

TITLE OF THE THESIS

**RELATION BETWEEN ETHICS OF DUTY AND
ETHICS OF VIRTUE: A CRITICAL STUDY**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL
FOR THE AWARD OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN
PHILOSOPHY**

BY

SAHABUDDIN AHAMED JAMADER

FEBRUARY, 2022

UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF

PROF. LAXMIKANTA PADHI

Professor of Philosophy

University of North Bengal

Darjeeling, West Bengal – 734013

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Sahabuddin Ahmed Tamader

*Keep me in
18/1/2022*

Dr. Laxmikanta Padhi
Professor of Philosophy
Dept. of Philosophy
University of North Bengal
Siliguri-734013

PREFACE

Only a sweet and virtuous soul, Like seasoned timber, never gives; But though the whole world turn to coal Then chiefly lives. “Virtue” by George Herbert

Virtue theory was the predominant framework for moral philosophy for centuries, but then was eclipsed by the Enlightenment, only to enjoy something of a renaissance in the past fifty years. Among contemporary moral philosophers, several have been associated with virtue theory, including Elizabeth Anscombe, Alasdair MacIntyre and Edmund Pellegrino. Ironically, theorists of both deontological and consequentialist schools have now begun to incorporate virtue components in their perspectives. Virtue ethics, it seems, is in its ascendancy.

How will virtue ethics comport with the other dominant theories? Deontological or duty ethics and teleological or ends-means ethics systems focus on questions of what is right and what is good, and the crucial distinctions between these qualities. And, they each translate these meanings into requisite or desired actions. These approaches answer the question: What should I do? Virtue ethics by contrast focuses upon one’s character, and “good life,” and the painstaking acquisition of habits of virtue. This addresses the question: Whom or what kind of person should I *be*?

From the Greek sources, the three central elements of virtue ethics are virtue (*arête*), human flourishing (*eudaimonia*), and practical wisdom (*phronesis*). Virtue (*arête*), in Aristotle’s elucidation refers to highest self-actualization, or more precisely, highest knowledge, and has a teleological resonance; it is purposive, aiming at highest fulfilment and happiness, as the proper end or goal of life itself.

Arête is the enabling, animating principle which assures the end desired, which is *eudaimonia*. This latter term is too often rendered as “happiness,” though it refers more profoundly to human flourishing. It is not the mere subjective quality of enjoyment or pleasure that is described, but rather the source of that feeling: the objective abundance of one’s acquired desirable ends.

Finally, virtue theory includes the quality of practical wisdom, or phronesis, which is seen to result from the habituation of virtue enroute to human flourishing. Practical wisdom may be thought of as the knowledge, understanding and appreciation necessary for habitually and purposefully doing what is right and good; it is moral savvy elevated to prudent judgment and wise decision-making.

There are thinkers who argue that Buddhist ethics is a form of virtue ethics, and is intrinsically teleological. The aim of life is happiness, and the means to this goal is virtue, which consists in actualization of all the potentials inherent in human nature. The Eightfold Path is, much like Aristotle's envisioning of the development of moral habits, a prolonged, progressive process moving toward full human actualization and the ultimate achievement of nirvana, which is both the aim and the perfection of virtue. We are reminded of the ancient Buddhist saying: "To do goods, to avoid evils, to purify one's own heart – this is the Buddha way." It seems a virtue ethic, and the very term, "way," seems to suggest journey, intentionality, and goal.

Preparing this thesis entitled "**Relation Between Ethics of Duty and Ethics of Virtue: A Critical Study**" has made me realized that how far the discussion of normative ethical issues related to human character, and examines the discrepancy in ethics. In the process, this thesis offers both explanations and some critical observations of basic moral theories such as deontological and teleological ethics while approaching towards virtue ethics.

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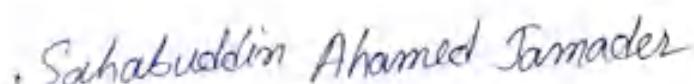
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University of North Bengal

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Last but not certainly least; I would like to acknowledge the most important person in my life – my parents and my didi. My better half Najmun, has been a constant source of strength, and inspiration in pursuing this research work. I would be failing in my duty if I do not thank my God.



Sahabuddin Ahamed Jamader

SRF in State-Funded Research Scheme
Department of Philosophy
University of North Bengal

DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled "**RELATION BETWEEN ETHICS OF DUTY AND ETHICS OF VIRTUE: A CRITICAL STUDY**" has been prepared by me under the guidance of Prof. Laxmikanta Padhi, Professor in Philosophy, Department of Philosophy, University of North Bengal. No part of this thesis has formed the basis or the award of any degree or fellowship previously.

Sahabuddin Ahamed Jamader

Sahabuddin Ahamed Jamader

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Department of Philosophy

University of North Bengal

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL

Accredited by NAAC with Grade A

Laxmikanta Padhi

Professor

Department of Philosophy

SAP (DRS - III) of UGC (2015-2020)



লক্ষ্মী পদ্ধি পাদ্বি

Phone : +91-353-2699001

Fax : +91-353-2699001

E-mail : llpadhi@unib.edu.in

Visit at : www.unib.ac.in

P.O: NORTH BENGAL UNIVERSITY, RAYA RAJNAGAR, Dt. DARJEELING, WEST BENGAL, INDIA, PIN - 734 013

Ref. No. :

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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that the Doctoral thesis entitled: **RELATION BETWEEN ETHICS OF DUTY AND ETHICS OF VIRTUE: A CRITICAL STUDY** prepared by SAHABUDDIN AHAMED JAMADER, Research Scholar, Department of Philosophy, University of North Bengal is the result of his academic work. To the best of my knowledge, this thesis is not submitted for the award of any degree of this University or any other University.

It is further certified that the candidate has complied with all the formalities as per the requirements of the University of North Bengal.

As the thesis bears the evidence of his originality, I consider it fit and recommend its submission for evaluation for the partial fulfilment of Doctorate degree in Philosophy of the University of North Bengal.

Date:

(Prof. Laxmikanta Padhi)

Supervisor

Department of Philosophy
University of North Bengal

Dr. Laxmikanta Padhi
Professor of Philosophy
Dept. of Philosophy
University of North Bengal
Siliguri-734013

Abstract

Title of the Research Proposal:

Relation Between Ethics of Duty and Ethics of Virtue: A Critical Study

Introduction:

There are three major areas of ethics, meta-ethics, normative ethics and applied ethics. Normative ethics is the study of action which deals with the questions like how one ought to act or how one ought to morally speak. It is concerned with the criterions of what is morally right or wrong for us. There are varieties of normative ethical theories such as, consequentialism, deontology and virtue ethics. Consequentialism holds that the consequences of one's actions are the only foundational criteria to determine the rightness and wrongness of an action. According to the Consequentialists, an act is morally right if and only if it produces a good consequence. If the act does not produce the comparative amount of good consequences or it does not produce the comparative amount of good over evil then it is not the kind of right action. According to Frankena, "Thus, an act is *right* if and only if it or the rule under which it falls produces, will probably produce, or is intended to produce *at least as great a balance of good over evil as any available alternative*; an act is *wrong* if and only if it does not do so."¹

Deontological theory:

Criticisms of consequential theory give rise to the deontological theory. The etymological meaning of the word 'deontology' is dependent upon two Greek words 'deon' and 'logos'. In Greek language 'deon' means duty and 'logos' means science, so deontology means the science of duty. According to the critics of consequential theory, it is so much engaged with ends that it may overshadow the means by which the ends could be achieved. Deontological

¹ Frankena, William K., *Ethics*, Prentice-Hall India, New Delhi, 1997, p. 14

theorists do not agree with the consequentialist theorists. They deny that, an action is right by the consequences it produces. They argue that an action can be right or wrong depending upon the reasons besides the goodness or badness it produces. For example – to keep a promise is just, and thus, promise keeping is a right action without depending on its consequences. This type of action is right but its rightness is not due to its consequence. Consequentialists generally accepted the myth that, there is only one criterion to judge an act, whether it is right or wrong. They basically depend upon a non-moral comparative value. Deontologists do not believe that this characteristic is reliable; rather they believe that there are also other more pertinent characteristics to be considered to determine whether an act is right or wrong. Deontologists say that, “the principle of maximizing the balance of good over evil, no matter for whom, is either not a moral criterion or standard at all, or, at least, it is not the only basic or ultimate one.”² Deontological ethics and consequential ethics are thus opposite of one another. If consequentialism tells us to emphasize on the consequences of individual work, deontology tells us to consider only act without being considering its consequences.

Kantian deontology:

Kant’s moral theory lays emphasis on human reason. For Kant, one act can be called moral if it is done in accordance with reason. And being a rational agent, one must follow the moral rules prescribed by practical reason. If one does not follow this criterion then it is obviously considered as an irrational act, and consequently an immoral act. Kant’s philosophy is basically concerned about duty performed by a rational agent and this is the reason why Kant’s theory is regarded as a form of deontology. The principles of Kant’s theoretical as well as practical philosophy are *a priori*. To be *a priori*, according to Kant, is to be strictly universal and necessary (meaning the contrary of which is inconceivable). According to Kant, the general principle of the moral law, i.e., the categorical imperative, is derived from practical reason, and is, therefore, obligatory for every rational agent that poses the same practical reasons. So, every rational agent or human being is obliged by the moral law. But what does

² Frankena, William K., *Ethics*, Prentice-Hall India, New Delhi, 1997, p. 15

Kant mean by the moral law? In one word, the moral law is Categorical Imperative. Categorical Imperative is a set of principle, these are – respect the humanity in oneself as well as in other rational agents, not to make an exception for himself while deliberating others about how to perform an act, and act only in accordance with rules that could be universally obeyed.

All rational agents are obliged by the moral law, but this moral law is not imposed upon them by any other external cause. Kant believes that moral laws are imposed by rationality, the inner self of man. Here Kant says about the autonomy of will. The moral law which Kant discusses requires both freedom of the will as well as autonomy of the will.

Virtue theory:

Virtue ethics is a revised version of what Aristotle thinks about morality. For him, human flourishing can be achieved by the habitual practice of moral and intellectual virtue. Though Aristotle is treated as the protagonist of virtue ethics, it does not mean that he was the first person to deal with this topic. He was the first philosopher who discussed ethics as a separate part of philosophy and the different kinds of virtues that form our good life. *Nicomachean Ethics* is the name normally given to Aristotle's best known work and central text for the study of ancient virtue ethics. There is another book on ethics, the *Eudemian Ethics*, which has been written by Aristotle. It is commonly believed that *Eudemian Ethics* is written before the *Nicomachean Ethics*. The first one was named after Aristotle's son Nicomachus, and the second one is named after his friend Eudemus, who may also have had a hand in editing the final work. The *Nicomachean Ethics* is not easy reading for the new comer students, it was meant for the audience of advance students who were sufficiently familiar with Aristotle's philosophy and terminology. Both the works of Aristotle are important to understand the Greek virtue ethics.

According to Aristotle, virtue is neither a passion nor a faculty, it is a state of character. In the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle offers a definition of virtue thus – “Virtue is a state of character concerned with choice, lying in a mean, i.e. the mean relative to us, this being determined by a rational principle,

i.e. by that principle by which the man of practical wisdom would determine it.”³ Aristotle’s definition proposes to adopt a middle path which has been much discussed. Virtue is considered as if it lies between two vices which are two extremes. For example, courage is the middle path between the extremes of rashness and cowardice. Such a middle course will be relative to vices of the extremes depending upon the actual circumstances of the individual.

According to Bertrand Russell, there are two kinds of virtues, intellectual and moral, corresponding to the two parts of the soul. Intellectual virtues result from teaching, moral virtues from habit. The two kinds of virtue in Aristotle’s ethics, that are responsible for the quality of life is –

- i. ‘Ethical virtues’ or ‘virtues of character’ that regulate the desires concerning the ends to be attained or avoided by action, and
- ii. ‘Intellectual virtues’ (*Phronêsis*), the capacity of the soul’s rational part that selects the means to realize those ends. According to Aristotle, a virtue of character is the irrational part of the soul, having the characteristic of “listening to reasons advice”.

Previous studies on this topic:

Alasdair MacIntyre, has done the most to reintroduce virtue ethics, argues that utilitarianism cannot distinguish between the clear qualitative difference between the internal value of the virtues and the extrinsic value of ordinary pleasures, a difference crucial to what is called "character consequentialism." Whereas it is virtually impossible to do the hedonic calculus for ordinary pains and pleasures, there is no question about the long-term good consequences of the virtues and good character, as compared to the long-term pain that the vices bring. This means that attempts, such as Michael

³ Ross, David (Trans.), *The Nicomachean Ethics*, p. ix, Oxford University Press, New York, 2009

Slote's gallant effort, at founding the value of the virtues on their own grounds fails, because one cannot deny that the virtues were preferred, very early in human social development, primarily because of their good consequences.

There are two opposite views regarding the relationships between Kant and virtue ethics. Many Kantian interpreters think that Kant is just a pure deontologist and has nothing to offer to virtue theory. But there are also few interpreters who think that Kantian ethics has all the possibilities by which it can be considered as a virtue ethics. The former view limits Kant's contributions to current debates to a very restricted sphere and the latter view suggests an expansion of the possible contributions of Kantian ethics. The latter view also opens the moral sentiments and questions of character to the Kantian thinking.

Kantian ethics has long been criticized from the perspective of virtue and other ethical theories. For the critics, Kant is a pure deontologist ethicist. It is generally accepted that Kant has nothing to offer to the virtue theory. For example, according to the communitarian philosopher Michael Sandel "Kant's conception of morality is asocial and ahistorical because he gives all his efforts to emancipate the individual from the community". Hegel has also tried to bridge the gap between the individuals and the community. Philipa Foot and Simon Blackburn are those who consider Kant as only a deontologist and severely criticizing his theory. In this proposal we will deal with this issue.

According to the orthodox interpretation of Kant, morality can be derived only from a non-empirical standard of rationality, i.e., the Categorical Imperative. It is the highest principle of moral action. Rationality is the conceptual feature of our willing to decide what is right for us. Reason and only reason decides the standard of rightness, independently of any empirical inclinations and dispositions of the agent. Hence it is clear that all our duties could be derived from reason, and their justification is independent of any empirical facts about one's emotion or other characteristics.

Kantian ethics is exclusively about moral duty and his primary concern is about how one must act but not a type of person one should be. All duties

are derived from reason independent of any psychological attitude. This view suggests that morality is governed by only rule alone. The only good motive is about duty. We should do our duty out of respect for the rule, not out of imitation to virtuous person, or even not out of nobility and honour. Our moral life must be governed by strict moral rules which holds good for everyone and equally without exception. Thus, Kant's moral rule is very rigid and bereft of sympathy and psychological attitude.

According to the contemporary virtue-ethicist, virtue, either as a generalized disposition or as a set of particular traits of a person, simply does not figure as a core feature of Kant's moral theory. Virtue ethics mainly concentrates on the intrinsic or inherent character, or what kind of person one should be. It discusses the ideal of how to live well, and this might be the difference by what we can differentiate virtue ethics from other ethical concept, such as deontology or consequentialism. Virtue ethics deals with the idea of human flourishing. It does not put emphasis on right or duty, or value or the good. For this ethics the ideal of a person is more fundamental. Accordingly, with the help of an ideal of the person one could judge, what actions are right, and what things are good. The ideal or standard of right action is determined by performing the action, no matter what an entirely virtuous person would be. The ideal of the person must be independent of any understanding of the right or the good.

Kant provides the non-empirical foundation to the ethical theory. He exercised himself to analyse the rational will and a conception of self-governing reason rather than discuss about the kind of a person one should be. So, it is enough for the critics of Kant to claim that he should not be considered as a virtue ethicist and they may not be altogether wrong, but it would be hasty to conclude that virtue does not play any important role in Kantian ethics. Our aim is to shed some new light on Kant's moral theory, especially to the role played by virtue in his ethical theories.

But in the proposed research we will argue that, Kant has paid equal importance to both the ethics of duty and the ethics of virtue. Kant's work on virtue has been ignored by the most of his interpreters as they paid full attention

to his ethics of duty, which is characterized as deontology. Many consider Kant's ethics as formalism. But in our discussion, we will try to show that Kant's ethical theory is not just based upon the rules but upon agents and the kind of life they live.

Generally, we think that the ethics of duty and the ethics of virtue are opposed to each other and they are mutually exclusive alternatives. But Kantian ethics is not like that, Kantian ethics emphasizes on both of them. Our opinion is that it is not necessary to choose between rule ethics and virtue ethics, because Kant's ethics is able to combine both of them. Here we want to develop Kant's ethical theory as an agent-centred ethics by making reference to the good will, the maxims, morally necessary ends and the relation between virtue and good.

Virtue ethical thoughts in the *Dharmaśāstras*:

According to Bimal Krishna Matilal the term *dharma*, is understood nothing short of moral virtue. Martha Nussbaum, a major proponent of virtue ethics, states: "The good agent must therefore cultivate the ability to perceive and correctly describe his or her situation finely and truly, including in this perceptual grasp even those features of the situation that are not covered under the existing rule." Aristotle's practical reason is the ability to perceive "finely and truly" any situation, whereas Buddhists would call it the virtue of mindfulness and the Confucians would say that it is doing "what is appropriate". If *dharma* is duty, then Hindu ethics should conform to something like duty-based ethics, but Matilal maintains that it is not really the meaning of *dharma* which will be discussed in the proposed research. Matilal quotes Robert Lingat favourably when he maintains that *dharma* is never "imposed" but simply "proposed"; and he paraphrases Louis Dumont idea that *dharma* "reigns from above without actually governing the world." Both of these descriptions are intriguing but vague, but Matilal proposes that *dharma* is "open ended," a crucial aspect of rules in virtue ethics in the *Dharmaśāstras*.

As opposed to a rule-based ethics, where the most that we can know is that we always fall short of the norm, virtue ethics is truly a voyage of personal discovery. Ancient virtue ethics always aim at a personal mean that is a creative choice for each individual. Virtue ethics is emulative - using the sage or savior as a model for virtue - whereas rule ethics involves conformity and obedience. The emulative approach engages the imagination and personalizes and thoroughly grounds individual moral action and responsibility. Such an ethics naturally lends itself to Matilal's moral poets and virtue aesthetics: the crafting of a good and beautiful soul, a unique gem among other gems.

Research gap and problems:

Though most of the Kantian interpreters think that Kant was just a deontologist but it is very difficult to agree with them. We will discuss what Kant actually says about virtue, not only showing his high estimation of virtue but also showing the centrality of virtue, in his practical ethics. Kant's position on good will is considered generally as act-centered ethics and for which it is criticized by many philosophers. But I argue that Kant's good will offers us a clear view of agent-centered ethics which is contrary to the act-centered ethics, though Kantian philosophy is identified with the doctrine of formal duty, not with a judgment like what one ought to do.

We will try to show that virtue is the central theme of Kantian ethics and the foundation of all types of moral judgments. However, this is not contradictory to Kantian ethics but it is defined in accordance with the moral law. Therefore, I will try to show how Kant combines rules and duties concerning different acts in his virtue ethics.

Kant's virtue theory reveals the mystery of human morality. According to Kant, rational beings, such as human are also finite rational beings. In his *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, Kant opines, "We know of only one species of rational being on earth; namely, the human species". On the other hand, the unearthly rational beings are omnibenevolent, omniscient, and omnipotent. According to Kant, "For finite holy beings (who could never be tempted to violate the duty) there would be no doctrine of virtue but only a

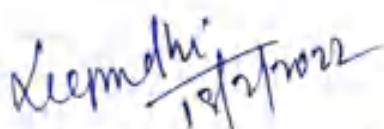
doctrine of morals". "Only the moral relations of human beings to human beings" and "human duties to one another" is called ethics.

In the preface of the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant opines, "Intending to publish someday *Metaphysics of Morals*, I issue this *Groundwork* in advance."⁴ This is just a preliminary step for future *Metaphysics of Morals*. It is purely theoretical and may be considered as foundation for future moral studies. Kant believes, 'as a philosopher, he has to go to the first grounds of this concept of duty, since otherwise neither certitude nor purity can be expected anywhere in the doctrine of virtue'. This supreme moral principle leads to legal rights and moral duty. Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason* is another important work which presupposes the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. On the basis of my observations, these following thoughts may be considered as research gap.

- Is Kant be interpreted as a virtue ethicist?
- If we are able to reinterpret Kant as a virtue ethicist, how can we relate his ethics of deontology with virtue theory?
- What is the relationship between ethics of duty and ethics of virtue?
- Is Kant's ethics of duty is considered as ethics of virtue then what would be the case of other ethics of duty?
- What are the sound arguments for claiming that Kantian ethics is considered as virtue ethics?
- Can we consider ethics of duty is equivalent or identical with virtue ethics?
- Moral rules are too abstract and too rigid, and it is difficult to apply them to complex situations and decisions. They, however, still retain their normative force in the application of national and international

⁴ Kant, Immanuel, *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

law. In this context, question may be raised that what is the relation between Kant's virtue ethics and the virtues in the *Dharmaśāstras*.



Prof. Laxmikanta Padhi

Professor of Philosophy
University of North Bengal

Dr. Laxmikanta Padhi
Professor of Philosophy
Dept. of Philosophy
University of North Bengal
Siliguri-734013



Sahabuddin Ahamed Jamader

SRF in State-Funded Research Scheme
Department of Philosophy
University of North Bengal

Chapter - I

Introduction

Virtue theory was the predominant framework for moral philosophy for centuries, but then was eclipsed by the Enlightenment, only to enjoy something of a renaissance in the past fifty years. Among contemporary moral philosophers, several have been associated with virtue theory, including Elizabeth Anscombe, Alasdair MacIntyre and Edmund Pellegrino. Ironically, theorists of both deontological and consequentialist schools have now begun to incorporate virtue components in their perspectives. Virtue ethics differs from other normative theories such as Utilitarianism and Situation Ethics. Whereas those theories focus on whether acts are right or wrong virtue ethics looks towards the person and asks whether they are ‘good’ in relation to the virtues or the qualities they possess. Virtue ethics is about the virtues that make for the good life. The approach became popular in the middle of the twentieth century though it had its roots in the teachings of Aristotle.

Aristotle and Virtue:

Aristotle sought to give an account of the structure of morality and explained that the point of engaging in ethics is to become good: ‘For we are enquiring not in order to know what virtue is but in order to become good since otherwise our enquiry would have been of no use’¹ (*Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 1, ch.2, 1103b27). Aristotle distinguishes between things which are good as means (for the sake of something else) and things which are good as ends (for their own sake only). He sees one final and overriding end of human activity, one final good – *eudaimonia* or happiness, human flourishing. Aristotle discusses the character traits of a person who is going to achieve *eudaimonia*.

Eudaimonia, or ‘happiness’, is the supreme goal of human life. Aristotle believed that everything has a purpose - the good for a knife is to cut, and a good knife is one that cuts well. In the same way, *Eudaimonia* is the ‘good’ for a person. Aristotle draws a distinction between superior and subordinate aims. Why do I study ethics? Maybe to get a qualification. I get the qualification to get a good job, and I want a good

¹ Ross, D. (Trans.), *The Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 1, ch.2, 1103b27, Oxford University Press, New York, 2009, p. 24

job because... These are subordinate aims. At some point you stop and say ‘because that would make me happy’ – and this becomes the superior aim. *Eudaimonia* is the end goal or purpose behind everything we do as people, and is desired for its own sake.

Aristotle’s ethical theory is known as *Virtue Ethics* or *Aretaic ethics* because at the centre of his description of the good are the virtues which shape human character and ultimately human behaviour. He suggests that human well-being and human flourishing result from a life characterised by the virtues. However, this good human life is one lived in harmony and cooperation with other people, since Aristotle saw people not only as rational beings but also as social beings. We live in groups (e.g., family, school, village) and he saw the well-being of the group as more important than that of a single member.

Our relationships are an important part of the ‘good life’. Aristotle is very different from, Kant here. According to Kant, we should work out moral rules rationally, ignoring our feelings or what the outcomes of our actions would be. Aristotle says that our friendships are a very important part of who we are and how we should behave. Each of us should aim at achieving *eudaimonia* in our own lives. It is therefore, much better thing to achieve the greatest good for a whole society. We can put this another way and say that the society we live in helps to form and shape us as individuals. People in cities often get ‘lost’, not belonging to anything and turning to drugs, crime etc. There is far less crime and drug abuse in smaller, rural communities. Aristotle sees our communal relationships as an essential part of our moral growth and flourishing.

One may argue that there is still a sense of community in the city we live in – Aristotle is on our side here. He lived in Athens, one of the greatest cities of the world. Whether we live in a village or a city, the important thing is to develop a good relationship with those around us. The Golden Mean Virtue is to be found in the Golden Mean, which involves finding the balance between two means – this is the best way to live in a society, as extremes of character are unhelpful. Aristotle always said that virtue is to be found between two vices, each of which involves either an excess or a deficiency of the true virtue e.g., courage is the mean – a coward does not have enough courage and the rash person just runs into danger.

Aristotle said that the difference between virtue and vice in both emotions and action was a matter of balance and extremes. However, the mean is not the same for everyone and depends on circumstance - we need to apply *phronesis* or practical wisdom to decide on the right course of action in each situation. *Phronesis* is acquired as we grow up and move away from rules and the demands of authority figures to a more autonomous, person-centred and virtue-centred morality. Acquiring virtues Aristotle saw two types of virtues: there are nine intellectual virtues. Intellectual virtues are qualities of mind developed through instruction, training and education. The five primary intellectual virtues are:

- i. Art or technical skill (*techne*)
- ii. Scientific knowledge (*episteme*)
- iii. Prudence or practical wisdom (*phronesis*)
- iv. Intelligence or intuition (*nous*)
- v. Wisdom (*sophia*).

The four secondary intellectual virtues are:

- vi. Resourcefulness or good deliberation (*eubolia*)
- vii. Understanding (*sunesis*)
- viii. Judgement (*gnome*)
- ix. Cleverness (*deinotes*).

Moral Virtues:

Moral virtues developed by habits in the rational part of the soul. The good life involves developing a good character. Moral virtues are cultivated by habit. To become a generous person, we must get into the habit of being generous. Put another way, it is not enough to be told that we should be patient. To become patient, we need to practice patience. It is very difficult to translate some of Aristotle's moral virtues. 'Liberality' and 'Magnificence' both seem to mean generosity. The following list is an attempted translation.

Aristotle argued that the best course of action falls between the vice of excess and the vice of deficiency. There are twelve moral virtues and corresponding vices as follows.

Vice of Deficiency	Virtue	Vice of Excess
Cowardice	Courage	Rashness
Insensibility	Temperance	Intemperance
Illiberality	Liberality	Prodigality
Pettiness	Munificence	Vulgarity
Humble-mindedness	High-mindedness	Vaingloriousness
Want of ambition	Right ambition	Over-ambition
Spiritlessness	Good temper	Irascibility
Surliness	Friendliness/Civility	Obsequiousness
Sarcasm	Sincerity	Boastfulness
Boorishness	Wittiness	Buffoonery
Shamelessness	Modesty	Bashfulness
Callousness	Just resentment	Spitefulness

How are Moral Virtues Acquired?

According to Aristotle, one acquires the virtues through practice. To see what this means, consider the case of learning to play an instrument. If we wish to play the violin, we need to practice a great deal. We have to learn how to hold the instrument and bow properly; how to ‘warm up’ on the instrument when we pick it up to play; we need to practice scales and simple tunes; we need to work repeatedly on the same pieces before we can play them well; and so on. Eventually we will be able to play the violin, but even then, our playing will always be capable of being improved, because we will not only have to keep our playing in very good shape technically, but we will also be able to explore different interpretations of the pieces we play.

Acquiring the virtues is similar to learning to play the violin. In order to become brave, for example, or generous or kind, one must do brave or generous or

kind things so that one gradually acquires the disposition to do such things, in the kind of way that one must practice scales on the violin until one has the ability to play the scale without thinking hard about how to do it.

There are other parallels between learning to play the violin and acquiring the Virtues. When you are first learning the violin, we might not really enjoy practicing and playing the instrument. After a while, we will come to enjoy the instrument that is take pleasure in playing it. Similarly, even though it is often hard to acquire the virtues, it is possible in the long run to take pleasure in the exercise of the virtues, so that, for example we enjoy being kind or generous to others.

Just as we need a teacher when playing the violin, we need an inspiration to acquire the virtues. We can learn how to be virtuous by following the example of virtuous people. Virtue Ethicists emphasize the way we are helped to acquire the virtues by copying the behaviour of others. For example, Martin Luther King, Jesus and Mother Teresa.

Cardinal Virtues in Aristotle and Aquinas:

Basically, cardinal virtues are the central virtues. The cardinal virtues are temperance, courage, practical wisdom and justice. These virtues work together, and it would not be enough to have one of these alone. Temperance and courage are moral virtues - we get into the habit of acting bravely. We learn self-control by practicing restraint. Developing right judgement requires training - we are educated in the skill of weighing up a situation. In our courts, judges don't just learn on the job, they require years of training before they earn the title 'Justice'. Wisdom sits above all of the other virtues, the culmination of years of learning.

Courage:

Courage can be shown in many circumstances: in the face of grievous disappointment, for example, or in speaking one's mind or pursuing a way of life that others believe to be strange. It is however, most often connected with, and shown in overcoming fear. This might be fear of pain, when one is suffering illness, or fear of death. The latter has always been thought to be particularly significant, because many thinkers have regarded the battlefield as the place where courage is shown. The rewards of showing such courage are public glory and honour. In this form, courage is

not commonly thought of in the modern world. There are at least two reasons for this. One we live an age where we value ordinary private life and are skeptical about public life and politics. The second is that people object to war much more than in the past.

Temperance:

Temperance is self-discipline particularly with respect to our physical desires. The temperate person is not self-indulgent, he knows how to control his appetites and knows how to control them without becoming obsessed by them. Those who have discussed temperance have often spoken of the fact that lack of this virtue leads to vice. In particular the vices of laziness and gluttony that a person is lacking temperance may have.

Practical Wisdom:

Possessing practical wisdom is a matter of possessing good judgement. It is not the mere application of rules or principles to a situation but the ability to understand the situation and to judge what to feel and think about it and how to act well in it, even if it is a situation in which one has previously not found oneself. To possess practical wisdom is to possess moral imagination. For example, a doctor may have never been in the unfortunate position of having to inform someone about the death of a relative but if he possesses the virtues, he will have capacity to judge the correct time to speak and the right time to remain silent. A person who possesses practical wisdom is the kind of person who gets things right: he is not overly specialised and will have good judgement concerning a range of things e.g., politics, business matters, assessment of others character and so on. He may also have practical skills.

Justice:

Justice seems to involve a general harmony in the soul. A just person will not be egotistical and he will be able to listen to others and yield if there are grounds to do so. He will have a high regard for the interests of others, though this does not mean he will never become angry or assert his own case: the just person is not weak and does not yield to every demand made of him. Indeed, he will make demands for himself when this is appropriate. He will judge like cases in a like manner. The seven cardinal vices are the opposite of the virtues, and are described by Dante in the *Divine Comedy*:

- i. Lust (fornication) - Unlawful sexual desire, such as desiring sex with a person outside marriage. (Dante's definition was "excessive love of others," and this reduced the love that a person could give God).
- ii. Gluttony - Wasting of food, either through eating too much food, drink or drugs, misplaced desire for food for its taste, or not giving food to the needy ("excessive love of pleasure" was Dante's definition).
- iii. Greed (covetousness, avarice) - Greed is when somebody wants more things than the person needs or can use. Dante wrote that greed is too much "love of money and power".
- iv. Sloth (also accidie, acedia) - Laziness; idleness and wastefulness of time that a person has. Laziness is hated because: Others have to work harder delaying what God wants a person to do or not doing it at all It makes life harder for oneself, because useful work does not get done It, like gluttony, is a sin of waste, for it wastes time, maybe because of pride. Sloth is a state of equilibrium: one does not produce much, but one does not need much either (in Dante's theology, sloth is the "failure to love God with all one's heart, all one's mind, and all one's soul"; specific examples including being lazy, being scared, lack of imagination, complacency, and not doing what the person should do).
- v. Wrath (anger, hate) - Inappropriate (not right) feelings of hatred, revenge or even denial, as well as punitive desires outside of justice (Dante's description was "love of justice perverted to revenge and spite").
- vi. Envy (jealousy) - Hating other people for what they have. Dante wrote that envy is "Love of one's own good perverted to a desire to deprive other men of theirs" (in other words, thinking that the person himself should have more, even if it means someone else will have less because of him.)
- vii. Pride (vanity) - A desire to be important or attractive to others or excessive love of self (holding self out of proper position toward God or fellows; Dante's definition was "love of self-perverted to hatred and contempt for one's neighbor")

It seems that Virtue ethics is in its ascendancy. Question may be raised that how will virtue ethics comport with the other dominant theories? Deontological and teleological systems focus on questions of what is right and what is good, and the crucial distinctions between these qualities. And, they each translate these meanings into requisite or desired actions. These approaches answer the question: What should I do? Virtue ethics by contrast focuses upon one's character, and "good life," and the painstaking acquisition of habits of virtue. This addresses the question: Whom or what kind of person should I be? Another version of the contrast may be given by the utilitarians, which are –

"A utilitarian will point to the fact that the consequences of doing so will maximise well-being, a deontologist to the fact that, in doing so the agent will be acting in accordance with a moral rule such as "Do unto others as you would be done by" and a virtue ethicist to the fact that helping the person would be charitable or benevolent."

Aristotle and all the major traditions hold that character develops over time. Since it is not given in nature (but rather, its potential for acquisition is given), it must compete with.

