



VETHATHIRIYAM AND POLITICS: A WISDOM CENTERED MODEL FOR ETHICAL GOVERNANCE AND GLOBAL HARMONY

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Abstract

Modern politics is increasingly characterized by power struggles, corruption, violence, environmental destruction, and moral decline. Against this backdrop, spiritual and ethical philosophies offer alternative paradigms for governance rooted in wisdom, self-discipline, and universal compassion. Vethathiriyam, propounded by Vethathiri Maharishi, presents a holistic philosophy integrating individual moral transformation with social and political responsibility. Though not a conventional political ideology, Vethathiri Maharishi's Vethathiriyam is a comprehensive philosophy that combines social and political duty with personal moral reform. Vethathiriyam provides significant insights on government, leadership, social justice, economic equity, environmental ethics, and world peace despite not being a traditional political doctrine. This article examines Vethathiriyam's political aspects and argues that its wisdom-centered approach provides a framework for ethical politics and sustainable governance in today's world.

Keywords: *Vethathiriyam, Vethathiri Maharishi, Politics, Ethical Governance, Spiritual Democracy, A World Peace.*

1. Introduction

Politics is one of the most powerful instruments shaping human society. Political systems shape laws, allocate resources, establish social hierarchies, and decide collective fates. However, politics devolves into exploitation, injustice, and bloodshed when it is divorced from moral principles and internal discipline. The problems that political institutions face—corruption, inequality, ecological collapse, and international conflict—are essentially crises of human consciousness. The visionary philosopher, scientist-sage, and social reformer Vethathiri Maharishi (1911–2006) presented Vethathiriyam as a holistic philosophy for both individual and group development. Vethathiriyam has a deeply political ideology that aims to balance individual ethics with societal governance, despite being best recognized for its spiritual rituals and moral teachings.

This article examines Vethathiriyam as a political philosophy, analyzing its views on power, leadership, social justice, economy, democracy, environmental responsibility, and world governance.

2. Vethathiri Maharishi : Life and Vision

Vethathiri Maharishi was not merely a spiritual Guru, also a social philosopher who was profoundly concerned with the pain that people endure as a result of ignorance, innocence, and emotional states like aggression and greed. His experiences as a worker, inventor, philosopher, and spiritual mentor influenced his all-encompassing perspective.

2.1 Vethathiri Maharishi's Social Concern

Vethathiri Maharishi noted that people's lack of moral discipline is a major factor in the failure of political institutions, rather than only flawed frameworks. He maintained that institutions and



laws cannot bring about justice unless they are backed by ethical conscience. According to him, uncontrolled human tendencies like anger, fear, rage, and ego are what cause violence rather than just outside circumstances. In a same vein, economic inequality is a result of unchecked desire. Therefore, Maharishi suggested that the basis of true social reform would be inner transformation. People develop ethical behaviour through self-awareness, self-discipline, and inner balance; this naturally manifests in leadership, governance, and economic systems.

His solution was **inner transformation as the foundation of social reform**, including politics.

3. Understanding Vethathiriyam

Vethathiri Maharishi developed the Vethathiriyam system of ideas and precepts to bring about world peace via personal development. It emphasizes the unity of humanity by symbolizing universal wisdom that cuts over nationality, religion, and culture. Vethathiriyam, which has its roots in rational spirituality, promotes direct experience, reasoning, and investigation over mindless faith. By teaching people to responsibly control their thoughts, impulses, and behaviours, it encourages ethical living. The philosophy explains the connection between body, mind, and consciousness and provides a scientific understanding of life energy. Vethathiriyam emphasizes social duty above all else, claiming that social harmony and enduring world peace follow naturally from personal harmony.

It represents:

- Universal wisdom
- Rational spirituality
- Ethical living
- Scientific understanding of life energy
- Social responsibility

Unlike dogmatic religious systems, Vethathiriyam is **non-sectarian, universal, and rational**, making it applicable to political life.

4. Philosophy of Human Nature and Political Behaviour

According to Vethathiri Maharishi, political problems originate from flaws in human psychology. So he wish to make corrections of individual life style. His vision is world peace through individual peace. If every human correct themselves by follow the Vethathiriyam principle, will leads to family peace, societal peace, and world peace.

4.1 Human characters and Politics

Greed, anger, miserliness, immoral sexual passion, Inferiority and superiority complex, vengeance, ego, fear, possessiveness, are all characteristics that humans naturally display. If these inclinations are allowed to continue unchecked, they become more prevalent in politics rather than only in private life. There, they take the form of violence, communalism, corruption, authoritarianism, and the brutal exploitation of resources and the natural world. This demonstrates how unresolved internal problems within people are ultimately reflected in political disasters. As a result, external laws, regulations, or institutions cannot be the only sources of political power. As fundamental pillars of fair and compassionate government, it must also address self-control, ethical consciousness, and internal discipline.



