

**WORLD CLASSICS IN TRANSLATION**  
**VI SEMESTER- 18BEN62C**

- **Unit I - Poetry: Detailed:**
- ~~Thirukkural. Trans. G. U. Pope Part I:~~
- 1. The Praise of God
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- **Unit II - Prose: Detailed:**
- St. Augustine's The Confessions Book I

# G. U. Pope

- Thiruvalluvar, known commonly as Valluvar, is a celebrated Tamil poet and philosopher whose contribution to Tamil literature is the Thirukkural, a work on ethics. It is believed that he was born either in Thiru Mylai (Mylapore) Chennai in Tamil Nadu or in ThirunainarKuruchi, a village in Kanyakumari District of Tamil Nadu. Thiruvalluvar is thought to have lived sometime between the 4th century BC and the 1st century BC. George Uglow Pope (24 April 1820-11 February 1908) or G.U. Pope was an Anglican Christian missionary and Tamil scholar who spent 40 years in Tamil Nadu and translated many Tamil texts into English. His popular translations included those of the Tirukkural and Tiruvachagam. G. U. Pope's Tirukkural translation focuses on word-to-word translation while Rajaji's translation focuses on sense-to-sense translation.
- contrast Tirukkural translations of G. U. Pope and Rajaji, at the linguistic level. Pope's translation, coming as it does from the weighty backdrop of his long academic career at the Oxford University, naturally attracted more attention than the other contemporary translations of Thirukkural, which gradually tended to transfer rewardingly on to the Thirukkural text itself. Thus began the Kural's spread and reputation beyond the constricted bounds of Tamilnadu



# DIVISION OF KURAL

- The Kural is structured into 133 chapters, each containing 10 couplets (kural) for a total of 1,330 couplets. The 133 chapters are grouped into three parts,
- Part 1– Arattuppal (அறத்துப்பால்): Book of Virtue (Dharma). This part dealing with virtues independent of the surroundings.
- Part II – Porutppal (பொருட்பால்): Book of Polity (Artha). This part deals with virtues with respect to the surroundings.
- Part III – Kammattupal (காமத்துப்பால்): Book of Love (Kama),. This part deals with virtues involved in conjugal human love.
- The part Aram (virtue) contains 380 verses, that of Porul (wealth) has 700 and that of Inbam (love) has 250. Thirukkural is a wonderful classic, a work on ethics and the way of life. The best part about Thirukkural is that it is the style and language of it is so universal. It does not stand by any religion. Due to its universal approach it is called "Common wisdom for the world" (உலக பொது மறை).

# I. The Praise of God

- 1. A, as its first of letters, every speech maintains; The "Primal Deity" is first through all the world's domains. As the letter A is the first of all letters, so the eternal God is first in the world.
- 2. No fruit have men of all their studied lore, Save they the 'Purely Wise One's' feet adore. What Profit have those derived from learning, who worship not the good feet of Him who is possessed of pure knowledge ?

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- 3. His feet, 'Who o'er the full-blown flower hath past,' who gain In bliss long time shall dwell above this earthly plain. They who are united to the glorious feet of Him who passes swiftly over the flower of the mind, shall flourish long above all worlds.
- 4. His foot, 'Whom want affects not, irks not grief,' who gain Shall not, through every time, of any woes complain. To those who meditate the feet of Him who is void of desire or aversion, evil shall never come.
- 5. The men, who on the 'King's' true praised delight to dwell, Affects not them the fruit of deeds done ill or well. The two-fold deeds that spring from darkness shall not adhere to those who delight in the true praise of God.
- 6 Long live they blest, who 've stood in path from falsehood freed; His, 'Who quenched lusts that from the sense-gates five proceed'. Those shall long proposer who abide in the faultless way of Him who has destroyed the five desire the senses.



# I. The Praise of God

- 7. Unless His foot, 'to Whom none can compare,' men gain, 'Tis hard for mind to find relief from anxious pain. Anxiety of mind cannot be removed, except from those who are united to the feet of Him who is incomparable.