This dissertation is divided into six chapters. In the **introduction**, we have tried to give an overview of the thesis and discussed a few basic questions of moral philosophy i. e. how moral virtues are acquired? How Aristotle and Aquinas have responded to this? And a few more. The **second chapter** entitled: **A Brief History of Traditional Normative Ethics**, we primarily focus on a brief history of traditional normative ethical theories. Here, we will discuss the origin and development of morality and tried to answer a few fundamental questions like where does ethics actually come from? why should one obey the rules? Is our morality innate or not? And a few more. We have also discussed the traditional normative ethical theories and their different variants in a very brief manner. We have also defined consequentialism, utilitarianism, divine command theory and Kantian deontology. Kantian deontology is considered the most popular version of deontological ethics. In his ethical system, he emphasizes on obligation rather than consequences and virtue. Here we discuss the maxim, good will, categorical imperative as the common notions of his ethical system. Kant believes that as a supreme moral principle, categorical imperative would be obeyed by everyone. Categorical imperative has three formulations; the formula of

the universalisation, the formula of the end in itself or humanity and the formula of the kingdom of ends. The first formula is about the form of maxim and the second formula is about the matter of maxim, while the third is a combination of both the matter and form.

In the **third chapter**, entitled: **The Development of Virtue Ethics**, we have continued with an enquiry into the history and development of virtue ethics. In this chapter, we have focused on the concept of ‘virtue’ from its etymological meaning and development to its journey across the century. The word ‘virtue’ is used as an equivalent of the Greek word ‘*arête*’ means ‘moral excellence’. The term ‘*arête*’ or virtue has a long history and it is used in many meanings. But at the end of the fifth century B.C., virtue or *arête* has shifted its meaning, it represents as ‘to become a good citizen and to achieve success in daily life’ in politics and society by the Greek thinkers. We have discussed the conception of virtue introduced by Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics* is the best-known work and central text for the study of ancient virtue ethics. Aristotle’s definition of virtue proposes a middle path which has been considered as the Golden mean. For example, courage is the middle path between the two extremes rashness and cowardice.

In this chapter, we have also discussed how virtue plays a central role in the medieval period. The medieval conception of virtue can be traced in the works of Chaucer and Dante and Thomas Aquinas’ thought. In *Summa Theologiae*, Aquinas talked about four cardinal virtues; these virtues are prudence, justice, temperance, and courage. He had also made a differentiation between theological virtues and acquired virtues and mentioned that acquired virtues are just a foundation for the theological virtues. We have also discussed the revival of virtue ethics by Elizabeth Anscombe. Anscombe’s article *Modern Moral Philosophy* is considered for responsible of the present revival of virtue ethics. We have found that Anscombe has made detailed research on modern ethical theory and criticises them in her own way for the revival of virtue ethics.

In the **fourth chapter** entitled: **Virtue Ethics in Kantian Moral Philosophy**, an attempt has been made to show that, Kantian ethics is not all about deontology, Kant discusses his virtue in his *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, *Lectures on Ethics* and in his *Metaphysics of Morals*. We had focused that how virtue

played a central theme in Kantian moral philosophy and the foundation of all moral judgments. We argued that Kant's conception of Good is directly related to virtue. We have also discussed the unique achievement of Kantian ethics in harnessing together both rule and virtue ethics. In the *Doctrine of Virtue*, Kant explains virtue as a moral disposition 'armed for all conditions' and 'protected from changes those new temptations can bring about. The *Doctrine of Virtue* is considered as the primary source of Kant's practical ethics. In the introductory part of the *Doctrine of Virtue*, Kant clearly took his position of viewing ethical ideas in respect of teleological value leading towards perfectionism. We have found that Onora O'Neill in her *Kant After Virtue*, clearly stated that Kant has no doubt, primarily does an ethic of virtue rather than an ethic of rules. Warner Wick has also put his importance on the prominence of virtue in Kantian ethics, though he did not use such strong terms as Onora O'Neill did.² We have also made it clear that rule ethics and virtue ethics are mutually exclusive alternatives. But in the case of Kant, it is different, Kantian ethics emphasises on both rule ethics and virtue ethics. Kant made his position clear and introduces duty in terms of virtue. In this chapter, we have developed Kant's ethical theory as an agent centred ethics by referring to good will, maxims, morally necessary ends and the relation between virtues and good.

We have argued that Kant has been read too one-sidedly as the propounder of the rule ethics or deontological ethics. Though Kant has a very deep interest in virtue ethics. *The Doctrine of Virtue* is the key text where Kant discusses the practical aspects of his ethical theory. The work is originally the second part of *The Metaphysics of Morals*; it represents the highest development of ethical theories with which Kant has been struggled for so many years. Though the *Doctrine of Virtue* has an important role in Kantian ethics, it has been neglected for so many years, since it is written. We have tried to show that virtue plays an important role in Kantian ethics than those who read Kant's ethics as pure rule ethics or deontological ethics. But this does not mean that Kant's ethics is only a virtue ethics which was already said by his ancestor philosophers and nothing else. It is more prominent to say, Kant combines both rule and virtue ethics to develop his ethical empire rather than virtue or rule. Both agent and act have their own significant part to play in Kant's ethical theory. In this

² 'Kant's Moral Philosophy' in *Kant's Ethical Philosophy*, James Ellington (Trans.), Hackett Publishing Company, Indianapolis, 1983

dissertation, we have tried to eradicate the dominant reading of Kant as only a deontological ethicist and established him as a virtue ethicist. So, Kant is also an ethicist of virtue and of the highest concept of good, not just of rules and acts.

The **fifth chapter** is entitled as: **The Concept of Virtue in Indian Philosophical Tradition** where, we have discussed how virtue plays an important role in Indian philosophical tradition. The term *dharma* which has a variety of meanings in Indian tradition and virtue is one of them. *Dharma* is generally understood as duty but *dharma* has a wider domain than just duty and obligation. In the *Vana Parva* of the *Mahābhārata*, Yudhiṣṭhīra defines *dharma* as the virtue of truthfulness, forgiveness, goodness, kindness, self-control, and compassion, which simply contradicts with duty. D.C. Srivastava and Bijoy H. Boruah opine that “Indian ethics, both in its classical and modern shape, is founded upon the cultivation of virtuous attitudes and character.”³ And they also mentioned that “Indian virtue ethics is primarily founded on the notion of *dharma*.⁴ In *Manusamīhitā*, we have also found that *dharma* is used as a virtue on many occasions. Manu’s concept of virtue is closely connected with the concept of self-control. According to Glucklich, in Manu’s theory, one can achieve virtue by controlling and developing natural inclinations. In *Manusamīhitā*, we can find that by attachment to the organs, a man undoubtedly becomes corrupted; but by bringing them under control, he achieves success. Desire is never quenched by enjoying desires; like a fire with ghee, it only waxes stronger. Between a man who obtains all the desires and a man who gives them all up - giving up all desires is far better than obtaining them all. It is stated that a virtuous man should abstain from honey, meat, scent, garland, flavours, women, all fermented acids and also the killing of living creatures. So, we can see, how virtue is related to self-control and how self-control helps one to achieve one’s ultimate goal in their life. So, in *Manusamīhitā*, we can find a number of verses that establishes the relation between virtue and self-control. There are enough evidences that compel us to think that *dharma* is best interpreted as a virtue than that of duty. Manu has also talked about the ascetic notion of *tapas*, which has played an important role in understanding *dharma* as a virtue. The intelligent men and the sages have this *tapas* or inner heat as its root, it helps us to realise our supreme nature. This *tapas* is different in respect to the

³ Srivastava, D.C. and Boruah, Bijoy H., *Dharma and Ethics: The Indian Ideal of Human Perfection*, Decent Books, New Delhi, 2010, p. 1

⁴ *Ibid*, p. 2

different classes of men. For example, Knowledge is a priest's inner heat, protection a ruler's inner heat, and service a servant's inner heat. One thing is to be noticed here that in *Manusamhitā*, *sukha* is not merely a result of virtue, but it is linked with virtue in such a way that one becomes virtuous by simple pursuing *sukha* effectively. So, we can find in this chapter that Manu has combined the notion of duty based on Vedic transactions with an understanding of virtue and forged a whole new conception of *dharma*.

In a way of **conclusion**, we have tried to discuss that there are inadequacies of utilitarian and deontological ethics, and there has been a turn to the revival of virtue ethics whose primary focus is on agents and the sorts of lives they lead rather than upon atomic acts. In this normative turn, the characters of agents and their morally relevant traits matter more than laws of obligation. In our study we have also focused on this agent centered ethics. Here we have applied this normative turn into Kantian ethics. Kantian ethics is normally considered as the ethics of deontology but we have tried to show that Kantian ethics can best be understood through a practical viewpoint. Kant has basically founded his practical ethics on this duty based deontological ethics, but most of his interpreters treated him only as a deontological ethicist. They considered Kant as the most responsible philosopher for the turn away from virtue ethics and interpreted Kant as the first and greatest philosopher of deontology. Communitarian philosopher Michael Sandel mentioned that Kant has tried to emancipate the individual from society and community. For this reason, Kant's universalistic conception of morality is considered asocial and ahistorical, a deficiency which Hegel sought to remedy in his conception of *Stickiest. The Doctrine of Virtue* is the key text which supports the interpretation of Kant's philosophy as a practical ethics. Contemporary Kantian philosopher Gary Banham defines Kantian virtue as a combination of teleology with perfectionism. In the *The Doctrine of Virtue*, Kant makes the clear case for viewing ethical considerations in terms of teleological standards that involve an orientation towards perfectionism.

If we go through Hegel, we can find that Kant's pure motive of duty can never produce the good since it is abstracted from the real desires, interests, and needs of real individuals. There is simply no way of bracketing out the characters of the agents in the way that seems to be required by Kant. Instead, Hegel demands that the good be made an integral part of the everyday empirical life of individuals. Here, Hegel follows

Aristotle's conception of a virtue as an intelligent disposition to behave in certain ways and act for certain reasons through feeling pleasure or pain at certain things. For Hegel, this Aristotelian virtue transcends Kant's dualism of duty and inclination.

According to MacIntyre, a virtue is an acquired human quality, the possession and exercise of which tends to enable us to achieve those goods which are internal to practices and the lack of which effectively prevents us from achieving any such goods.” Alasdair MacIntyre’s *After Virtue* provocatively criticizes the state of contemporary moral philosophy and its history. For MacIntyre, the intractability of contemporary moral debates stems from the lack of shared goods in Aristotle’s sense. People line up on either side of an issue and, because they lack a common ideological focus, they can never engage in rational argument, at least as subsumed by the movement toward a shared good. MacIntyre himself suggests, external motivations are premised on the expectation that an appreciation or conviction of the “internal goods” in chess play will build in the person. ‘External goods’, including both beauty and especially the ‘moralities of law,’ therefore, serve as more than enticements; they create the conditions of possibility or openness to virtue that may be impossible otherwise.

For the Hindu philosophical texts, the shared good of *Veda*, respectively, is mediated in the first place by rules. And it is rules that promote the virtues that sustain a human life. In other words, laws are the first means of entry into the religious path. They are an invitation to the rhetorical community associated with *Veda*.⁵ To think of laws as constraints on freedom is to misunderstand what true freedom is in these religio-legal worldviews. Law prescribes certain activities and demands certain restraints that enable new activities and new knowledge that are otherwise impossible. The repetition of such activities whether it be related to ritual, diet, marriage, contracts, inheritance, or the suppression of crime constitutes the normative practice of the community. Virtues come to be appropriated through socialization in and self-yoking to that normative practice.

⁵ Paul Hacker, *Dharma in Hinduism*, Journal of Indian Philosophy. 479, 490 (2006). One may compare rules, practices, and virtues of *dharma* to Hacker's distinction of *dharma* before, during, and after its performance or realization

If we consider the structure of the famous *Laws of Manu*⁶, we can find for instance that, the first half of the work, which gives detailed rules for the daily life of Brahmins of various kinds and in various stages of life, culminates in an altogether different listing of the “ten-point law”. This list includes what can only be called virtues: resolve, forbearance, self-control, understanding, learning, truthfulness, et cetera. Though it is a stretch to read the text as giving myriad rules that result in a handful of virtues, it is reasonable to view the *Laws of Manu* as placing first priority on *dharma* as a set of enjoined practices and only a distant, secondary importance to *dharma* as a collection of virtues.

The movement is really chronological. Virtue, being an acquired quality or habit, must be forged in the crucible of practices that conform to rules. All elements rules, practices, and virtues are equally important and equally constitutive of *dharma*, but one cannot obtain virtue without rules and practices. The point from the Hindu law side is that virtue is not an absolute possession but is rather directly linked to what one actually does as measured against the empirical sources of *dharma*. One has the ten-point law in direct proportion to one’s observance of the great variety of *dharma*s. The status of the virtues among the famous renouncers of the Hindu tradition is a different matter, and many different opinions have been given about their legal status and rights and about the prerequisites. In this way, though the law cannot recognize virtue as such, rather only conformable action, it can produce virtue or virtue-substance. In Hindu jurisprudence, it is not *dharma* merely to think “virtuously” about performing rituals, abstaining from certain foods, charging appropriate interest, etc. Once one does act according to rule, however, a virtue-substance is produced.

The acquisition of the unity of virtues in Aristotle’s sense is coextensive and contemporaneous with the acquisition of *eudaimonia*, true human flourishing as an ultimate good. Virtues do not precede *eudaimonia*; they constitute it. For MacIntyre, law and virtue have to be informed by teleology, a shared good, in order to have authority. The nurturing of virtue for MacIntyre, however, follows closely on the heels of the identification of that shared good. The current normative turn, involving virtue ethics, is going in the way of Hegel against Kant, or against the Kant who is a

⁶ Commentary on *Laws of Manu* 2.6, translated in *Manusmṛti: With the ‘Manubhāṣya’ of Medhatithi* 206-08 (Ganganath Jha trans., 1999)

deontologist and no more. Philippa Foot singles out Kant for particular criticism in being one of the key philosophers whose ‘tacitly accepted opinion was that a study of the topic (of the virtues and vices) would form no part of the fundamental work of ethics’.

As the basis for all judgments of moral worth, virtue constitutes the heart of the ethical in Kant’s view. However, Kant goes on to define this virtue according to the moral law, the supreme principle of morality. Virtue ethics places the emphasis upon agency and long-term characteristic behaviour rather than discrete acts and decision procedures for moral quandaries. However, what matters most of all for Kant is that moral agency acts consistently out of respect for the moral law, not merely in terms of following specific rules for specific acts, but in the more fundamental terms of the person guiding his or her whole life out of respect for rationally legislated and willed law.

It is clear that virtue plays a much greater role in Kant’s ethics than those who read Kant’s ethics as a rule ethics pure and simple would presume. This does not mean, however, that Kant’s ethics is just a virtue ethics and nothing else. It is more accurate to argue that Kant combines both rule and virtue ethics to develop an ethical position that is more than the sum of both. Both agent and act perspectives form a significant part of Kant’s ethical theory. We have tried to correct the dominant reading of Kant as a deontological rule ethics that is silent on the good. Whilst Rawlsian liberalism fits the contemporary demoralised modern world in which right prevails over good, this was not Kant’s position at all on ethics. At the core of Kant’s ethics is the moral requirement to transform society to realise the highest good: ‘The moral law ... determines for us ... a final purpose toward which it obliges us to strive, and this purpose is the highest good in the world possible through freedom’. For Kant, human beings ‘are a priori determined by reason to promote with all our powers the *summum bonum*, which consists in the combination of the greatest welfare of rational beings with the highest condition of the good itself, i.e., in universal happiness conjoined with morality most accordant to law’. Kant’s notion of the good connects directly with virtue, his ethical theory thus assessing not merely discrete acts but most of all agents’ characters and ways of life.

However, Kant's philosophy cannot be read as a virtue ethics alone. There is little to be gained from bending a stick that has gone too far in one direction, too far back in the other direction. There is much more to Kant's ethical position than these rules versus virtue antagonism. Kant defines both the good will and virtue in terms of obedience to moral law; they are both wills which conform to the moral law and act out of respect for the moral law. In beginning with the good will, Kant is attempting to discern 'the supreme principle of morality'. This is the categorical imperative. Which means that if virtue is defined in terms of conformity to the moral law and the categorical imperative, then it follows that, after all, it is obedience to rules that is primary in Kantian ethics, not virtue. There is, however, a sense in which this is to divide Kant's ethical position from within, creating a false antithesis which forces us to choose between duty for duty's sake or virtue for virtue's sake.

We can say that the basis of virtue ethics is the idea of *eudaimonia*, which means "the good life" or "life lived well" or "flourishing" or "happiness". Aristotle distinguishes things that are valuable in themselves, things that are valuable for some other purpose, and things that are both. Ultimately, there is only one thing that is purely valuable in itself happiness sand all other things are desirable because they lead to living well or happiness. What is required to be an excellent teacher is different from what is required to be an excellent soldier because teachers and soldiers have different functions to play. There are possibly many research questions in virtue ethics which are not covered in this dissertation due to paucity of time and constraints. These questions require further future research.

Chapter - II

A Brief History of Traditional Normative Ethics

2.1 Introduction:

The word “ethics” etymologically came from the Greek word “*ethos*” which means character, habit, customs et cetera. “Moral philosophy” is also identified to ethics. The term “moral” comes from “*mores*”, a Latin word, which is similarly signifies customs, character, etc. Thus, ethics may be identified as the systematic study of human behaviour from the point of rightness or wrongness of their actions. It is the study of good or bad of human conduct for which they were responsible. More specifically, ethics identifies what is good and to achieve it, and what is bad to avoid it. It guides us to what ought to be done and what ought not to be. As a branch of philosophical study, ethics provides the values and guidelines to live our life qualitatively better, not only that, ethics also justifies these values and guidelines.

Ethics as moral philosophy, discusses about morality, moral problems, and moral judgements. Ethics can be considered as a science as it is a collection of reasoned truths organised in a logical order that deals with the question what human ought to be. Even more, it is a rational science because it deduces its principles by human reason concerning the free will. It is a normative science as it controls human’s life and provides the right direction to one’s way of life. Ethics can also be theoretical or practical. It is theoretical when it provides the basic principles for moral judgements and practical when it is concerned for a particular end and the ways of attaining it. Ethics is generally defined to study the human behaviour and the ways of being one should be. The approaches and concept of ethics has changed and varied over time among ethicists. Ideal human behaviour according to Aristotle were practices that leads one to the end goal of *eudaimonia*, means a higher level of happiness, while Kant believed that ideal behaviour is the capability to think rationally. As a branch of philosophy, ethics makes differentiation between right and wrong, good and bad and admirable and deplorable.

2.2 The Origin and Development of Morality:

It is difficult to answer the question, where does ethics or moral philosophy come from? Actually, the question is two-folded, one is about the historical source and the other is about the authoritative source. In fact, they both appeal some traditional myths about the origin of the universe. They both are intended that the primal clashes and disasters were originated because human beings have to live by rules which did not fulfill their desires. The quest for the origin of morality does not want to prove the moral rules unnecessary, but it can be a strong motive to establish a conclusion. Perhaps, it may be arising from conflicts within ethical rules. We can often see that, in any culture, tradition or society, accepted duties and moral rules sometimes clash and some more basic rules are needed to negotiate between them. People are generally judgmental between these moral rules and it may provoke them to look for a supreme negotiation, which will be the starting point for the source of morality. Thus, there is no straight forward answer to the question which this paragraph starts with.

The question “where do ethics come from?” is not like the question “where does the meteoroid come from?” the question is about “why should we obey the rules?” A response may be given that it is necessary to imagine our life without these rules and which inevitably raise the question about the source of morality. This may raise another question where people tend to look backward and ask whether there is any conflict-free state before the rules were imposed. Perhaps they imagine a state where rules were not needed, perhaps because nobody ever wanted anything bad. They further ask that, how did we come to lose this pre-ethical condition and can we get back to it?

The answer may be given in two different ways:

- i. From the Greeks and Thomas Hobbes, who explain ethics as a device of egoistic prudence; it is an outcome of social contract. They foresee the pre-ethical state as solitude and the primal disaster being that people ever began to meet each other at all. And once they did, conflict was inevitable and the nature of state was then, as Hobbes describes, ‘a war

of everyone against everyone¹ as Rousseau insisted that, they had not been actually hostile to each other before colliding.

- ii. Christianity explains our morality as our necessary attempt to bring our imperfect nature in accordance with the will of God. According to this view, its origin of myth is the Fall of Man.²

We can see that Christianity in this context, shifts the problem rather than solving it, as we still want to know why we should obey God. Christianity might say that we can just derive our duty to obey God simply because an all-powerful being created us. Because someone may argue that, if something bad is created for bad motives then we are not bound or dutiful to obey that being. So far, as we have seen that neither of these approaches can solve our question, so the question remains. Keeping in mind the above, let us, discuss Hobbes view in this context, in the following paragraph.

Some Lure of Egoism and Social Contract:

Some thinkers may say that ethics just a contract based on egoistic prudence, as propounded by Hobbes. Though it is a much simpler answer to our question but at the same time it is unrealistic and impossible too; to explain the actual complexities of ethics. There may be several reasons to show why this is impossible but here we will focus only two of them.

- i. First one is rests on human defect. Human beings are not so prudent and consistent according to this theory.
- ii. The second one is about human beings' good qualities. People who behave decently are often moved by a set of motives, considering others'. These motives are justice, friendship, love, loyalty, compassion, sympathy, family affection, which are honoured in most human societies. Egoist such as Hobbes claims that these motives are unreal, they are only empty names.³ But it is hard to believe that how does a name could be

¹ Hobbes, T., *Leviathan* (London, 1651, Everyman Edition), Dent and Dutton, London, 1914, Part One, Ch. 13, p. 64

² Midgley, M., The Origin of Ethics in *A companion to Ethics*, Ed. By Peter Singer, Blackwell Publishers Ltd., UK, 1991, p. 4

³ *Ibid*, p. 5

invented for such motives which were not existent at all⁴. Thus, Hobbes's discussion is inadequate to locate the source of ethics. To find an answer to establish let us make a distinction between moral and factual argument for the origin of morality.

Moral and Factual Arguments:

If we accept extreme individualism as a factual discovery then it will appear as how human beings are actually constituted. This argument rests on the idea of evolution, by the 'survival of the fittest'⁵. This process is surely shaped them into isolated beings. Unlike all earlier sources about origin of ethics, it can be said that this concept of Darwin is much more scientific. One may say that though it incorporates some genuine scientific evidences and principles but it ignores and distorts some great issues.

There are two issues by which it can be distinguished from our current science are:

i – Its fantasy and over-dramatised notion of competition and **ii** – The predominant position that secures our own species in the evolution.

- i.** What we need is to be careful in using the term 'competition'. Competition may be held between two organisms if they both cannot achieve it, and they both deliberately trying to defeat each other. But in the case of the organisms like, plants, bacteria, which are apparently not conscious then how can we say that they are in the process of competition. The competition really exists in a narrow sense. For example, the plants' existence in a particular ecosystem depends upon both with each other and with animals that consume plants, and those animals also depend on each other and on their predators. Thus, every entity is dependent makes the ecological cycle possible. So, we can clearly see the co-operative motivations supply the main structure of their behavior rather than the competitive motivations.

⁴ Midgley, M., The Origin of Ethics in *A companion to Ethics*, Ed. By Peter Singer, Blackwell Publishers Ltd., UK, 1991, p. 5

⁵ *Ibid*, p. 5

ii. While the second reason presents the evolutionary process as a pyramid and place the MAN in its apex, this theory does not cohere with todays' genuine biology⁶. Today's biological theory depicts the life-form quite differently. This theory does not belong to modern science rather it belongs to traditional metaphysics, and it does not play any role to develop the origin of ethics. Thus, the distinction between moral and factual argument from science does not give a solid ground for the source of morality. Let us discuss Midgley's another argument in the following paragraph.

Sociability, Conflict and the Origins of Morality:

Some thinkers may opine that morality or ethics is originated from the natural social dispositions that human possess. So, the question remains how are these natural social dispositions linked with human morality. It is obvious that they do not directly originate from natural or social dispositions, rather, they definitely contribute some essential element to it. Perhaps they supply the new material for moral life but it still requires the work of intelligence to shape properly. This suggestion was sketched by Darwin in his *The Decent of Man*.⁷ Let us discuss.

The relation between natural disposition to morality would be much like that of natural curiosity to science. Natural dispositions do not create rules themselves; these dispositions often conflict with each other. Following Darwin, Midgley mention that, in non-human animals these conflicts can be settled by further second order dispositions but in the case of human beings they arbitrate these conflicts somehow in a manner to feel themselves coherent and continuous.⁸

Darwin says that, in searching the special power possessed by 'the imperious word ought', there is a clash between these social dispositions with temporary motives which often conflict with them.⁹ According to him, human beings naturally try to produce rules to protect their group. Also for him, 'any animal whatever, endowed with well-marked social instincts, would inevitably acquire a moral sense

⁶ Midgley, M., *Evolution As A Religion*, Methuen, London and New York, 1985

⁷ Darwin, C., *The Decent of Man* (1859), Princeton University Press, London, 1859, Vol. 1, Ch. 1, 1981

⁸ Midgley, M., The Origin of Ethics in *A companion to Ethics*, Ed. By Peter Singer, Blackwell Publishers Ltd., UK, 1991, p. 9

⁹ Darwin, C., *The Decent of Man* (1859), Princeton University Press, London, 1859, 1981, p. 92

or conscience, as soon as its' intellectual powers had become as well developed, or anything like as well developed, as in man.¹⁰ Thus, the social instincts, the prime principle of man's moral constitution – with the aid of active intellectual powers and the effect of habit, naturally lead to the Golden Rule, "As ye would that men should do unto you, do ye to them likewise" and this lies at the foundation of morality.¹¹ As we have seen that the Darwinian account of the relation between social disposition with morality is not enough to solve our problem of the origin of morality, so we will continue with our question in following paragraphs, as Midgley suggests.

The Problem of Partiality:

We have tried to figure out the origin of morality by establishing the link between natural dispositions to morality but it cannot ignore the problem of partiality or biasness. But, how can we generalise the origin of human morality is equal to the origin of non-human morality. There are thinkers who have objected to this view rule them out entirely because these dispositions occur fitfully and their incidence is strongly biased. But this partiality or biasness often very powerfully exists in all human morality. It is important to notice that this biasness becomes stronger with the development of human civilization and it is still fully active in our own culture. For example, any modern society parents were giving more care and affection to their own children than they did to others and if they don't do it then they would be counted as monsters. Parents naturally spend their resources for their minors before considering the grave needs of outsiders. So, human society makes some fundamental rules or provisions like, code of conduct for the outsiders and it all starts with biasness towards their kin which shapes animal societies. It is true that biases need to be gradually corrected by the recognition of wider concepts of duties and responsibilities as human morality develops. This becomes true if all our parents care for other children as they give to their own. Though it cannot be a substitute for natural disposition but it will probably help to survive few warm-blooded infants. Therefore, there are some sociobiologists, who rightly point out that "heritable altruistic dispositions are not easily passed on unless they make possible an increase

¹⁰ Darwin, C., *The Descent of Man* (1859), Princeton University Press, London, 1859, 1981, p. 72

¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 106

in the survival of the altruist's own kin, who share the gene that give rise to them.”¹² But when that occurs, it becomes possible for such traits to develop and to spread through kin selection that did not only consider competition for survival between individuals.

One may be critically asked that if these dispositions are not disqualified by the biasness or partiality and still accepted as essential material for the development of morality then can we say that Darwin's proposal is the right one to convince this? In response to this question, we can say that there is obviously a force in, Darwin's suggestion that what makes morality necessary is conflict and an unfallen state would never require it. If this is right then the proposal to get rid of morality, would involve everybody conflict-free. Unless that were done, we need some priority rules to avoid individually into state of helpless. According to Mary Midgley, “in some sense, this ‘the origin of ethics and our search need take us no further.’”¹³

Thus, for Midgley, the origin of morality is intended to avoid the unrealistic, egoistic theorizing on the one hand and equally unreal moral boasting to make the origin of human beings as a primary species looks incomprehensible on the other. It does not give equality to human morality with other social creatures. So, it is fallacious to equate any product with its source. Thus, morality emerges from prevailing atmosphere or conditions or state-of-affairs, so far as Midgley's view is concerned.

2.3 The Innateness of Morality:

If we go through the book of Richard Joyce, we can find that everyone comes with an idea of good and evil, beauty and ugly, becoming and unbecoming, happiness and misery, proper and improper, what ought to be done and what ought not to be. Therefore, we all try to apply our preconceptions to particular cases and use these names as following: so-and-so acted well, not well; right, not right; is happy, not happy; is just, unjust and so on. But what compels us to think such behaviour is right or wrong? From where we derive it? One may respond with

¹² Midgley, M., The Origin of Ethics in *A companion to Ethics*, Ed. By Peter Singer, Blackwell Publishers Ltd., UK, 1991, p. 11

¹³ *Ibid*, p. 11

different reasons, exposing significant differences in one's underlying conceptions of morality and let us focus on these conceptions.

One may define these underlying conceptions into two different steps.

- i. He may ask, "Is human morality innate?" In fact, one is basically tries to understand what the question is,¹⁴ to arrive at a positive answer.
- ii. Second is to ask "so what?" If we suppose that morality is innate than can we say that does this provide a foundation to morality or does these remove away the threat of moral scepticism?

So, to respond the first question i.e. "Is human morality innate?" we need to understand "what is innate". People who debate for the innateness of morality are generally trying to explain that whether we can explain morality in genetic terms: whether our present moral traits can be explained by reference to a gene gifted from our ancestors. It does not follow that an innate trait will develop itself without depending on the environment and even it does not follow that there exists a gene for morality. The innateness and the reference to human nature which is closely associated with it never imply any dubious metaphysics regarding human essence. For example, to say that *bipedalism* is innate and a part of human nature does not imply that it is a necessary condition for being human.

There is another reason behind the vagueness of the hypothesis, human morality is innate and that reason might be the meaning of "morality". So, we need to clarify the meaning of the term "morality". Again, there may be two hypotheses to explain morality.

- i. The claim that humans are naturally moral animals perhaps mean that we act in a way that is morally praiseworthy. The process of evolution has designed us to be social, friendly, and benevolent and so on. But no one ever claims that humans always possess such virtuous behaviours rather they also be violent, selfish and lying. To say that human behaviour is morally praiseworthy, we might mean that the immoral qualities of humans are unnatural or might mean that both of those

¹⁴ Joyce, R., *The Evolution of Morality*, MIT Press, USA, p., 2006

behaviours are innate but the morally praiseworthy behaviours are predominant.

- ii. The hypothesis that humans are naturally moral animals may mean that the process of evolution has designed us to think and judge morally. Thus, the former hypothesis, the term “moral animal” is understood as an animal that is morally praiseworthy; while the second hypothesis is understood as an animal that is morally think or judges. Like the former the later claims that to say that we naturally make moral judgements may mean that we are designed to have particular moral attitudes towards particular kinds of things. For example, murder, rape and cheating is offensive and helping others and keeping promises to others is determined by contingent environmental and cultural factors.

These two hypotheses might be complementary to each other. No one may have objections to the fact that something which is morally praiseworthy must be motivated by moral thoughts. If humans are naturally or morally praiseworthy, then we are also naturally be able to employ our moral judgements. Thus, we can see the truth of the first hypothesis is depend upon the second. So, they are logically related. Here the second hypothesis is directly concerned with whether the human capacity to make moral judgements innate. We cannot discuss the evolution of moral judgement unless we know “what moral judgement is”. Let us focus in this section, by introducing socio-biological approach.

Sociology is a kind of research that explains social behaviour in terms of biology, with the assumption that biology is innate. Biology successfully explains the social behaviour of bees, ants and naked mole rats, but it is problematic when it is applied to human beings. To explain any human behaviour in terms of biological or natural selection is considered to be offering a socio-biological explanation. Socio-biology which is invented in 1970 again in 1980 invented as evolutionary psychology. Socio-biology discusses innate behaviour whereas evolutionary psychology discusses the psychological mechanism underlying that behaviour. Evolutionary psychology has three implications –

- i. Evolutionary psychology does not claim that human behaviour is adaptive rather it is a product of psychological mechanisms that are

adaptations. It is necessary that something which is a product of adaptation must always be adaptive.

- ii. Evolutionary psychology never implies that an adaptation must result in cross-cultural Universals in human behaviour, cross culturality can be offered as evidence of innateness.
- iii. The innateness for evolutionary psychologists does not mean any behaviour produced by an innate mechanism. It claims that the behaviour is generated by an innate mechanism in accordance with the mechanism's design. This mechanism is to be explained by reference to our ancestors having engaged in this type of behaviour in surrounding environmental conditions.

As we have seen, no one can object to evolutionary psychology and if anyone does then it will be difficult to answer, why do we have emotions at all? Why humans have better memory than that of a goldfish? Why are naturally attracted to sex and food? One may say that we need to look at the way of living of our ancestors. But if this is so, then one may wonder that why there are so many objections to evolutionary psychology. Because it is not only saying that the basic faculty of the human mind are due to evolutionary process but it also says that the mind consists of hundreds of innate psychological mechanisms and each of it geared to respond to some discrete ancestral threat. But this is terribly vague, so far as the prevailing discussion is concerned.

Though evolutionary psychology allows that the human behaviour may be evolutionary accidental but it also allows the human behaviour as malleable and the plasticity of psychological mechanism is an adaptation. That is our brain which produces different responses to environmental variations. The human brain or rationality is multiple faculties which were designed to deal with environmental variation per excellence and how we can best to respond to an infinite range of environmental stimuli. Rationality is the faculty what sets us apart from the rest of the other animal and enhance our capacity to do the things alone, on our own. It is not possible that our enormous range of behaviour in response to enormous range of stimuli is all well-programmed. No ancestral environment contained all such stimuli and our genome is not large enough to contain the information to cover all such behaviours.

Though it is true that human behaviour cannot be all programmed at all and it is our rationality or human mind which designed us, how to response in a particular environment but we cannot say that human mind is nothing but full of flexibility. The thesis of the human *tabula rasa* has never been held in pure form. The word “tabula” used as a metaphor for something that has innate abilities to acquisition, manipulation and storage of beliefs from the environment to build our mental mechanism. Even John Locke, accepts these innate mental faculties like memory, emotion, perception, deliberation, will, understanding and so on. Locke in *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, once says that “of all the men we meet with what they are, good or evil, useful or not, by their education”¹⁵. If, Locke indicates that 10% of character is innate then one might clearly consider Locke as an evolutionary psychologist.

