
Tirukkuaṛaḷ as a Modern Guide to Life

Krishnaswamy Nachimuthu

Senior Fellow

EFEO ,Puducherry

tamizhkina@gmail.com

Roots of Ethical thoughts in Tamil

When we talk about Tirukkuaṛaḷ, the Tamil work on the ethics and philosophy of life, a look at the Tamil literature and the history of ideas on these aspects will not out of place to have a historical context in which the work was produced. It will take us to trace the roots of ethical and philosophical thoughts in Tamil literature.

A Brief History of Tamil Works on Ethics and Philosophy

Tamil language spoken by about seven crores in India, Srilanka, Malaysia, Singapore, Mauritius, South Africa, East Indies and other places possesses an unbroken tradition in literature starting from circa 3 Century B.C. Tamil belongs to the Dravidian family of languages ,one of the four major languages families (Indo-European, Astro-Ausiatic, Tibeto Burman) of Indian sub continent. It is one of the classical languages of India and rich and equal in antiquity like Sanskrit.

Early History

The earliest writtten specimen of the language is found in Southern Brahmi Script datable to 3 B.C. The archaeological evidences indicate that the ancient Tamil country had extensive contacts with the north and also the over seas in the west and east. The extensive trade, religious and cultural contacts enriched the language and literature which have also preserved the native elements in them tenaciously.

Caṅkam Literature

The earliest specimen of written literature is preserved from that period and the earliest literary productions datable to 3 B.C to 5 A.D are collectively called **Caṅkam Literature**. It consists of about 2400 verses sung by about 300 poets including about 25 poetesses hailing from modern Tamilnadu, Kerala, Southern Karnataka, Andhra and Srilanka, compiled in nine anthologies called **Pattuppāṭṭu** and **Eṭṭuttokai**. It represents the literary output of the heroic age of the Tamil or Dravidian people. Oral formulaic in structure its subject matter consists of love (*akam*) and war (*puram*) poems based on the backdrop of natural landscapes (*Tiṇai*) to represent the mental landscape of the dramatic personae. **Unlike in other Indian literatures the beginnings of Tamil literature is secular in nature.** These literatures were produced by the patronage of three Tamil kings viz Cēra, Cōḷa, Pāṇṭiya and some minor chieftains when the Tamil country enjoyed a political freedom and independence. One can see parallel ethos in the Maharāṣṭri Prākṛit poetry called *Gītha Sapta Satī*(2 B.C.–3 A.D.) which share common features with Caṅkam literature.

A succinct study of *Philosophic thought in Sangam Literature*, a dissertation submitted to the Department of Tamil, University of Kerala in 1973 by late Dr.S.Sathiyamoorthy is a significant contribution in this area. He has shown how in spite of the themes of love war and other worldly affairs dominate throughout the compiled literary out put, an unique form of ethical thinking and an assortment of traces of philosophical speculations found in it. There are at least three streams of thought one Vedic and other orthodox systems and second Jain and Buddhist and other unorthodox systems and a third a native element encompassing folk and tribal beliefs and practices.

Even from a hoary past there took place a syncretism of faiths and traditions represented by different linguistic groups and regions, which make it pan Indian. The early phase represented by the Vedic traditions and the Indus culture and the

subsequent amalgamation is only vaguely and incorrectly described and a reexamination of our old formulations is necessary in the light of various efforts to the decipherment of Indus script and the subsequent cultural developments and the study of Agamas.

The references to *Arivar* in Tolkāppiyam (Tol.Puṛa 20.5) and Kuṛuntokai (130) the sages meditating in the forest (Perumpāṇ 484-500) and of logicians (Mullaippāṭṭu 112) speak of the speculative traditions. The Agamas produced though in Sanskrit contain the wisdom and knowledge of the native people in the spiritual sphere. The agamic tradition might have the *megalithism* as one of its sources of origin.

The schools of *Pūrva Mīmāṃsā* by Kumāṛila Bhaṭṭa and *Prabhākara* the Vedānta traditions of *Śāṅkara*, *Rāmānuja* and Madhva were developed in the south. The *Viśiṣṭādvaita* influenced by the *Pāñcarātra* tradition and the *Saiva siddhānta* by Shaiva Āgamas are the other facets which much have drawn profusely from the native elements.

In the Caṅkamage there is a strong influence of Jainism, Buddhism and Ajivakam in Caṅkam literature. Apart from that the ideas of *Cārvāka*, *Sāṃkhya-Yōga*, *Pūrva Mīmāṃsā* can also be traced.

A few examples of ethical and philosophical thought can be cited from Caṅkam literature. The famous song by Kaṇiyaṅ Pūṅkuṇṇaṅār speaks of the universal brother hood ,the firm grip of destiny on human lives and the consequent equanimity the wise end up.