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- 8. Unless His feet 'the Sea of Good, the Fair and Bountiful,' men gain, 'Tis hard the further bank of being's changeful sea to attain. None can swim the sea of vice, but those who are united to the feet of that gracious Being who is a sea of virtue.
- 9. Before His foot, 'the Eight-fold Excellence,' with unbent head, Who stands, like palsied sense, is to all living functions dead. The head that worships not the feet of Him who is possessed of eight attributes, is as useless as a sense without the power of sensation.
- 10. They swim the sea of births, the 'Monarch's' foot who gain; None others reach the shore of being's mighty main. None can swim the great sea of births but those who are united to the feet of God. o

# CHAPTER 1 SUMMARY

- 1. The first verse informs us that God is the creator of matter, life and knowledge and the example of the Tamil alphabets (uyir, mei and uyirmei & a'autham) are used as the example. Thus we come to know that God is the initiator of everything; thus denoting that He is the uncreated one and is the start and end of everything. This is the first quality of God.
- 2. In the second verse, we are informed that God is the Wisest One, as such we must pay homage to Him.
- 3. In the third verse, we are informed homage is to be made in the form of meditation, for any one reaching the highest level of meditation will become the most perfect one (like God) in the after world and in this world
- 4. In verse four, we are informed that God's nature is un-attachment thus we are clearly informed that prayers, rituals and sacrifices are not the way to reach God. Meditation, as mentioned in verse three is the way to reach God. By this meditation, the soul also becomes unattached and thus is not enveloped in sorrowfulness.
- 5. Verse five stands out prominently. Here the word "Irvan" definitely means God and cannot be interpreted otherwise. The verse also informs of the linking (of the soul) with God. In this verse, we are informed that it is our own actions or (Good and Bad Karma) that decides our path towards spirituality.
- 6. In verse six, we are further strongly informed that God is without emotions and thus by controlling the five senses (hearing, touch, sight, smell and taste) we can live a virtuous life.



## CHAPTER I CONTINUED.....

- 7. In verse seven we are informed that God has “incomparable power” and an individual who can control the five senses (thus achieve the highest meditative stature) also becomes incomparable.
- 8. In verse eight, we are informed that God is the most "virtuousness one” and is devoid of any negative qualities, and the learned individual also is not swayed away from this virtues” path.
- 9. Verse nine informs of the eight qualities of God (and indirectly for the soul) It also explains that the eight qualities are with the body, senses and mind of an individual.
- 10. The final verse indirectly informs that those who cannot achieve the above eight qualities will not reach God.
- Let us now table His qualities mentioned above and compare with the theological concepts usually attributed to God.
- Qualities of God as described in Thirukkural
  - 1 Infinite 1
  - 2 Eternal 1
  - 3 Wisdom 2,3,8
  - 4 Creation 1, 7
  - 5 Compassion 2,8
  - 6 Unchanging 3,8
  - 7 Unattached 4,6,7,
  - 8 Pure 3,5,8

# CHAPTER I CONTINUED.....

- The above are the eight qualities indirectly and directly informed to us through Thirukkural. Apart from this, the concept of Karma (verse 5), rebirth (verse 10) and Souls and God are separate entities (verse 10) provides us with the basics of the Siddhanta philosophy.
- Further the soul not being pure (verse 2 and 3); the need to control its senses and emotions (verse 3, 6 and 9); the need to strive to reach God (verse 3, 7, 8, and 9) and without this it will continue its rebirth (verse 10) are all indirectly stated.



## II. The Excellence of Rain

- 11. The world its course maintains through life that rain unfailing gives; Thus rain is known the true ambrosial food of all that lives. By the continuance of rain the world is preserved in existence; it is therefore worthy to be called ambrosia.
- 12. The rain makes pleasant food for eaters rise; As food itself, thirst-quenching draught supplies. Rain produces good food, and is itself food.
- 13. If clouds, that promised rain, deceive, and in the sky remain, Famine, sore torment, stalks o'er earth's vast ocean-girdled plain. If the cloud, withholding rain, deceive (our hopes) hunger will long distress the sea-girt spacious world.
- 14. If clouds their wealth of waters fail on earth to pour, The ploughers plough with oxen's sturdy team no more. If the abundance of wealth imparting rain diminish, the labour of the plough must cease.
- 15. 'Tis rain works all: it ruin spreads, then timely aid supplies; As, in the happy days before, it bids the ruined rise. Rain by its absence ruins men; and by its existence restores them to fortune.
- 16. If from the clouds no drops of rain are shed. 'Tis rare to see green herb lift up its head. If no drop falls from the clouds, not even the green blade of grass will be seen..