5. Ethics as the Foundation of Politics

Vethathiriyam places morality at the center of social life. Everyone in the world must lead moral life. The important parts of moral life are:

1. Morality
2. Duty
3. Charity

Morality

“Morality means that the deeds through thought, deed or word should not bring harm either to self or others, to body or mind, either in the present or in future.

Duty

Everyman in the earth are belongs to the society. The body and knowledge are given by the society. All the things he enjoys also came from the society itself. Therefore human is indebted to the society to a greatest extend. So it is the duty of every human being to repay the debts to the society by physical work, by wealth, and knowledge.

Charity

The speciality of mankind is to show mercy on those who suffer and come forward to help them to remove the pains. This kind of tendency is called charity”. -(V.M. Int.c.St.1, V.P)

5.1 Moral Discipline

Vethathiri Maharishi emphasized the need to analyse thoughts, moralize desires, neutralize anger, eradicate worries, and ultimately attain self-realization as the core disciplines of human development. He believed that when individuals consciously observe and refine their inner processes, they gain mastery over impulsive behaviour. These practices lead to self- control over desires, non-violence in thought, word, and action, and foster honesty, transparency, and a deep sense of social responsibility. Such inner discipline is especially crucial in politics, where power amplifies personal flaws. Maharishi warned, a political leader lacking self-discipline, becomes dangerous regardless of intelligence, skill, or popular support.

6. Concept of Political Power in Vethathiriyam

Unlike conventional politics that views power as domination, Vethathiriyam defines power as **responsibility**.

7. Leadership According to Vethathiriyam

A Vethathiriyam-based leader must possess:

- Emotional maturity
- Ethical clarity
- Compassion
- Scientific understanding
- Long-term vision
- Self realised person

Leadership is not about ruling people but guiding society towards harmony.



8. Vethathiriyam and Conscious Democracy

Vethathiri Maharishi supported democracy as a system that honors human freedom but warned against its degeneration through ignorant voting, emotional populism, money power, muscle power, and identity-based politics. He observed that when citizens vote without awareness or ethical judgment, democracy loses its purpose and becomes vulnerable to manipulation. For Maharishi, true democracy requires educated and morally conscious citizens who participate based on values rather than emotion or identity. Political participation must be guided by responsibility, and leaders must remain accountable not only to law but to conscience. Without wisdom and ethical grounding, democracy risks collapsing into chaos, mob rule, and moral decline.

9. Social Justice and Equality of Human worth

Vethathiriyam strongly opposes caste discrimination, gender inequality, economic exploitation, and all forms of social exclusion, viewing them as violations of human unity. Maharishi asserted that all human beings share the same life force and intrinsic dignity, and that divisions based on caste, gender, or status are artificial social constructs rather than natural truths. For him, justice meant not mere legal equality but equal opportunity, respect, and dignity for every individual. This perspective closely resonates with Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's vision of social justice, while grounding it further in spiritual unity, ethical responsibility, and inner awareness as the basis for lasting social reform.

10. Economic Philosophy and Politics

Vethathiriyam presents a balanced economic philosophy that critiques both extreme capitalism and rigid communism for neglecting ethical consciousness. Maharishi opposed unregulated capitalism because it promotes greed, excessive accumulation, and exploitation, while rigid communism was criticized for suppressing individual initiative and inner freedom. Instead, Vethathiriyam advocates ethical economics, grounded in moral responsibility and social balance.

Key principles include:

- Wealth must be earned through honest labour
- Excess accumulation creates inequality and social unrest
- Natural resources belong collectively to humanity
- Consumption should be need-based, not greed-driven

According to Vethathiriyam, economic policies must aim at sufficiency for all, not luxury for a few. The goal of economics is to ensure security, dignity, and equitable access to resources. When guided by ethics rather than profit or ideology, economic systems can foster social harmony, sustainability, and global justice.

11. Environmental Politics and Ecological Wisdom

Vethathiri Maharishi was a pioneer of ecological ethics, emphasizing that nature must be treated as a political stakeholder rather than a commodity. He viewed the natural world as an interconnected life system essential to human survival and social stability.

Key ideas include:

- Nature is not property but a living, self-sustaining system
- Exploitation of nature leads inevitably to ecological imbalance and collapse
- Political and developmental decisions must assess environmental impact



Maharishi asserted that environmental crises are not merely scientific or economic problems but political failures rooted in moral ignorance, greed, and short-term interests. When ethics are absent from governance, nature is abused and society suffers. Sustainable politics, according to Maharishi, must integrate ecological responsibility with moral awareness to ensure long-term harmony between humanity, society and the nature.