யாதும் ஊரே யாவரும் கேளிர்

தீதும் நன்றும் பிறர்தர வாரா

நோதலும் தணிதலும் அவற்றோ ரன்ன

சாதலும் புதுவது அன்றே, வாழ்தல்

இனிதென மகிழ்ந்தன்றும் இலமே முனிவின்

இன்னா தென்றலும் இலமே, மின்னொடு
வானம் தண்துளி தலைஇ யானாது
கல்பொருது மிரங்கு மல்லல் பேரியாற்று
நீர்வழிப் படுஉம் புணைபோல் ஆருயிர்
முறைவழிப் படுஉம் என்பது திறவோர்
காட்சியில் தெளிந்தனம் ஆகலின், மாட்சியின்
பெரியோரை வியத்தலும் இலமே,
சிறியோரை இகழ்தல் அதனினும் இலமே. (புறம்: 192)

Yātum ūrē; yāvarum kēlir;
tītum nanrum pirartara vārā;
nōtalum taṇitalum avarrō raṇṇa;
cātalum putuvatu anrē; vāltal
iṇitu'eṇa maḱiIntanrum ilamē; muṇiviṇ,
iṇṇā teṇralum ilamē; 'miṇṇoṭu
vāṇam taṇtuḷi talai'i, āṇātu
kalporutu irāṅkum mallar pēryārū
nīrvaḷip paṭū'um puṇaipōla, āruyir
muraivaḷip paṭū'um' eṇpatu tīravōr
kāṭciyiṇ telintaṇam ākaliṇ, māṭciyiṇ
periyōrai viyattalum ilamē;
cīriyōrai ikaltal ataṇiṇum ilamē.

- Puṇanāṇūru, Kaṇiyaṇ pūṅkuṇraṇār.192

Every place is my home country everyone is my kinsman
Bad or good will not come as given(caused) by others
Suffering and remedying are like those above
And dying is not new(strange)
And we do not rejoice saying if
Living

Is sweet
Nor do we say (it is) unpleasant
Because of hatred
We have understood due to the views
Of the persons of discrimination (which say)
That the rare life
Follows fate
Like a float following(ie floating on)water
Of an abundant and big river which roars
After the sky(cloud)poured down a cold rain
With a lightening
And not only that (ānātu)
(it also) shaked stones.
Therefore (ākalin) because of glory
We do not admire great men
And also because of that we do not despise small men.

- Kaṇṇiyaṅ Pūṅkuṅṇaṅṅār - Purāṅāṅūru 192

There is another poem by Auvaīyār the grand Sappho of early Tamil literature which has a parallel in Dhammapada.

நாடாகொன்றோகாடாகொன்றோ
அவலாகொன்றோமிசையாகொன்றோ
எவ்வழிநல்லவராடவர்
அவ்வழிநல்லைவாழியநிலனே. (புறம் 187)

*Nāṭākoṅṅrō;kāṭākoṅṅrō;
avalā koṅṅrō; micaiyā koṅṅrō;
evvaḷi nallavar āṭavar,
avvaḷi nallai; vāḷiya nilaṅṅē!* (Purāṅāṅūru, 187)

Earth's Bounty
Bless you earth:
Field
Forest
Valley
Or Hill
You are only
As good
As the young men-or ruler /citizen
In each place
Auvaiyar-Puṛanānūru 187
A.K.Ramanujan- *Poem of Love and War*

Tolkāppiyam the earliest grammatical treatise

The poetics of the whole corpus plus the grammar of the Tamil language is described in the grammatical text called Tolkāppiyam written around the beginning of the Christian era. It follows the native and *Aintira* Model of grammar and incorporated many ideas from the other Sanskrit grammatical traditions notably *Pāṇiniyaṅ*

The poetics of Tolkāppiyar has distinct originality which has no parallels in the Sanskrit tradition (the **Tiṇai** based poetics, theory of suggestion etc.) and a world view which encompasses the synthesis of family life ,worldly and spiritual achievement. Tolkāppiyar's projection of a model of life is drawn from all traditions consisting of Vedic Jain, Buddhist and native traditions displaying a composite world view of the best in all traditions. The **Puruṣārtha's** are included in the Uripporuḷ (*subject matter*) scheme of Tolkāppiyar (Kaḷaviyal 1 Ceyyuliyal 411).The early poetics was drawn with care to include the different ethos and sensibilities of the multiple cultural spheres of old Tamil akam.

Post Cañkam Poetry:Didactic poems: Tirukkuṛaḷ (A.D.1-5)

Then follows the age of didactic works which are eighteen in number during a turbulent political and cultural phase in the history of Tamil country. Among the works the majority of them sing the aspects of ethical conduct.

