64.

36. Tolkāppiyam, Karpīyal 151.


38. Tolkāppiyam, Karpīyal 180.

39. Dr. N. Subbu Reddiar, Symposium papers on Tirukkuṟaḷ 1974, page 37.

41. The Rev. Dr. J. Lazarus, The Tamilian Antiquary
   Vol. II, No.1, 1913.

42. Dr. U.V. Swaminatha Iyer, 'Tiruvalluvaru
   Tirukkuralum', page 24, 1945.

43. Acharya Narendra Dev, Tirukkural 1-33 chapters; Tamil
   Text with Hindi Translations by B.D. Jain, 1952.

44. Dr. P.S. Sastri, Tirukkural - Arattuppal, page XVIII,
   1939.

45. Kalittokai, 128, 16-17; 128, 8-9, 22-26;
   Kural 1218, 1219, 1213.

46. Kalittokai, 130, 27-28; Kural 1104.

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