Perhaps Locke was right in his discussion but it would be difficult for him to answer if someone asks Locke that why do we have emotions at all and why have we these particular emotions i.e., fear, happiness, jealousy etc. instead of other unimaginable emotions? One might say that it lies with our ancestors. Having emotions and having these particular emotions are provided to us by our ancestors. Our ancestors enjoyed them and thus, they selected these emotions to carry. There is flexibility and stability as well regarding these emotions. Though every human has the capacity for fear but what to fear is something what we learn from environment. In this way our emotions are both stable and flexible. And even humans are naturally attracted towards cohabitation and food but when food and cohabitation are search then food surely wins out. No one is starved to death on a lifeboat attracted with opposites with synonymous thoughts. Thus, the argument and counter arguments are not enough to solve our question of innateness.

In reference to socio-biology, the opponents go at a per with genetic determinism to establish their view. According to this view, human morality is genetically programmed and by the term “programmed” they do not deny the cultural or environmental influences, nor even say that any manifestation of morality is inevitable.

¹⁵ Locke, J. *Some thoughts concerning education*, Clarendon press, 1989, p. 83

Let us see how these genetically encoded or programmed? Morality may be affected by environmental factors. Phenylketonuria (PKU), for example is a genetic metabolic disorder that can cause terrible mental retardation which can be easily avoided with a restricted diet. So, we can see that there is no obvious relation between genotype and phenotype expression. So, it is wrong when Stephen Jay Gould wrote: "If we are programmed to be what we are, then these traits are ineluctable. We may, at best, channel them, but we cannot change them either by will, education, or culture."¹⁶

The tendency to make moral judgement as an output of innate conditional strategy would not be considered in consistent with morality as a part of human nature. Even if our living conditions are very much dissimilar with our ancestors, we cannot say that there has been at least one modern human society without moral system and still claims that morality is innate. But we all know that apparently all of the modern human societies have their moral system.

As we have seen moral beliefs are unlikely to be inevitable and evolutionary account of morality would in some sense deprive us from our freedom. According to Patricia Williams, "if morality were innate then our moral judgements would be coerced from within, but that, since in order to be ethical brings we must be free, it is incoherent to appeal to evolution in order to explain our ethical nature; therefore, morality cannot be innate"¹⁷. Though many philosophers argue that freedom does not alter the course of neutral causation, it simply means acting on our desires. Thus, evolutionary explanation of an action actually clarifies that where the relevant desires came from. Richard Joyce thinks that human desires come from nature, all desires have a history and some of them have evolutionary history.¹⁸

Traditionally one may object against sociobiology and evolutionary psychology, which have been removed recently, that it leads to unpleasant political issues.¹⁹ Most of the objection against these research programs was politically motivated and sometimes it was compared with Marxist philosophy. Levins and Lewontin once proudly made their declaration that, "...we have been attempting with

¹⁶ Gould, S.J., "The Non Science of Human Nature", In Gould, *Ever Since Darwin*, Norton, p. 238

¹⁷ Joyce, R., *The Evolution of Morality*, MIT Press, USA, 2006, P. 9

¹⁸ *Ibid*, P. 10

¹⁹ *Ibid*, P. 10

some success to guide our research by a conscious application of Marxist philosophy.”²⁰ Though it is intellectually repugnant to discuss these political issues here but what Joyce wants to highlight here is the weird presupposition that a Darwinian approach to human psychology and human behaviour should have any obvious political ramifications.”²¹ He continues “...even if evolutionary psychology were to turn out to have specific political implications, so be it. The policy of letting political preference determines our acceptance of scientific theories, of denying a theory irrespective of its empirical support simply because of its uneasiness about its practical implications, has never, so far as I know, deserved a place among the virtues of intellectual enquiry”.²²

So, our hypothesis, how much human psychology can be explained in terms of innate faculties, let us proceed to the available evidences. There is no such plausible argument to show that these findings may have any practical or moral implications. According to Richard Joyce, we are not committed to the view that human mind is open to direct evolutionary explanation and even Joyce is not sure that whether the ideas that will be discussed in his coming pages should cannot as favouring evolutionary psychology or not. But if the question is about innateness of moral faculty, then neither hypothesis should be rejected in advance of examining the evidence. Even he says that it is obvious that biological natural selection should have developed that kind of mechanisms that designed to produce such judgements. It is also plausible that moral judgement is a culturally generated capacity flowing from more general psychological faculties. Thus, moral behaviour is generated from culture as well as psychological faculties, so far as Joyce is concerned.

2.4 Normative Ethics:

Discussions on the contemporary ethical theories are shaped by our predecessors. We are engaged in the discussions or debate because of their philosophical failures and success in the present context. The history of moral philosophy is thus, involved with the discussion between their theories and our contemporary debates. In most of the cases, these debates are similar because we all are looking for the better approaches by which we can understand ourselves, our

²⁰ Levins , R. and Lewontin. R. C., *The dialectical Biologist*, Harvard University Press, 1985, p. 165

²¹ Joyce, R., *The Evolution of Morality*, MIT Press, USA, 2006, P. 11

²² *Ibid*, P. 11

place in the world and our relationships with the others. Keeping this in mind, we may distinguish moral philosophy into three main categories such as, normative ethics, meta-ethics and applied ethics.

Normative ethics is an enormous field. It is concerned with the justification of the fundamental ethical principles which considers that how we should live and what we morally ought to do. It is generally a decision procedure to guide our moral action. It deals with the question like how one ought to act? According to Hugh LaFollete, normative ethics generally considers the queries that “Are there general principles, rules, guidelines that we should follow, or virtues that we should inculcate, that help us to distinguish right from wrong and good from bad?”²³ Normative ethics is contrasted with meta-ethics because; it examines standards for the rightness or wrongness of an action, while meta-ethics deals with the meaning of moral language and metaphysics of moral facts. Meta-ethics concerns questions about normative enquiry, rather than discussing questions within normative enquiry. Normative ethics generally concerned with questions like what is good or bad, what we must ought to do. But on the other hand, meta-ethical questions are like what it means to say that something is good or bad?²⁴

Theories of Normative Ethics:

Normative ethical theories can further be divided into three main categories, such as, Consequentialism, Deontology and Virtue ethics.

2.4.1 Consequentialism or Teleological theory:

Moral philosophers have offered us different types of moral standards to understand what type of actions are right and what type of actions are wrong. They have generally proposed two sorts of ethical theories that are Consequentialism and Deontological theory. Consequentialism is the kind of moral theory which holds that the consequences of one’s actions are the only foundational criteria to determine the rightness and wrongness of that particular action. According to the Consequentialists, an action is morally right if and only if it produces a good consequence. If the act does not produce the comparative amount of good consequences or it does not

²³ LaFollete, H. (Ed.), *The Blackwell Guide to Ethical Theory* Blackwell Publishers, USA, 2000, p. 1

²⁴ Mc Pherson, T. and Plunkett, T. (Ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Metaethics*, Routledge, New York, 2018, p.

produces the comparative amount of good over evil then it is not the kind of right action. Frankena, opines: "Thus, an act is right if and only if it or the rule under which it falls produces, will probably produce, or is intended to produce at least as great a balance of good over evil as any available alternative; an act is wrong if and only if it does not do so."²⁵

In consequentialist theory, one judges things or actions solely in terms of the consequences it produces. Teleological or consequential theories are sometimes compared with hedonism because here the good is understood in terms of pleasure and evil in terms of pain, and the view is taken that the right action is that which produces the greater balance of pleasure over pain. Hedonism argues that pleasure and happiness is the highest good and the ultimate aim of our life. But consequential theory is not like that in every way. The consequentialists sometimes identify good with pleasure but they also identify the good with power, knowledge, perfection and obligation. So, it is not always necessary for the teleologists to identify good with pleasure; what is necessary is that they have some views about good or bad and seek to determine the right action by the greatest balance of good over evil.

Varieties of Consequentialism:

The most discussed form of consequentialism is Utilitarianism, which is known as impartial theory in ethics. Though there are also some non-utilitarian views which are also accepted as impartial theory. For example, Egoism and Situational ethics. Like all the other forms of consequentialism, Utilitarianism holds that an action is right or wrong depending upon their effects only. The utilitarians believe that our main purpose of morality is to make life better and this could be done only by increasing good things in our life and decreasing the bad things. Utilitarianism maintains that an act is right if and only if it contains the greater welfare or consequences than any other alternative does.

According to the utilitarians,

"…impartial assessment of welfare, a benefit (i.e., addition to some one's welfare) or harm (loss to welfare) to anyone individual gets the same weight as the same size benefit or harm to anyone else. Thus, benefits and harms to everyone count equally, no matter what his or her ethnic group, religion, wealth, education,

²⁵ Frankena, William K., *Ethics*, Prentice-Hall India, New Delhi, 1997, p. 14

political views, talent or conscientiousness; all that matters is the size of the benefits and harms.”²⁶

Utilitarianism is a kind of view proposed by philosophers to make decisions within a wide range of options that are available before the people. These options may be actions, laws, moral codes or what so ever. Utilitarianism is a kind of consequentialism because it depends on the consequences, if the consequence is good then the act is right and if the consequence is not good then the act is wrong. The best result of any action is always praised by the utilitarians. “Maximizes utility” – is the expression made by the utilitarians which means, actions or policies that produces the greatest amount of good.

Varieties of Utilitarianism:

Utilitarianism has two forms one is act centered and the other is rule centered. The first one is called Act-utilitarianism which focuses mainly on actions and Rule-utilitarianism is the other variant which focuses on the moral rules.

Though both of the variants agree that our main purpose is to evaluate action on the basis of best possible result that it produces, but they differ on certain points. Let us discuss:

i. **Act-utilitarianism:** According to act-utilitarians we should perform the morally right action. But the question is what type of actions could be considered right actions. Act-utilitarianist says, the action that produces the largest utility is right, and we should perform that. The right action will produce the best result in all possible circumstances. Act-utilitarianism says, we should apply the principle of utility on every individual case. The right action produces more utility than any other action.

ii. **Rule-utilitarianism:** On the other hand, rule-utilitarian emphasises on the moral rules to determine whether an act is right or wrong. Rule utilitarian adopts a two-fold view that **i)** an action is right if and only if it is justified by a moral rule and **ii)** a moral rule is justified only if it produces more utility than any other possible rule. According to rule-utilitarianism, one action should be regarded as

²⁶ Frankena, William K., *Ethics*, Prentice-Hall India, New Delhi, 1997, p. 14

morally right if it conforms to the moral rules and those moral rules are justified by the capacity of producing goodness than any other possible moral rules. Thus, we can see the difference between act-utilitarianism and rule-utilitarianism, the first one is applied directly on action for evaluation but the second one is applied to evaluate the rule in accordance with which the action that produces the largest welfare is done.

2.4.2 Theory of Deontology:

Deontology can best be understood in contrast with consequentialism. These two theories divide the entire moral philosophy from different perspective. The etymological meaning of the word ‘deontology’ is derived from two Greek words i.e., ‘*deon*’ and ‘*logos*’. In Greek language ‘*deon*’ means ‘duty’ and ‘*logos*’ means ‘science’, thus, the meaning of the term ‘deontology’ is ‘the science of duty’.

Deontological theories do not agree with the consequentialist theories and deny that, an action is right by the consequences it produces. They argue that an action can be right or wrong depending upon the reasons besides the goodness or badness it produces. For example, to keep a promise is just, and thus, promise keeping is a right action without depending on its consequences. This type of action is right but its rightness is not due to its consequence. Consequentialists generally accepted the myth that, there is only one criterion to judge an act, whether it is right or wrong. They basically depend upon a non-moral comparative value. Deontologists do not believe that this characteristic is reliable, rather they believe that there are also other more pertinent characteristics to be considered to determine whether an act is right or wrong. Deontologists say that, “the principle of maximizing the balance of good over evil, no matter for whom, is either not a moral criterion or standard at all, or, at least, it is not the only basic or ultimate one.”²⁷ Deontological ethics and consequential ethics are thus opposite to one another. If consequentialism tells us to emphasise on the consequences of individual work deontology tells us to consider only action without being considering its consequences.

²⁷ Frankena, William K., *Ethics*, Prentice-Hall India, New Delhi, 1997, p. 15

2.4.2.1 Varieties of Deontology:

Deontological theories have different forms like; **i** – act-deontology and **ii** – rule-deontology is the most popular.

i. Act-deontological theories hold that our basic judgments of obligation are always particular like, “in this particular situation I should do so and so”. They do not believe in the general rule like “We ought to keep our promise always”. For them general rules are useless, they are just derived from particular sets of moral judgments. But H. A. Prichard and E.F. Carritt²⁸do not satisfy themselves with the above mentioned formulation. They proposed an extreme kind of formulation of the act-deontological theory and thus they are considered as extreme act-deontologists. According to them, we ought to see each particular case or situation to decide what is the right or obligatory action. And they also hold that this should be done without any reference to general moral rules. And because it is a form of deontological theory which is opposed to consequentialism, so we do not have to see whether this act produces the greatest balance of good over evil. The similar kind of view is suggested by Aristotle in his *Nicomachean Ethics*; at the end of Book – II, when he says that the golden mean is “depend upon particular facts, and the decision rests with perception.”²⁹

Butler also supports this view in his book *Five Sermons* when he says, “...any plain honest man, before he engages in any course of action, asks himself, is this I am going about right, or is it wrong?... I do not in the least doubt but that this question would be answered agreeably to truth and virtue, by almost any fair man in almost any circumstances [without any general rule].”³⁰

Existentialists also pose this kind of view. They say that there is no such general rule, and ‘humans create moral rules to fit the circumstances of their own existence’. As I have said earlier that act-deontologists believe that general rules can

²⁸ The author of *The Theory of Morals: An Introduction to Ethical Philosophy* and *The Theory of Beauty*

²⁹ Ross, D. (Trans.), *The Nicomachean Ethics*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2009, p. ix

³⁰ Butler, J., *Five Sermons*, Liberal Arts Press, New York, 1949, p. 45

be constructed on the basis of particular instances which will be useful for us to judge an action in the future, if it occurred later. But this does not mean that we can derive the ethical values of one particular judgment from the values of general rules. Because situational ethics is opposed to the generalisation of rules it accepts both the variants of act-deontology.

- ii. The other variant of deontological theory is rule-deontological theory. Rule-deontological theory gives priority to the principle that can be generalised, rather than any particular judgment or principle. The rule-deontologist hold that the rightness or wrongness of an action is dependent upon a general rule, which can be applied to every action of everyone in the society, for example, "We always ought to tell the truth". This is a general rule and ought to be obeyed by everyone. Unlike consequentialism, rule-deontology doesnot determine the rightness or wrongness of one particular action by taking the greatest balance of good over evil. And contrary to the act-deontologists they believe that the general rules are not derived by induction from particular instances. But they believe that the rightness or wrongness of particular instances is always determined by these general rules. We have many thinkers and writers who were considered as rule-deontologists but in the following paragraphs we will discuss the Divine Command theory and the Kantian account of deontology.

2.4.2.1.1 Divine Command Theory:

Divine Command theory is a kind of rule-deontological theory which is also known as theological voluntarism. Divine Command theory is a metaethical theory which holds that an action is morally right if it is commanded by God, and it is wrong if it is done otherwise. Thinkers who believe in this view also hold that "right" and "wrong" respectively mean the command of do's and don'ts of God. This theory proposes that morality of an action is determined by God's command. To be moral is to follow the commands of God. So, the rightness or wrongness of an action is solely dependent upon divine commandment.

Proponents of this theory do not follow the rule of greatest number of good for the people or the consequences of an action it produces. They believe that God's

law is constituted by a set of rules, for example, the Ten Commandments of the Old Testament. If they think so, then they must be facing the problem of conflicts among these rules.

Question may be raised that, why should we act according to God's will? A theist or a theologian may answer that we need to act because God's will provide reward to us and if we do not follow His will, then He will punish us. This kind of judgment is made by the theologians just to motivate us to obey God's will. But if they claim that we ought to obey God's will, then they presuppose that one ought to do only what is interested to him, interest means the good to one's own. So, the basic principle is not to obey God, but to choose the greatest good to one's own. But this formulation is not what deontological theories actually say. Here I just concentrate on the theologians who believe that rightness or wrongness of an action is determined by its being commanded or forbidden by God.

Divine Command theory is not equally understood by the believers and the non-believers of God. The person who believes in God definitely holds that the moral law is what God tells us to do, but, on the other hand, the person who does not believe in God, will express his/her/their disagreement to the previous one. So, it is not easy to formulate a version of Divine Command theory which is equally accepted by both the believers and the non-believers.

A Critical Analysis of Divine Command Theory:

Divine Command theory is discussed from the Greek period to the present day and there are so many questions and objections against it. In Plato's *Euthyphro*, we can find that something is right because it is commanded by God, and then Socrates asks him, "is something right because it is commanded by God or does He command this because it is right?" Euthyphro replies that, God commands it because it is right. Socrates argues that Euthyphro must withdraw his theory. Socrates concludes from Euthyphro's argument that there is something which is right or wrong independent of God's command. In other words, there are such moral standards which are right and wrong by themselves. This is known as Euthyphro's Dilemma in philosophy. In this dilemma, if the first is chosen then it follows that whatever God commands is right, even if that is patently wrong from the human point of view. And if the later one is chosen then morality will be independent of

God, which is contradictory to the Divine Command theory. If God is subjected to other external laws, then He must lose His omnipotence, which is again contradictory to the orthodox conception of God. Proponents of this dilemma claim that the Divine Command theory cannot be accepted because, it challenges the ability of God. Though this turmoil Euthyphro's answer seems to be a natural one. He just says that God only reveals what is right and does not make anything right or creates its rightness merely by willing it.

Ralph Cudworth, an English theologian and a philosopher of the 17th century, said if Divine Command theory is true then if God were to command cruelty or injustices then those unethical things are considered as right and obligatory and thus ethical.³¹ But this would be awkward. The supporters of Divine Command theory react that, God could not command cruelty. God is good in nature, by definition.

This theory generally teaches us that moral truth does not exist independently; the morality of judgment is always dependent upon the Divine Commands. Though there are so many objections against this theory most of the religious believers believe in some form or other of Divine Command theory because they feel that by remaining true to the moral principles, they remain obedient to God.

2.4.2.1.2 Kantian Deontology:

The best example of deontological ethics is the theory advocated by the German philosopher Immanuel Kant.³² Kant was an 18th century Germany philosopher and thinker of the Enlightenment age. He had a strong faith in human reason. He believed that man can understand the various problems of worlds by and with the help of reason alone and he has the capacity to solve them as well – specially the ethical problems. Kant sought to prove that morality is based on reason. For him, if one is to be ethical then he should be rational, or to say the same thing in another way, an action is ethical if it is done through reason, and it is reason only that determines if an action is ethical or not. So, the most rational action is the most ethical one. Kant also believed that morality is all about obligations, obligations towards the actions performed by the agents irrespective of their consequences. Kant thought that moral actions do not have any exceptions; every action should follow

³¹ Raphael, D. D. (edit.), *British Moralists 1650 – 1800*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1969, p. 105

³² Kuehn, M., *Kant: A Autobiography*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2011, p. 159

the moral rules. For this reason, Kantian morality is considered as deontological ethical theory.

Kant's philosophy is basically concerned about duty. The principles of Kant's theoretical as well as practical philosophy are *a priori*. To be *a priori*, according to Kant, is to be strictly universal and necessary. For Kant, the general principle of the moral law, i.e., the categorical imperative, is derived from practical reason, and is therefore obligatory for every rational agent that poses the same practical reasons. So, every rational agent or human being is obliged by the moral law. But what does Kant mean by the moral law? In one word, the moral law is Categorical Imperative. Categorical Imperative is a set of principle, these are – respect the humanity in oneself as well as in other rational agents, not to make an exception for himself while deliberating others about how to perform an action, and action only in accordance with rules that could be universally obeyed.

Kant discusses his ethical ideas mainly in his *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785), *Critique of Practical Reason* (1787), and *Metaphysics of Morals* (1797). These are primary sources of his ethical discussions, though *Groundwork* is the most popular and well known among them, for his ideas of ethical theories, and in this chapter, we shall primarily restrict our discussion from his *Groundwork*.

The moral theory which Kant sought for is possible only under the foundation of the unconditional good. Conditional good has no important value in Kantian morality. Conditional good presupposes some external cause for its goodness. If one thing is conditionally good then its goodness depends upon some other external cause which may be either conditional or unconditional. If the external cause is unconditional then nothing may be wrong with it but if the cause is conditional then the external cause needs another second external cause for its goodness. And this process will run if we do not accept any unconditional good as a foundation of morality. Kant believes that all our goodness ultimately depends upon something that is good unconditionally. We have so many examples of good things but these are not unconditionally good, these are merely conditionally good. For example, Money is such a thing that we generally consider as a good thing but this is not ultimately good, because money can be used for both good as well as bad purposes. Goodness depends upon the situation; thus, it is conditional. Power is also a criterion that is

considered as good, but power is not unconditionally good. Power is good if it is used for the development of human civilisation, otherwise not. Kant is very conservative in his conception of the good and, more definitely, with regard to what is unconditionally good. For him, even happiness is not unconditionally good. All people want to be happy, but if this happiness is due to the perception of something bad in others, then it is not good. Suppose if one person is feeling happy after coming to know a bank robbery then his happiness cannot be considered as good.

So, the question is, *is there anything that can be considered as unconditionally good?* Kant's answer is an affirmative one. There is only thing that can be considered as good unconditionally and that is *good will*. According to Kant, “The only thing that is good without qualification or restriction is a good will”.³³ According to Kant, good will alone is good in all circumstances. And it is good in itself without depending on other things. But this does not mean that good will is the only good. There are innumerable goodness's in the world but they are not good in all circumstances, and sometimes they are bad when they are used by unworthy motives. It means that they are not unconditionally good, they are conditionally good. The value of goodness does not depend upon the result or consequences it produces, even a good will does not suggest any desirable consequence at all.

2.4.2.1.2.1 The Good Will and Duties:

Kant's goodness is strongly connected with the concept of duty. For him, to understand human goodness we need to examine the concept of duty. For Kant, “*A human action is morally good, not because it is done from self-interest – but because it is done for the sake of duty*”.³⁴ He also says even an action in accordance with duty cannot be regarded as morally good action if it is done through self-interest. This is also applied to the case of inclinations. If an action is done out of any inclination, such as, sympathy or generosity, then it cannot be considered as a morally good action.

Kant's second proposition on duty is, “*An action done from duty has its moral worth, not from the results it attains or seeks to attain, but from a formal*

³³ Paton, H. J., *The Moral Law*, B. I. Publication, New Delhi, 1979, p. 17

³⁴ *Ibid*, p. 19

principle or maxim – the principle of doing one's duty whatever that may be.³⁵ In this second proposition Kant adds the concept of ‘maxims’, and states the doctrine in terms of a maxim. A maxim is a principle which Kant calls ‘subjective’ principle, meaning a particular type of principle on which a rational agent performs his duty. For Kant, a maxim is a kind of general principle under which we all perform our particular action. For example, if I want to commit suicide to avoid my unhappiness then the principle or maxim under which I commit suicide may be stated as; “I will commit suicide if I have more pain than pleasure in life”.

The third proposition about duty is, “*Duty is the necessity to act out reverence for the law*”.³⁶ The third one is related to the previous two. Kant says duties should be done out of reverence for the law. All living animals can act out of inclinations or instincts and they might get the positive result as well. But not all living animals are rational agents. He says about rational agent or human being. Because only a rational agent can understand a general moral law and perform out of reverence (respect) for the law. The reverence for the law is not just an emotional feeling towards the greatness of the law but it is a moral motivation.

2.4.2.1.2.2 Kant and the Categorical Imperative:

According to Kant, every moral action is determined by ‘human will’. ‘Human will’ is the only thing that can be considered good without having any qualification. Good will is the kind of duty in accordance with law. As we have said earlier, morality should provide a mental framework of moral rules or maxims which are obviously categorical in nature. So, every human being should act in accordance with categorical imperative. In the *Groundwork* Kant opines, “the search for the establishment of the supreme principle of morality (AK 4:392). That supreme principle, which Kant calls the *Categorical Imperative*, commands simply that our actions should have the form of moral conduct.”³⁷

The moral law, Kant says, is a categorical imperative. There are two kinds of Imperatives, hypothetical and categorical. A hypothetical imperative says that, if you want something then you ought to do something to fulfill your desire: for example, if

³⁵ Paton, H. J., *The Moral Law*, B. I. Publication, New Delhi, 1979, p. 20

³⁶ *Ibid*, p. 21

³⁷ Gregor, M. J. (Trans. & Ed.), *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2001, p. x

you want to be a healthy man, then you ought to exercise to fulfill that desire. Here the imperative talks about how to achieve a particular end. Hypothetical imperatives apply only to those who want to achieve a goal of their preference. But if anybody don't care about to be a healthy person then he/she don't need to follow those above-mentioned criterions.

On the other hand, a categorical imperative simply tells us about what we ought to do, not on condition, but unconditionally. Categorical imperative is not related to our particular desires. It does not tell, 'If you want to be a healthy man, then you ought to exercise', it says, 'Do the exercises'. Hypothetical imperative is merely a suggestion, but the categorical imperative is a command.

According to Kant morality does not ask us to achieve a particular goal. It does not consist of hypothetical imperatives, but rather it is a categorical imperative.³⁸

There are three formulations of the 'Categorical Imperative' as stated by Kant in his *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. These are discussed as follows –

The Formula of the Universalisation:

Generally, Categorical Imperative asks us to follow those principles which are laws by themselves. The first formulation of the Categorical Imperative is, "act only that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law (4:421).³⁹

Thus, there is only one categorical imperative, or we may describe the categorical imperative in various words as the various particular moral laws in which one general categorical imperative is essential. Categorical laws, such as, for example, 'Thou shalt not kill'⁴⁰, are generally derived from one categorical imperative and this categorical imperative is regarded as the fundamental principle of those particular laws.

³⁸ Gregor, M. J. (Trans. & Ed.), *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2001, p. xvi

³⁹ Paton, H. J., *The Moral Law*, B. I. Publication, New Delhi, 1979, p. 29

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p. 29

Universal Law of Nature:

Kant's first formulation about the universality of nature is closely associated with the formulation of the law of nature, because the laws of nature are always universal, and they are inexorably necessary; they are inviolable. The moral laws, on the other hand, are violable, though they ought not to be violated. What Kant says is that this 'ought not to be violated' of the moral law is as good as the inviolability of the laws of nature. Accordingly, Kant's view of the categorical imperative is, "Act as if the maxim of your action were to become through your will a universal law of nature."⁴¹

In accordance with this formulation of the moral law Kant divides our duties into four varieties. Kant says, "Duties may be divided into duties towards self and duties towards others, and again into perfect and imperfect duties."⁴² Kant speaks of these four varieties of duty and also gives us an illustration of each type to show how his formula covers all of them.

Duties towards Self and Duties towards Others:

According to Paton, the duties regarding to oneself and the duties towards others than oneself in his translation of *Groundwork*, that is –

"In the case of duties towards self, Kant assumes that our various capacities have a natural function or purpose in life. It is a perfect duty *not* to thwart such purposes; and it is also a positive, but imperfect, duty to further such purposes."⁴³ And "In the case of duties towards others we have a perfect duty *not* to thwart the realisation of a possible systematic harmony of purposes among men; and we have a positive, but imperfect, duty to further the realisation of such a systematic harmony."⁴⁴

Perfect and Imperfect Duty:

A perfect duty is one which admits of no exception in the interests of inclination. Under this heading the examples given are the ban on suicide and on making a false promise in order to receive a loan. We are not entitled to commit suicide even if we may have a strong inclination to do so, nor are we entitled to pay

⁴¹ Paton, H. J., *The Moral Law*, B. I. Publication, New Delhi, 1979, p. 30

⁴² *Ibid*, p. 30

⁴³ *Ibid*, p. 31

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p. 31

our debt to one man and refuse another because we happen to like the one and dislike the other. In the case of imperfect duties, the position is different: we are bound only to adopt the *maxim* of developing our talents and of helping others, and we are to some extent entitled to decide arbitrarily *which* talents we will develop and *which* persons we will help. There is here a certain ‘latitude’ or ‘playroom’ for mere inclinations.

Kant’s first formulation of the categorical imperative is similar to the Golden rule of ethics: “Do not impose on others what you do not wish for yourself”. So, Kant’s formulation of categorical imperative sounds almost like Golden rule. It is empirical in sense that, it requires the context to apply, for example, if you don’t get hurt by others then you should not hit the others or do not follow the rules which you are unable to universalise.

The Formula of the End in Itself or Humanity:

The formula is, “Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end.”⁴⁵ According to this formulation of imperative, every rational action must be considered a principle as well as also an end. Like the principle ends may also be subjective in nature: they may be randomly chosen by the individual. A subjective or relative end possessed by an individual agent is a hypothetical imperative, though its value is relative and is conditioned. A hypothetical imperative is a kind of reason that must be conditional. It guides to achieve our goal, for example, *one must drink if he wants to quench his thirst*. And if there were objective ends provided by reason to us, which is pursued by a rational agent without depending on any circumstances, then these would have an absolute and unconditioned value.⁴⁶ But these ends are not the result of our action, because we know that no mere product of our action can have an unconditioned and absolute value. They must have ends and the existence of these ends imposed on us to pursue the duty. That is to say, unlike subjective ends, the ground of hypothetical imperative, objective ends are the grounds of categorical imperative. These ends are described as ends in themselves, not as ends relative to particular rational agents.

⁴⁵ Paton, H. J., *The Moral Law*, B. I. Publication, New Delhi, 1979, p. 32

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, p. 32

Only rational agents can be ends in themselves, because only they have an unconditioned and absolute value, and it is wrong to use them as a subjective end which have only relative value. According to Kantian ethics one cannot treat another mere as a means to an end. Kant in his second formulation of the categorical imperative says, a person must be obedient to duty to achieve the end and that must be equally applied to all people.

The Formula of the Kingdom of Ends:

Kant's formulation on the Kingdom of Ends is, "So act as if you were through your maxims a law making member of a kingdom of ends."⁴⁷ In the *Groundwork*, Kant suggest that for the discussion of judgment we must rely on formula of Universal law or formula of Autonomy, but in the *Metaphysics of Morals* he often uses the idea of humanity as an end in itself.⁴⁸

Interpretation may vary from one to another but the basic analogy is concerned with an ideal commonwealth, in which laws are legislated by all the people and the people are also subject to them. These laws treat each other as ends in themselves, who autonomously legislate universal laws. If the laws are not universal, then they could not be the laws of conduct at all. As we have stated about the analogy with the laws of a commonwealth, we mean that the legislations do not follow the ultimate moral laws, but they adopt more specific principles what are guided by ideas implicit in the ultimate principles.

We have so far mentioned in the essay about the three formulations of Kant's categorical imperative and we can see that the first formulation is all about moral maxim and its universalisation; the second is also about moral maxim but is concerned with its ends, what is also considered as the matter of maxim. So, the first is about the form of maxim and the second is about the matter of maxim, while the third is a combination of both the matter and form.

Using this formulation of categorical imperative to any maxim we can decide whether this maxim is permissible under deontological ethics. Let's take an example to understand this situation. The example is about the act of picking flowers for

⁴⁷ Paton, H. J., *The Moral Law*, B. I. Publication, New Delhi, 1979, p. 34

⁴⁸ Skorupski, J. (Ed.), *The Routledge Companion to Ethics*, Routledge, New York, 2010, p. 163

beautification and someone may want to take few of them to home for decoration. This act requires to adopt a maxim that will support doing whatever one may want to do. But if we apply the formulation of the universal law of categorical imperative, then there obviously will arise some contradiction to adopt such a maxim as law. If this maxim is to become law and everyone does the same, picking flowers for home decoration, then there would be no flowers left in the park. Here the act contradicts the original motive of cultivating flowers. So, instead of doing this, one should go to the flower shop and order for his likings.

But there is also such kind of acts that are always forbidden, lying is one of them. This negatively values the meaning of truth and helps to keep trust between us. Lying is forbidden in all cases even if it has some advantageous or some good consequences. For example, a mad man may want to kill your neighbor because; your neighbor does not lend him money. If you lie and do not tell the mad man about where he hides then an innocent life could be saved. Here one moral duty contradicts another. In situation like this follow the higher moral duty, that is, the obligation of not killing or helping others in killing.

2.5 Is Virtue Ethics Different from Deontological and Teleological Systems?

Reasons in favour of Virtue ethics being different from teleological and deontological approaches. Normative ethical systems are generally divided into deontological, teleological and virtue ethics. The first two are action-based ethical theories and focus on the actions of a person. When actions are said to be right in themselves or right in how well they conform to a set of duties, the ethical theory is deontological. Virtue ethics focuses on the character of the person doing the actions and looks at what actions would make a good person.

There is much less emphasis on rules people should follow and more on helping people develop character traits which will help them make the right decisions later on in life. Virtue ethics is flexible as it is not based upon absolute rules/formulas that cannot be broken. Virtue Ethics understands the need to distinguish good people from legalists - obeying the law and following the rules does not make one a good person. In particular this is unlike deontological approaches. Virtue ethics does not pretend to be able to tell us what a good person would do in every possible situation but encourages us to be more like such a person so that we will not need an ethical

theory to make our decisions for us. It stresses the importance of character - after all, someone who helps the poor out of compassion does seem to be morally superior to someone who does it out of duty. Again, this is unlike the formulaic approaches like Situation Ethics.