Tirukkuṛaḷ

Tirukkuṛaḷ is one of the famous Tamil ethical works written by Tiruvaḷḷuvāra Jain monk consisting of 1330 pithy couplets divided into *Aṛam*(Dharma) *poruḷ* (Artha) and *Iṅṅam* (Kāma). It is a book of maxims for good living which delineates the path for living a virtuous life. Its philosophy is life affirming and upholds equality, fraternity and freedom from a secular stand point. It is a work, which narrates lofty ideas in a simple and powerful language with multiple levels of meaning and literary beauty, which excels in aesthetic qualities. The historical details of the life of the author are shrouded in mystery and whatever available is based on legend and folklore.

What makes it unique is its cosmopolitan outlook transcending caste, creed and nationality. It exudes an air of universal brother hood, life affirmation and teaches the art of successful, ethical, and harmonious life. It is not only a guide to life but also a compendium of political and management principles for good governance based on equity and morality. Tiruvaḷḷuvāra was a Jain but is eclectic in his choice of ideas drawing from all sources at hand and he has made a coherent philosophy of life based on egalitarianism, nonviolence and moral uprightness. Though written in Tamil its language and style are not barriers for understanding and it makes an instant communication with the readers like a sign language. His use of language is very skillful that makes the tailor made collection of maxim of ideas captivatingly literary and enjoyable.

Albert Schweitzer (1957) has found Tirukkuṛaḷ as unique in the development of Indian thought. He says that Tirukkuṛaḷ is the quintessence of the Indian thought

,which proposes an alternate world view of life affirmation and human dignity and equality .Tirukkuraḷ often creates flutter in challenging established practices. He is against the Yajñas and the killing of animals. For him only the purity of mind is the greatest of Dharma.

மனத்துக்கண் மாசிலன் ஆதல் அனைத்தறன்

ஆகுல நீர பிற.34

Maṇattukkaṇ mācilaṇ ātal aṇaittaṇ

ākula nīra piṛa.34

A spotless mind is virtue's sum

All else is empty noise.34

Even though Tirukkuraḷ is formulated on the model of four *Puruṣārtha's*,he incorporates the native Tamil models of *Akam and Puṛ am* in a beautiful synthesis.

He gives equal importance to ascetism and domestic life which is closer to the Jain view of life ie Śrāvaka dharma (domestic) and Śramaṇa (ascetic) dharma.

ஆற்றின் ஒழுக்கி அறனிழுக்கா இல்வாழ்க்கை

நோற்பாரின் நோன்மை உடைத்து.48

Ārriṇ oḷukki aṇaiḷukkā ilvāḷkkai

nōṛpāriṇ nōṇmai uṭaittu.48

His is the greater penance who helps penance

Not erring in his worldly life.48

He will go against the injunctions in *Dharmaśāstra* if it is not with in the strict dharmic code and purity of intent and action he expounds. This goes against the views of *Dharmaśāstras*. Cf.abhyakāryatham kritva bharthavya manurapavid

ஈன்றாள் பசிகாண்பான் ஆயினுஞ் செய்யற்க

சான்றோர் பழிக்கும் வினை. 656

Īnrāḥ pacikānpāṇ āyīnuñ ceyyarka
cānrōr palikkum viṇai.656

Do not do what the wise condemn
Even to save your starving mother 656

இன்றி அமையாச் சிறப்பின ஆயினும்
குன்ற வருப விடல்.961

Īnri amaiyāc cirappiṇa āyīnum
kuṇṇa varupa viṭal. 961

Reject base actions even if such rejection
Makes life impossible.961

Jīvitātyayamāpanno yō annamatti tatastata: I akāsam iva pañ kēna nasa papēna lipyate I
Manusmriti 10.104

He who, when in danger of losing his life, accepts food from any person whatsoever, is no more
tainted by sin than the sky by mud.

Tiruvalluvar is for equality .

பிறப்பொக்கும் எல்லா உயிர்க்கும் சிறப்பொவ்வா
செய்தொழில் வேற்றுமை யான். 972

piṛappokkum ellā uyirkkum cirappovvā
ceytolil vērumai yāṇ. 972

Birth is alike to all-but not their worth
Because of their diverse deeds.972

For him Truthfulness or sathya is the greatest of virtues.

யாமெய்யாக் கண்டவற் றுளில்லை எனைத்தொன்றும்
வாய்மையின் நல்ல பிற.300

Yāmeyyāk kaṇṭavar ruḷillai eṇaittonrum
vāymaiyiṇ nalla pira.300

In all Gospels we have read we have found

Nothing held higher than truthfulness.300

He concurs that fate is stronger but one can overcome it by sheer hard work.