## II. The Excellence of Rain

- 17. If clouds restrain their gifts and grant no rain, The treasures fail in ocean's wide domain. Even the wealth of the wide sea will be diminished, if the cloud that has drawn (its waters) up gives them not back again (in rain).
- 18. If heaven grow dry, with feast and offering never more, Will men on earth the heavenly ones adore. If the heaven dry up, neither yearly festivals, nor daily worship will be offered in this world, to the celestials.
- 19. If heaven its watery treasures ceases to dispense, Through the wide world cease gifts, and deeds of 'penitence'. If rain fall not, penance and alms-deeds will not dwell within this spacious world.
- 20 When water fails, functions of nature cease, you say; Thus when rain fails, no men can walk in 'duty's ordered way'. If it be said that the duties of life cannot be discharged by any person without water, so without rain there cannot be the flowing of water.



## CHAPTER 2 SUMMARY

- Life cannot exist without water, nor can right conduct. The interpretation adopted by most writers for this Kural is that of Manakudavar, who takes 'olukku' to mean 'Virtuous life'. The direct line taken by Parimelalagar to have 'olukku' meaning the fall of rain, is quite naive and not considered appropriate to Valluvar's general line of thinking. By 'Ulaku' Valluvar means 'Ulakiyal' appertaining to wealth and all its side-issues i.e., economy. The expression 'Neerinru amaiyaadhu ulaku' meaning that the world cannot exist in the absence of the waters, finds a place in Natrinai.
- If there is diminution in the bounty of rain, the ploughmen will be forced into idleness.
- The meaning is obvious. If drought sets in, all agricultural operations come to a grinding halt. The activity of the plough is the indication of prosperity and the absence of it naturally forebodes famine and misery. It is the absence of rain that ruins and rain again that aids the ruined land to rise. In fact it is not merely failure of rain, drought, that destroys the crops and ruins people.

- The blades of grass are one of the lowest forms of plant life. Even these cannot sustain unless the rains fall, what then about the higher forms of life and man himself? The extreme importance and usefulness of rain is again referred to in Kural 211, in the chapter on 'Opuravu' Benevolence.. Kaimaaru veindaa kadapaadu maarimaatu Yennaatrung kollo ulagu In this couplet the benevolent man's spontaneous service to society is compared to the rain clouds which pour forth rain on to this earth without expecting any return. When they withhold their bounty we know what happens to the drought-affected areas. The land gets parched and even the grass will not grow. That is the extent of the importance of rain, the bounty of which is easily forgotten.



- Drought affects not only life on earth but also in the seas, which in that case, will also lose much of their wealth. All commentators are agreed to explaining the expression 'Tan Neermai' which directly means their nature," but would refer to the wealth of living creatures like fish that inhabit the seas and the valuable treasure like "pearls and corals that are found there". This Kural underscores in no uncertain terms the importance of rain. If the heavens will not open up and give rain to this world, neither alms, which is the salient virtue of the householder, nor penance which is the characteristic virtue of the ascetic, can flourish on this earth. The 'milk of human kindness' in charity and penance, will therefore, totally dry up when the rains fail.

# III.LEARNING

- கற்க கசடறக் கற்பவை கற்றபின்  
நிற்க அதற்குத் தக.
- Learn thoroughly what should be learnt. And having learnt, stand according to that.
- எண்ணென்ப ஏனை எழுத்தென்ப இவ்விரண்டும்  
கண்ணென்ப வாழும் உயிர்க்கு..
- They say: Numbers and other one called Letters Are the two eyes to live with.
- கண்ணுடையர் என்பவர் கற்றோர் முகத்திரண்டு  
பண்ணுடையர் கல்லா தவர்.
- Only the learned have eyes. The unlearned have two sores on their face!
- உவப்பத் தலைக்கூடி உள்ளப் பிரிதல்  
அனைத்தே புலவர் தொழில்.
- It is the prowess of scholars that meetings bring delight And departures leave memories.
- உடையார்முன் இல்லார்போல் ஏக்கற்றுங் கற்றார்  
கடையரே கல்லா தவர்.
- The learned learn to humble, like destitute before the rich; Only the low never learn.



# III.LEARNING

- தொட்டனைத் தூறும் மணற்கேணி மாந்தர்க்குக் கற்றனைத் தூறும் அறிவு.
- The more you dig a sand-spring, more the flow. The more you learn more the wisdom.
- யாதானும் நாடாமால் ஊராமால் என்னொருவன் சாந்துணையுங் கல்லாத வாறு.
- Why does one stop learning till he dies When it makes all lands and place his?
- ஒருமைக்கண் தான்கற்ற கல்வி ஒருவற்கு எழுமையும் ஏமாப் புடைத்து.
- The learning acquired in one birth Protects a man in the next seven.
- தாமின் புறுவது உலகின் புறக்கண்டு காமுறுவர் கற்றறிந் தார்.
- Seeing that what delights him delights the world, Gets a scholar also delighted.
- கேடில் விழுச்செல்வம் கல்வி யொருவற்கு மாடல்ல மற்றை யவை.