Virtue ethics sees it as good to be biased in favour of friends and family, unlike utilitarianism or situation ethics which see impartiality as important. · Unlike act-based theories, virtue ethics cannot be applied to moral dilemmas. This is the problem raised by Robert Louden ('On Some Vices of Virtue Ethics'): Virtue ethics does not help people facing a crisis because it does not give any clear rules for action. It is difficult to work out what is the virtuous response to stem-cell research or abortion. Virtue ethics does not give us any concrete answers and says only that it is a matter for the practical wisdom of the person facing the situation. It is possible to apply both deontological theories and teleological approaches to moral dilemmas.

Reasons Against Being Different –Teleological:

Virtue ethics could be said to be teleological as it focuses on the person's telos or end - *eudaimonia* or human flourishing. Virtue ethics can consider possible consequences from being virtuous and therefore can be applied to moral dilemmas. For example, it could be considered courageous to be honest regarding your sexuality. This is in common with act-based ethics. In common with Situation Ethics a teleological approach. Virtue ethics also takes on the character of a particular culture, so that it can espouse particular virtues such as mercy and 'agapaeic love'.

Reasons Against Being Different-Deontological:

Virtue ethics has close links to the deontological natural law approach of the Catholic Tradition. Its main thinker Aquinas drew heavily from Aristotle and he saw natural law as compatible with a virtue-based approach.

Chapter - III

The Development of Virtue Ethics

3.1 Introduction:

In the previous chapter, we have discussed the origin and development of moral philosophy. The question has not any straight forward answer. So, we had tried to deal this question in both historical and mythological way. We had found that Mary Midgley has done extensive research on this issue in her article *The Origin of Ethics*. After that we had also discussed the innateness of morality in the second chapter. Here we had tried to answer the question that whether the human morality is innate or not? This question is linked with the first question. After discussing the origin and development of moral philosophy we have briefly discussed the normative ethical theories, such as, Consequentialism, Deontology and Virtue ethics. Here in this chapter, we have continued the virtue ethical discussions from chapter two for a detailed enquiry in the history and development of virtue ethics.

We find that the concept of virtue is one of the central concepts of moral philosophy. Moral philosophy deals with the questions of morality that discusses how one should live. In this chapter we will make an attempt to elaborate a brief survey of concept of ‘virtue’ from its etymological meaning and development to its journey across the century. Virtue ethics gained its popularity in Ancient Greece from the writings of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, though it can be found even before these writings. But it has again become popular in the last part of the twentieth century with the writings of the thinkers like Elizabeth Anscombe, Phillipa Foot and Alasdair MacIntyre, Jane Aultine and Benjamin Franklin.

3.2 The Very Definition of Virtue:

The word ‘virtue’ is used as an equivalent of the Greek word ‘*arête*’ means ‘moral excellence’. Though ‘*arête*’ in its basic sense designates the “the excellence of any kind, virtue is generally regarded as a quality which is morally good, and thus it is used as a foundation of the principle of good moral being.

The term ‘*arête*’ or virtue has a long history and it is used with many meanings. In the ancient Greece, the notion of excellence was bound with the act of

living up to one's full potential. Homer used the term for both the Greeks as well as Trojan heroes and also for the female figures, such as Penelope, the wife of Greek hero Odysseus. For the Greek and Trojan heroes, it is used for their bravery but in the case of Penelope it is known for her faithfulness towards Odysseus. Though *arête* is frequently used to designate bravery and faithfulness, it is more often associated with the effectiveness. When *arête* is used as a quality of man and woman it signifies that the man or woman is having the quality of highest effectiveness. It means that the man or the woman having *arête* use all their faculties - strength, bravery, and wit - to achieve their goal. In regards to the *Iliad* the way Homer describes Achilles is an example of *arête*. Here *arête* is used as the goodness and strength of a warrior. Though Homer used the word to describe the fighting spirit of warriors; many authors applied the term to animals and even to lifeless objects, such as tools and instruments.

3.2.1 Sophists' View of Virtue:

By the end of the fifth century B.C., one important meaning of *arête* was popularized by the Greek thinkers. This meaning of virtue or *arête* represents as becoming a good citizen and achieving success in daily life, especially in politics and society. Taking advantage of this, the Sophists claimed that, they possessed the secret knowledge of achieving success in public life. Thus, they were able to attract the young people who were struggling to achieve success in Athenian life. However, the leading Sophists did not practice what they taught to others, because they did not belong to the society of Athens; they were foreigners.

There were few Sophists who were very popular in their time. Protagoras, Prodicus and Gorgias were among them. Protagoras of Abdera came from Thrace; he travelled around Greece as a teacher and lived in Athens for several years, where he got associated with Pericles and other rich and powerful Athenians. Pericles invited him to write the constitution of the newly founded Athenian colony, Thruii, in 444 B.C. Prodicus came from an island of Ceos. His countrymen sent him as an ambassador to Athens but later he is known as a great speaker and a teacher. Gorgias came to Greece from Leontini in Sicily. They all were first generation Sophists. These foreigners became very popular and successful not by becoming good citizens and succeeding in public life, since foreigners could not do such things. They were

popular for their teaching. They could convince the Athenian young people that their teachings would help them to develop excellence for success in Athenian life.

3.2.2 Socratic Conceptions of Virtue:

As the teachings of the Sophists gained in popularity in Athens, the sophists also became controversial figures. Their way of making money from teaching virtue also bothered their rival men. The controversies regarding their teaching raised sufficient discussion about excellence or virtue among the Athenian people. At the end of the fifth century Socrates became a major person in these ongoing debates.

Socrates and his contemporary philosophers began to discuss about virtue with the prevailing notions of virtues. They pointed out their difficulties and ultimately modified them. The quote from Plato's *Protagoras*, "the Sophist Protagoras describes virtue as deliberating well (*eubouilia*) about one's own affairs and... as one plays a role in public life (*Protagoras* 318E – 319A)."¹ As the discussion started, Socrates asked whether virtue can be taught by teachers and about whether virtue is one or many. He further asked whether there are many too many virtues then are they separated from one another. From Plato's dialogue we come to know that there are many types of virtues. Plato discusses the virtue of Temperance or *Sophrosyne* in his *Charmenides*, his *Laches* deals with Courage, *Euthyphro* with Piety and Justice and the *Crito* is about Justice. The concept of justice has an important role in Plato's writings, the main question of Plato's *Republic* is 'what is Justice?'

Let us consider the six major characteristics that perhaps proposed by Sophist philosophers. Though, later on these characteristics were modified by Socrates.

1. Virtues are admirable and praiseworthy:

It is very difficult for us to determine whether virtues are truly admirable. For example, Odysseus is a more admirable character in Homer, than he as appears in Sophocles. In Sophocles' play *Philoctetes*, Odysseus is described as clever and deceitful. But in Homeric epics he is an admirable character. Sophocles describes

¹ Devettore, Raymond J., *Introduction to Virtue Ethics: Insights of the Ancient Greeks*, p. 61, Georgetown University Press, Washington, 2002

how Odysseus planned to kidnap Philoctetes and steal his weapon by cheating. By any standard, this act of Odysseus is injustice and shameful.

2. Virtues are related to actions:

This behavioral view of virtue was presented by Homer. He talked of great warriors whose actions were admirable because their actions were heroic and excellent. From the Socratic days it was very clear to the Athenian people that virtue was about deeds, deeds that are admirable and not shameful.

3. Virtues are based on one's role in life:

In Plato's dialogue *Meno*, Meno (a person) begins his discussion of virtue with Socrates by saying that virtue varies with one's role in social life (*Meno* 71E – 72A).² Virtuous behaviors are not same for the whole people of a society; they vary from person to person. The virtue of a warrior differs significantly from that of a poet, a musician, a politician, an ordinary citizen, a head of household, and so on. Virtuous behavior is one thing for a woman living as a wife, another for a man acting as a citizen, another for warriors, and another for children and still very different for slaves. In other words, virtuous behavior is relative to persons' role in life in the society.

4. Different virtues are not interconnected:

Each virtue has its own uniqueness with no connection to any other virtue. Being a virtuous person in a particular field does not entail to be virtuous in other areas of life. For example, a warrior might have great courage in battle but have no temperance to take wine or having sex.

5. Virtues can do harm to themselves:

Virtues can also do harm to the person who is performing virtuous behavior. One courageous soldier could lose his health, even lose his life when he is performing courageously in battle. Neoptolemus, son of Achilles, put his life in danger when he challenged Odysseus by returning to Philoctetes the awesome bow that the Greek desperately needed at Troy.

² Devettere, Raymond J., *Introduction to Virtue Ethics: Insights of the Ancient Greeks*, p. 62, Georgetown University Press, Washington, 2002

6. Wisdom or knowledge is just a kind of virtue:

Wisdom or knowledge has no special role. It is just an important form of excellence, such as justice, temperance and courage.

Though the Greeks would talk a great deal about different virtues, they were hardly subjected to criticism. However, these popular conceptions of virtue began to be changed when Socrates and other Philosophers started examining them and the conception of the Sophists. What we know today as virtue ethics is the result of radical modification of the concept of made by the philosophers.

Philosophical conceptions of virtue:

Though the philosophical conception of virtue considerably differs from the popular conception of virtue these is yet an argument in regard to the first characteristic of virtue it is admirable and praiseworthy. Philosophers modified the second characteristic and thoroughly revised the rest four. For them virtues are not only actions but psychological states; they are connected with each other; and the last one, practical wisdom is not just a virtue, it is a foundational virtue of every other virtue. Now we shall discuss about the six cardinal characteristics of the philosophical conception of virtue.

1. Virtues are admirable and praiseworthy:

As I have already noted this is the only popular characteristic of virtue about which the philosophers are in argument with the popular conception of virtue.

2. Most virtues are psychological states:

According to the philosophers' virtues are mainly related with the character, habits and dispositions of persons. They explain in determine the kind of person one is, and not his actions. Actions follow from but do not determine a virtuous character.

3. Virtues are not based on our social roles:

The Greek philosophers believe that virtues are rooted in our soul, they are not based on the roles played by a man in the society. Socrates in his *Meno* explained that, virtues such as justice and temperance are not dependent upon the role that a

person played in life. Being a good human being, one is just needed to have a set of virtues independent of what role he plays in the society (*Meno* 72C – 73C).

4. Virtues are connected:

All virtues are internally connected with each other. If a man has one virtue, it means that he can have them all. Ancient philosophers believed that all virtues are united or integrated in the character of person, and so are in responsible from each other. For them virtues cannot be separated. If a person does not have the virtue of temperance it follows that he does not have the virtues of justice, love, and so on. Though this theory looks like counterintuitive yet it is clear that, with wisdom as a virtue unity of the moral virtues seems to be inevitable.

5. Virtues are not contrary to the person's self-interest:

Virtues are never in conflict with person's self-interest. Many people think that this theory is counterintuitive. Most of the modern moral philosophers react against it by saying that ethics is about social life, but the interest of the society need not necessarily contradict personal or self-interest. Live and let live is the principle of social living.

6. Wisdom or knowledge is the foundation of all virtues:

All of our virtues require wisdom to move us towards the goal. For Socrates wisdom or knowledge is the only virtue, and for Aristotle and Plato, it is the foundational virtue that creates the others.

7. Virtue requires freedom:

A person is called virtuous only by freely choosing his or her actions. So, virtue requires personal freedom, the freedom of choosing actions. A person becomes just only by choosing just actions repeatedly, he became honest by choosing honest actions repeatedly, temperance by choosing temperate actions repeatedly, and so on. Without the freedom of personal of choice authentic virtuous character cannot be constituted. However, it is also true that freedom does not alone guarantee virtue. Choosing to do something does not necessarily mean that what is chosen is good.

These seven characteristics of virtue as we have explained are enough for us to understand the difference between philosopher's conception virtue and the popular conception made by the Sophists in the fourth century in Athens. And when we are discussing the conceptions of virtue in detail, it will be also clear that the Greek philosophical conceptions of virtue are quite different from the most doctrines of virtue to be found in modern moral philosophy.

3.2.3 Plato's Notion of Virtue:

Plato's account of virtue can be found in two different works, one is *Protagoras* and the other one is *Republic*. In Plato's dialogue *Protagoras*, Protagoras (a person) claimed that virtue is some kind of a whole with different parts, such as a human face is a whole with different parts (nose, eyes and so on). He says that a person could have some virtues but not all, just as a person could be missing a part of his face, an eye, for example. Like this a person could be courageous but might not be temperate or just.³

But according to Socrates, unity of virtue is stronger than the unity of a whole with disparate parts. Many virtues are simply different names for one and the same thing. For him one virtue is entailed by the other: justice is piety and piety is just (*Protagoras* 331b). At the end of the dialogue, Socrates says, all the virtues, such as justice, temperance and courage, are one and the same thing, and that is knowledge. Here Socrates uses the term 'knowledge' to indicate wisdom. In another writing *Euthydemus*, Socrates claims that wisdom is the only thing that makes a person happy and fortunate (*Euthydemus* 282 c - d).⁴

Socratic sayings "virtue is knowledge" is well known but it would be better to understand "virtue is wisdom". Wisdom is the knowledge that helps us to understand what is good or bad for us. There are no several virtues but one, and that one virtue is practical wisdom. According to Socrates temperance, justice, courage, piety and wisdom are all different names for one single thing.

The other account of virtue was expressed by Plato in his famous dialogue *Republic*. But there is no common view in the *Republic* and in the *Protagoras*

³ Devettere, Raymond J., *Introduction to Virtue Ethics: Insights of the Ancient Greeks*, Georgetown University Press, Washington, 2002, p. 79

⁴ *Ibid*, p. 79

regarding the notion of virtue. Plato begins his statement concerning the human soul. He divides the human soul into three parts: appetite, spirit and reason. Each part has its own desires. Appetite (*epithumetikon*) is the part of the soul which is predominant in animals; it is lusting for bodily pleasures. Appetite is desires whatever gives pleasure and such as food, sex, power and wealth. Spirited (*thumoeides*) part originates in the emotions; it intends to find whatever is appearing good in a particular situation. When I am attacked or victimized it may appear good to charge against in anger, when faced with a danger it may appear good to back down in fear, when a family member dies it may appear good to downfall with grief, and so on. The third part, rational, (*logistikon*) desires whatever is truly good. The rational part relies on reasoning to decide in each situation whatever activities that are good or bad for my life considered as a whole.

Plato share his opinion on the different parts of the soul and then after he says virtue can be traced within the proper relation between each of its components. Reason should guide the soul and help us to determine what is right and what is wrong, spirit must follow the reason and appetite should obey both spirit and reason. According to this view virtue is nothing but a magical or accurate ratio of the components of the soul. Plato's opinion considering the conception of virtue, is that virtue can be acquired by the state of the soul, where reason is dominating and reason is followed by appetite and spirit both, can knowledge of the good and hereafter virtue will be acquired. Though Socrates and Plato both give an importance to desire for ethical-decision making, they also differ in regarding to some other points. Socrates opines that each of our desires are rational. But Plato acknowledges the existence of non-rational desires which are appetitive and spiritative. For Socrates, all the things which go wrong are due to ignorance. But in the case of Plato, it may be due to ignorance and in some cases, it also may be due to non-rational desires. For Socrates, our ethics is totally rational but Plato says that though ethics is rational we also need knowledge to shape and form our desires, educate and cultivate good habits.

3.2.4 Aristotle's Contribution to the Virtue Ethics:

Though Aristotle is treated as the protagonist of virtue ethics, it does not mean that he was the first person to deal with this topic. He was the first philosopher

who discussed ethics as a separate part of philosophy and the different kinds of virtues that form our good life. *Nicomachean Ethics* is the name normally given to Aristotle's best-known work and central text for the study of ancient virtue ethics. There is another book on ethics, the *Eudemian Ethics*, which has been written by Aristotle. It is commonly believed that *Eudemian Ethics* is written before the *Nicomachean Ethics*. The first one was named after Aristotle's son Nicomachus, and the second one is named after his friend Eudemus, who may also have had a hand in editing the final work.⁵ The *Nicomachean Ethics* is not easy reading for the new comer students, it was meant for the audience of advance students who were sufficiently familiar with Aristotle's philosophy and terminology. Both the works of Aristotle are important to grasp the inner implications of Greek virtue ethics.

Difference between “character virtue” (*ethikai aretai*) and “intellectual virtue” (*dianoetikai aretai*)

According to Aristotle, virtue is neither a passion nor a faculty, it is a state of character. In the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle offers a definition of virtue thus – “Virtue is a state of character concerned with choice, lying in a mean, i.e., the mean relative to us, this being determined by a rational principle, i.e., by that principle by which the man of practical wisdom would determine it.”⁶ Aristotle's definition proposes to adopt a middle path which has been much discussed. Virtue is considered as if it is lies between two vices which are two extremes. For example, courage is the middle path between the extremes of rashness and cowardice. Such a middle course will be relative to vices of the extremes depending upon the actual circumstances of the individual.

According to Bertrand Russell, “There are two kinds of virtues, intellectual and moral, corresponding to the two parts of the soul. Intellectual virtues result from teaching, moral virtues from habit.”⁷ Aristotle says that Plato has divided the soul into two parts, one is rational and the other is irrational. The irrational part is divided into the vegetative (such as plants) and the appetitive (such as animals).

⁵ Besser-Jones, Lorraine and Slote, Michael (Ed.), *The Routledge Companion to Virtue Ethics*, p. 18, Routledge, New York, 2015

⁶ Ross, David (Trans.), *The Nicomachean Ethics*, p. ix, Oxford University Press, New York, 2009

⁷ Russell, Bertrand, *A History of Western philosophy*, p. 185, Unwin Hyman Ltd., London, 1979

The expression “character virtue” is used for the original Greek Word “*ethike arête*”. Though some of the translators translate “*ethike arête*” as “moral virtue” or “ethical virtue”, these translations do not signify the actual meaning of “*ethike arête*”. Firstly, the English word “moral” and “ethical” do not serve the same purpose as the notion of “character” serve. Secondly, the expressions “moral virtue” and “ethical virtue” are commonly used to denote the virtue only that is relevant to what we call today morality or ethics, though the master virtue or fundamental virtue is not “moral virtue” or “ethical virtue” but is another kind of virtue namely intellectual virtue (*dianoetike arête*).⁸

The two kinds of virtue in Aristotle’s ethics, that are responsible for the quality of life is i) ‘Ethical virtues’ or ‘virtues of character’ that regulate the desires concerning the ends to be attained or avoided by action, and ii) ‘Intellectual virtues’ (*Phronêsis*), the capacity of the soul’s rational part that selects the means to realize those ends. According to Aristotle, virtues of character is the irrational part of the soul, having the characteristic of “listening to reason’s advice”.⁹ (*Nicomachean Ethics* – Book – I 13 1102b29 – 1103a3)

Let us understand the distinction carefully between “character virtue” (*ethike arête*) and “intellectual virtue” (*dianoetike arête*) and also to understand, how the former is dependent on the latter. Some commentator thinks that character virtues are certainly acquired by habituation, they are more than habits. In fact, they are permanent states of character produced by our habit. According to Plato, character grows out of habit (*Laws* 792E) and Aristotle echoes the same idea in the *Eudemian Ethics* and also in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. In the *Eudemian Ethics*, Book II, Aristotle says –

“It is clear, then, that virtue of character is concerned with pleasures and pains. Character exists, as the name signifies, because it develops from habit.” (*Eudemian Ethics* 1220a39)¹⁰

Aristotle in his *Nicomachean Ethics*, at the beginning of Book II says –

⁸ Devettere, Raymond J., *Introduction to Virtue Ethics: Insights of the Ancient Greeks*, p. 66, Georgetown University Press, Washington, 2002

⁹ Besser-Jones, Lorraine and Slote, Michael (Ed.), *The Routledge Companion to Virtue Ethics*, p. 18, Routledge, New York, 2015

¹⁰ Inwood, Brad and Woolf, Raphael (Ed.), *Eudemian Ethics*, p. 19, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2013

“Virtue, then, being of two kinds, intellectual and moral, intellectual virtue in the main owes both its birth and its growth to teaching (for which reason it requires experience and time), while moral virtue comes about as a result of habit, whence also its name (*éthike*) is one that is formed by a slight variation from the word *ethos* (habit). (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1103a14 – 19)¹¹

A character virtue can be thought of as a state (*a hexis*) created through performing repeatedly certain actions. There is no fixed list of character virtues, Aristotle in his writings talks about a dozen of virtues, among three of which play important roles in ancient Greek ethics: temperance, courage and justice.

It is clear for us that character virtues are basically psychological states created by habitual actions repeatedly. The Greek philosophers, when they talk about justice or courage, they do not simply talk about just or courageous actions; they talk about the character states that they considered just or courageous. No action can be just or courageous by itself simply because of its appearance. Actions that look like just or courage but performed for the wrong or foolish reason are not virtuous actions.¹² The person who gives a gun back to its actual owner out of justice, when the owner is a terrorist and wants the gun for murdering someone, is not a just act at all. According to Aristotle, the soldier, who foolishly risks his life, because he fears dishonor, is not courageous at all. In the eyes of virtue, an action can be just or courageous, if it maintains the following three conditions –

- i. It must arise out of character state called justice or courage
- ii. It must be reasonable in the circumstances and
- iii. It must be performed for the right reason.

Here the term “reasonable” focuses on a new kind of virtue which is not character virtue. This other kind of virtue in Aristotle’s ethics is intellectual virtue. We don’t need only character virtue; we need character virtue as well as intellectual virtue (*dianoetike arête*). Aristotle’s list of intellectual virtues is understanding (*nous*), science (*episteme*), philosophy (*philosophia*), skill (*techne*), and prudence (*phronesis*). Aristotle draws a distinction between two kinds of intellectual virtues¹³;

¹¹ Ross, David (Trans.), *The Nicomachean Ethics*, p. 23, Oxford University Press, New York, 2009

¹² Devettere, Raymond J., *Introduction to Virtue Ethics: Insights of the Ancient Greeks*, p. 67, Georgetown University Press, Washington, 2002

¹³ Ross, David (Trans.), *The Nicomachean Ethics*, p. 102, Oxford University Press, New York, 2009

one is theoretical and other is practical.¹⁴ The theoretical virtues are science and philosophy on the other hand practical virtues are skill and prudence. Prudence is the practical intellectual virtue relevant to ethics which makes our lives good and brings us happiness. Understanding is a kind of intellectual virtue that appears both in the theoretical and practical categories.

But now the question is how the character virtue and the intellectual virtue interact with one another, when they are opposite in nature. One is concerned with the irrational part of the soul and the other is with the rational part of the soul. According to Aristotle, "...virtue makes the goal correct and practical wisdom makes what leads to it correct."¹⁵ In other words, character virtues determine the ends we desire, while intellectual virtue or practical wisdom sees the right way to achieve the end.

Our brief survey of the Greek world may result in this observation that goodness implies a certain point of view. An impulse guided action, or action directed by outside agency, be it religious, social, political, may be good but not truly virtuous. This point of view, according to the Greeks is intellectual or rational and not based on emotional considerations.

3.3 Virtue Ethics in the Medieval Period:

In the medieval Western Europe, virtue theories play a central role in the ethical discourse. The term "virtue" is neither a scriptural concept, nor does this concept have obvious theological connotations like the concept of law and sin. By the third century, the concept of virtue plays a central role in Christian thought, and pastoral literature. The virtues much-admired by St. Paul, is the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity, and the classical cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance. However, monastic and pastoral traditions focused on few different virtues and give prominence to them; for example, humility is a virtue, which plays a secondary role in a doctrinal analysis, is regarded as a leading virtue within monastic and ascetic scriptures. The doctrinal analysis of virtue is the most familiar to us because it was popular in the Catholic thought influenced by Thomas

¹⁴ Nicomachean Ethics 1139a5

¹⁵ Ibid, p. 115; Nicomachean Ethics 1144a8 - 9

Aquinas. However, the monastic or ascetic conception of virtue was reflected in the medieval literature, especially, in the works of Chaucer and Dante.

Christian intellectuals, ascetics, and pastors began to discuss on the classical traditions of virtue ethics to address the practical concerns of expanding the moral sensibilities of Christian Communities. These reflections gave rise to the theoretical and practical approaches to this discussion. On the one hand, Christian intellectuals entered into philosophical debates over the proper analysis of virtues and good life. They inspired us to think the key theological concepts such as sin, grace, and conversion within the classical tradition of virtue ethics, which goes beyond the apologetic discourses.

3.3.1 St. Augustine and the Ascetic or Monastic Tradition:

The most important of these early Christian intellectuals in this period, was Augustine of Hippo (354 – 430). Augustine combined the Stoic and Neoplatonic ideas with Christian traditions of theological virtues.¹⁶ Following Plato and the Stoics, Augustine describes that all virtues are fundamentally of one quality, and one of the novel particular virtue is Christian love (*De moribus Ecclesiae catholicae* I 15). He opines that, virtue can only be achieved by the grace of God. Virtue helps a man or woman to enhance their ability to place their desires in a right manner, loving all creatures and loving God above all. Virtues of non-Christians are genuinely praiseworthy and beneficial to human community, but these are not considered as virtues, as it was not directed towards the Christian ends (*De civitatis Dei* 5.12, 14).

In the early third century the ascetic or monastic understandings which focuses on a new approach to virtues, in terms of therapies for the vices of the soul.¹⁷ The monastic tradition emphasised that men and women who are retired from the society in pursuit of salvation will achieve virtue with the continuous practice of humility, self-restraint, chastity, and obedience. So, from the monastic perspective, the virtues are no longer the qualities of character necessary to living a good life, rather rectification to vices which could potentially lead them to salvation. Thus, the constant practice of virtues was an instant task for all the lay people and for the

¹⁶ Porter, Jean, “Virtue ethics in the medieval period” in *The Cambridge Companion to virtue Ethics* Edited by Daniel C. Russell, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2013 p.75

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p.76

ascetics; and who are liable to spiritual care were in focus to facilitate this process. Both, John Cassian (c. 360 – c. 435) and Gregory the Great (c. 540 – 604) understands the urgency and practicality of this kind of virtue ethics and represented the influential accounts of the deadly vices and their corrective virtues in their writings. Cassian in his writings is primarily concerned for the monks and ascetics, whereas Gregory was more concerned with the struggles of lay man. Their efforts were deeply influential and much followed throughout the medieval period. As a result of this, patristic tradition given two ways to analyse the concept of virtues: the first one tied the classical virtues with the Christian theological virtues, whereas the second systematized them through seven deadly vices with their corrective virtues.

Thus, we have seen two broad yet different approaches to the concept of virtue, one is systematic or academic, while the other is more practical or pastoral. These two different approaches continued simultaneously throughout the medieval period. The popular theme for literary works of medieval period were virtues, is found in the writings of Chaucer and Dante. The older schema of the virtues as correctives to the vices, took on unprecedented beauty and power and probably this could help them to popularise. Though their approaches were different for the virtues but both these approaches developed together and contribute in shaping the other through a creative way. The monastic writings and lectures in the medieval period enrich the literature of virtues, vices and the concept of Holy Spirit etc, which helps to form the monastic understandings of virtues. The high estimation of monastic virtues in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries achieve a remarkable advancement in the analysis of virtue.¹⁸ These advances were a necessity to recapitulate the normative implications of virtues in the light of rapidly changing social and cultural context. They develop a psychologically acute form of literature on the underlying changing aspects of human action. Thus, this monastic tradition that focuses on the reflection on virtues, vices and sin brings together practical concerns and theoretical sophistication.

3.3.2 Concept of Virtue in Peter Abelard and Peter Lombard:

It is said that the classical form of virtue that reflects the systematic analysis of virtue in relation to the overall well-being of humans and this classical form is

¹⁸ Wenzel, S. "The Seven Deadly Sins: Some Problems of Research," in *Speculum*, 1986, p. 1–22

started with the emergence of scholastic philosophy in the early twelfth century.¹⁹ Two of the most popular and influential scholastic philosophers, Peter Abelard (c. 1074 – 1142) and Peter Lombard (c. 1100 – 1160), proposed contrasting approaches to the analysis of virtues that set the outline for much subsequent discussion.²⁰ Abelard, in his *Dialogus inter Philosophum, Judaeum, et Christianum* (Dialogue of a Philosopher with a Jew and a Christian), offered an Aristotelian way of analysing virtue as a habit that helps people to act in a proper moral way, and to merit supreme beatitude (*Patrologia Latina* 178, 1651C – 1652A). In contrast to this, Peter Lombard in his *Sentences* has described theological analysis of virtue. For him, virtue is closely connected with the grace and gifts of God (ii 27.1). His definition of virtue is influenced by Augustine's writings. According to Augustine virtue is a good quality of the mind, which God brings in us without our activity (ii 27.5). and more specifically, God brings virtue in our soul, and we are doing acts of virtue through the regular exercise of free will in collaboration with God's grace. Although grace is not directly understood as virtue (ii 27.9), but it implies that virtue and grace cannot be separated at all. One may infer from this that Christian way of analysing the virtues has no place for philosophical analysis.

3.3.3 William of Auxerre:

William of Auxerre (c. 1150 – 1231) offered a significant approach in his *Summa Aurea* while distinguishing the difference between theological virtues, which can only be acquired by the grace of God, and the political virtues, appropriate to human in society and achieved through human effort. According to him, the political virtues can be traced in fundamental principles of natural law, which can be known to all by the grace of God because supreme good is innate in all of us. For him, the political virtues have two-fold benefits, one is it prepares us to achieve theological virtues, and the other is it becomes the medium to express in external acts when God's grace is received. William claims that the fundamental principles of virtue are known to Augustine through the divine ways.

¹⁹ Kent, B. *Virtues of the Will: The Transformation of Ethics in the Late Thirteenth Century*, Catholic University of America Press, 1995

²⁰ Marenbon, J. *The Philosophy of Peter Abelard* New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997, pp. 282–7.

3.3.4 Bonaventure:

The Bonaventure (1217 – 1274) developed Augustine's understandings of virtue in a whole new way, in his last work, the *Collations on the Hexameron*, which is a discussion on the limitations of human knowledge.²¹ Bonaventure's concept of virtue starts with a point from Genesis chapter 1, verse 4, where it is stated as – “God saw the light, that it was good, and He divided the light from the darkness...” and then he started his conception of virtue from the “most noble Plotinus” and Cicero, they believe that virtues come into human soul through an illumination by God, the cause of all virtues. Further, he claims that the pagans could not achieve the right understanding of virtue, because without revelation, nobody can have the proper understanding of the virtues. He explained that, the virtues work in the human soul by the means of threefold process –

- i. Directing the soul to its end,
- ii. Rectifying the dispositions of soul,
- iii. Healing the sickness of soul.

None of the above processes can be understood without having a revelation. According to him, the philosophers are unaware that our ultimate end is resurrection and eternal life, so, they are not able to understand how virtues connect our soul with its end. Philosophers don't even understand that the desires of the soul can only be remedied by the grace of God and how virtues can be healing, because they don't even know that the reason behind the sickness of the soul is their results of sin. The only possible remedy for the sicknesses of the soul is Christian charity, which presupposes faith and hope. One may claim that the pagan philosophers were not only incapable of understanding virtues, but also of attaining them. In the next section, we will focus on the virtues of the pagans which we think were actually uncooked versions of their Christian counterparts.

Bonaventure tried to establish that virtue cannot be achieved without grace of God. He clearly rejects the classical concept of virtue ethical thoughts, but it remains unclear that how far his rejection would go. There are some medieval scholars who suggested that his conception of virtue reflects that his rejection was made against

²¹ Kent, B. *Virtues of the Will: The Transformation of Ethics in the Late Thirteenth Century*, Catholic University of America Press, 1995, pp. 46-58

the entire classical moral philosophy. However, if we look at the *Hexaemeron*, we can find the difficulties that he criticises the classical moral philosophy completely, because he approved the elements of Aristotelian virtue theory evidently.²²

3.3.5 Thomas Aquinas:

The scholastic philosophers in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries took their concepts from Aristotelian ethics and philosophy to develop virtue theory. Aristotelian thoughts were introduced before the Muslim translators and commentators introduced the philosophical works of Aristotle to the West. According to Cary Nederman, Aristotle's moral thought were mainly introduced through his works on logic and its commentaries, and from the writings of later Peripatetic and Neoplatonic philosophers.²³ Thomas Aquinas who is known for his innovative synthesis of Christian theology and Aristotelian philosophy, has developed his idea of the virtue within this context. Aquinas in *Summa Theologiae* moulded his concept of virtue inspired by Peter Lombard's definition: "Virtue is a good quality of the mind, by which we live righteously, of which no one can make bad use, which God brings about in us, without us"²⁴. Aquinas criticises Lombard's definition and says it applies only to the infused virtues, by the grace of God, while the acquired virtues can be attained through human effort without grace. Aquinas interprets this definition of virtue in Aristotelian terms, as a *habitus*, i.e., a stable disposition of the intellect, will, or passions inclining the person to act in a certain way. For example, the innate capacities of a child for speech must be developed through the *habitus* of a particular language before the child start to talk. The virtues that shape our passions, will and intellect are considered as morally significant, because they incline a particular kind of action which are good without qualification.

The most innovative aspect of Aquinas' distinctive theory of the virtues lies in the systematic analysis of the virtues in terms of a metaphysics of perfection. Almost every scholastic theologian during Aquinas' period might believe that virtues are perfections of the agent, but Aquinas provides a systematic way to this belief, in

²² Kent, B. *Virtues of the Will: The Transformation of Ethics in the Late Thirteenth Century*, Catholic University of America Press, 1995, pp. 46-8

²³ Nederman, C. J. "Aristotelianism and the Origins of 'Political Science' in the Twelfth Century," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 52: 179–94, 1991

²⁴ Porter, Jean, "Virtue ethics in the medieval period" in *The Cambridge Companion to virtue Ethics* Edited by Daniel C. Russell, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2013 p. 80; *Summa theologiae*, i-ii 55.4, quoting ii *Sentences* 27.5

which he interprets and explained this in the light of his overall metaphysics. Aquinas interprets those actions that generally associated with certain virtues in such a way that they are perfections of specific faculties, as well as exemplifications of general ideals of praiseworthy behaviour. The passions, which are generally inclined towards desired and away from undesired through the senses, are shaped through reason towards the overall good through the virtues of temperance and fortitude²⁵. We must remember that the virtues were shaped, not suppressed – if they were suppressed then the virtues of the sensitive part of the soul would render their subject ineffective, rather than perfecting it. For example, the will, which is naturally directed towards self-love, is shaped by the virtues of justice and move from self-love to wider loves, towards the community, one's neighbours, and finally directed towards God²⁶.