ஊழிற் பெருவலி யாவுள மற்றொன்று

சூழினுந் தான்முந் துறும்.380

Ūlir peruvali yāvula marṇṇu

cūḷinun tāṇmun turum.380

What is stronger than fate which foils

Every ploy to counter it.380

ஊழையும் உப்பக்கம் காண்பர் உலைவின்றித்

தாழாது உஞற்று பவர்.620

Ūlaiyum uppakkam kāṇpar ulaiviṇṇit

tāḷātu uṇṇaru pavar.920

Those that strive undaunted will see

The back of Fate itself.920

He extols the farmers and their role in sustaining life on earth which is refreshingly new in ethical thought. It is generally against the view of *Dharmaśāstra* view that farming is an inferior avocation. Tirukkuṛaḷ has a separate chapter on Uḷavu 'Tilling'(104) extolling its virtues for the sustenance of material life on earth. *Kauṭilya* also finds the farmers as an important component of polity and accepts their value.

He rejects Vedic *Yajñas* and praises the principle of *Ahimsāas* supreme dharma. He condemns drinking and public women and gambling which were accepted as normal in the earlier Tamil society. He has a balanced view of celibacy and domesticity. His doctrines of the statecraft and political thought are based on equality ,equity and probity and can be considered as the directive principles for good governance. While non killing is extolled as a individual virtue, the same is not advised for the state. The use of killing by the state is justifiable, as the

state has to maintain the law and order by executing the criminals and murderers to safeguard the law abiding which is comparable to the weeding out of unwanted plants in a farmland. Tiruvalluvar's formulation of an ethical system transcending all human barriers is unique and can be considered as the quintessence of the good in Indian thought. Hence, it should rightly be celebrated and practiced as guide to modern life in its core dictums, if not in the details. It could be seen as a source of directive principles for a secular modern life. The zealots' efforts being made to declare it as a national book of ethics may have this in mind and I would argue that an unofficial adoption of it as a modern secular guide is more in consonance with the mind of the sage and his message.

Sources and Uniqueness of Tirukkuraḷ: Some of his formulations in the domains of Aṛam (Dharma) poruḷ (Artha) and Iṅpam (Kāma).

Tirukkuraḷ is a text on good living and the basic ethics enunciated in it are culled out of the great works on religious ethics, statecraft and psychology of love making. As has been explained earlier Tirukkuraḷ has a firm Jain foundation and is eclectic in accepting principles, which are in conformity with his worldview and philosophy. He openly mentions in many places the ideas of great men who dwelt on the problems he discusses under a topic. The parallels one found in the works on statecraft like Artha śāstra, Kāmandakamare striking.

A few examples of Tirukkuraḷ Ideas

இணருழ்த்தும் நாறா மலரனையர் கற்றது

உணர விரித்துரையா தார் (650)

Iṅarūḷttum nārā malaraṇaiyar karṛatu

uṅara viritturaiyā tār.650

The learned lacking expression are

flowers with out scent. 650

தீயினால் சுட்டபுண் உள்ளாறும் ஆறாதே

நாவினால் சுட்ட வடு (129)

Tiyiñālcuṭṭapuṇuḷḷārumārātē

nāviñāl cuṭṭa vaṭu.129.

The hurt fire caused will heal with in

But not the scar left by the tongue 129

கணைகொடிது யாழ்கோடு செவ்விது ஆங்கன்ன

வினைபடு பாலால் கொளல்.(279)

Kaṇaikōṭitu yāḷkōṭu cevviṭu āṅkaṇṇa

viṇaiṭu pālāl koḷal.279.

The Lute is bent,the arrow straight judge

men not by their looks but acts. 279

வெள்ளத் தனைய மலர்நீட்டம் மாந்தர்தம்

உள்ளத் தனையது உயர்வு.(595)

Vellat taṇaiya malarnīṭṭam māntartam

ullat taṇaiyatuuyarvu.595.

The lotus rises with the water

And a man as high as his will 595.

