

# Thiruvalluvar

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# Thiruvalluvar economic ideas

- **The economic ideas of Thiruvalluvar are found in his immortal work,**
- **Thirukkural, a book of ethics.**
- **Thiruvalluvar's work is marked by pragmatic idealism.**
- **Thirukkural contains three important parts,viz.,**
- **Aram,**
- **porul, and**
- **inbam**

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- **which Literally means**
- **Dharma (Ethics),**
- **Artha (Polity) and**
- **Kama (Bondage or love),**
- **which are the aims of life of a Hindu.**

**The fourth aim of life was Moksha or  
Veedu (liberation).**

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- **A large part of Valluvar's economic ideas are found in the **second part of Thirukkural –the Porutpal.****
- **It deals with wealth.**
- **Thiruvalluvar was a **Pragmatic thinker****
- **his **porutpal** shows **three characteristics features of the author****

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- **Firstly**, Thirukkural has certain elements of classicism. So he can be identified as a classical economist.
- **Secondly**, his economic ideas were **based under ethics** and hence he can be called as **normative economist**

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- **Finally, his treatise speaks about **general welfare** and hence he can be identified as a welfare economist.**
- **Thus, he had in him,**
- **classicism,**
- **normatism and**
- **ideal welfare.**
- **Thiruvalluvar was a **fundamental thinker.****
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- **According to Thiruvalluvar, the four principles for a prosperous society are**
  - (i) faith in God**
  - (ii) economic resources**
  - (iii) spiritual leadership and**
  - (iv) observance of moral law**

# Wealth

- **Porutpal** literally means things, **wealth** etc.
- **include all material things** than can be **acquired** which a **man requires in daily life for maintaining ones family.**
- **According to Valluvar,** wealth is only a means and not an end.



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- He was **against hoarding of wealth** and to him a **hoarder is a burden to the earth.**
- Thus, Porutpal covers all **consumer and producer goods.**
- According to Valluvar, a society should have **freedom from hunger,**
- **freedom from disease**
- **freedom from fear**

**External and internal aggression.**

# Poverty

- **Thiruvalluvar was aware of the dangers of poverty**
- **cursed poverty and he was against begging.**
- **Hence to him poverty and begging are the greatest social curses.**

# Agriculture

- **Valluvar attached very much importance to agriculture.**
- **He favored peasant proprietorship**
- **against absentee landlordism.**
- **According to him all are dependent on agriculture for food.**

# Public Finance

- **Thiruvalluvar elaborately explained**
- **public finance**
- **public revenue,**
- **Financial Administration**
- **public expenditure.**
- **He has stated these as:**
- **1. Creation of revenue**
- **2. Collection of revenue**
- **3. Management of revenue**
- **4. Public expenditure**

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- **Valluvar was against the method of **collecting tax compulsorily.****
- **He **compared** a king who collected taxes by force to a **highway robbery.****
- **The **three main sources of revenue** are:**
  - **1. **Wealth that comes by itself****
  - **2. **Customs duties****
  - **3. **Tributes paid by the defeated kings, ie. `reparation`****

# Public expenditure

- **Valluvar recommended** a balanced budget.
- ‘It is not a great misfortune for a state if its revenues are limited,
- provided the expenditure is kept within bounds.
- ‘He gave certain guidelines for a budgetary policy.
- ‘**Budget for a surplus**, if possible, **balance the budget at other times**, but **never budget for a deficit.**”

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- **Valluvar advocated the following main items of public expenditure:**
- **1. Defence,**
- **2. Public works and**
- **3. Social services.**

# External Assistance

- **Valluvar was against seeking external assistance.**
- **According to kural 739, countries seeking external assistance are not be considered as countries at all.**
- **In other words, he advocated a **self sufficient economy.****



# Ethics

- **Ethics The entire teachings of Thiruvalluvar were based on ethics.**
- **He was against unlawful and illegal methods of realizing the objectives.**
- **There should be ethics not only in objectives, but also in realizing those objectives**

# Kautilya and Thiruvalluvar

- **When we compare Kautilya and Thiruvalluvar, we find the following differences between them in their economic ideas.**
- **1. Thiruvalluvar attached importance to agriculture**
- **Kautilya attached importance to wealth .**

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- .Thiruvalluvar advocated taxation by consent whereas Kautilya advocated compulsory taxes to increase states revenue for the benefit of the society.
- According to Kautilya the economy is based on caste system while according to Thiruvalluvar, the economy is not based on caste system

- **We can see an ethical foundation of society in Thiruvalluvar whereas in Kautilya Arthasastra, ethical principles are absent.**
- **We may conclude that Valluvar was a great sage and poet and was not an economic theorist.**
- **He tried to synthesis the principles of ethics, economics and politics in his Thirukkural**