12. Violence, War, and World Politics

Vethathiriyam rejects violence as a political tool because Maharishi believed violence only deepens suffering rather than resolving conflict. He viewed war as a human failure, born from inner turmoil that spills into world politics. Wars do not begin on battlefields; they begin in the human mind.

12.1 Roots of War

According to Vethathiriyam, war arises from:

- Greed for land, resources, and power
- The ego and pride of nations seeking dominance
- Fear, insecurity, and lack of trust
- An arms industry that benefits from conflict

When these forces go unchecked, violence appears inevitable. Maharishi emphasized that peace cannot be imposed through weapons or fear. Treaties and diplomacy matter, but they are fragile without ethical awareness. True peace, he argued, begins with inner peace—calm minds, disciplined desire, and compassionate leadership. Only when leaders and citizens transform inwardly can politics shift from aggression to cooperation and lasting global harmony.

13. Concept of world Government

One of Vethathiri Maharishi's most profound political ideas is the concept of World Governance, grounded in the belief that humanity must think beyond borders. He envisioned a world where national pride evolves into a shared sense of global responsibility.

13.1 One world – One Humanity

Key principles include:

- Nationalism should give way to global humanism, recognizing the unity of all people
- Global challenges—climate change, poverty, conflict—require coordinated, worldwide solutions.
- A world government must be guided by justice, ethics, and collective welfare, not by domination or power

Vethathiri Maharishi emphasized that this vision is not political imperialism or control by a few nations. Instead, it is ethical globalization, where cooperation, moral responsibility, and respect for all life guide governance. True world peace and progress, he believed, can only emerge when humanity embraces its shared destiny and acts in harmony with universal principles.

14. Education as Political Transformation

According to Vethathiriyam, educating future leaders requires more than academic knowledge; it must cultivate moral and social consciousness. Education should develop well- rounded individuals capable of ethical decision-making and responsible leadership.



14.1 Educating Future Leaders

Key components include:

- Language skills for clear communication.
- Vocational training for practical competence
- Philosophy of nature to understand humanity's place in the world
- Ethics to guide actions with integrity
- Self-discipline to control desires and impulses
- Social responsibility to serve communities conscientiously
- Ecological awareness to protect and sustain the environment

Maharishi emphasized that without ethical education, political systems cannot be truly reformed. Leaders shaped solely by technical knowledge or ambition risk perpetuating corruption, greed, and exploitation. Only through comprehensive education that balances intellect, morality, and social awareness can future leaders create just, sustainable, and harmonious societies.

15. Relevance of Vethathiriyam in Contemporary Politics

In today's world, marked by:

- Political polarization
- Climate crisis
- Moral decay
- Global insecurity

Vethathiriyam offers a path toward transformative politics rather than mere opposition or criticism. Maharishi envisions a system rooted in ethical awareness and non-violence, where governance serves humanity rather than personal or national interests. Key elements include:

- A non-violent political framework that resolves conflicts without coercion
- Ethical governance guided by conscience and social responsibility
- Sustainable development that balances human needs with ecological limits
- Promotion of global harmony through cooperation and shared values

Far from being anti-political, Vethathiriyam redefines politics as a tool for inner and social transformation, emphasizing that true change begins with the moral and ethical evolution of individuals.

16. Critical Evaluation

While Vethathiriyam provides a powerful moral framework, critics argue:

- Implementation may be slow
- Requires mass ethical awakening
- Faces resistance from power-centric politics

However, all lasting political reforms begin with consciousness change.

17. Comparative Perspective

Vethathiriyam resonates with the visions of several great leaders:

- Gandhi's moral politics, emphasizing ethics and non-violence
- Ambedkar's pursuit of social justice and equality
- Aurobindo's focus on spiritual evolution
- Martin Luther King's commitment to non-violent activism



However, what sets Vethathiriyam apart is its scientific-spiritual synthesis. Maharishi combined rational understanding with inner awareness, showing how ethical, psychological, and ecological principles can guide human behavior and governance. Unlike purely political or religious frameworks, it integrates personal transformation, societal responsibility, and global consciousness. In this way, Vethathiriyam offers a comprehensive approach to leadership, social reform, and world peace, grounded simultaneously in ethics, science, and spirituality.

18. Conclusion

Vethathiriyam redefines politics as a moral science rather than a power game. It asserts that political reform is impossible without personal discipline, ethical leadership, and universal compassion. By integrating spirituality, rationality, and social responsibility, Vethathiriyam provides a visionary model for governance rooted in wisdom.

In an era where politics threatens human survival, Vethathiriyam reminds humanity that **only wisdom can save power from destroying itself.**

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