கூத்தாட்டு அவைக்குழாத் தற்றே பெருஞ்செல்வம்

போக்கும் அதுவிளிந் தற்று.(332)

Kūttāṭṭu avaikkūḷāt tarrē peruñcelvam

pōkkum atuvīḷin tarṛu .332

Great wealth like a crowd at a concert

Gathers and melts. 332

உடுக்கை இழந்தவன் கைபோல ஆங்கே

இடுக்கண் களைவதாம் நட்பு.(788)

Uṭukkai iḷantavaṇ kaipōla āṅkē

iṭukkaṇ kaḷaivatām naṭpu.788

Swift as one's hand in slipping clothes

Is a friend in need. 788

பண்பிலான் பெற்ற பெருஞ்செல்வம் நன்பால்

கலந்தீமை யால்திரிந் தற்று.(1000)

Paṇpilāṇ perṛa peruñcelvam naṇpāl

kalanṭimai yāltirin tarṛu.1000

A boor's great wealth goes bad

As milk in a can unscrubbed. 1000

Human Love

Though Tiruvalluvar has modelled his Tirukkuraḷ in the *Love chapters* on the planks of the Classical Tamil Akam Concepts, it basically differs in the avoiding the portrayal of love with *Tiṇai* or geographical backgrounds and the conventional dramatic personae like the concubines in *marutam tiṇ ai* (sulking) who are anathema to his ethical world. The aspect of *marutam tiṇ ai* (sulking) is deftly handled with typical interpersonal interactions between lovers in action and word, exhibiting different psychological moods. His characters are the typical personae in the love lyrics like the hero or heroine or the maid.

இருநோக்கு இவளுண்கண் உள்ளது ஒருநோக்கு

நோய்நோக்கொன் றந்நோய் மருந்து.(1091)

Irunōkku ivaḷuṅkaṇ uḷḷatu orunōkku

nōynōkkoṇ ṛannōy maruntu.1091

Her greedy eyes have a double role

They kill and cure. 1091

இம்மைப் பிறப்பில் பிரியலம் என்றேனாக்
கண்நிறை நீர்கொண் டனள்.(1315)

Im'maip pirappil piriyalam enrēṇāk
kannirai nīrkoṇ ṭanaḷ.1315.

When I said,We shouldn't part in this life
Her eyes filled with tears 1315

வழுத்தினாள் தும்மினேன் ஆக அழித்தமுதாள்
யாருள்ளித் தும்மினீர் என்று. (1317)

Valuttiṇāḷ tum'miṇēṇ āka aḷittalutāḷ
yāruḷḷit tum'miṇīr eṇru.1317

“Bless you”she will say if I sneeze;
Then cry ,”which she is it now?”1317

செல்லாமை உண்டேல் எனக்குரை மற்றுநின்
வல்வரவு வாழ்வார்க் குரை. (1151)

Cellāmai uṇṭēl eṇakkurai marruniṇ
valvaravu vālvārḱ kurai.1151

Tell me if he is not going,of his soon return
Tell my survivors. 1151

Tirukkuraḷ: No Religion ,No God or Bhakti

Tiruvalluvar advocates no God or religion or a bhakti cult as we see in the other medieval Tamil works predominantly. Being a Jain his Jain philosophy does not recognise god. The word *Kaṭavuḷ* in old Tamil means a sage. So according to Jains the first chapter deals with Aruka caraṇam, Siddha caraṇam, sādhu caraṇam, and dharma caraṇam (Ananthanatha Nainar T. 1932 pp.134 ff). The synonyms and epithets used for *Kaṭavuḷ* in this chapter undoubtedly do not refer to the God or the supreme God. In this chapter the practicing of the tenets of *Arhat* is given importance and the kind of worship or reverence shown should be

to follow and practice these tenets and not to practice ritualistic worshiping. In other chapters, also Tiruvalluvar stresses the virtues to be practiced and the penance to be performed. So there is no room for ardent devotion as we see in the later Saivite and Vaishnava tradition. However, later the commentator like Parimēlaḷakar interpreted this first chapter in accordance with the Vaisnava and Saiva sects. It may be mentioned here that in the later period, Jainism also came under the influence of the Bhakti cult with its temple worship and attendant ritualistic things.

Tirukkuraḷ; Extols one's actions and man needs no savior to surrender than oneself

பெருமைக்கும் ஏனைச் சிறுமைக்கும் தத்தம்
கருமமே கட்டளைக் கல். (505)

Perumaikkum ēṇaic cīrūmaikkum tattam
karumamē kaṭṭalaik kal.505.

A man's conduct is the touchstone

Of his greatness and littleness 505

எண்ணிய எண்ணியாங் கெய்துப எண்ணியார்
திண்ணியர் ஆகப் பெறின.(666)

Enṇiya enṇiyāṅ keytupa enṇiyār
tiṇṇiyar ākap periṇ.666

All one aims at can be gained

If one is but firm. 666

தெய்வத்தான் ஆகா தெனினும் முயற்சிதன்
மெய்வருத்தக் கூலி தரும்.(619)

Teyvattāṅ ākā teṇinum muyarcitan
meyvaruttak kūli tarum.619

Even if Fate will not, exertion will pay

The wages of effort. 619

It is repudiation of the ideas found in Bhagavat Geeta.