Aquinas recognizes the traditional cardinal virtues as general qualities of every praiseworthy action, and he adds a further opinion in this regard, according to which these are separate virtues, concerning the particular faculties of the soul. Thus, virtues are perfections, they are developed concerned faculties and realised through the actualisation of different kinds of good actions. Because, each of the faculty, i.e., faculties of the intellect, the will, and the desire are all very different from each other, each of them has its own virtue, identified with one of the four traditional cardinal virtues, these are;

- i. Prudence or practical wisdom, an intellectual virtue, empowers the agent to act in accordance with rightly guided desires that expressed through particular actions;
- ii. Justice is a virtue that guide our will towards the good for all or the common good determined by reason;
- iii. Temperance and fortitude shape our passions to act in accordance with reason which sets forth the relation of the virtues to the different faculties of the soul in more detail.

²⁵ Porter, Jean, “Virtue ethics in the medieval period” in *The Cambridge Companion to Virtue Ethics* Edited by Daniel C. Russell, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2013 p. 82; *Summa theologiae* i-ii 58.2

²⁶ *Ibid*, 58.4

Aquinas considered the classical and Augustinian theory of virtue as a diverse form of virtue, that actually is a form of one single virtue or ideal goodness, thus, he focused on the specific virtues that deals with the specific faculties of our soul. As they are coordinated with rational judgment. The virtues are always good without qualification, so, they must be coordinated with the rational judgments of prudence, in accordance with the agent's overall good and overall, the relations with God²⁷. It should be noted that the infused virtues can be described without qualification, but, the acquired virtues are formed connected rational judgement and prudence, are also genuine virtues and the essential end of human being²⁸.

Thus, virtues play an important role to develop specific faculties of our soul but it also directs an individual towards his/her complete perfection as a rational being, or might say that directs towards beatitude or happiness. Happiness can best be understood from two different perspectives, which are as follows.

- i.** The first kind of happiness concerning to our natural capabilities, deals with the virtues that we achieve by the capacities of ourselves. Aquinas recognizes this kind of happiness with the practice of the cardinal virtues themselves, constituting the full development of the principles of action.²⁹

- ii.** But, on the other hand the second kind is a higher form of happiness, that direct personal union with God in the beatific vision. This kind of happiness exceeds the natural capabilities; thus, it must introduce new principles of action in order to attain such end.³⁰

According to Aquinas, these new principles of action are acquired through the immediate action of God on our soul. Transformation is achieved by grace, and the means by which grace is rendered are the infused virtues that includes the infused cardinal virtues with the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity and the gift of the Holy Spirit God (*ST* i-ii 110.3). One more difference between the acquired and infused virtues is also discussed by Aquinas. The infused cardinal virtues are

²⁷ Porter, Jean, "Virtue ethics in the medieval period" in *The Cambridge Companion to Virtue Ethics* Edited by Daniel C. Russell, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2013 p. 83

²⁸ *Ibid*, p. 83

²⁹ *Ibid*, p. 83

³⁰ *Ibid*, p. 83

different from the acquired virtues as they moved towards a particular end through a particular mean (*ST* i-ii 63.3, 4). While the acquired temperance takes its values from the entire well-being including physical health, which leads to a perfect self-control in food and drink. Infused temperance, in contrast, takes its values from one's desire for salvation, and maintains discipline, for example, fasting promote one's spiritual, as well as physical health. However, for Aquinas, ascetical exercises are vicious, because they damage one's bodily well-being, rather than virtuous. The acquired virtues, that concentrates finally on the overall well-being of the community, is thus transformed by the infused virtue, rather than undermining it. What we found is that Aquinas's grace perfects our nature rather than destroying it.

This is the most important and innovative aspect of Aquinas' accounts of virtues. Most of Aquinas' predecessors and interlocutors, articulated their understanding of virtues in relation to the theological virtues and political or acquired virtues. Theological virtues are necessary for salvation and depends on the grace of God, while political or acquired virtues are necessarily directed towards human flourishing and can be achieved through human participation. For Aquinas, political or acquired virtues serve as a foundation for the theological virtues, and they served as a mean through which the theological virtues are expressed. However, some scholastic philosophers hold that the theological and the acquired virtues remain in an external relation, and they don't accept infused political or cardinal virtues in this schema.

Though Aquinas is familiar with his predecessors' approach, but in the *Summa Theologiae*, he introduces even more complex differences between the theological and cardinal virtues, the infused and acquired virtues, with distinct forms of the cardinal virtues falling on either side of this line. One may think that, what compels us to introduce such unnecessary complications. Why he had done so?

One may respond to this question and may say that it lies in Aquinas' concept of grace. He had developed the concept of grace in terms of his analysis of the virtues as perfections of the agent. For Aquinas, infused virtues are the means that helps the grace to be expressed by one's own acts. What we can see in the above lines is that, the theological virtues direct the political or cardinal virtues, is inadequate to express. To be operative and effective completely in all the sphere of

human life, grace must transform all the faculties of one's soul involved in the process of action.³¹ Thus, it is clear that theological virtues alone cannot command the actions of other virtues, grace is expressed by the appropriate virtues to each faculty of the soul or in other words, expressed by the infused cardinal virtues.

Though it is inadequate to explain, why Aquinas prefers the cardinal virtue over political or infused virtues. It will be better, if we discuss the term '*secunda secundae*'. The virtues that oriented towards beatitude and the virtues that towards social aspects of human life, is too simple for Aquinas' purposes. For him, only justice, has a direct relation to the good of the entire community. In a specific sense, Temperance and fortitude both have focused on the good of individuals because they maintained a relation between passion and reasoned judgement of the individuals.

Aquinas took the Aristotelian doctrine of means to analyse the specific ideals of cardinal virtue. For Aristotle, virtues are expressed through passions and actions in accordance with rational means. So, according to rational means or the means of passions' a virtue is determined by the good of an organism, which maintains the correct relation between sensual good and whole good. So, these virtues are considered as rational means only. But the means of justice is established by the good of the entire community which reflects the objective criteria of equality and equity. Thus, the mean of justice is recognised as a means of reality as well as rationality. What we can observe here is that the infused cardinal virtues and the acquired virtues have defined by their different means, while the theological virtues are not like that, as they do not moderate with respect to belief, hope and love for God.

3.4 Virtue Ethnical Thoughts in the Late Medieval Period:

In the late thirteenth century, and also in the fourteenth and fifteenth century, scholastic conception of virtue took its form by the controversy over free will and the relation between the concept of will, intellect and passion. These controversies are complex and were driven by two approaches to human agency.³² One is the Dominican masters and their defence of intellectualism. For intellectualism, rational

³¹ Porter, Jean, "Virtue ethics in the medieval period" in *The Cambridge Companion to Virtue Ethics* Edited by Daniel C. Russell, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2013 p. 85

³² Kent, B. *Virtues of the Will: The Transformation of Ethics in the Late Thirteenth Century*, Catholic University of America Press, 1995, pp. 94–149.

judgment determines the choice of will. Another is Franciscan masters defending voluntarism, that gives more or less absolute priority to will. Consequently, these two approaches, leave not much space for the Aristotelian version of virtues. Aristotelian virtues start its journey from human agency as a complex phenomenon, dependent on the diverse faculties to set by two related problems, one is to explain how this coordination reach one's desirable or praiseworthy actions; and second to show that how the virtuous agent acts in accordance with the ideals of virtuous life.

Though these approaches have their differences, but they both share the similar view corresponding to the analysis of human agency either through the intellect or will, which lead us to determine choice and action. In this regard, the coordination of the diverse faculties is unnecessary because they don't have independence to generate real internal conflicts or distorted judgements. It also refers to the agent's character is which is much more connected to the sort of things he actually does. If someone's action is developed by a stable disposition and reflects the coordination of different faculties, which is determined by right judgements with a good will then that certainly is the character of an agent, so far as the late medieval period is concerned.

3.4.1 Duns Scotus' Conception of Virtue in the Medieval Period:

Duns Scotus (c. 1265 – 1308), a Franciscan theologian offers the most significant theories of will, moral law, and moral goodness in the medieval period. His conception of virtue takes even more attention, at least in the modern ethics, than that of his concept of other moral views.³³ Scotus was labelled as “the subtle Doctor” at that time and his views were critically analysed by the philosophers. Scotus defended a voluntarist theory of human agency in his later writings, though his voluntarism is qualified by the agreement that the will is informed by the intellect. The kind of voluntarism that he promoted leads him to an account of virtue that is very much different from the views of Aristotle.³⁴

According to Scotus, the will operates independently of the judgments of the intellect, as it produces actions apart from, or contrary to the judgments of intellect

³³ Kent, B. *Virtues of the Will: The Transformation of Ethics in the Late Thirteenth Century*, Catholic University of America Press, 1995, p. 352.

³⁴ Like other philosophers discussed previously, Scotus does not maintain a systematic theory of the virtues in any one text. His ideas on the virtues can be found in the *Ordinatio III* suppl., dist. 33–6.

relating to good. It is the only way that can be considered as truly free and will operates independent of passions or sensory desire. Scotus identifies a more concrete concept of by distinguishing the monastic ideas of Anselm. Following Anselm, he classifies two varieties of wills in each individual. One is to seek one's own well-being or perfection, and other one is a will towards justice or the good in general. It offers the most meaningful and sensible way to free the human agent to choose between its own well-being and justice or good. Scotus does not propose that the will towards one's own perfection, if it were properly exercised, plays a natural and proper part in human action.

Thus, Scotus' conception of virtue is a disposition to act in accordance with the will of justice, where self-interest is subordinate. It is important to mention here that virtue even in the most unqualified sense would seem to be identified with the agent's disposition to choose just or morally acceptable acts. Therefore, Scotus tried to build a theory of virtue that show how the architectonic virtues explain self-love to love of God in a proper way. He believes that virtue makes the way easy for a good action through disciplining and controlling our sensory desires but denies that virtue adds either anything to the moral value of a particular action or to the character of an agent. Scotus denies the distinction between infused and acquired moral virtues, and the dependence of meritorious acts on infused virtues. Generally, we characterise acts of charity, self-sacrifice as love of God, but if these kinds of actions become easier by the grace of God, then it becomes a necessary condition for their attainment.

The arguments as we discussed above, clearly maintain a safe distance from the earlier scholastic views on uniqueness and necessity of grace. But they actually appreciate the views on human agency and therefore the virtues. According to Wolter, Duns Scotus opposed Aquinas' view that our soul is obviously distinct from its faculties, which means he need not and perhaps cannot postulate the grace in terms of Aquinas, as a new operative principle separated from natural inclinations. Scotus doesn't believe that our soul and its faculties are completely separated from one another, as for him, whatever faculty enrich our soul must enrich overall. Both Aquinas and the earlier scholastics believes that the infused virtues are necessary, because it helps us to achieve a particular set of aims, and apprehend in the ways that go beyond natural capacities. Both agrees that infused virtues qualify different modes

of action and its final determinants too. So far as Scotus is concerned, what is important for us is that the righteous will that is engaged in the course of action and there is no need or no space for any principles to qualify or direct that will. Because of his attitude and opinions, Scotus is blamed to the scholastic virtue ethics. It is further alleged that Luther's idea of rejecting the Christian virtue is mostly influenced by Scotus. Martin Luther rejected the Christian virtue theory entirely together with Aristotle. But this does not prove that Scotus and his followers opposed the idea of virtue. Scotus' views can be traced as an alternative to the idea of virtue when he proposes the view against the Christian thinkers on the concept grace that departs radically from his Aristotelian predecessors. More specifically, while Augustine rejected his wholesale ideas, then Scotus may argue in his defence and in against to Augustine's view that "the virtues are all modalities of love, with *righteous will* substituted for *love*." It does not mean that Aristotelian virtue ethics was collapsed though suffered from an eclipse, but enjoy a revival in both philosophical and theological space. Thus, Virtue ethics is debated within a wider context of intellectual and practical spheres, and with the new ideas and views, it is expected to see diverse approaches to the virtues appearing, receding, and returning again.

3.5 The Revival of Virtue Ethics:

In the second half of the twentieth century, some highly significant changes in moral philosophy have been happened. Prior to that, moral philosophy was divided into two traditions. One is Kantianism or deontological moral theory and the another is utilitarianism or consequentialist moral theory.

Kantian moral theory proposes that morality must be universal and is based on impartial law of rationality. Categorical Imperative is the foundation of Kant's moral theory. For Kant, do not make false promises to get your desires. Because no one can will that, if someone will that, that would be a law of nature and everyone who wants to get their desires should make false promise. And if anyone further asks that why do not I will this, Kant may reply that if this happens then promising will not survive, and making false promises is not in accordance with laws of rationality.

Kant implacably disagreed with utilitarianism because it evaluates value of a particular moral theory only by comparing the well-being of human beings. Here

moral action aims at the good of human well-being and what is rational also. This theory does not aim solely at one's own well-being. It is an impartial theory because it obliges us to produce greater amount of overall well-being as possible.

In 1958, Elizabeth Anscombe attacked on both of these ethical traditions. For her, both of them speaks for a foundation of morality, such as obligation but these notions are nonsensical when there is no such law-giver (God) is assumed. As many of us do not believe in God, Anscombe suggests a foundation for ethics and this foundation is the notion of virtue as a part of human flourishing.

To explain the notion of human flourishing, Anscombe refers to Aristotle who was the main inspiration for Modern Virtue Ethics. In his *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle argued that “the best life for human being... consists in the exercise of the virtues (or the ‘excellences’)”³⁵ Aristotle talks about the necessity of *eudaimonia* and he was perhaps the most radical virtue ethicist ever. His radicalistic view on virtue can be traced when he says that “there is nothing worth having in life except the exercise of the virtues.”³⁶

To discuss the notion of virtue, few questions that frequently comes in our mind are as follows—

What is virtue ethics? One may say that it suggests us to act virtuously. We should live a virtuous life. But this is not enough to explain this theory, for example, Mill may probably agree with this line. His reason would be – one should act virtuously because it helps him/her to produce greater amount of overall well-being. And similarly, a Kantian may agree that one should be virtuous because it is an act which is in accordance with moral law, and moral laws are universal.

How does a virtue ethicist react to it? It must provide some ultimate moral reasons that are neither utilitarian nor Kantian, yet it makes some essential rationality of virtue itself. The virtue ethicist's straight-forward answer is - I should not tell lie because it is a dishonesty. Not because it is against the moral law, not because it produces greater amount of overall well-being. So, the notions of virtue are mere basic than that of utilitarian or Kantian moral theory. It also replaces the notion of

³⁵ Crisp, R. & Slote M. (Ed.), *Virtue Ethics*, Oxford University Press, UK, 2013, p. 2

³⁶ *Ibid*, p. 2

obligation, that utilitarians or Kantians are based on and moreover at least they do not need such language. Another feature of virtue ethics that makes it alienated from these two theories is its focus on moral agents and their lives, rather than focusing on one's discrete actions (telling a lie, making false promise, giving alms to beggar).³⁷

So far, we have seen, Anscombe's '*Modern Moral Philosophy*', which was published in 1958, is considered as the inauguration of present revival of virtue ethics. Anscombe, discusses few topics which are in some way or other related to the idea of a revival of virtue ethics. But the main reason that attracted its importance to all is its strong criticism of modern and contemporary moral philosophers and their theories. Though the entire criticism has not been univocally made by the modern virtue ethicist, Kantianism and religious ethicist would also criticize this point. The revival of virtue ethics inaugurated by Anscombe based on two further factors in her thinking –

- i. She claims that notions such as “‘moral obligation’ require a legislative model of morality in order to make sense.”³⁸
- ii. She also claims that “Kantian ‘self-legalisation’ is not a sensible notion.”³⁹

With both of these assumptions, Anscombe argues that secular moral philosophy that has no law-giver cannot make sensible use of moral obligation and rightness or wrongness of an action become tied to moral obligation. But the problem is, how can we do ethical statements? Anscombe simply answers that ethics can be done or based on the idea of virtue and human flourishing. To explain the ideal model of ethics that everyone should follows, Anscombe lead us back to fourth century B.C. ancient Greek philosophers, Plato and Aristotle. Yet, she warns us that we do not have actual understandings of the notion of virtue because Plato and Aristotle both of them do not clarify that notion and before we say what virtue is, we must have clear conception about the terms like – ‘intention’, ‘pleasure’ and action. Hence, according to Anscombe, we must have a clear idea about philosophical psychology otherwise it is better to stop moral philosophy.⁴⁰

³⁷ Crisp, R. & Slote M. (Ed.), *Virtue Ethics*, Oxford University Press, UK, 2013, p. 3

³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 4

³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 4

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p. 4

We have seen that virtue ethics differentiates itself by its *aretaic* notions, such as, ‘virtue’, ‘admirability’ and ‘excellence’, which are basic than deontic notions for Anscombe and even it can replace the deontic notions, such as rightness, wrongness or moral obligations. Anscombe’s argument against the emptiness and attributions of moral obligation, clearly favours the virtue ethics and probably this is the most rigorous attack that have been made in the contemporary history of ethics.⁴¹ Thus, after criticizing those popular ethical theories and showing the inappropriateness of the recent moral theory, we should encourage our self to do an ethics Plato and Aristotle does. In other words, once we have an idea of philosophical psychology, then, we must do an ethics, which have virtue ethical commitment to make virtuous character or an ethical theory that primarily concern the character traits.⁴²

Anscombe made an extensive research and discussion on the recent development of contemporary moral theory, criticizes them and done an extraordinary achievement to the revival of virtue ethics. Yet, there are many present-day ethicists, both defenders and opponents of her theory, do not agree with the assumptions she had made in her article ‘*Modern Moral Philosophy*’. According to many contemporary Kantians, they “can make more sense of self-legalization than Anscombe supposes”⁴³, and there are few virtue ethicists who think that “deontic notions of right and wrong need to be tied to typical, familiar assumptions about moral obligation”⁴⁴, rather they naturally emerge from *aretaic* notions, such as excellence and evil.

⁴¹ Crisp, R. & Slote M. (Ed.), *Virtue Ethics*, Oxford University Press, UK, 2013, p. 4

⁴² *Ibid*, p. 4

⁴³ *Ibid*, p. 4

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p. 4

Chapter - IV

Virtue Ethics in Kantian Moral Philosophy

4.1 Introduction:

In this chapter we have tried to discuss what Kant actually says about virtue. He not only expresses his high estimation of virtue but also expresses the centrality of virtue, in his practical ethics. Generally, Kant's notion of good will is considered as act-centered ethics for which it is criticized by many philosophers. In this chapter, we will try to establish that Kant's notion of good will offers us a clear view of agent-centered ethics which is contrary to the act-centered ethics, although Kantian philosophy is identified with the doctrine of formal duty, not with a judgment like what one ought to do.

We will also try to discuss that how virtue is a central theme in Kantian moral philosophy and the foundation of all types of moral judgments. However, this is not contradictory to Kantian moral philosophy but is defined in accordance the universal moral law. Let us focus how does Kant combines rules and duties concerning different acts in his virtue ethics.

What we need is to reinterpret the Kantian maxim to consider Kant's position as a virtue ethicist. We would also like to discuss the doctrine of morally necessary ends in his *Doctrine of Virtue* clearly establishes the central position of virtue in Kant's ethics. We will show that Kant has succeeded in balancing free choice with the obligation to obey the moral rule when he argues that agents have a duty to adopt certain ends. Kant is well enough to combine virtue and rule ethics and he sets the autonomy within universality. In the final section we will make a connection between virtue and the highest good. We will argue that Kant's conception of Good is directly related to virtue and his ethical theory is deeply connected with the agent's character and the ways of life. We will also discuss the unique achievement of Kantian ethics in harnessing together both rule and virtue ethics.

In the previous sections, we have seen that Kant's deontological rule ethics is primarily considered as the abandonment of agent-centred ethics. But there is more in Kantian ethics so far as his formal philosophy is concerned. One may be justified

in criticizing Kantian ethics only if categorical imperative is introduced in terms of the formula of universal law. In fact, Kant is not indifferent to the notion of ends. The categorical imperatives always treat humanity as an end, never as a means. Kant's formulation of universalisation is not left adrift but it is deeply attached with the duty which imposes upon everyone to treat others with the respect, they expect to receive in return from them. It has practical implications and ruling out all those institutions and practices which treat human being as a means. In our argument we suggest that Kant has been perceived one-sidedly as an act-centered ethicist. But Kant has a clear and distinct interest on virtue. We need to remember that Kant has also written a substantial work, entitled: *The Doctrine of Virtue*.

4.2 Kant and the Doctrine of Virtue:

The *Doctrine of Virtue* is considered as the primary source of Kant's practical ethics. In 1797 Kant published Metaphysics of Morals, *The Doctrine of Right* and the *Doctrine of Virtue*. *The Doctrine of Right* expresses his political ideas whereas *The Doctrine of virtue* is concerned with characters. Since 1770 Kant at the University of Königsberg he was very much concerned with the logical and metaphysical questions like, what is man? Or who am I?

Later on, it is seen that Kant's *Doctrine of Virtue* has been neglected and scholars failed to give critical attention which it deserves. While re-interpreted Kantian ethics in his own light, Gary Banham opines, Kantian ethics is a combination of both teleology and perfectionism. In the introductory part of the *Doctrine of Virtue*, Kant clearly took his position of viewing ethical ideas in respect of teleological value leading towards perfectionism. Kant compares the *Doctrine of Right* with the *Doctrine of Virtue* and says –

“The doctrine of Right dealt only with *the formal* condition of outer freedom (the consistency of outer freedom with itself if its maxim were made universal law), that is, with **Right**. But ethics goes beyond this and provides a *matter* (an object of free choice), an **end** of pure reason that it presents as an end which is also objectively necessary, that is, an end which, as far as men are concerned, it is a duty to have.”¹

¹ Gregor, Mary J. (Trans. & Ed.), *Groundwork of The Metaphysics of Morals*, p. 186, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2001

According to Banham, interpretation expresses the meaning of these lines may be summarised as follows;

“The distinction between the treatment of right and that of virtue involves two different elements. First, whilst the treatment of right is concerned only with *formal* conditions, the treatment of virtue concerns *matters* of choice or objects of choice. Second, the treatment of right is purely in relation to outer freedom but since the treatment of virtue is related to the activity of choice of objects for the will it must include within its province inner freedom or the setting of ends. This concentration on ends is constitutive of the treatment of virtue. It marks Kant’s ethics as teleological.”²

The distinction between right and virtue, as interpreted above rejects some of the opinions in Kant’s critiques who think that Kant is just a deontologist and for whom ‘the motive of duty’ is primary. It also rejects the view of those who interpreted Kant’s view as concerned with right rather than good. But Kantian ethics is something more than right and principle. Kant refuses the utilitarian happiness principle in order to make a connection between good and virtue. Thus, Kant rejects the principle of personal happiness and opines:

The principle of *personal happiness* is, however, the most objectionable, not merely because it is false and because its pretense that well-being always adjusts itself to well-doing is contradicted by experience; it is not because it contributes nothing towards establishing morality, to make a man happy is quite different to make him good and to make him prudent or astute in seeking his advantage quite different from making him virtuous; but because it bases morality on sensuous motives which rather undermine it and totally destroy its sublimity, inasmuch as the motives of virtue are put in the same class as those of vice and we are instructed only to become better at calculation, the specific difference between virtue and vice being completely wiped out.³

Making morality dependent upon personal interests significantly destroys its dignity. Here Kant argues that utilitarianism dose not teach us how to make a distinction between virtue and vice but “how to become better at calculation”, and

² Gary Banham, *Kant’s practical philosophy From Critique to Doctrine*, p. 182, Palgrave MacMillan, New York, 2003

³ Paton, H. J., *The Moral Law*, pp. 109 - 10, B. I. Publication, New Delhi, 1979

makes his view clear that he is basically concerned with virtue that is connected with good rather than right. Thus, Kant clearly expresses his views on virtue, not on right. Banham attempts to establish the *Doctrine of Virtue* in closer connection with the *Doctrine of Right* to provide a combined idea of Kant's practical ethics in relation to his critique of morality.

What we are trying to establish is that Kantian ethics is necessarily concerned with purpose, but not any ordinary purpose, only a special type of purpose that it is a duty to have. Kant describes ethics as “the system of the *ends* of pure practical reason”⁴, here Kant talks of ends that are considered as duties within the field of virtue. Kant explains that “the treatment of moral philosophy in his critical works is no more than a propaedeutic to the discussion of ethics paper, a discussion conducted necessarily in terms of ends.”⁵ But it does not mean that ends are pre-existently given that can be expected to be adapted by the categorical imperative. Banham in this context opines:

“...there was such an adaptation of the principles of morality to ends, with an allowance for ends to be selected according to whatever principle one wished as long as they in execution conformed to a general rule of conduct. But with ethics it is quite otherwise as in ethics ‘the *concept of duty* will lead to ends and will have to establish *maxims* with respect to ends we *ought* to set ourselves’ (Ak. 6:382). So, the categorical imperative has to enable us to think of how to connect the concept of duty with that of an end in general.”⁶

This is needless to say that Banham's work is an essential piece of work that recovers the practical field of Kantian ethics. It establishes Kant's deontological rule ethics within the teleology of perfectionism and helps us to recover the centrality of virtue in Kantian ethics. We know that Kantian virtue ethics is neglected for so many years but Kant himself expressed his view on virtue many times in his works.

For example, Kant in his *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*, says that, “Among moral qualities true virtue alone is sublime”.⁷ And he

⁴ Gregor, Mary J. (Trans. & Ed.), *Groundwork of The Metaphysics of Morals*, p. 187, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2001

⁵ Gary Banham, *Kant's practical philosophy From Critique to Doctrine*, p. 182, Palgrave MacMillan, New York, 2003

⁶ *Ibid*, p. 182

⁷ Kant, Immanuel, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime and Other Writings*, Patrick Frierson and Paul Guyer (Eds.), p. 22, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2011

also expresses in his *Critique of Pure Reason*, where he says, "...it is only by means of this idea (of virtue) that any judgment as to moral worth or its opposite is possible; and it therefore serves as an indispensable foundation for every approach to moral perfection..."⁸ A similar view is also presented by Kant in his *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim*, when he says, "But everything good that is not grafted onto a morally good disposition, is nothing but mere semblance and glittering misery."⁹ Thus it is clear in Kantian thinking that whatever is not based on morally good disposition is nothing but glittering misery.

One point is very clear from the above discussion that it should not be difficult for us to argue for the establishment of Kantian ethics as a virtue ethics. And if we establish his view regarding virtue then virtue ethics also secured him more profoundly.

Onora O'Neill a Kantian scholar, responded to MacIntyre's criticism¹⁰ of Kant in her book *Kant After Virtue*. Even Robert B. Louden in his *Kant's Virtue Ethics*, opines:

"Some readers of Kant feel that the conceptual shape of his ethical theory has been distorted by defender and critic alike, that his ethics is not rule ethics but virtue ethics. This reading of Kant has had its defenders in the past (he did after all write *The Doctrine of Virtue*), but Onora O'Neill has recently placed it in the context of the contemporary virtue ethics debate. In *Kant After Virtue* (a reply to MacIntyre's book), she states confidently that 'what is not in doubt . . . is that Kant offers primarily an ethic of virtue rather than an ethic of rules'¹¹."¹²

Warner Wick presents an earlier interpretation about the prominence of virtue in Kantian ethics. But he did not use such strong term like Onora O'Neill.¹³

In fact, we think that a rule ethics and a virtue ethics are opposed to each other and they are mutually exclusive alternatives. But Kantian ethics is not

⁸ Kant, Immanuel, *Critique of Pure reason*, Smith, N. K. (Ed.), p. 311, Macmillan & Co. Ltd., New York, 1968

⁹ Kant, Immanuel, *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim*, A. O. Rorty and James Schmidt (Eds.), p. 19, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2009

¹⁰ MacIntyre criticizes Kant in his *After Virtue*

¹¹ Onora O'Neil, *Kant After Virtue*, p. 397, 1984

¹² Louden, Robert B., *Kant's Virtue Ethics*, appeared in Immanuel Kant: Critical Assessments, Vol. 3, Ruth F. Chadwick, Routledge, London, 2002

¹³ 'Kant's Moral Philosophy' in *Kant's Ethical Philosophy*, James Ellington (Trans.), Hackett Publishing Company, Indianapolis, 1983

considered in this line, as Kantian ethics emphasizes on both. In a reply to Garve, Kant make his position and identifies duty in terms of virtue. According to him –

“I had provisionally designated the study of morals as the introduction to a discipline which would teach us not how to be happy, but how we should become worthy of happiness.¹⁴ Nor had I omitted to point out at the same time that man is not thereby expected to *renounce* his natural aim of attaining happiness as soon as the question of following his duty arises; for like any finite rational being, he simply cannot do so. Instead, he must completely *abstract* from such considerations as soon as the imperative of duty supervenes, and must on no account make them a *condition* of his obeying the law prescribed to him by reason. He must indeed make every possible conscious effort to ensure that no *motive* derived from the desire for happiness imperceptibly infiltrates his conceptions of duty. To do this, he should think rather of the sacrifices which obedience to duty (i.e., virtue) entails than of the benefits he might reap from it, so that he will comprehend the imperative of duty in its full authority as a self-sufficient law, independent of all other influences, which requires unconditional obedience.”¹⁵

What we want to establish is that it is not necessary to choose between rule ethics and virtue ethics, because Kant’s ethics is able to combine both equally. We want to develop Kant’s ethical theory as an agent centered ethics by making reference to good will, maxims, morally necessary ends and the relation between virtues and good. Let us discuss the concept of goodwill as a foundation of human character.

4.3 The Good Will as a Foundation of Human Character:

Kant develops his ethical theory on an idea of ‘character’ in reference to the need for ‘the good will’ –

“It is impossible to conceive anything at all in the world, or even out of it, which can be taken as good without qualification, except a **good will**. Intelligence, wit, judgment, and any other *talents* of the mind we may care to name, or courage, resolution, and constancy of purpose, as qualities of *temperament*, are without doubt

¹⁴ Being worthy of happiness is that quality of a person which depends upon the subject's own individual free will and in accordance with which a universal reason, legislating both to nature and to the free will, would agree with all the aims of that person. It is thus entirely different from any aptitude for attaining happiness itself. For if a person's will does not harmonize with the only form of will which is fit to legislate universally to the reason, and thus cannot be contained within the latter (in other words, if his will conflicts with morality), he is not worthy of happiness and of that gift of attaining happiness with which nature endowed him. (Collected from Kant: Political Writings, p. 64, footnote)

¹⁵ Reiss, H. S., Kant: Political Writings, p. 64, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1991

good and desirable in many respects; but they can also be extremely bad and hurtful when the will is not good which has to make use of these gifts of nature, and which for this reason has the term '*character*' applied to its peculiar quality."¹⁶

Kant says that, "Power, wealth, honour, even health and that complete well-being and contentment with one's state which goes by the name of '*happiness*', produce boldness, and as a consequence often over-boldness as well, unless a good will is present by which their influence on the mind and so too die whole principle of action may be corrected and adjusted to universal ends."¹⁷ Thus, Kant concludes that "a good will seems to constitute the indispensable condition of our very worthiness to be happy."¹⁸

Here Kant's ethical position on good will is very clear. He clearly talks about an agent-centered ethics rather than an act-centered ethics. This view is definitely contradicting the view that Kantian ethics is rule-centered and deontological. Robert Paul Wolff in *The Autonomy of Reason*, remarks that it is "noteworthy that the philosopher most completely identified with the doctrine of stern duty should begin, not with a statement about what we ought to do, but rather with a judgment of what is unqualifiedly good."¹⁹ So, it is clear that what Kant understands by the concept of unqualifiedly good is not some end-state like pleasure or some particular acts in accordance to rules, but a state of character which is the foundation for all actions performed by one person. For good will it is necessary to look beyond some particular acts and decisions and to observe the lives that agents live. Kant personally believes that 'it is not possible for someone to be morally good in some ways and at the same time morally evil in others.'²⁰ A steadfastness of character must be present in the agent at all times.