# LEARNING-SUMMARY

- Let a man learn thoroughly whatever he may learn, and let his conduct be worthy of his learning.
- Letters and numbers are the two eyes of man.
- The learned are said to have eyes, but the unlearned have (merely) two sores in their face.
- It is the part of the learned to give joy to those whom they meet, and on leaving, to make them think (Oh! when shall we meet them again.).
- The unlearned are inferior to the learned, before whom they stand begging, as the destitute before the wealthy.
- Water will flow from a well in the sand in proportion to the depth to which it is dug, and knowledge will flow from a man in proportion to his learning.
- How is it that any one can remain without learning, even to his death, when (to the learned man) every country is his own (country), and every town his own (town) ?.
- The learning, which a man has acquired in one birth, will yield him pleasure during seven births.
- The learned will long (for more learning), when they see that while it gives pleasure to themselves, the world also derives pleasure from it.
- Learning is the true imperishable riches; all other things are not riches.



# KNOWING THE FITTING TIME

- பகல்வெல்லும் கூகையைக் காக்கை இகல்வெல்லும் வேந்தர்க்கு வேண்டும் பொழுது.
- A crow will conquer owl in broad daylight;
- The king that foes would crush, needs fitting time to fight..
- பருவத்தோடு ஒட்ட ஒழுகல் திருவினைத் தீரமை ஆர்க்குங் கயிறு.
- The bond binds fortune fast is ordered effort made,
- Strictly observant still of favouring season's aid.
- அருவினை யென்ப உளவோ கருவியான் காலம் அறிந்து செயின்.
- Can any work be hard in very fact,
- If men use fitting means in timely act?.

- ஞாலம் கருதினுங் கைகூடுங் காலம்  
கருதி இடத்தாற் செயின்.

- The pendant world's dominion may be won,  
In fitting time and place by action done.

- காலம் கருதி இருப்பர் கலங்காது  
ஞாலம் கருது பவர்.

- Who think the pendant world itself to subjugate,

- With mind unruffled for the fitting time must wait. ஊக்க முடையான் ஒடுக்கம் பொருதகர்  
தாக்கற்குப் பேருந் தகைத்து.

- The men of mighty power their hidden energies repress,  
As fighting ram recoils to rush on foe with heavier stress.

- பொள்ளென ஆங்கே புறம்வேரார் காலம்பார்த்து  
உள்வேர்ப்பர் ஒள்ளி யவர்.

- The glorious once of wrath enkindled make no outward show,  
At once; they bide their time, while hidden fires within them glow.

- செறுநரைக் காணின் சுமக்க இறுவரை  
காணின் கிழக்காம் தலை.

- If foes' detested form they see, with patience let them bear;  
When fateful hour at last they spy,- the head lies there.



- எய்தற் கரியது இயைந்தக்கால் அந்நிலையே  
செய்தற் கரிய செயல்.
- When hardest gain of opportunity at last is won,
- With promptitude let hardest deed be done.
- கொக்கொக்க கூம்பும் பருவத்து மற்றதன்  
குத்தொக்க சீர்த்த இடத்து.
- As heron stands with folded wing, so wait in waiting hour;

## KNOWING THE FITTING TIME-SUMMARY

- A crow will overcome an owl in the day time; so the king who would conquer his enemy must have (a suitable) time. Acting at the right season, is a cord that will immoveably bind success (to a king). Is there anything difficult for him to do, who acts, with (the right) instruments at the right time ?. Though (a man) should meditate (the conquest of) the world, he may accomplish it if he acts in the right time, and at the right place. They who thoughtfully consider and wait for the (right) time (for action), may successfully meditate (the conquest of) the world. The self-restraint of the energetic (while waiting for a suitable opportunity), is like the drawing back of a fighting-ram in order to butt. The wise will not immediately and hastily shew out their anger; they will watch their time, and restrain it within. If one meets his enemy, let him show him all respect, until the time for his destruction is come; when that is come, his head will be easily brought low.



## KNOWING THE FITTING TIME-SUMMARY

- If a rare opportunity occurs, while it lasts, let a man do that which is rarely to be accomplished (but for such an opportunity).
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- As heron snaps its prey, when fortune smiles, put forth your power. At the time when one should use self-control, let him restrain himself like a heron; and, let him like it, strike, when there is a favourable opportunity.