'Karmaṇyēvādhikaraste, Mā phalēṣu kadāchana | mā karmaphalaheturbhū
mātēsangotsvakarmaṇ | 2.47

(कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्तेमाफलेषुकदाचन।माकर्मफलहेतुभूमतिसङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि।) 2.47.

'A person has the right towards action alone and not towards the fruit of action'. Let not
the fruit of action be the motive for acting nor there be any attachment to inaction. 2.47

Tirukkural's ideas are the modern dictum for the proletariat to appropriate his due
as wages for his actions performed.

Politics with Ethics: Welfare and Egalitarianism

For Tiruvalluvar the ruler should be benevolent to the people and a tyrant will one
day punished.

குடிதழீஇக் கோலோச்சும் மாநில மன்னன்

அடிதழீஇ நிற்கும் உலகு.(544)

Kuṭitalī'ik kōlōccum mānila maṇṇaṇ

aṭitalī'irirkum ulaku.544

The King who rules cherishing his people

Has the world at his feet. 544

அல்லற்பட்டு ஆற்றாது அழுதகண் ணீரன்றே

செல்வத்தைத் தேய்க்கும் படை.(555)

Allarpaṭṭu ārrātu aḷutakaṇ ṇīraṇṇē

celvattait tēykkum paṭai.555

Wont the tears of the oppressed allowed to flow

Wear out a kind's wealth. 555

உறுபசியும் ஓவாப் பிணியும் செறுபகையும்

சேரா தியல்வது நாடு. (734)

Urupaciyum ōvāp piṇiyum cerupakaiyum

cērā tiyalvatu nāṭu.734.

An ideal land is free of hunger

Pestilence and war 734

பிறப்பொக்கும் எல்லா உயிர்க்கும் சிறப்பொவ்வா

செய்தொழில் வேற்றுமை யான்.(972)

Pirappokkum ellā uyirkkum ciraṇṇovvā

ceytoḷil vēṇṇumai yāṇ.972

Birth is alike to all –but not their worth

Because of their diverse deeds. 972

Tirukkuraḷ: Its reception in the Tamil Society and beyond

If the story of cold reception of Tirukkuraḷ by the celebrated Tamil Academy at Madurai is a reflection of history, then the Tamil society did not receive this great work with due honor in the beginning. It seems its allegiance to the heterodox sects might have been the reason behind it. Later at least , beginning from 6th Century A.D. the empathy with the ideas in Tirukkuraḷ by the Saivites and Vaisnavas must have started .It can be seen in the acceptance of ideas and idioms from Tirukkuraḷ by the Nāyaṇ mārs and Māṇ ikkavācakar (Arunai Vadivel Mudaliyar C.1992) and by Vaisnavas (K.Nachimuthu 2019). Around 10 A.D.and after when the sectarian animosities subsided ,Tirukkuraḷ started slowly receiving more attention due to its own merit. Saivites might have been the first to reinterpret it to suite their tenets and accord acceptability as can be seen in the works of Umāpati Civāccāriyār and others (K.Nachimuthu 2019). Later the laudatory work on Tirukkuraḷ called *Tiruvalluvamālai* probably by a Vaiṣṇava author completely identifies it as a reincarnation of vedas and Itihāsās paving the way for the acceptance of it by the Vaiṣṇavas (K.Nachimuthu 2019). It is a skillful

travesty of facts. The *Tiruvaḷḷuva Mālai* and the newly fabricated legends of Tiruvaḷḷuvar connecting him with the Madurai Tamil Sangam in the late 18-19 century by scholars like Tiruttaṅikai Caravaṅapperumāl Iyer, Taṅtapāṅi Cuvāmikaḷ and others have created a new historiography of Tiruvaḷḷuvar and Tirukkuṛaḷ at the advent of print culture in Tamil. Simultaneously we see the ancient Jain temple dedicated to Tiruvaḷḷuvar in Mayilāppūr was converted to a Saivite temple during 19th century A.D. and Tiruvaḷḷuvar as a Saivite saint. But late in the twentieth century the emergence of Tamil renaissance redeemed Tiruvaḷḷuvar and Tirukkuṛaḷ from religious identities and interpreted them as the expression and symbol of secular values of Tamil pride (Cutler 1992. Blackburn 2000)

Vaiṣṇava scholars also paid more attention to Tirukkuṛaḷ as can be inferred from the frequent references in their commentaries (K. Nachimuthu 2019). Still later and when Parimēlaḷakar, the celebrated Vaiṣṇava Commentator of Tirukkuṛaḷ interpreted it in compatible with the orthodox Vedic and Vaiṣṇava doctrines Tirukkuṛaḷ started to receive a recognition as an universal book of maxims. Even then the ruling class might have reluctance to look it for guidance as its open stand against **Yajñas** and *Varṇāśrama - dhārma*.