Kant's conception of unqualified goodness helps us to conclude that he emphasizes more on agents rather than acts in his ethical theories. This assertion from Kant demands the relationship between good will and virtue. In the *Doctrine of Virtue* (*Tugendlehre*), Kant defines virtue (*Tugend*) as "fortitude in relation to the

¹⁶ Paton, H. J., *The Moral Law*, p. 59, B. I. Publication, New Delhi, 1979

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 59

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 59

¹⁹ Wolff, Robert Paul, *The Autonomy of Reason*, pp. 56 – 7, Harper & Row, New York, 1973

²⁰ Kant, Immanuel, *Religion Within the Bounds of Bare Reason*, Trans. By Werner S. Pluhar, Hackett Publishing Company, Cambridge, 2009

forces opposing a moral attitude of will in us.”²¹ For Kant, a good will must be an act consistent with the motive of respect for the moral rule. Human beings generally possess their natural urges and inclinations, sometimes contrary to reason. But a virtuous person is one whose fortitude is able to rise above those natural urges and inclinations. This fortitude is strength of force of will,²² not as an ability to achieve goal but to achieve mastery over one’s natural urges and inclinations. (Foundations, p. 10) As because some wills are better than others and only a holy will possess an absolutely good will, Kant thus concludes that, “human morality in its highest stages can still be nothing more than virtue.”²³

For Kant, virtue is only an approximation of the good will and the virtuous agent is a human approximation of a good will, which is effected and through the strength of mind and acting out of reverence for the law. After establishing the good will as the unqualified good and defining virtue as the human approximation of a good will one can conclude that virtue is foundational for Kant. We have seen earlier that Kant expresses his view in favor of morally good character as – “But all good enterprises which are not grafted on to a morally good attitude of mind are nothing but illusion and outwardly glittering misery.”²⁴ According to this, “the essence of [Kant’s] moral philosophy is quite different from what it has commonly been supposed to be, for on the basis of this enquiry one must conclude that it is the concept of the good will that lies at its foundation.”²⁵

4.4 Maxims as Underlying Intentions:

According to Robert B. Louden the second argument to establish Kant as a virtue ethicist we need to re-interpret Kantian maxim as underlying intention.²⁶ Kant

²¹ “Now the capacity and considered resolve to withstand a strong but unjust opponent is *fortitude* (*fortitudo*) and, with respect to what opposes the moral disposition *within us*, *virtue* (*virtus*, *fortitudinemoralis*).” (Immanuel Kant, *Metaphysics of Morals*, p. 186, Ak. 380)

^{22a}Kant, Immanuel, *Doctrine of Virtue*, p. 49 – 50; ^bKant, Immanuel, *Lecture on Ethics*, Trans. By Peter Heath and Ed. By Peter Heath and J. B. Schneewind, p. 73, Cambridge University Press, UK, 1997; ^cKant, Immanuel, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, Trans. By Mary J. Gregor, pp. 26 – 7, Martinus, Nijhoff, The Hague, 1974

²³ (*Doctrine of Virtue* – 41, *Critique of Practical Reason* – 86 – 7, *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals* – 30 – 31)

²⁴ Peter Critchley, Kant and Virtue, p. 16

²⁵ *Ibid*, p. 16

²⁶ This strategy is adopted by Onora O’Neill in her book *Constructions of Reasons: Explorations of Kant’s Practical Philosophy*

defines the maxim as a ‘subjective principle of volition’.²⁷ Here one may infer that a maxim is a course of action which is adopted by a particular agent at a particular time and place. Because, the principle or maxim is subjective rather than objective, it must be tied in with the agent's own intentions and interests. So, one may ask that ‘why Kantian maxims are not considered as agent's specific maxims for their discrete acts?’ Though this is the general understanding of maxim, but at the same time it leads itself towards the rule interpretation of maxim, because here a maxim becomes a rule which prescribes a specific act.²⁸ O'Neill opposed this rule interpretation of maxim and argues that “it seems most convincing to understand by an agent's maxim the *underlying* principle by which the agent orchestrates his numerous more specific intentions.”²⁹ O'Neill takes an example to discuss this in a more lucid way — “Suppose I have invited a guest to my house, and that my underlying intention is to make him feel welcome. On most such occasions, I will have numerous specific intentions by means of which I carry out the underlying intention: I may offer him a beer, invite him to put a record on the stereo, show him my vegetable garden, etc.”³⁰

O'Neill offers two arguments in favour of the formulation of maxims as underlying intention.

- i. Naturally we must be aware of our specific intentions for the future, but Kant insists that “agents are not always aware of, nor ever infallible about, what their maxims are”³¹ (G, 4, 398-9; DV, 6, 446). This first argument suggests that maxims and specific intentions are not the same.
- ii. The second argument “why maxims cannot be understood as conscious decisions or intentions for the future is that not every act is preceded by any such intention.”³² Sometimes, when we act absentmindedly, we act without a specific intention, but Kant holds that we always act on some maxim. All action, even unplanned and negligent action also is

²⁷ Kant, Immanuel, *Foundations of The Metaphysic of Morals*, Trans. by L. W. Beck, p. 17, The Liberal Arts Press, New York, 1959

²⁸ Louden, Robert B., “Kant's Virtue Ethics” in *Philosophy*, Vol. 61, No. 238 (Oct., 1986), pp. 473-489

²⁹ O'Neill, Onora, *Constructions of Reasons: Explorations of Kant's Practical Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1995, p. 151

³⁰ Louden, Robert B., “Kant's Virtue Ethics” in *Philosophy*, Vol. 61, No. 238 (Oct., 1986), pp. 473-489

³¹ O'Neill, Onora, *Constructions of Reasons: Explorations of Kant's Practical Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1995, p. 151

³² *Ibid*, p. 151

performed on some action and thus, opens to moral assessment. And again, the second argument also suggests a difference between maxims and specific intentions.³³

So, it is clear enough for us that if Kantian maxims can interpret as underlying intentions rather considering them as specific intentions, then we do have a strong argument to claim that Kant's ethics can be interpreted as virtue ethics. We know that our underlying intentions directly connected with the type of persons we are and with the type of lives we lead. And what the type of person one is depends upon what virtues or vices one holds. On the other hand, one's specific intentions, do not always guide accurately about the sort of person one is 'deep down inside'. Both O'Neill and Höffe stressed on this particular connection between 'underlying intentions' and 'being a sort of person one is'.³⁴ So what we can see here is that if we understand Kantian maxim as underlying intentions then it will redirect us to the ethics of virtue.

So, if we follow O'Neil and interpret Kant's maxim as *underlying intentions* then we can interpret Kant's ethics as a virtue ethics. Underlying intentions of an agent is inseparable with the character of a person and the kind of life he lives. And what kind of a person is, depends upon the virtues and vices he possesses.³⁵

If maxims are underlying intentions that gives sense to agent's different specific intentions, then it may be wrong to consider them merely as adoptions of moral rules with the sense that rules prescribe specific actions. It will be better, if we consider maxims as indeterminate guidelines that can be acted specially when it will be supplemented by more specific intentions. O'Neill takes an example to express her thought, "For example, if a maxim were as indeterminate as "don't deceive others", then in a certain modern context it might be reflected in matters such as 'not writing false checks' or 'becoming a spy' or 'manipulating public opinion, but in other traditional contexts these actions might be unavailable, indeed

³³ Louden, Robert B., "Kant's Virtue Ethics" in *Philosophy*, Vol. 61, No. 238 (Oct., 1986), pp. 473-489

³⁴ O'Neill, Onora, *Constructions of Reasons: Explorations of Kant's Practical Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1995, p. 395; Hoffe, 91. Louden 480

³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 395

incomprehensible.”³⁶ So, from the above passages, one might think that our specific intentions, e.g. ‘not concealing weapons and arms from others’ might be important to implement a maxim of no deception.

But, if this is true, then we have to admit that maxims play a very little role with the rightness and wrongness of a specific type of action, though plays a much more important role with the underlying moral quality of one’s life. Adopting a sort of morally appropriate maxims do not mean that one adopting a set of moral rules rather it is a much more general guidelines for living. That means, to have a morally appropriate maxims are actually a matter of leading certain sort of life or what sort of person is. For O’Neill, then our core of morality lies in appropriate underlying intentions rather conforming our actions to specific moral rules.

The above-mentioned criteria of ‘morally appropriate maxim ‘are actually holding the Kant’s view on morality. Kant differentiates between morally appropriate maxim, which is according to him is the heart of morality and acting in accordance with those maxims, which is an outward conformity rather than morality of action. According to Kant, the action that meets the inner standard is morally valuable or virtuous actions; and actions that meets the outward standard is morally right. Thus, we can see that, the morally worthy or the virtuous actions and the morally unworthy or the vicious actions are more fundamental to Kant than that of the morally right actions, that are obligatory or merely permissible actions and the forbidden actions. In both *Groundwork* and *Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant share his idea that, the definition of right action is that conforms at least outward action that done out of virtuous or morally worthy maxim.

In spite of focusing on the clear textual evidences that Kant approves virtue or moral worth as much more fundamental than that of merely morally rightness, there is too many interpreters who claims that Kant is a philosopher who gives the central position to the notion of rightness and wrongness of an action in his moral discourse. Here O’Neill assumes that perhaps this interpretation of Kant was made because “Kant asserts that he is concerned above all with *duty* – and duty for modern

³⁶ O’Neill, Onora, *Constructions of Reasons: Explorations of Kant’s Practical Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1995, p. 151

thinkers is concerned with the external aspects of action.”³⁷ But O’Neill thinks that Kant has “wrought a change in our understanding of duty” by attaching them to rational being as such but not any particular position or role. One thing that established very strongly is that, “I suggest, is that Kant offers primarily an ethic of virtue rather than an ethic of virtue.”³⁸

In the *Doctrine of Virtue*, Kant explains virtue as a ‘mere aptitude (*Fertigkeif*) or ...a long-standing habit (*Gewohnheit*) of morally good actions’.³⁹ For Kant, human virtue is valuable but uncertain. To give certainty and preserve this virtue we need to constantly guard this from empirical inclinations. Because for Kant virtue is more than a mechanical habit or something which can be the reason. Thus, Kant defines virtue as a moral disposition ‘armed for all situations’ and ‘insured against changes that new temptations can bring about’.⁴⁰

4.5 Practical Reasoning:

What we have just establish is that Kantian ethics is not primarily an ethic of rules thus it is not vulnerable to the serious charge of rigoristic ethics. And similarly in the charge of formalism against Kant claimed that Kant has failed in showing that how reason could be practical. The Categorical Imperative, which is supposed to be the supreme principle of practical reason is also alleged to bear no fruitful outcome. So, it our responsibility to show that the allegation just made against Kant is not right at all, and to do this it is necessary to introduce an interpretation of the Categorical Imperative that also bear fruitful conclusions. O’Neill offers a sketch that how it should be done and also give some reasons to accept that the Categorical Imperative is a purely rational principle.

To make it possible that the Categorical Imperative is a purely rational principle, O’Neill initially focuses on the Formula of Universal Law. The Formula of Universal Law runs as “act only that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law (4:421).”⁴¹ Here the Categorical Imperative suggests that ‘the maxim by which we propose to guide our action is the

³⁷ O’Neill, Onora, *Constructions of Reasons: Explorations of Kant’s Practical Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1995, p. 153

³⁸ *Ibid.* p. 153

³⁹ Kant, Immanuel, *Doctrine of Virtue*, p. 41 - 2

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* p. 42

⁴¹ Paton, H. J., *The Moral Law*, B. I. Publication, New Delhi, 1979, p. 29

one that at the same time we will can that all others should act on.' Though it does not mean that 'what would want all others to do, or what others might want done', rather it means that 'what we can consistently done, will be done not only by ourselves but also by others.' The reason behind the moral significance of a universal law is that it does not any special treatment to ourselves (*Groundwork*, 4:404). By accepting the Categorical Imperative, we actually accept the moral reality of others and moreover accept the possibility of a moral community. So, the Formula of Universal Law clearly speaks that 'we act only those maxims that are open to others (or everyone) also. Thus, once again we have found the ample evidences to consider maxim as underlying principles rather than as specific intention of action.⁴²

4.6 The Doctrine of Morally Necessary Ends:

Another evidence for considering Kantian ethics as based upon virtue theory is given by his doctrine of morally necessary Ends in the *Doctrine of Virtue*. Kant opines that every action must have an end because they all are goal-directed processes. Ends are objects of free choice. Kant argues that human beings have many desires and inclinations which are imposed upon them. Since we cannot be forced to make an end of an action but it is ultimately chosen by us. Even one can and does refuse the biological desire for life in extreme condition.

Question may be raised how does Kant balance free choice with the obligation to obey the moral rule? Kant speaks of freely chosen ends which are morally necessary. Therefore, an agent must have a duty to adopt certain ends. Kant might have a problem with neo-Kantian philosopher, such as, John Rawls, who argues for the priority of right over the priority of good. The neo-Kantian position which gives priority to the right over the good is far away from the Kantian position. Kantian morality establishes the space for freedom but neo-Kantian morality is only instrumental. Kant allows us both the right and the good, rules and virtue. He is concerned with the moral dispositions and the kinds of lives lived by the agent.

Whatever the contemporary neo-Kantian attempts to reinterpret Kant as neutral on the good, but Kant clearly mentioned that, the morally necessary ends are very crucial to moral philosophy and these morally necessary ends do really exist.

⁴² O'Neill, Onora, *Constructions of Reasons: Explorations of Kant's Practical Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1995, p. 156

Our good life depends on choosing these ends as a matter of free choice in terms of reason. The elimination of morally necessary ends ‘would do away with all moral philosophy’.⁴³ All necessary ends are categorical. And if all ends are contingent instead of necessary then all imperatives are also hypothetical instead of categorical, this would be the end of moral philosophy.

In the *Doctrine of Virtue* Kant expresses that the moral agents have two ends in respect of their duty. One is duty to their own perfection and the another is duty to the happiness of others. Duty to their own perfection is most fundamental and directly connected with moral character. Duties of self-perfection include the cultivation of mind, body and soul. But the most important thing is the obligation to cultivate one’s own will ‘to the purest attitude of virtue’.⁴⁴ It is also argued that, according to Kant, virtue is a human approximation to the good will. Human beings are always subject to inclinations by their biological and cultural sentiments which are contrary to the moral law. Here reason guides towards the morally necessary ends in accordance with moral law.

4.7 Virtue and the Highest Good:

So far, we have seen that virtue plays a greater importance in Kantian ethics than what merely rule-ethics does. It does not mean that, Kantian ethics talks only about virtues rather it combines both rule and virtue to develop an ethical position which is better than others. In Kantian moral philosophy both the agent and his act have their own significant parts to play. In fact, we have tried to rectify the predominant interpretation of Kant as a rule deontologist. In Rawlsian ethical theory, it is right that prevails over good, but Kant disagrees with this view. Kant talks about the moral requirement to transform the whole society to experience the highest good. In his *Critique of Judgment*, he says –

“The moral law... determines for us... a final purpose toward which it obliges us to strive and this purpose is the highest good in the world possible through freedom.”⁴⁵

For Kant, human beings “are a priori determined by reason to promote with all our powers the *summum bonum* [Weltbeste], which consists in the combination of the

⁴³ Kant, Immanuel, *Metaphysics of Morals*, Ak. 384

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, Ak. 386

⁴⁵ Kant, Immanuel, *Critique of Judgment*, Bernard, John H. (Trans.), p. 225, Cosimo Classics, New York, 2007

greatest welfare of rational beings with the highest condition of good itself, i.e., in universal happiness conjoined with morality most accordant to law.”⁴⁶

Thus, one may say that Kant’s conception of the good is directly concerned with virtue and thus his ethical theory does not consider merely particular acts but agents’ characters and the lives they live.

4.8 Virtue as a Structured Composite:

Kant in his *Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone* says that, virtue is a composition of cultivated emotions. Virtue has a regulative structure and it is an ordered composition in which inclinations are not criticized. According to Kant there are three types of dispositional property of good that characterize human nature; **A**) “the predisposition to animality (as a mere living being), **B**) the predisposition to humanity (as a living and rational being), and **C**) the predisposition to personality (as a living and rational being who is accountable).”⁴⁷ In the first case, predisposition about animality is about one’s self-love, increasing one’s species and basic sociality. In predisposition to humanity self-love is expressed in our cultural striving and the social dependence upon others. Predisposition to personality is to hold ourselves morally accountable by our actions in terms of our moral principles. All of these are part of our human nature that composes the conception of good character. Kant opines:

“All of these predispositions are not only *good* in negative fashion (in that they do not contradict the moral law); they are also predispositions *toward good* (they enjoin the observance of the law). They are *original*, for they are bound up with the possibility of human nature. Man can indeed use the first two contrary to their ends, but he can extirpate (*vertilgen*) none of these. By the predispositions of a being we understand not only its constituent elements which are necessary to it (*Bestandstucke, die dazuerforderlich sind*), but also the forms of their combination, by which the being is what it is.”⁴⁸

For Kant, our cultivated natural and social powers are not necessary conditions of moral agency, it is a hierarchically structured component of the overall

⁴⁶Kant, Immanuel, *Critique of Judgment*, Bernard, John H. (Trans.), Cosimo Classics, New York, 2007, p. 227

⁴⁷Sherman, Nancy, *Making a necessity of virtue: Aristotle and Kant on Virtue*, p. 159, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1997

⁴⁸Kant, Immanuel, *Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone*, p. 28

character of a human being to achieve moral good. He believes that, if natural powers and capacities are properly habituated and ordered then it can be a supportive part of moral character. For Kant “only in continuous labor and growth’ (*Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone*, p. 47 - 48) one can be able to become a good person.”⁴⁹

“This change can be regarded as a revolution. But in the judgment of men, who can appraise themselves and the strength of their maxims only by the ascendancy which they win over their sensuous nature in time, this change must be regarded as nothing but an ever-lasting struggle toward the better, hence as a gradual reformation.”⁵⁰

In fact, Kant argues that virtue requires not choosing character but the course of habituation. In criticising Aristotle’s view, Kant sometimes thinks that habituation as producing mindless states will lack the practical, “But virtue is not to be defined [*zuerklären*] and valued merely as an *aptitude* and ... a long-standing *habit* of morally good actions acquired by practice. Unless this aptitude results from considered, firm, and continually purified principles, like any other mechanism of technically practical reason, it is neither armed for all situations nor adequately secured against the changes that new temptations could bring about.”⁵¹ (*Doctrine of Virtue* 383 - 384)

But it is wrong to conclude that reliable and stable habituated states always lack the practical reason. And even Aristotle does not say that the habituation takes place or that the training of emotions implies the absence of practical reason. There are many commentators including Kant, who have badly misinterpreted Aristotle’s conception of habituation or *ethismos*.

Coming back to our discussion, what can we say about the praiseworthiness of Kantian virtue? In a passage from the conclusion of the *Doctrine of Virtue*, Kant says that ‘duty ...emphasizes earlier’.⁵²

If we interpret that a cheerful frame of mind as not just of acting from duty in the absence of contrary inclination, but acting from context specific emotions, then

⁴⁹ Sherman, Nancy, *Making a necessity of virtue: Aristotle and Kant on Virtue*, p. 60, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1997

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, p. 160; *Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone*, p. 48

⁵¹ Mary Gregor, *Metaphysics of Morals*, p. 189

⁵² Sherman, Nancy, *Making a necessity of virtue: Aristotle and Kant on Virtue*, p. 163, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1997

the presence of these emotions also required for the action to be “meritorious and exemplary.”⁵³ Even Kant has some conception of moral praiseworthiness and the moral agent with a structured conception of character that cultivates the emotions that is responsive to the states of the moral law. Action done from duty without emotions from a structured conception of character is simply not morally praiseworthy.

Conclusion:

By the help of above discussion, we have found that the possibility for developing a theory of practical reasoning that does not depend on teleological foundation. Kant has criticized the teleological foundation for ethics in his *Critique of Practical Reason*. The attempt/project to build a heteronomous ethical system that derives moral rules directly from the wants of human beings is rejected by both Kant and MacIntyre. Kant rejects the possibility of teleological ethics in perfectionism while MacIntyre adopts it. Kant’s conception of human rationality also inherited an indeterminate conception of the good for human being. The conception of the good for human being that can be read in Kant’s conception of human nature is no more determinate than one’s way of life that is guided by universal and rational maxims. The good life for someone is that invite the collaboration of others and never exclude them. Leaving a particular life in a certain context, we must say that, the possibility of moral community is to be maintained.

And again, the less determinate, though formal and rational conception of human nature on which Kant depends is sufficient to establish at least some fundamental maxims of virtue. Kant introduces a form of rationalism in ethics that does not produce any unique moral code, although it provides both fundamental guidelines and suggests the form of reasoning that introduces these guidelines into the way of life we are leading. O’Neill’s suggestion is that “if we are on a quest for the good for a man, and so in the process of debating, weighing, and considering the constituents practices and virtues of our own traditions, it would be a good idea to set aside some of the most venerable criticism made of Kant’s ethics and to look at his

⁵³ Sherman, Nancy, *Making a necessity of virtue: Aristotle and Kant on Virtue*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1997, p. 163

actual account of reason in action.”⁵⁴ And at the end we can claim similarly with Onora O’Neill that “Kant offers us primarily an ethic of virtue rather than of rules,” and Kant never treats the conception of human nature as merely calculative.

⁵⁴ O’Neill, Onora, *Constructions of Reasons: Explorations of Kant’s Practical Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1995, p. 161

Chapter - V

The Concept of Virtue in Indian Philosophical Tradition

5.1 How Virtue Ethics is Compatible with Cultural or Religious Approach to Ethics?

At a first glance, if we go through the traditional perspective of Virtue Ethics, then we can find that it involves personal responsibility and seems entirely secular. It is about developing qualities that will lead to *eudaimonia*. It, therefore, seems compatible with religion, but in fact, independent of it. However, recently in religious ethics there has been renewed interest in the virtues, and it has been recognised that the thought of Aristotle had great influence on the Christian tradition, especially the work of Thomas Aquinas. Since the twentieth-century revival and the work of MacIntyre, Virtue Ethics has become important and influenced theologians such as Stanley Hauerwas and Jean Porter.

For most of the Christians what is important is following the life and teachings of Jesus. They do not understand their religious beliefs as following a code of conduct or a set of concepts. The life of Jesus as related in the Gospels is fundamental; though Paul in his writings often appeals to other values, it is always to the Gospel, to the death and resurrection of Jesus, that he turns when discussing any serious moral issue. Throughout the *New Testament*, there is a constant call for the Christians to be the sort of people they are called to become. This fits well into a Virtue Ethical approach which suggests following the examples of virtuous people in order to become virtuous people ourselves. The appeal of Virtue Ethics is that it places a greater emphasis on being rather than doing – the kind of moral person one is to become, rather than goals or rules that must be followed.

The focus of Virtue Ethics on motivation and transformation of character fits in well with the biblical teaching such as that found in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5–7). Virtue Ethics also takes on the character of a particular culture, so that it can espouse particular Christian virtues such as mercy and agapeic love. Christianity has also responded to the times, with each major upheaval bringing about a new way of living the Christian life: Benedictine monasticism in the Dark

Ages, Franciscan and Dominican friars in the later Middle Ages, Protestant pietism in the eighteenth century and Blessed Mother Teresa's work among the poor in the twentieth century. Different times have seen the need for new virtues and new ways of living in Christianity.

Virtue Ethics does require practicing the virtues in order to become virtuous, and from a Christian point of view this wouldn't be the right way, instead of this they would like to help the poor to get into heaven. But the relationship between human flourishing (*eudaimonia*) and virtuous activity does not neatly fit into a means-to-an-end category, as all human flourishing is about how we live – it is not an end state. For Christians, the good life is to be found in communion with God and others. So, religious ethics does not need to mean unquestioning obedience to the commands of God, based on some private or particular revelation; it may also appeal to the natural also God-given moral insights and virtues of humans.

Indian philosophy and culture termed “ethics” or moral philosophy as *Nītiśāstra*. *Nītiśāstra* deals with the *Śāstra* or treatise of a branch of philosophy that preaches *Nīti* or moral values or moral norms. It addresses the questions and justifications on morality, good and evil, right and wrong, virtue and vice, justice and injustice etc. It discusses the rightness and wrongness of an action and discusses human values or the *puruṣārtha* or the goal of human life. It also gives emphasis on human being's internal character and their flourishing. Because of the internal character one's behaviour or *ācāra* is considered as good, bad, responsible or accountable. These internal characters also make one's *dhārmik* or virtuous for which one is portrayed as moral, virtuous or *dhārmik* in the society. Thus, for the *Nītiśāstra*, intrinsic character or virtue of an individual is significant to become a good, virtuous or *dhārmik* human being. It also deals with the supreme good or *mokṣa*, which everyone should attain in their life. To discuss human values or virtue in *Nītiśāstra* of Indian tradition, let us focus on the origin and development of virtue or *dharma* in the context of Indian philosophy.

5.2 The Concept of *Rta* as *Dharma* or virtue in the *Vedas* and other *Śāstras*:

The concept of *Rta* is regarded as the foundation of moral philosophy in Indian culture. It is actually considered to be the treasury of various cosmic orders; such as, the order within the heavenly deities, the order within day and night and

various seasons. Though, gradually with the evolution of time it becomes a treasury of moral order. *Rta* in the *Vedas* has a three-pronged meaning which are as follows:

- i.** A cosmic order,
- ii.** A ritualistic order or religious order and
- iii.** An ethical or moral order, and it all the same time.

Though it has three different meaning but still it has a unitary meaning. The three cosmic orders – natural, sacrificial and moral – each of them manifested the very universal concept of *Rta*,¹ which is often considered as *dharma*.

The word *Rta* comes from the root ‘*R*’ that has two groups of meaning; one signifies ‘to move’ and another ‘to fit or to arrange’. So, activity or movement and institution including law and order are considered as the two primary foundation of the concept *Rta*. Thus, everything in the creation engages with activity and maintains law and order is supposed to have *Rta* as its underlying principle.²

Rta is an objective principle in *Vedas* so, it is real. Like *satya* and *tapa*, *Rta* is also the basic constituent of our universe.³ It is considered as the embracing power of the world.⁴ In a specific sense, *Rta* is understood as ideal. Its ideal nature can be clearly understood in the domain of human behaviour. It sets the moral distinction between ‘is’ and ‘ought’ or ‘right’ and ‘wrong’. *Rta* is a principle of supreme moral order and there can be no moral disorder in the domain of *Rta*. It is wrong to conclude that *Rta* is just a universal cosmic order and it has no property of right or wrong in it because the *Vedas* has recognized *Rta* as a principle of goodness and righteousness. It is clearly stated in the *Rg Veda*, that – “The wicked travel not the path way of law.”⁵ Here *Rta* or law is considered as the path of righteousness or *dharma*. In the *Vedas*, *Rta* stands for the principle of good and opposite of *Rta*, i.e., *Anṛta* is the principle of *pāpa* or evil or *adharma*.⁶

¹ Tiwari, Kedar Nath, *Classical Indian Ethical Thought: A Philosophical Study of Hindu, Jaina and Buddha Morals*, p. 179, Motilal Banarsi Dass Publishers Private Limited, Delhi, 2014

² *Ibid*, p. 179

³ Griffith, Ralph Thomas Hotchkin (Trans.), *The Hymns of The Rig Veda*, Book (*Mandala*) 10, Hymn (*Sukta*) of Creation CXC.1, Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, Banaras, 1896

⁴ *Ibid*, Book (*Mandala*) 4, Hymn (*Sukta*) of Indra XXIII. 8-10

⁵ *Ibid*, Book (*Mandala*) 9, Hymn of *Soma Pavamana* LXXIII. 6, Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, Banaras, 1896

⁶ Tiwari, Kedar Nath, *Classical Indian Ethical Thought: A Philosophical Study of Hindu, Jaina and Buddha Morals*, Motilal Banarsi Dass Publishers Private Limited, Delhi, 2014, p. 180

Though *Rta* stands for the principle of virtue and righteousness (*dharma*), one could hardly answer to the question that what sort of ethical property or quality that make *Rta* so. In response to this question, one may put forward that *Rta* is often identified with truth, it is independent of any supreme power. But, Varuṇa, is considered as the guardian of *Rta*.⁷ In a passage of the *Rg Veda*, Indra, the king of the Gods addressing Varuṇa that –

निर्माया उ त्ये असुरा अभूवन्त्वं च मा वरुण कामयासे ।

ऋतेन राजन्ननृतं विविच्छन्मम राष्ट्रस्याधिपत्यमेहि ॥

*nirmāyā u tye asurā abhūvantvam ca mā varuṇa kāmayāse |
ṛtena rājann anṛtam viviñcan mama rāṣṭrasyādhipatyam ehi ||*

That means “But thou, O Varuṇa, if thou dost love me, O King, discerning truth and right from falsehood, Come and be Lord and Ruler of my kingdom.”⁸ In another passage of the *Rg Veda*, the eternal moral law or the *Rta* is identified with truth as follows:

युवं वस्त्रणि पुवसा वसाथे युवोरचिद्रा मन्तवो ह सर्गाः ।

अवातिरतमन्तानि विश्व रतेन मित्रावरुणा सचेथे ॥

*yuvam̄ vastraṇi puvasā vasāthe yuvorachidrā mantavo ha sarghāḥ /
avātiratamanṛtāni viśva ṛtena mitrāvaruṇā sacethe ||*

Which means – “All falsehood, Mitra-Varuṇa, ye conquer, and closely cleave unto the law eternal.”⁹ Truth is regarded as the primal constituent of the universe, so as *Rta*. Truth therefore, is the ethical property that *Rta* have. The path according to the *Rta* is the most truthful and righteous path that considered as the eternal cosmic order and basically an eternal moral order.

From the above discussion it can be established that *Rta* as a universal moral order gives a clear-cut criterion that distinguish between right and wrong or moral

⁷ Tiwari, Kedar Nath, *Classical Indian Ethical Thought: A Philosophical Study of Hindu, Jaina and Buddha Morals*, Motilal Banarsi Dass Publishers Private Limited, Delhi, 2014, p. 181

⁸ Griffith, Ralph Thomas Hotchkin (Trans.), *The Hymns of The Rig Veda*, Book (Mandala) 10, Hymn (Sukta) of Agni CXXIV.5, Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, Banaras, 1896

⁹ *Ibid*, Book (Mandala) 1, Hymn (Sukta) of Mitra-Varuṇa CLII. 8-10

and immoral. The only criterion provided by *Rta* is the principle of truth as a virtue. In this sense whatever is truthful is also in accordance with the *Rta* and therefore it is right and moral. Thus, *Rta* is considered as the moral principle in the form of truth.

Like *Rta*, *dharma* has a moral sense too. The word *dharma* comes from the root ‘*dhr*’, which means ‘to hold’ or ‘to support’, ‘to support’ or ‘to hold’ the individual and the object of the entire universe. So, in this sense, they both are principles of cosmic order though the *dharma* has also an ethical implication. And again, *dharma* not only implies the moral virtues or duties, but also the customs, laws and rituals. According to Van Buitenen “It is as difficult to define *dharma* in terms of Western thought as it is to define ‘culture’ in Sanskrit, and for the same reason: both are all comprising terms including institutions, a way of thinking and living, accomplishments characteristic of people.”¹⁰ ‘*Dharma*’ is a word with wide importance in Indian ethics can never be replaced by any English word equivalent to it. Mckenzie opines:

Dharma “is variously translated as Religion, Virtue, Law, Duty. All these words convey something of the meaning, but to use any one of them as an equivalent is highly misleading. Much confusion might be avoided if it were recognized once for all that the term ‘*dharma*’, as used at any rate in the *Dharmasūtras*, was applied to a condition of things to which modern terms like religion, virtue and law are strictly speaking inapplicable. In India in those days no clear distinction was drawn between moral and religious duties, usages, customary observance and law, and *dharma* was the term which was applied to the whole complex of forms of conduct that were settled or established.”¹¹

In a similar way K. V. Rangaswamy Aiyangar also stated how the term *dharma* is used in a variety of meaning in the Indian culture – ““*Dharma*’ is used in so many senses that it eludes definition. It stands for nature, intrinsic quality, civil and moral law, justice, virtue, merit, duty and morality.”¹² Aiyer also mentioned that – “the contents of *dharma*, as evidenced by its use in the various treatises on *dharma*, are virtually coextensive with the entire sphere of human behaviour and whose

¹⁰ Buitenen, J. A B. van “*Dharma and Mokṣa*”, Philosophy East and West, Vol. – 7, University Hawaii Press, USA,1957, p. 33-40,

¹¹ Mckenzie, John, *Hindu Ethics*, Oriental Book Reprint Corporation, New Delhi, 1971, p. 38-39

¹² Rangaswamy Aiyangar, Kumbakonam Viraraghava, *Some Aspects of the Hindu View of Life According to Dharmasāstra*, Oriental Institute, Baroda, 1952, p. 63

numerous and vital prescripts descend to the minutest details of life and conduct.”¹³ According to Vishwanath Prasad Varma, “Dharma is perhaps the most comprehensive concept in the entire history of Hindu thought.”¹⁴ Hajime Nakamura has given a list of fourteen senses in which *dharma* is used in Hinduism, while noting a further and distinct meaning in Buddhism.¹⁵ S. N Dasgupta maintains that – *dharma* “is used in very different senses in the different schools and religious traditions of Indian thought.”¹⁶ P .V. Kane, who is best known for his work *The History of Dharmasāstra*, defines *dharma* as a far-reaching concept that helps to embrace human life.¹⁷

We must agree to the concept of Heinrich Zimmer that *dharma* “comprises the whole context of religious and moral duties”¹⁸, and it will be wrong if we consider ‘*dharma*’ simply as ‘religion’.¹⁹ One should be careful in not using *dharma* only in the religious domain. Paul Masson Oursel mentioned that, “The distinction between religion and law can be justified only from the European point of view, the two notions are one in the Indian perspective of *dharma*.”²⁰ According to Bhagavan Das, “Dharma is not mere other world-religion, but is also every duty, every law, every proper and specific function of every thing or being, in this and all other worlds.”²¹ One should be careful to use the term ‘*dharma*’ simply to its various meanings, such as law, duty, morality, justice virtue or religion, though they all together constitute the meaning of *dharma*, but none of them are equivalent to it.²²

¹³ Sivaswamy Aiyer, Paramanheri Sundaram, *Evolution of Hindu Ethical Ideals*, Calcutta University Press, Calcutta, 1935, p. 19-20

¹⁴ Varma, V. P. *Studies in Hindu political Thought and its Metaphysical Foundations*, Motilal Banarsi das, Banaras, 1955, p. 106

¹⁵ Nakamura, Hajime, “The Indian and Buddhist Concept of Law”, in *Religious Pluralism and World Community: Interfaith Intercultural Communication.*, ed. Edward Jurji, E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1969, p. 132-33

¹⁶ Dasgupta, S. N., *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. 4, Part 2, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1955

¹⁷ Kane, P. V., *History of Dharmasāstra*, Vol. 2, Part 2, Bhandarkar Oriental Series, Poona, 1962

¹⁸ Zimmer, Heinrich, *Philosophies of India*, Ed. Joseph Campbell, Pantheon Books, New York, 1951, p. 40

¹⁹ Dube, S. C., *Indian Village*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1955; Dasgupta, S. N., *Hindu Mysticism*, p. 8, Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1959, p. 236

²⁰ Masson-Oursel, Paul; de Willman-Grabowska, Helena; and Stern, Philippe, *Ancient India and Indian Civilization*, Trans. M. R. Dobie, p. 71, Trubner&Co., Trench, 1934

²¹ Das, Bhagavan, *The Science of Social Organization: Or the Laws of Manu in the Light of Theosophy*, p. 123, Theosophical Publishing Society, Madras, 1910

²² Creel, Auseen B., *Dharma in Hindu Ethics*, Firma KLM Private Limited, Calcutta, 1977, p. 2

What we need to show is that the term ‘*dharma*’ is used in a variety of senses in the Indian ethical, mythological and philosophical tradition. *Dharma* holds and maintains the entire world. It is a set of virtues or duties that everyone must follow, so far as virtue ethical perspective is concerned.