Tirukkuṛaḷ till nineteenth century was a favorite work for the scholars and public speakers for pithy quotations. Only in twentieth century it is given a prime of place as a gospel of secular life of the Tamils upholding secular and progressive ideas. It should also be noted that the foreign missionaries also found the merits of this work as equivalent to their Christian ethics and brought to the notice of the international attention (Albert Schweitzer 1957). A whole movement of propagation has been orchestrated and made as part of the syllabi of schools and colleges. Now it has been promoted at the national level as an Universal Gospel to stress the secular polity and the life guide it bestows without narrow views. Still it may be debated that not all the ideas in it may be

suitable to this age and one has to choose the appropriate ideas from the wealth of ideas of Tiruvaḷḷuvar. In fact Tiruvaḷḷuvar being a Jain who professes *Syādvāda* or theory of probability is not dogmatic and he allows alternate word views to coexist.

Tirukkuṛaḷ in Kerala and Malayalam

Tirukkuṛaḷ was read in Tamil itself by the people of Kerala till atleast 10th A.D., the time of separation of Tamil and Malayalam. Poet ḷḷaṅkō aṭikaḷ, Kulacēkara āḷvār and Cēramāṇ perumāḷ employed the words and ideas from Tirukkuṛaḷ in their works. The traditions of *Paṛacci peṛra pantiru makkaḷ* has a name **Vallol** and some body would connect it with Tiruvaḷḷuvar. There is a vaḷḷuva Nāṭu in Kerala and the relationship with the dynastic name and the name of vaḷḷuvar is striking but not revealing any thing. Even in the later period Niraṇam Poets, Pūntāṇam and others show evidence of having read Tirukkuṛaḷ. Tirukkuṛaḷ was translated into Malayalam for the first time in 16th Century (1595). In the nineteenth century the two great sages of Kerala Caṭṭampi cuvāmikaḷ and Nārāyaṇa Guru were well read in Tirukkuṛaḷ. In fact Nārāyaṇa Guru translated about 4 chapters of Tirukkuṛaḷ and he adopts ideas of Tirukkuṛaḷ and traditions of Tiruvaḷḷuvar in his poetry like the one found in Tiruvaḷḷuvar Mālai. Of late there emerged a sect called *Āti Tiruvaḷḷuvar Deivika Sabha* and it shows the contemporary reception of Tirukkuṛaḷ as a sacred text. The modern poets like Kumāraṇ āsāṇ, and Kuñṇuṇṇi adopts ideas of Tirukkuṛaḷ in their poetry up to now at least 15 Malayalam translations are available and I find at least one translation of Tirukkuṛaḷ appears in Malayalam every year.

Nārāyaṇa Guru and Tirukkuṛaḷ

In Siva satakam, Nārāyaṇa Guru adopts one belief found in Tiruvaḷḷuvar Mālai ie Tirukkuṛaḷ is a quintessence of Vedas and Itihāsās.

arumaṛa nālu morikka lōti muṇṇam

*karimukil varṇṇaṇu paṇ kuṭicaytu nalki
paramatu vaḷḷuvarnāvilum moḷ iṇṇap
parimaḷa bhāraṭi kāttukoḷka nityam*

-Civacatakam-1

This is an adaptation of the following Tiruvaḷḷuvamālai verse:

*nāṭā mutalnāṇ maraināṇ mukaṇṇāviṛ
pāṭā viṭaiṇṇā ratampakarnteṇ-kūṭārai
eḷḷiyaveṇṇi yilaṇ kilaivēḷ mārapin
vaḷḷuvaṇ vāyateṇ vāḷḷu*

- Tiruvaḷḷuva mālai- nāmakaḷ1

Here it is mentioned that the Saraswati (सरस्वती) who taught the vedas to Brahma in the first yuga and Mahabharata to **Vyāsa** in the second yuga, taught Tirukkuṛaḷ to Tiruvaḷḷuvar in the third yuga. Sri Narayana Guru draws ideas and idioms freely from the Tirukkuṛ aḷ .

*Cuvayoḷ iyuḷ aloḷ iṇṇa sītarasmik
kavamaṭi ceyvatiṇuḷḷa niṇkaṭākṣ am
pavamruti mūṭupaṇṇiṇṇ upōkumāri
ṇ ṇ avaṇu tarēṇamaṭiṇṇ u vantaṇam te (Civa sadakam)*

Here the first line *Cuvayoḷ iyuḷ al* is from the Tirukkural 27 (cuvaiyoḷ iyūḷ ocai).

*nallatal oruvaṇ ceyta
nalla kāryam maṇappatu
nalla tallāṭta tuṭaṇe
maṇan niṭunnaṭuttamam (Kural 108) (Narayana Guru Tirukkural Translation)
naṇṇi maṇappatu naṇṇaṇṇu naṇṇallatu*

Tiṅarporuṭṭāḷ kollātu ulakeniṅ yārum
vilaiṅporuṭṭāḷ uṅṅaruvā ril. -kuṟaḷ .256

If there is no slaughtering, arising out of the desire for meat -eating,
There will be none to sell meat for profit.-Diaz translation.

Nārāyaṅa Guru reformulates the idea in his own format with elaboration and with a second affirmative proposition. If nobody eats meat there will be none to kill and so who kills has to eat it. Hence eating meat is a worst vice than killing.

Kolluṅṅavanilla pujiṅpaṭiṅ
āḷilleṅkilacikkuka taṅṅē druṭam
kollikkuka koṅṭu bhujikkukayām
kolluṅṅaṭiṅṅiṅṅumurattoragham-4

The idea of kuṟaḷ 256 is differently worded in the 4th stanza of Ahimsa .

Kollaṭē kaṅṭu lōkattu
kiṭṭā māṅcaṅkaḷoṅṅume-Ahimsa 4

This will suffice to indicate the kind of reception Kuṟaḷ has been accorded in Malayalam.

References

Anantanāta Naiṅiṅ āṟ (1932/2006)Ti.*Tirukkuṟ aḷ Āṟāycciyum Jaiṅa Camaya Cittānta viḷ akkamum,Mutaṟ pākam, Nāḷ antā Patippakam,Chennai, reprint,2006 originally published in 1932*

Aruṅ ai Vaṭ ivēḷ Mutaliyār C.(1992),*Teyvappaṅ uvalkaḷ il Tirukkuṟ aḷ (Tirukkuṟ aḷ Āṟāycci)*,Part I,Aṅ ṅ āmalai University ,Aṅ ṅ āmalai Nakar,1992

Blackburn ,Stuart (2000), ‘Corruption and Redemption: The Legend of Valluvar and Tamil Literary History’,*Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (May, 2000), pp. 449-482, Cambridge University Press, URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/313071>

Bhaskaran, T.(1985). *Narayana Guruvinre sampurna kritikal- Vidyodini Vyakhyanam*, Calicut: Mathrubhumi Publications.

------(1998). "Ātmōpatēsa catkavum saiva sittāntavum" *Gurudēva Swarupam Ātmōpatēsa Sadakattil*. Ed.Satchidanada Swami, Chalakkudy: Gayathri Ashramam.
Diaz S.M. (2001). *Tirukkural* with English Translation and Explanation, Coimbatore: Ramananda Adigalar Foundation.

Cutler, Norman 1992, 'Interpreting Tirukkuṛ al :The Role of commentary in the creation of a text.' *Journal of the American Oriental Society* pp.112:549-66

Hart, George L.III. (1975) *The poems of Ancient Tamil*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Nachimuthu, K. (2003). "Tiruvaḷḷuvarum Nārāyaṇa Guruvum", *Ayvukkovai*, vol.34 Pt.2.pp.991- 995, Tañcāvūr.

----- (2000). *Malayāḷattil Tirukkuṛaḷ* -Vaḷḷuvam 11, November, pp.

------(2003). 'Nārāyaṇa Guru's Universal Brotherhood,' *Dravidian Studies*, vol.I No.4, July –September, Kuppam: Dravidian University.

------(2006). *Tirukkuṛaḷ* Malayalam, Translation by Shailaja, Introduction, Kottayam: D.C. Books.

------(2010). *Ethical and Philosophical thoughts in Tamil Literature*, unpublished article presented in the Seminar on Ethical Works, New Delhi: Special Centre for Sanskrit Studies, JNU.

------(2015). *Tirukkuṛaḷ cila māruppārvaikaḷ*, *Peyal*, 1:2 April-September ,Coimbatore, pp.50-60

.....'Tiruvaḷḷuvarumālai :A Prolegomena to Tirukkuṛ al ? : An inquiry into the genesis and transformation of the canonization of an author and a text at the advent of the print era' 8th NETamil Workhapon *Colophons, Prefaces, Satellite Stanzas*, 20-22 April 2017, CSMC Hamburg, Germany

Narayana Guru, *Sree Narayana Guruvinte Sampoorana* Kritikal, Sivagiri Mutt, Varkala

Ramanujan, A.K. (2006). *Poems of Love and War*, (Selected), Oxford, New Edition.

Schweitzer, Albert (1957), *Indian thought and its development*, The Beacon Press; First Edition edition (1957)