5.3 *Dharma* is Beyond the Meaning of Duty:

As we have seen, the term *dharma* is generally understood as a duty or a set of obligations that everyone must follow. But, the domain of *dharma* is far beyond than duty or obligation. For example, a *Brāhmaṇa*, has different kind of duties than a *vaiśya*, and a *vaiśya* has different kind of duties than a *sūdra*. Different kinds of virtues are required for each of the *āśramas*, simply beyond the limits of duty. In most of the cases, *Varṇa dharmas* are defined as virtues, as in this list for *brāhmaṇa* from the *parampara* “Assiduous work, the bridling of the passions, compassion, liberality, truthfulness, ...discipline, generosity, righteousness, ...[and] wisdom...”²³ An example may be given in the *Vanaparva* of the *Mahābhārata*, when King Nahuśa asks Yudhiṣṭhīra what is *dharma*, Yudhiṣṭhīra defines it as the virtues of truthfulness, generosity, forgiveness, goodness, kindness, self-control, and compassion.²⁴ What Yudhiṣṭhīra argued here is that a *sūdra* having those virtuous qualities may become a *brāhmaṇa*, and similarly a *brāhmaṇa* without those virtuous qualities may downfall into a *sūdra*. In the *Bhagavad-Gitā*, Lord Kṛṣṇa says that “I have created the four *varṇas* (castes) in reliance upon the division of qualities and actions.”²⁵ Thus, what we can observe in these *ślokas* is that Indian ethics and epics are actually endorsing the concept *dharma* or virtue and provokes us to claim our supremacy by cultivating virtue within us.

Manusmṛti also defines *dharma* as custom not as duty. The righteous king “should ordain (as law) whatever may be the usual custom of good, religious twice-born men, if it does not conflict with (the customs of) countries, families, and castes.”²⁶ Rather being only deontological, *dharma* is, as Paul Hacker opines,

²³ Soosai Arokiasamy, *Dharma, Hindu and Christian according to Roberto de Nobili*, Editrice Pontificia Universita, Rome, 1986, p. 25

²⁴ Matilal, Bimal K, and Ganeri, Jonardon. *Ethics and Epics: The Collected Essays of Bimal Krishna Matilal*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2002, p. 54;

Mahābhārata, Shanti Parva, Tirtha-yatra Parva, Section: CLXXIX

²⁵ Gita, chapter 4 verse 132

²⁶ Doniger, Wendy; Smith, Brian K. (trans.), *The Law of Manu*, Penguin Books India, New Delhi, 1999, p. 156

“radically empirical” and it can be conceived only through experience.²⁷ Even though social customs stand third behind *Sruti* and *Smṛti* on many Hindu textual lists, it could be argued that they are actually the true source of *dharma*. For example, this passage from the *Mahābhārata* gives priority to customs: “*Dharma* has its origin in good practices and the *Vedas* are established on *dharma*.²⁸ Hacker considers that “this is the most concrete and most precise definition of the Hindu concept of *dharma* that I know.”²⁹ According to Kuppuswamy, “*dharma* does not consist in blind conformity to customs; a human's behaviour should be based upon reasoning, and should contribute to the welfare of humanity and should be guided by conscience.”³⁰

It is believed that the *Vedas* are considered to be the origin of Indian ethics and *dharma*. According to Manu “*vedo 'khilodharmamūlam*” (वेदोऽखिलोधर्ममूलं) means the entire *Veda* is the root-source of our *dharma* or morality.³¹ There are six orthodox systems in Indian philosophy and each of it explains *dharma* or morality in its own way, though they accept the sacred authoritativeness of the *Veda*. The unorthodox systems have also explained *dharma* and morality but they do not accept the authority of *Veda* at all. The ethical ideas can be traced in our thinking thousands of years back. *Vasudhaiva Kuṭumbakam* (वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्) is such an example from the *Veda* that introduces the concept of morality to the world. Thus, ethics combines both theories and practice. It synthesises the ideal life with our worldly aspects. The four *Puruṣārthas*, a key concept in Indian theory of morality that helps human beings to achieve the supreme good, can only be achieved through practice. Thus, Indian ethics focuses on both spiritual as well as social life. It focuses on the values that one should achieve, performs the duties to others and it is their *dharma* to do so. According to T. M. P. Mahadevan, “Indian philosophy is essentially a philosophy of values.”³² For him, it is because that Indian philosophy is closely intertwined with

²⁷ Hacker, P.; Davis, Donald R. Jr, “Dharma in Hinduism” in *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, October 2006, Vol. 34, No. 5, p. 486, pp. 479-496

²⁸ Kuppuswamy, Bangalore, *Dharma and Society*, p. 17, South Asia Books, Columbia, 1977

²⁹ Hacker, P.; Davis, Donald R. Jr, “Dharma in Hinduism” in *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, October 2006, Vol. 34, No. 5, p. 486, pp. 479-496

³⁰ Kuppuswamy, Bangalore, *Dharma and Society*, South Asia Books, Columbia, 1977, pp. 51-2

³¹ Doniger, Wendy; Smith, Brian K. (trans.), *The Law of Manu*, Penguin Books India, New Delhi, 1999, p. 17-18

³² T. M. P. Mahadevan ‘Social, Ethical, and Spiritual Values in Indian Philosophy’, from the Indian Mind, edited by C. A. Moore, East West Centre Press, Honolulu, p. 152

religion.³³ According to D.C. Srivastava and Bijoy H. Boruah “Indian ethics, both in its classical and modern shape, is founded upon the cultivation of virtuous attitudes and character.”³⁴ And we have also found that “Indian virtue ethics is primarily founded on the notion of *dharma*.³⁵

5.4 The Semantic History of the Term *Dharma*:

Philosophers have shown their interest very deeply to the studies of the term *dharma* from time immemorial. People like Paul Horsch and Jarrod L. Whitaker in their “From Creation Myth to World Law: The Early History of *Dharma* and Joel P. Berereton in his *dharma* in the *Rg Veda* have discussed about the frequent use of the term *dharma* in the *Rg Veda*. They mentioned that the term has total sixty-seven occurrences with a wide semantic range of cosmological, ritual and ethical uses. They further opine that it decreases its number of occurrences in the other text of this period. In the *Atharva Veda* we find the word *dharma* only thirteen times though it has a similar semantic range to the *Rg Veda*. But one can find the centrality of *dharma* in both of these *Brahmnical* and Buddhists literature. In these literature of the middle and late Vedic periods the term *dharma* represented by the *Brāhmaṇas*, *Āranyakas*, the *Upaniṣads* and the *Śrauta-sūtras* and *Gṛhya-sūtras*, which together constitute a wide range of vocabulary.

Patrick Olivelle is not in a position to agree with those previous views. He had a different view regarding the centrality of the term *dharma*. According to Olivelle, *dharma* secures a marginal concept in the religious vocabulary, and does not secure a central position. It is not only dropping the frequency of its usage but also becomes narrower to its semantic range. It restricts its range to Varuṇa and its earthly counterpart, the king of the state. He further attempts to show how the term *dharma* contribute to the development to its semantic range in the religious literature of Buddhism, Aśoka and the Brahmanical literature. Let us discuss the semantic history of the word *dharma* as discussed in the *Samhitā*, *Āranyaka*, *Brāhmaṇa* and *Upaniṣads* of the each *Rg Veda*, *Yajurveda*, *Sāmaveda* and *Atharvaveda*.

³³ Malik-Goure, A. “Virtue Ethics in Indian Philosophy” in *International Journal of Academic Research*, Vol. 1 Issue-2(1), July – September 2014,p. 111

³⁴ Srivastava, D.C. and Boruah, Bijoy H., *Dharma and Ethics: The Indian Ideal of Human Perfection*, Decent Books, New Delhi, 2010, p. 1

³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 2

Yajur Veda:

The *Yajurveda Saṃhitās* are very old text after *Rg Veda*. Let us discuss the four *Saṃhitās*: *Vājasaneyi*, *Maitrāyaṇī*, *Kāṭhaka* or *Caraka* and *Taittirīya*; *Vājasaneyi* belongs to the *Śukla Yajurveda Saṃhitā*, whereas the rest three belongs to the *Kriṣṇa Yajurveda Saṃhitā*. The study of *dharma* in these texts basically cited the verses from *Rg Veda* and sometimes they present same verses or passages from the same ritual. We have thus, decided to count the citations from the *Rg Veda* only.

In these *Saṃhitās*, here we can find twenty-two passages that occurred with the term *dharma*. In most of the cases these occurrences refer to Varuṇa or Mitra-Varuṇa. Mitra and Varuṇa are both considered as deities and they are the protectors of the righteous order of the cosmic law *Rta*. We can find the phrase *dhruvēṇa dhármaṇā* in the passage: *dyutānás tvā mārutó minotu mitrāváruṇayor dhruvēṇa dhármaṇā* – which means – “May Dyutāna Māruta establish you in accordance with the enduring *dharma* of Mitra and Varuṇa.”³⁶ (*Taittirīya Saṃhitā* 1.3.1.2; *Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā* 1.2.11; *Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā* 5.27) The same phrase *dhruvēṇa dhármaṇā* has been repeated in another context: *Váruṇas tvā dhṛtāvrato dhūpayatu mitrāváruṇau dhruvēṇa dhármaṇā* – which means – “May Varuṇa, whose commandment is upheld, perfume you with incense, may Mitra and Varuṇa, in accordance with their enduring *dharma*”.³⁷ (*Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā* 4.9.1) Also it is said that: *mitrāváruṇau tvottarataḥ pāri dhattāṇi dhruvēṇa dhármaṇā* – which means – “May Mitra and Varuṇa lay you around in the north in accordance with their enduring *dharma*”³⁸. (*Kāṭhaka Saṃhitā* 1.11; *Taittirīya Saṃhitā* 1.1.11.2; *Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā* 2.3; *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* 1.3.4.4) What we find that the term *dharma* bears almost the same meaning as it is in the *Rg Veda*. *Dharma* has been considered as an institute or commandment which is *dhruva*, firm and enduring. The *Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā* provides a significant commentary on this issue: “*mitrāváruṇau dhruvēṇa dhármaneti / mitrám evainām dādhāra, váruṇah kalpayati, vídhṛtyai ca khálū vā e śām̄ prajánām klptyai ca mīyate, mitrāváruṇau vaí devānām dhármadhārayau, daivāṇi vā etád dhármam adīdharatām /* “Mitra and Varuṇa in accordance with their enduring *dharma*. Mitra, indeed, holds it fast, and Varuṇa establishes it. For the upholding of these creatures and for their

³⁶ Olivelle, P., ‘The Semantic History of Dharma the Middle and Late Vedic Periods’, *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, vol. 32, Springer, New York, 2004, p. 492

³⁷ *Ibid*, p. 492

³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 492

establishment, it is set up. Mitra and Varuṇa are clearly the ones who uphold *dharma* among the Gods. They uphold here as divine *dharma*”.”³⁹ (MS 3.8.9)

What we observed in these paragraphs is that the term *dharma* clearly makes a significant and consistent relation to its root *dhṛ* which means to uphold or to bear or to support. The evidence of the relation between *dhruva* and *dharma* has also been found in the *Kāthaka Samhitā* 35.7: “*dhruvā dyaur dhruvā pṛthivī dhruvam viśvam idam jagat / devā ha dharmaṇā dhruvā yajamānah paśubhir dhruvah* – “The sky is enduring; the earth is enduring; this whole world is enduring. The Gods are enduring through *dharma*, and the sacrificer is enduring through the sacrificial animals”.”⁴⁰

In the *Yajurveda Samhitā*, the connection between *dharma* and Varuṇa has been established by the two rituals closely associated with kingship; one is *Rājasūya* (Royal-consecration) and another is *Aśvamedha* (Horse-sacrifice) to enhance and proclaim the sovereignty of king himself. At the *rājasūya* the king establishes its connection to Varuṇa and *dharma*. Varuṇa, who is actually the lord of the *dharma* or *dharma-pati* and king who is assumed as the earthly counterpart of the lord Varuṇa, is also considered as the upholders of *dharma*. In the *rājasūya*, *ćaru* (a special type of cake made from rice and milk is offered to the deities) is offered to *Agni* (the lord of house or *gṛhapatī*); *Soma* or *vanaspati* (the lord of forest); *Rudra* or *paśupati* (the lord of cattle); and *Bṛhaspati* or *vācaspati* (the lord of Speech) and also to the Mitra or *satya* (the lord of character) and Varuṇa or *dharma-pati* (the lord of *dharma*) to please with their bliss. (*Taittirīya Samhitā* 1.8.10.1)

Maitrāyanī Samhitā:

In the *Maitrāyanī Samhitā* the Gods are invoked to allow the king as an upholder of *dharma*: *sómā índro várūṇo mitrō agnís té devā dharmadh ýto dhármam dhārayantu* – “Soma, Indra, Varuṇa, Mitra, Agni – may these gods, the upholders of *dharma*, uphold *dharma*”.⁴¹ (*Maitrāyanī Samhitā* 2.6.8, 4.4.2). The *Taittirīya Samhitā* also indentified the king with the Varuṇa as: *várūṇo 'sisatyadhármā* (you are like Varuṇa, whose *dharma* is upholding the truth). The attribute of Varuṇa is indirectly praised to be applicable to the king. In the *Aśvamedha*, the chariot of

³⁹ Olivelle, P., ‘The Semantic History of Dharma the Middle and Late Vedic Periods’, *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, vol. 32, Springer, New York, 2004, p. 492

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p. 492

⁴¹ *Ibid*, p. 493

Varuṇas has been referred to stop injustice as Varuṇa is the upholder of *dharma*. (*Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā* 3:16:5; *Kāṭhaka Samhitā* 22:15; *Taittirīya Samhitā* 4.7.15.2) In all of the above passages what we want to justify is that the king and his power is closely attached with the *dharma*. They cannot be separated. Here Varuṇa, who is the supreme ruler of heaven and his earthly counterpart, king is also considered as the supreme ruler of the earth. They both are lords and upholders of *dharma* in the universe and in the society.

Brāhmaṇas:

Let us examine the concept of *dharma* and virtue in the *Brāhmaṇas*. As the *Brāhmaṇa* is a larger text in size than *Yajurveda Samhitā*, we only consider the three: *Aitareya*, *Taittirīya* and *Śatapatha* in this chapter. In all of these three *Brāhmaṇas*, the term *dharma* occurs eleven times in general. The number of uses of the term *dharma* in these *Brāhmaṇas*, is a bit of surprise because it covers a wide range of materials and issues; such as ethical and ritual of the *Brāhmaṇical* life. So, it becomes a natural query to one that if *dharma* is a key term in the *Brahmaṇical* view to the world and society then it would have been used more in numbers in the *Brāhmaṇas*.

Aitareya Brāhmaṇa:

In the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, the term *dharma* has occurred only once in the context of *Rājasūya* or royal consecration.⁴² In the *Mahābhiṣeka* of Indra is immediately followed after this in *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* 8.15 – 23. In both of the cases we have a public proclamation. Though both of these have identical words except the *Rājasūya* of king is proclaimed *Rājakartārah* (king-makers) and the audience is men and *Mahābhiṣeka* of Indra is proclaimed by the *Viśvedevas* and audienced by the *devāḥ* (Gods): “*imam janā [devā] abhyutkrośata samrājam sāmrājyaṁ bhojam bhojapitaram svarājyaṁ svārājyaṁ virājaṁ vairājyaṁ parameṣṭhinam pārameṣṭhyaṁ rājānam rājapitaram kṣatram ajani kṣatriyo ‘jani viśvasya bhūtasyādhipatir ajani viśām attājany amitrāṇām hantājani brāhmaṇānām goptājani dharmasya goptājanīti.* (*Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* 7.12 – 17) “Do ye proclaim him, O men [O gods], as overlord and overlordship, as paramount ruler and father of paramount rulers, as self-ruler and self-rule, as sovereign and sovereignty, as supreme lord and

⁴² *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* 8.12-14

supreme lordship, as king and father of kings. The *kṣatra* (royal power) has been born, the *kṣatriya* has been born, the suzerain of all creation has been born, the eater of the commoners (*viś*) has been born, the slayer of foes has been born, the guardian of *brāhmaṇas* has been born, the guardian of *dharma* has been born.”⁴³

Here both Indra and the king is announced in the proclamation that they born as the guardian of *dharma*.

Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa:

The term *dharma* is occurred four times in *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* and three of these occurrences are closely associated with Varuṇa and *adhipati*. The *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* 3.9.16.2 which is also a commentary text on *Taittirīya Saṃhitā* 7.4.16 interpreted the *Saṃhitā mantra*: *dhármovā ádipatiḥ, dhárman evāvarundhe* as *namódhipataye*. Here the person identified with *ādhipatya* and *dharma* is the king who performing the *Aśvamedha*. Here *dharma* as *adhipati* secured the highest position in *Brāhmaṇa* followed by the respective *Saṃhitā*.

Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa:

The term *dharma* has been occurred only in the six passages of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*. The most significant statement has been made in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* 5.3.3.9 regarding the connection between the Varuṇa, king and the *dharma* in the context of *Rājasūya*. It states: “*athá várūṇāya dhármapataye / várūṇám yavamáyam carum nírvapati tát̄ enām várūṇa evá dhármapatir dhármasya pátim karoti paramótā vaí sá yó dhármasya pátir ásad yó há paramátām gácchati tím hí dhárma upayánti tásmād várūṇāya dhármapataye//.*” This means – “Then to Varuṇa the lord of *dharma* he offers a cake made with barley. Thereby Varuṇa himself, the lord of *dharma*, makes him [the king] the lord of *dharma*. That, surely, is the highest state when one becomes the lord of *dharma*. For when someone attains the highest state, (people) come to him (in matters relating) to *dharma*. Therefore, to Varuṇa, the lord of *dharma*”.⁴⁴

⁴³ Olivelle, P., ‘The Semantic History of Dharma the Middle and Late Vedic Periods’, *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, vol. 32, Springer, New York, 2004, p. 494

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p. 495

In this context, we have a clear idea of *dharma* what does the author actually mean. In fact, the term deals with the matters regarding which people come to their king generally for their legal disputes. *Dharma* is considered in the public domain of law and social customs that is supervised by the king. Thus, it provides a clear idea about why the term *dharma-pati* refers to the king as well as Varuṇa, because Varuṇa is the supervisor of cosmic *dharma*. We have thus seen that this might be the meaning which generally understood as *dharma* during the Vedic period and in the text.

In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, we can find another passage that reflects the meaning of *dharma*. In *śloka*, 11.1.6.24, it is said that Prajāpati has created four Gods i. e.: Agni, Indra, Soma and *Parameṣṭhi*. They all generally observed from four directions. In north direction, it is mentioned that – “*athódīcīm diśam apaśyan / tāṁ ápo 'kurvatópainām itáh kurvīmahīti tam dhármam akurvata dhármo vā āpas tásmād yádemám lokám āpa āgácchanti sárvam èvedám yathādharmám bhavaty átha yadāv rṣtir bhávati bālīyān eva tarhy ábaliyasa ādatte dhármoh yápah//*”. This means – “Then they saw the northern direction. They made it waters. ‘Let us improve it from here,’ they said. They made it *dharma*. The waters, surely, are *dharma*. Therefore, when waters come to this world, all this becomes in accordance with *dharma*. But when there is no rain, then the stronger indeed seizes the weaker ones, for the waters are *dharma*”.⁴⁵

This reflection in *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, clearly supports the meaning of *dharma* “as a social order founded on law”. This also relates to *matsyanyāya* of later *Dharmaśāstras*. However, *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* does not mention any kingship here. It is a natural fact of abundance by the sufficiency of water and famine and also by the lack of water, that actually make adherence to and deviation from *dharma*. We can similarly find the negative term *adharma*, twice in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* that understands as something done in opposite to the law or natural order. Both in *śloka* 3.7.3.7 and 5.2.4.13, the term *adharma* is basically indicating an act that is against the rule. Apart from that a new meaning of *dharma* as a specific attribute is found in *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* 11.5.7.1. The *ślokas* says “a man becomes independent and wealthy through the Vedic study, and it also helps to grow his intelligence or

⁴⁵ Olivelle, P., ‘The Semantic History of *Dharma* the Middle and Late Vedic Periods’, *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, vol. 32, Springer, New York, 2004, p. 496

prajñāvṛddhi: “*prajñā vārdhamānā catúro dhármān brāhmaṇám abhiníspādayati brāhma nyām pratirūpacaryām yáśo lokapaktím, lokáḥ pácyamānaś catúrbhir dhármair brāhmaṇám bhunakty arcáyā ca dānena cājyeyátayā cāvadhyátayā ca*”. That means – “The growing intelligence brings to the *Brāhmin* to possess four *dharma*s i. e. *Brahmanical* stature, fitting deportment, fame, and ‘cooking’ the world. The world, as it is being ‘cooked’, gratifies the Brahmin with four *dharma*s – with veneration, with gifts, with the condition of not being oppressed and of not being subject to capital punishment”.”⁴⁶

Thus, it appears that the term *dharma* semantically developed its range from law or social norms to a specific attribute of a particular entity. Except the last passage no significant instances are found to that prove the *Brāhmans* expanded the semantic range of the word *dharma*. In all other cases we found that the connotation of the word *dharma* remains closely associated with the Varuṇa and the king. And in all of the instances, it primarily means the law and order of the society, the law that gives the legitimacy to a royal king. Thus, *dharma* is the society’s law and order and the duty or internal character of a king and Varuṇa.

The Āranyakas:

In the Āranyakas, *dharma* occurs only three times, once in the *Aitareya* and twice in the *Taittirīya*, though none of these occurrences has any serious contribution to the semantic use of *dharma*. In the *Aitareya Āranyaka*, we can find a *śloka* that describes the creation of the world and again connects *dharma* with Varuṇa: “*varuṇo 'sya prajām dharmena dādhāra* – “Varuṇa supported his offspring through *dharma*”.”⁴⁷ Also in the *Taittirīya Āranyaka* in *śloka* 2.19.1 and *śloka* 4.42.5, we can find that *dharma* is related to a list of cosmic categories where it is placed as the highest of the categories.

The Upaniṣads:

The Upaniṣads are the texts that we generally considered as a major source of *dharma*. But this is not exactly the case. In three major *Upaniṣads* i. e. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, *Chhāndogya* and *Taittirīya*, the term *dharma* is occurred in nine

⁴⁶ Olivelle, P., ‘The Semantic History of Dharma the Middle and Late Vedic Periods’, *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, vol. 32, Springer, New York, 2004, p. 497

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p. 497

passages, and except *Chhāndogya* and *Taittirīya* there are no maintained discussion of the term *dharma* to live a righteous life.

The Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣads:

In the *Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣads* the term *Dharma* occurs in four passages and had a single occurrence in the *Yājñavalkya-kāṇḍa*. In *sūtra* 4.4.5, a passage where the author demonstrates the list of categories that constitutes *ātman*. In various categories and its opposites, the author mentioned that the *ātman* is made of *dharma* and *adharma*. The author refers the term *dharma*, as priority. Among the other terms, it occupies the highest position because the author meant the term everything or *sarvamayah*. It is said that – “tejomayo ‘tejomayah kāmamayo ‘kāmamayah krodhayamo ‘krodhāmayaḥ dharmamayo ‘dharmāmayaḥ sarvamayah”. That means “made of light and the lightless, made of desire and the desireless, made of anger and the angerless, made of *dharma* and *adharma*, made of everything”.”⁴⁸

The most significant use of the term *dharma* is also found in the *sūtra* 1.4.14 of *Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* by in relation to the context of creation. It is said that that at the beginning the world, there was only *Brahman*, then it was not fully developed (*navyabhavat*), so, it was single. After the creation of *Brahman*, the ruling power (*ksatra*) including God, then *Vaiśya* and finally *Śūdra*, are created, but not in a developed form. It was fully developed when *Brahman* created *dharma*. It is said that – “tacchreyo rūpam atyasṛjata dharmam / tad etat kṣatrasya kṣatram yad dharmah / tasmād dharmāt param nāsti / atho abalīyān balīyāṁsam āśāṁsate dharmeṇa rājñāivam / yo vai sa dharmah satyam vai tat / tasmāt satyam vadantam āhur dharmam vadatīti / dharmam vā vadantam satyam vadatīti / etad dhy evaitad ubhayaṁ bhavati.” That means – “So it created *dharma*, a form superior to and surpassing itself. And *dharma* is the ruling power standing above the ruling power. Hence there is nothing higher than *dharma*. Therefore, a weaker man makes demands of a stronger man by appealing to *dharma*, just as one does by appealing to a king. Now, *dharma* is nothing but the truth. Therefore, when a man speaks the

⁴⁸ Olivelle, P., ‘The Semantic History of Dharma the Middle and Late Vedic Periods’, *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, vol. 32, Springer, New York, 2004, p. 498

truth, people say that he speaks *dharma*; and when a man speaks *dharma*, people say that he speaks the truth. They are really the same thing.”⁴⁹

These above-mentioned views may be found in two other different passages of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*. One is in the *sūtra* 5.3.3.9, which secures the highest position of *dharma* and the other one is in *sūtra* 11.1.6.24, where it identifies *dharma* with *satya* or truth. According to this a weaker man can drag even a stronger man to the king’s court. What I would like to focus here is that the term *dharma* here is connected with the legal domain as it was in the *Brāhmaṇas*.

The Chhāndogya Upaniṣad:

In the *Chhāndogya Upaniṣad*, the term *dharma* occurs in three passages, none of which had a detailed discussion about it. The first use of the term *dharma* is at *śloka* no. 2.1.4, which considers the veneration of *sāman* as *sādhu* (good). This *śloka* ends with: “sa ya etad evam vidvān sādhu sāmety upāste ‘bhyāśo ha yad enaṁ sādhavo dharmā ā ca gaccheyur upa ca nameyur. It means – “When someone knows this and venerates the Sāman chant as good, he can certainly expect that good *dharma*s will come his way and fall to his share”.⁵⁰ Though the author’s intention is not clear at all in these lines but, it may be assumed that he uses the term *dharma* as qualities or attributes that is similar to its usage in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*.

The second occurrence is at *śloka* no. 7.2.1 which juxtaposed the term *dharma* with *satya* and *sādhu*. It is “*dharmaṁ cādharmam ca satyam cāntram ca sādhu cāsādhu ca* – “that means *dharma* and *adharma* – truth and untruth, good and non-good.”⁵¹ Here, we can observe that the author of the *Chhāndogyo Upanisad* is trying to establish an intimate relation between *dharma*, *satya* and *sādhu*.

Finally, the most significant occurrence of the term *dharma* in the *Chhāndogya Upaniṣads* is made in the passages of *dharmaskandhas* (2.23.1). It is said that – “*trayo dharmaskandhāḥ / yajño ‘ dhyayanaṁ dānam iti prathamah / tapa eva dvitīyah brahmācāry ācāryakulavāsī tritīyah.*” Which means – “There are three types of persons whose true source is *dharma*. The first is who pursues sacrifice,

⁴⁹ Olivelle, P., ‘The Semantic History of Dharma the Middle and Late Vedic Periods’, *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, vol. 32, Springer, New York, 2004, p. 499

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, p. 500

⁵¹ *Ibid*, p. 500

Vedic recitation, and gift-giving. The second is who is devoted to austerity. Third is a celibate student of the *Vedas* living at his teacher's house.”⁵²

Thus, the term *dharma* clearly and specifically refers to the modes of religious life, the life of Brahmanical householder, led by an ascetic and a *Vedic* student. This is for the first time in *Vedic* literature that we find the term *dharma* in a similar way that *dharmaśāstra* uses.

The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*:

The term *dharma* occurs in the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* at the end of the first chapter, *Śikṣāvallī*. In this chapter, it is generally compared with a remnant part of a *Grhyasūtra*, which instructed a *Vedic* student and their return to teachers' house. The Guru or preacher instructs the students as – “*satyam vada / dharmam cara*” (“Speak the truth, Practice the *dharma*”). Here the verb \sqrt{car} is used first time in the Vedic literature with reference to *dharma*, and is used in its classical *Dharmaśāstric* tradition.

Thus, in *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, the term *dharmakāmaḥ*, means people who devoted to or loving *dharma*, is presented as a model to the young students. These *dharmakāmaḥ Brāhmins* were considered as authoritative.

The *Śrautasūtras*:

There are numerous numbers of *Śrautasūtras* but their exact time cannot be estimated at all. Though some of them were considered from the pre-Buddhist period and some of them from later Vedic period, but most of them were silent about their time and period. *Śrautasūtras* are not considered as a part of Vedic canon. They generally follow the traditions of *Brāhmaṇas* to provide rules and explanations of Vedic culture.

According to Patrick Olivelle, the term *dharma* occurs in thirty-nine passages in *Śrautasūtras*. In most of them the term does not occur in the meaning that it occurs in the Vedic literature or *Dharmaśāstras*. A specific meaning of the term *dharma* is used in these literatures that was basically restricted within this tradition, it refers *dharma* as a specific ritual details or ritual rules of a religion. Most of these passages

⁵² Olivelle, P., ‘The Semantic History of Dharma the Middle and Late Vedic Periods’, *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, vol. 32, Springer, New York, 2004, p. 500

focuses their discussion on how the term *dharma* extended its meaning from ritual archetypes to ritual details, for example, *Darśapūrṇamāsa* (new and full-moon) sacrifice, which extended its meaning to others. The *Bharadvāja Śrautasūtra*, śloka 1.1.9 states that: “*tatraiṣo 'tyantapradeśo ye kecana paurṇamāśīm amāvāsyāṁ vā dharmā anārabhyāmnāyanta ubhayatraiva te kriyante*”. Which means that – “In this connection, this is the general rule. The characteristics (*dharmaḥ*) which have been prescribed in connection with the full-moon day or the new-moon day without specification hold good with reference to both”.”⁵³ And again in a different śloka 6.15.5, *Bharadvāja Śrautasūtra* states that: “*sarveṣv iṣṭipaśubandheṣu dārśapaurṇamāśikā dharmā anuyanti*” which means – “The *dharmas* of the New-moon and the Full-moon sacrifices are carried over into the *iṣṭi* and animal sacrifices.”⁵⁴

What we in fact want to propose that the meaning of the term *dharma* in which it is used here is shifted. And this extended meaning is found neither in the *Vedic literature*, *Brāhmaṇas* nor in the *Upaniṣads*. May be this technical development has flourished within the seers that devoted to ritual aspects, which results the *Śrautasūtras*. The concept of *svadharma* is also used in a similar way, as it refers to a particular ritual that deals only with its *dharmas*. This use of *svadharma* is similar to the use in *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* 11.5.7.1 and in *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 2.1.4.

The only śloka in the *Bharadvāja Śrautasūtras* 9.18.4, where the term appears in a *Dharmaśāstric* meaning is that: “*katham duṣṭam havir vidyāt / yad āryāṇāṁ dharmajñānāṁ dharmakāmānāṁ abhojanīyam na tena devān yajeta*”. That means “How does one know a defiled oblation? Āryas who know *dharma* and who love *dharma* consider unfit to be eaten, with that he should not make an offering to the gods”.⁵⁵ Like *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, we can see the term *dharma* with another phrase *dharmajña*.

Thus, the term *dharma* is used as rituals and does not play any important role in these texts and literatures.

⁵³ Olivelle, P., ‘The Semantic History of Dharma the Middle and Late Vedic Periods’, *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, vol. 32, Springer, New York, 2004, p. 501-2

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p. 502

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, p. 502

The *Grhyasūtras*:

Though most of the *Grhyasutras* were dated after the emergence of Buddhism, but few of them claimed to be prior. These texts generally focused on the life and rituals of a Brahmin householder. As a parallel text of *Dharmasūtras* one may say that the term *dharma* has a central role in the *Grhyasūtras*. However, that person surely disappoints to know that the term has occurred only six times in the whole text. Out of these six occurrences three *ślokas* did not have any serious contribution, two *ślokas* (*Śāṅkhāyana Grhyasūtra* 3.3.7. *Pāraskara Grhyasūtra* 3.4.18) are dedicated in connection with the building of a house, and third one (*Kāthaka Grhyasūtra*) is about a general occurrence of the term *dharma* and *adharma*.

Apart from these we find three passages which have similar usages of the term *dharma* is found in the *Dharmaśāstras*. At *Sāṅkhāyana Grhyasūtra*, 2.16.2 we find that *iti dharmo vidhīyate*, which has a close resemblance to *Mānava Dharmasāstra* 3.110. In the *Baudhāyana Grhyasūtra* 3.3.31 we can also find the term *dhārmika* is used for those students who completed their studentship: *vratasamāptau vedasamāptau vā gurudakṣiṇām āhared dhārmiko yathāśakti* – “At the end of the observances or at the end of (the study of) the Veda, the *dhārmika* (student) should bring a gift to the teacher according to his ability.”⁵⁶ And lastly in the *Āśvalāyana Grhyasūtra* 1.7.1 we find – *atha khaluccāvacā janapadadharmā grāmadharmāś ca tān vivāhe pratīyāt* – “Now, manifold are the *dharmas* of regions and the *dharmas* of villages. One need to observe these at marriage.”⁵⁷ These lines in these passages clearly indicate the connection between *Grhyasūtra* with *Dharmaśāstras*. Here the term *dharma* is clearly understood as customs and social norms, which is identical with the *Dharmaśāstric* meaning.

5.5 The Concept of Virtues in the *Manusamhitā*:

Let us focus the concept of virtue as interpreted in *Manusamhitā*. But before going to discuss, we need to understand the significance of the concept of self-

⁵⁶ Olivelle, P., ‘The Semantic History of Dharma the Middle and Late Vedic Periods’, *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, vol. 32, Springer, New York, 2004, p. 503

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p. 503

control (*Samjama*), as available in the *Manusamhitā*. According to Ariel Glucklich⁵⁸ Manu tried to establish a relationship between the senses, emotions and discipline, on the one hand, and well-being, on the other. In simple words, the quest of sensory delights or *bhoga* leads one to misery or *dukkha*, while controlling those senses and mental habits leads one to happiness or *sukha*. This understanding was so widely accepted and shared by the *Upaniṣads*, *Yoga* and the *Bhagavad Gīta*, that it becomes a cultural meme used in one text after the other.⁵⁹ We will attempt to show that Manu's ethical thought, particularly how his conception of *dharma* is related to virtue theory and how closely is it connected with the concept of self-control. We will also discuss the psychological foundation of the three different types of affect namely; sensory-addictive, mastery and freedom, in *Manusamhitā* in relation to concept of virtue.

The category of affect and the practice of cultivating positive affect by regulating the self is very much important to understand the ethical ideas of Manu. Ariel Glucklich has suggested the following definition where Affect is the evaluative information produced by the dynamic system in which the moral actor is an ever-changing agent of adaptation within an ever-shifting environment. This assertion is based on Dynamic system theory, which is frequently used in psychology but it is hardly ever applied to ethical and religious data. The dynamic system provides an ontological environment in which both pleasure or pain and happiness are only affective signals and skill or competence promotes both positive affect and virtue as an outcome. Let us know, how is this systemic adaptive approach generate three distinct types of positive affect in the following manner.

Affect 1 (sensory-addictive): The biological (hardwired) response of “self” to external or internal input in pursuit of homeostasis.

Affect 2 (mastery): The flexible response of self to external or internal input in pursuit of self-regulation relative to an acquired or learned telos.

Affect 3 (freedom): The response to internal input free of external constraints and any telos.

⁵⁸ Ariel Glucklich is a Professor in the Department of Theology at Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.

⁵⁹ Glucklich, A. (August, 2011). Virtue and Happiness in the “Law Book of Manu”. *International Journal of Hindu Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 2, pp. 165-190

Manu places regulation of the self in its various conceptions as the standard, by means of which affect should be measured. According to Glucklich the above mentioned understanding of affect is consistent with Manu's theory of virtue by controlling and developing the natural desires. Thus, according to Manu, in this sense self-regulation, the psychological dimension of moral restraint links the subject matter of *dharma* with virtue. In *Manusamhitā*, chapter 2, verse 93 – 96, it is stated that:

इन्द्रियाणां प्रसङ्गेन दोषं ऋच्छत्यसंशयम् ।
 संनियम्य तु तान्येव ततः सिद्धिं निगच्छति ॥ ९३ ॥
 न जातु कामः कामानामुपभोगेन शाम्यति ।
 हविषा कृष्णवत्मैव भूय एवाभिवर्धति ॥ ९४ ॥
 यश्चैतान् प्राप्नुयात् सर्वान् यश्चैतान् केवलांस्त्यजेत् ।
 प्रापणात् सर्वकामानां परित्यागो विशिष्यते ॥ ९५ ॥
 न तथैतानि शक्यन्ते संनियन्तुमसेवया ।
 विषयेषु प्रजुष्टानि यथा ज्ञानेन नित्यशः ॥ ९६ ॥

indriyāṇāṁ prasaṅgena doṣam ṛcchatyasaṁśayam |
saṁniyamya tu tānyeva tataḥ siddhim nigacchati || 93 ||
na jātu kāmaḥ kāmānāmupabhogena śāmyati |
haviṣā kṛṣṇavartmaiva bhūya evābhivardhate || 94 ||
yaścaitān prāpnuyāt sarvān yaścaitān kevalāṁstyajet |
prāpaṇāt sarvakāmānām parityāgo viśisyate || 95 ||
na tathaitāni śakyante saṁniyatumbasevayā |
viṣayeṣu prajuṣṭāni yathā jñānena nityaśah || 96 ||

That means by attachment to the organs, a man undoubtedly becomes corrupted; but by bringing them under control, he achieves success. Desire is never quenched by enjoying (*bhoga*) desires (*kāma*); like a fire with ghee, it only waxes stronger. Between a man who obtains all these and a man who gives them all up – giving up all desires is far better than obtaining them all. Corrupted as these organs

are by sensory objects, one cannot bring them under control as effectively by abstinence as by constant insight.

The control of desire and the senses is thus, a psychological skill that leads to excellent personal qualities, those on which virtues depend. The skill is cultivated in a variety of ways, in *Manusamhitā*, chapter 2, verse 177, it is stated that:

वर्जयेन् मधु मांसं च गन्धं माल्यं रसान् स्त्रियः ।
शुक्तानि यानि सर्वाणि प्राणिनां चैव हिंसनम् ॥ १७७ ॥

*varjayen madhu māṃsam ca gandham mālyam rasān striyah |
śuktāni yāni sarvāṇi prāṇinām caiva hiṃsanam || 177 ||*

This means one should abstain from honey, meat, scent, garland, flavours, women, all fermented acids and also the killing of living creatures. A man who is able to follow the rules of conduct (rising before sunrise, honoring parents, maintaining the domestic fires, and hundreds of others) is more than a follower of the law – he is a virtuous man. In *Manusamhitā* chapter 4, verse 162 & 163 we can find the following:

आचार्यं च प्रवक्तारं पितरं मातरं गुरुम् ।
न हिंस्याद् ब्राह्मणान् गाश्च सर्वांश्चैव तपस्विनः ॥ १६२ ॥
नास्तिक्यं वेदनिन्दाम् च देवतानां च कुत्सनम् ।
द्वेषं दम्भं च मानं च क्रोधं तैक्ष्ण्यं च वर्जयेत् ॥ १६३ ॥

*ācāryam ca pravaktāram pitaram mātaram gurum |
na hiṃsyād brāhmaṇān gāśca sarvāṁścaiva tapasvinah || 162 ||
nāstikyam vedanindām ca devatānām ca kutsanam |
dveṣam dambhaṃ ca mānaṃ ca krodham taikṣhnyam ca varjayet || 163 ||*

This means “One must never cause harm to his teacher, instructor, father, mother, elder, Brahmins, cows, and all who are given to austerities. He should eschew infidelity, denigrating the Vedas, disparaging the gods, hatred, arrogance, pride, anger, and harshness”. All of this is not just right and good: “A man who is

unrighteous, who has gained his wealth dishonestly, and who always takes delight in causing injury will never achieve happiness (*sukha*) in this world" (*Manusamhitā* chapter 4, verse 170). This applies for the simple reason that lack of virtue is lack of control and lack of control guarantees misery.

5.6 Tapas Mediates Virtue and Happiness:

Tapas is a familiar concept in *Manusamhitā* and translates usually as the heat that is generated by austerity. But Manu situates *tapas* in a new moral context in connection with both virtue and happiness. According to him, there is a sharp difference between the object of affect, which is a sensory fact, and the true cause of affect, which is a mental fact or process. Sensory contacts (*viṣaya*) give rise to addiction affect or pleasure and mastery regulates addiction, it is *tapas* that actually causes joy or *sukha*. In *Manusamhitā*, chapter 11, verse 234, it is said that –

तपोमूलमिदं सर्वं दैवमानुषकं सुखम् ।
तपोमध्यं बुधैः प्रोक्तं तपोऽन्तं वेददशीभिः ॥ २३४ ॥

tapomūlamidaṁ sarvam daivamānuṣakam sukham |
tapomadhyam budhaiḥ proktam tapo'ntam vedadarśibhiḥ || 234 ||

“The intelligent men or sages to whom the *Veda* was revealed said that all this happiness or *sukha* of Gods and humans has inner heat or *tapas* as its root, inner heat as its middle, and inner heat as its end”. *Tapas* is the key religious and psychological concept in Manu’s synthesis between regulated action (where Vedic transactions are subject to self-control and become *dhārmik* action) and the supreme goal of liberation.

The text states that obedience to mother, father, and *guru* - the paradigmatic examples of *dharma* - is the “supreme generator of inner heat.” The obstacles to *tapas* are desire or *kāma* and anger or *krodha*, where desire includes (in a list that is made explicit for the training of the king but partially resembles that of the student): hunting, gambling, sleeping, gossip, women, drinking, musing, singing, and others. Anger includes slander, violence, malice, envy, resentment, destruction of property, verbal abuse, and others (*Manusamhitā* chapter 4, verse 47 - 48). Note that greed (*lobha*) appears in both lists. The text *Manusamhitā* does not define *tapas*, but

describes it as the product of self-restraint and spiritual effort among humans and as the realization of one's most authentic nature even for “worms, snakes, moths, livestock and birds...” (*Manusamhitā*, chapter 11, verse 241)

Indeed, Manu links *tapas* to the realization of one's intrinsic nature, which combines ontological (*sva-bhāva*) and normative (*sva-dharma*) properties. *Tapas* are the elevated mental capacity for mastery affect, and are the very foundation of the law *dharma*: “By inner heat alone the God who is the Lord of Creatures emitted this teaching (*mahābhāgya*), and in the very same way the sages obtained the Vedas by generating inner heat” (*Manusamhitā*, chapter 11, verse 244). It seems to be the realization of one's supreme (and supremely appropriate) nature that is equated with *tapas*. For example, it is said that:

ब्राह्मणस्य तपो ज्ञानं तपः क्षत्रस्य रक्षणम् ।
वैश्यस्य तु तपो वार्ता तपः शूद्रस्य सेवनम् ॥ २३५ ॥

*brāhmaṇasya tapo jñānam tapah kṣatrasya rakṣanam |
vaiśyasya tu tapo vārtā tapah śūdrasya sevanam || 235 ||*

This means “Knowledge is a priest's inner heat, protection a ruler's inner heat, business a commoner's inner heat, and service a servant's inner heat” (*Manusamhitā* chapter 11, verse 236). Experts on *dharma* will note that this is an identical formulation with (*svadharma*) as one's inner nature and inner duty as a single conception. In *Manusamhitā*, *sukha* is not merely a result of virtue, but is linked with virtue in such a way that one becomes virtuous simply by pursuing *sukha* effectively. And it is the doctrine of *tapas* that makes this explicit.

One may say that there are different types of force that mediates between the world and the feeling of positive (or negative) affect and that the true cause of positive affect (*sukha*) is never the object of the sense or any other external reality. It is the ascetic restraint (*tapas*) which requires significant effort to master for the purpose of realizing one's authentic nature. Effort and ontological authenticity (*sva-bhāva*) function together, acting as the cause of happiness. In *Manusamhitā* chapter 2, verse 118, we can find the following reference:

सावित्रीमात्रसारोऽपि वरं विप्रः सुयन्त्रितः ।
नायन्त्रितस्त्रिवेदोऽपि सर्वाशी सर्वविक्रयी ॥ ११८ ॥

*sāvitrīmātrasāro'pi varam viprah suyantritah |
nāyantritastrivedo'pi sarvāśī sarvavikrayī || 118 ||*

Which means “A priest (*vipra*) who has controlled himself well (*suyantrita*) is better, even if all he knows is the verse to the sun-God, than a man who is not controlled, who eats everything and sells every-thing, even if he knows the three *Vedas*”.

In a way of conclusion, we can say that the value of recommending happiness as a goal of moral behaviour and consequence of virtue is contingent on both the true nature of affect (mastery as opposed to sensory-addictive) and on realizing the mechanism that produces it (internal *tapas*). This is the insight that Manu shares with the ascetic texts, an essential insight for removing the attribution error (*avidyā*) that generates a false sense of agency (the so-called enjoyment - *bhoga* - self with its false pleasures). With *tapas* Manu shows his indebtedness to the tradition that examines ignorance (*avidyā*) and sensory addiction in far greater detail. Still, *tapas* in Manu acts in the service of *dharma* and society - and not only for liberation (*mokṣa*). Manu has borrowed from one domain in order to apply it in another.

What we find here is that, Manu combines the concept of duty that was based on Vedic transactions with an understanding of virtue that originates in ascetic texts, and he forged a major new conception of *dharma*. This was an elaborate system where acts of *dharma* led to happiness, where happiness - properly understood - depended on the psychological skills (self-control) of ascetics, and finally, where self-control defined the essence of virtue. The underlying cause of happiness was identified with *tapas*, a force that combined ascetic discipline with observance of *dharma*.

Chapter - VI

Conclusion

A virtue is a trait which allows one to fulfill one's function well. Thus, there are different virtues for teachers, for soldiers, for knives, for clocks, etc. Living life well, *eudaimonia*, involves fulfilling one's function excellently. Thus, one's happiness or *eudaimonia* depends on their function or nature. Human function has to be something peculiar to humans. The only thing peculiar to humans is that we think we are rational animals. Therefore, *eudaimonia* is a life led by reason. The virtues are how we live this life led by reason. Thus, *eudaimonia* consists in a life of practicing virtue.

Virtues are trained habits, like the arts. Virtues give us reasons to act in a certain way. Doing a virtuous action is not the same thing as having a virtue, and the latter is better. Having a virtue affects not just one's actions, but one's thinking, desires, emotions. Virtues are the mean between two extremes deficiency and excess. Virtues can be closer to one extreme than the other. To hit the mean, you should aim towards the extreme which is less natural for you. There is no value in knowing about virtue, only in having the virtue. Virtues allow us to perform our function well. Our function being the activity of the soul is in accordance with reason. Living virtuously increases one's understanding of virtue.

Problems for Deontology:

One of the ways we evaluate a normative ethic is if we think it generally tells us the right thing to do in various cases. Once again, this evidence appears mixed. One noteworthy feature which may be considered bad or good is that the categorical imperative does not always say what to do. Sometimes there may be one forbidden action, but many permissible actions, and Kant does not say which is the best. There are other problems, such as Kant's distinction between acting from duty and acting in accordance with duty, which seems to many to be wrong. One remaining difficulty deserves to be especially highlighted: the problem of how broad maxims are supposed to be.

Whether or not we can or do wish a rule to be universalized seems to depend a lot on how specific a maxim is. If we consider the case of borrowing money without intending to give it back, then if the maxim on which we were acting were or “anyone with my DNA sequence should borrow money with no intention to pay it back” then we probably could coherently imagine and will such a scenario. Kant thinks we should not do this, so he needs maxims to be broader claims, such as, “one should borrow money without intending to pay it back”; a maxim of that sort plausibly could not be universalized. Whether or not we can or do wish a rule to be universalized seems to depend a lot on how specific a maxim is. As maxim’s get more general, other moral problems seem to crop up. For instance, “everyone should lie” could not be coherently willed as a universal law, so instead we should act on the maxim “everyone should tell the truth.” This seems, until we consider scenarios in which the Nazi’s are at the door and asking if you are harboring Jews in your house... Despite these problems, Kant accepts the results. To claim that we have a different moral obligation regarding truth when we are harboring Jewish people from Nazis is just to not understand what it is for an imperative to be “categorical” rather than hypothetical.

Applying Virtue Ethics:

One of the problems of virtue ethics is that it seems to have a lot less informative answer to normative ethics. In short, its rule is: “do what the virtuous person would do.” This answer is unhelpful precisely because virtue ethics is not so much interested in giving answers as it is in developing people. Scientific exactitude is impossible in treating of particular ethical cases. They do not fall under any art or law, but the actors themselves have always to take account of circumstances, as much as in medicine or in navigation. Aristotle nonetheless, there are things we can say about virtue which can help us in doing virtuous things. What do we actually know about virtue? Virtues are the mean between two extremes (deficiency and excess). Virtues can be closer to one extreme than the other. To hit the mean, you should aim towards the extreme which is less natural for you. There is no value in knowing about virtue, only in having the virtue. Virtues allow us to perform our function well (our function being the activity of the soul in accordance with reason). Living virtuously increases one’s understanding of virtue.

Strength of Virtue Ethics:

Virtue Ethics avoids having to use a formula (e.g. ‘the greatest good for the greatest number’) to work out what we ought to do and focuses instead on the kind of person we ought to be. Virtue Ethics understands the need to distinguish good people from legalists – obeying the law and following the rules does not make one a good person. Virtue Ethics stresses the importance of motivating people to want to be good – it stresses the importance of education in showing that good actions are their own reward. It shows how we acquire and learn virtues by imitating others. Virtue Ethics tells us how we learn moral principles and involves our entire life, as every moment, even the most mundane, is an opportunity for developing a virtue. Virtue Ethics enables us to integrate many aspects of life – our emotions, commitments to others, our friends, social responsibilities – into our ethical reflection; it looks at what makes life worthwhile rather than looking at what is right or wrong in a particular situation or particular moment in our lives. It does not reject our emotions but includes them, and so is more in tune with how people naturally react to an ethical dilemma. It relates our ethical choices to the bigger picture.

Virtue Ethics sees it as good to be biased in favour of friends and family, unlike Utilitarianism or Kant which see impartiality as important. Virtue Ethics does not pretend to be able to tell us what a good person would do in every possible situation but encourages us to be more like such a person so that we will not need an ethical theory to make our decisions for us. It stresses the importance of character – after all, someone who helps the poor out of compassion does seem to be morally superior to someone who does it out of duty.

Weakness of or Problems for Virtue Ethics:

One major difficulty is that of identifying the virtues. Are virtues culturally relative? How can Virtue Ethics be applied to moral dilemmas? This is the problem raised by Robert Louden (‘On Some Vices of Virtue Ethics’): Virtue Ethics does not help people facing a crisis because it does not give any clear rules for action. It is difficult to work out what is the virtuous response to stem-cell research or abortion. Virtue Ethics does not give us any concrete answers and says only that it is a matter

for the practical wisdom of the person facing the situation. Virtue Ethics seems to praise some virtues that we might see as immoral (e.g., soldiers fighting unjust wars may be courageous but that does not make them morally good). Louden also points out that it is difficult to decide who is virtuous, as acts which appear virtuous on the outside may not necessarily have good motives and vice versa. Virtue Ethics does not seem to have room for basic concepts such as rights and obligations, so as a theory of ethics it seems incapable of dealing with big issues - Virtue Ethics does not always have a view about what makes an act right or wrong. Virtue Ethics depends on some final end which gives shape to our lives: there may not be one, and being virtuous may not affect it anyway.

Does a virtue ethic generally give us the results we think are right? Ethics is supposed to tell us what to do, but virtue ethics is often not good at giving a particular answer. It is questionable whether happiness or living well actually consists in living virtuously. Virtue ethics requires that we have a proper function, but it is difficult to justify how we have a way we are supposed to work. How, evolutionarily, would that have come about?

Keeping these views in mind what we found that in recent years, as awareness of the inadequacies of utilitarian and deontological ethics has grown, there has been a turn to normative theories whose primary focus is on persons rather than decision-making and consequences. The revival of virtue ethics has been an important part of this normative turn, with the emphasis coming to be placed upon agents and the sorts of lives they lead rather than upon atomic acts and the rules for making choices, even less upon the consequences of such acts. The proponents of virtue ethics thus differentiate their normative approach from the two dominant forms of modern ethics - utilitarianism and deontology. In this normative turn, the characters of agents and their morally relevant traits matter more than laws of obligation.

The Doctrine of Virtue is the key text which supports the interpretation of Kant's philosophy as a practical ethics. The work forms the second part of Kant's *Metaphysics of Morals* and represents the culmination of the work on the ethical questions with which Kant had been grappling with for years. Despite being central to Kant's work, *The Doctrine of Virtue* has been neglected since it was written. In giving this work the critical attention it merits, contemporary Kantian philosopher Gary

Banham is laying the foundation for a major reinterpretation of Kant, at long setting Kant in his true light. Banham defines Kantian virtue as a combination of teleology with perfectionism. In the prefatory material to *The Doctrine of Virtue*, Kant makes the clear case for viewing ethical considerations in terms of teleological standards that involve an orientation towards perfectionism.

It would appear at first glance that Kant has nothing to offer the contemporary recovery of virtue ethics. Indeed, as the first moral theorist to place a non-derivative conception of duty at the centre of the philosophical stage and the first to establish a non-consequentialist decision procedure through his universalisability test, Kant can be considered the philosopher most responsible for the turn away from virtue ethics in the first place. On this reading, Kant is the first and the greatest philosopher of deontology. Further, whilst contemporary communitarian philosophers such as Michael Sandel are attempting to reinstate the warm, affective ties of individuals within community, Kant is associated with Enlightenment efforts to emancipate the individual from such ties and from the pull of traditions and communities. Kant's universalistic conception of morality is considered asocial and ahistorical for this reason, a deficiency which Hegel sought to remedy in his conception of *Sittlichkeit*.

There are conceptual as well as historical reasons as to why Kant is considered by virtue theorists to be a, and maybe even *the*, principal target for their criticism. In arguing that only actions done 'from duty' possess moral worth and exhibit a good will Kant has been criticised by both neo-Kantians like Rawls and anti-Kantians like Sandel for being indifferent to ends. Sandel rightly points out; Kant's account of rights and duties 'does not depend on the idea that we own ourselves, or on the claim that our lives and liberties are a gift from God. Instead, it depends on the idea that we are rational beings, worthy of dignity and respect.'

Sandel proceeds to present Kant as a deontologist, opposed to utilitarianism and to virtue theory, (allocating goods to reward and promote virtue. Instead, Sandel argues, Kant connects justice and morality via a 'demanding' idea of freedom. Since empirical considerations, such as interests, wants, desires, and preferences, are variable and contingent; they cannot serve as the basis for universal moral principles - such as universal human rights. For Kant, we arrive at the supreme principle of morality, the moral law, through the exercise of "pure practical reason." Kant's

argument is based on the close connection between our capacity for reason and our capacity for freedom. Every person is worthy of respect as an end, and not merely as a means, not on account of self-ownership of life, labour and person, but on account of being rational beings. This capacity for reason means that we are also autonomous beings, capable of acting and choosing freely.

But human beings are sentient creatures as well as rational ones, responding to the senses. Bentham was right to observe that human beings like pleasure and dislike pain, but wrong to argue that these are “our sovereign masters.” For Kant, reason can and ought to be sovereign. When reason governs our will, we are using our distinctive capacity to achieve freedom, setting us apart from obeying appetite in a mere animal existence.

To act freely, in Kant’s conception, is to act autonomously according to a law that is self-given, rather than to the dictates of nature or social convention. Kant’s autonomy contrasts with heteronomy. To act heteronomously is to act according to determinations external to the person – natural and social. So, to act freely is not to choose the best means to a given end but to choose the end itself, for its own sake.¹ On account of the distinctive capacity for reason, this is a choice that human beings can make, unlike those things which are a matter of physical causality and biological imperatives.

Sandel thus proceeds Kant as presenting a deontological rules ethics in which the moral worth of an action consists not in the consequences of that action, but in the intention from which the act is done. ‘What matters is the motive, and the motive must be of a certain kind. What matters is doing the right thing because it’s right, not for some ulterior motive.’

For Hegel, Kant’s pure motive of duty can never produce the good since it is abstracted from the real desires, interests, and needs of real individuals. There is simply no way of bracketing out the characters of the agents in the way that seems to be required by Kant. Instead, Hegel demands that the good be made an integral part of the everyday empirical life of individuals. Here, Hegel follows Aristotle’s conception

¹ Gregor, M. J. (Trans. & Ed.), *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2001, p. 453 - 454

of a virtue as an intelligent disposition to behave in certain ways and act for certain reasons through feeling pleasure or pain at certain things. For Hegel, this Aristotelian virtue transcends Kant's dualism of duty and inclination.

According to MacIntyre, a virtue is an acquired human quality, the possession and exercise of which tends to enable us to achieve those goods which are internal to practices and the lack of which effectively prevents us from achieving any such goods. Alasdair MacIntyre's *After Virtue* provocatively criticizes the state of contemporary moral philosophy and its history. For MacIntyre, the intractability of contemporary moral debates stems from the lack of shared goods in Aristotle's sense. People line up on either side of an issue and, because they lack a common ideological focus, they can never engage in rational argument, at least as subsumed by the movement toward a shared good. MacIntyre himself suggests, external motivations are premised on the expectation that an appreciation or conviction of the "internal goods" in chess play will build in the person. "External goods", including both beauty and especially the "moralities of law", therefore, serve as more than enticements; they create the conditions of possibility or openness to virtue that may be impossible otherwise.

MacIntyre's analysis of the problem is persuasive, but his solution? namely, a kind of return to Aristotelian virtues? is less so. MacIntyre appeals to his special definitions of 'practices' and 'internal goods' to define virtues. The missing element is that "practices" are undertaken in the shadow of, and "internal goods" are defined by, rules or laws that are themselves "socially established" and "cooperative" (even if they are theologically understood as eternal, given, and transcendent). Moreover, the practice of "practices" involves a repetitiveness and detailed attention to minor rules that closely resemble religious life itself. Maimonides, for instance, says, 'Know that these moral virtues and vices are acquired and firmly established in the soul by frequently repeating the actions pertaining to a particular moral habit over a long period of time and by our becoming accustomed to them.' Finally, "internal goods" are defined as benefiting the "whole community" most often and most easily through an acceptance of a religious worldview that provides unassailable assumptions. In this way, law and religion? what MacIntyre calls "moralities of law"? play a larger role in

the acquisition of virtues than he allows, precisely because that role is played most importantly before virtue arises.

The unexplained element in MacIntyre's definition of virtue is that it is an "acquired human quality". How is it acquired? The answer given by Jewish and Hindu jurisprudence is first through law that is, through the study and practice of religious law. MacIntyre emphasizes virtue as something possessed before practice and the achievement of good. Jewish and Hindu traditions emphasize the reverse, however. They do so because an initially blind and repeated self-acceptance of the obligations and prohibitions of law, what MacIntyre calls "to enter into a practice," produces the experiential and practical insight into the "internal goods" of ideal Jewish or Hinduism that then subsequently modulates into virtue or virtues. The radiant morality of *sista* possesses a beauty that transcends the limitations of being outside a "practice", and its charismatic attraction may be the first impetus for entering into a "practice". Virtue manifests itself to the uninformed as beauty and charisma. At the same time, one cannot merely will or claim for oneself the possession of such virtues. Instead, the value of virtue, as opposed now to its beauty, can be appreciated only by someone who is already convinced of the value of the "practices" and the "internal goods" in each tradition. Law is collectively the first instrument, the practical embodiment, and, in an extended sense, the tangible reward of that conviction.

Rules are prior to repeated activity; repeated activity leads to socially established "practices"; "practices" achieve goods; and goods instill, and arise simultaneously with, virtues. Virtues, in this view, validate and naturalize the spirit of the rules and the value of the prescribed activity. Whereas virtues may appear to emerge innately in certain persons, the recognition of human qualities as virtues emerges only after "practice". The acquisition of the unity of virtues in Aristotle's sense is coextensive and contemporaneous with the acquisition of *eudaimonia*, true human flourishing as an ultimate good. Virtues do not precede *eudaimonia*; they constitute it. For MacIntyre, law and virtue have to be informed by teleology, a shared good, in order to have authority. The nurturing of virtue for MacIntyre, however, follows closely on the heels of the identification of that shared good.

The current normative turn, involving virtue ethics, is going in the way of Hegel against Kant, or against the Kant who is a deontologist and no more. Philippa Foot singles out Kant for particular criticism in being one of the key philosophers whose ‘tacitly accepted opinion was that a study of the topic (of the virtues and vices) would form no part of the fundamental work of ethics’.

The most salient characteristic of virtue ethics is its strong agent orientation. In virtue ethics, the *primary* object of moral evaluation is the agent, not the intentional act or its consequences. Virtue ethics proceeds from the notion of the morally good person. This person is not defined in terms of performing obligatory acts ('the person who acts as duty requires') or end-states ('the agent who is disposed to maximise utility through his acts'). Rather, whether acts are right or wrong is determined according to what the good agent would or would not do. Ends are considered worthy or unworthy according to what the good agent would or would not aim at. It follows from this that virtue ethics is based on a conceptual shift in which 'being' receives greater prominence than 'doing'.

Virtue ethics is thus an agent-ethics rather than an act-ethics. The character of the agent rather than the act and its consequences is the primary focus. Where virtue theorists are concerned with the character of agents and the kinds of lives they lead, act theorists focus on discrete acts and are therefore more concerned with formulating decision procedures for making practical choices.

Agent ethics and act ethics also advance different views with respect to moral motivation. Moving away from rules as guiding acts and consequences of acts, the same act comes to be evaluated differently according to the motivations of the agent. The agent who acts from dispositions of friendship, courage or integrity is held to be morally higher than the person who performs the same acts but from other motives, whether with respect to utility or consequences. Character and kinds of life matter. The difficulty of any attempt to read Kantian ethics as a virtue ethics as such becomes apparent here. Kant is on both sides of the divide, as a duty-based or deontological theorist, whose preferred motivation factor is respect for the idea of duty itself, duty being done for the sake of duty, and as a virtue theorist whose preferred motive is neither duty nor utility but the virtues themselves. That Kant is able to reconcile duty and virtue testifies to his achievement in ethics.

Kant continues that “power, wealth, honour, even health and that complete wellbeing and contentment with one’s state which goes by the name of ‘happiness’” produce only ‘boldness’ and even ‘over-boldness’, ‘unless a good will is present by which their influence on the mind - and so too the whole principle of action - may be corrected and adjusted to universal ends’.² Kant therefore concludes that ‘a good will seems to constitute the indispensable condition of our very worthiness to be happy.’

Kant’s position on the good will would seem to offer clear evidence of an agent-centred ethics as against an act-centred ethics. This contradicts the familiar view of Kant as a rules-centred deontologist. Robert Paul Wolff remarks that it is ‘noteworthy that the philosopher most completely identified with the doctrine of stern duty should begin, not with a statement about what we ought to do, but rather with a judgment of what is unqualifiedly good’. Further, it is clear that what counts as unqualifiedly good for Kant is not some end-state like pleasure or the performance of certain discrete acts in conformity to rules, but a condition of ‘character’ forming the basis for all of a person’s actions. Thus, the question of ‘the good will’ can never be answered with certainty given the opacity of our intentions.

Instead, it is necessary to look beyond discrete acts and decisions and instead assess the lives that agents live. For Kant, a person cannot be ‘morally good in some ways and at the same time morally evil in others’. Likewise, a person cannot exhibit a good will in one instance and an evil in another. A steadfastness of character must be apparent at all times.

However, Kant’s philosophy cannot be read as a virtue ethics alone. There is little to be gained from bending a stick that has gone too far in one direction, too far back in the other direction. There is much more to Kant’s ethical position than these rules versus virtue antagonism. Kant defines both the good will and virtue in terms of obedience to moral law; they are both wills which conform to the moral law and act out of respect for the moral law. In beginning with the good will, Kant is attempting to discern ‘the supreme principle of morality’. This is the categorical imperative. Which means that if virtue is defined in terms of conformity to the moral law and the

² Gregor, M. J. (Trans. & Ed.), *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2001, p. 60

categorical imperative, then it follows that, after all, it is obedience to rules that is primary in Kantian ethics, not virtue. There is, however, a sense in which this is to divide Kant's ethical position from within, creating a false antithesis which forces us to choose between duty for duty's sake or virtue for virtue's sake.

As the basis for all judgments of moral worth, virtue constitutes the heart of the ethical in Kant's view. However, Kant goes on to define this virtue according to the moral law, the supreme principle of morality. Virtue ethics places the emphasis upon agency and long-term characteristic behaviour rather than discrete acts and decision procedures for moral quandaries. However, what matters most of all for Kant is that moral agency acts consistently out of respect for the moral law, not merely in terms of following specific rules for specific acts, but in the more fundamental terms of the person guiding his or her whole life out of respect for rationally legislated and willed law.

Whatever the contemporary deontological liberal attempts to redefine Kant as neutral on the good, Kant's own position is clear: the existence of morally necessary ends is crucial to moral philosophy. Morally necessary ends exist. The good life lies in our choosing these ends as a matter of free choice, guided by reason. Kant argues that the abandonment of morally necessary ends 'would do away with all moral philosophy'. From this perspective, contemporary deontological liberalism asserting a neutrality on the good and the priority of right evinces nothing more than the demoralisation of the modern world. MacIntyre's critique of modernity in *After Virtue* could have been written by Kant as *After Morality*. As Roger Trigg argues, 'morality matters' and to Kant ends are absolutely crucial to morality as such.

Kant's reasoning is that all ends which are necessary are categorical. If all ends are contingent, then all imperatives cease to be categorical and instead become hypothetical. And this would spell the end of moral philosophy. The reduction of morality to being 'value judgements' in the modern world amounts to the eclipse of ethics. 'Value judgements' do not constitute a morality; they are a mere congeries of subjective preferences and opinions based on desire, want and inclination. If individuals are free to accept or reject any end put before them according to their own specific inclinations, then it follows that all commands prescribing maxims for actions are similarly open to rejection. And once morally necessary ends are abandoned,

inclinations take the place of reason, the moral law is no longer recognised and morality no longer exists.

It is clear that virtue plays a greater role in Kant's ethics than those who read Kant's ethics as a rule ethics pure and simple would presume. This does not mean, however, that Kant's ethics is just a virtue ethics and nothing else. It is more accurate to argue that Kant combines both rule and virtue ethics to develop an ethical position that is more than the sum of both. Both agent and act perspectives form a significant part of Kant's ethical theory. We have tried to correct the dominant reading of Kant as a deontological rule ethics that is silent so far as the concept of good is concerned. Whilst Rawlsian liberalism fits the contemporary demoralised modern world in which right prevails over good, this was not Kant's position at all on ethics. At the core of Kant's ethics is the moral requirement to transform society to realise the highest good: 'The moral law ... determines for us ... a final purpose toward which it obliges us to strive, and this purpose is the highest good in the world possible through freedom'. For Kant, human beings 'are a priori determined by reason to promote with all our powers the *summum bonum*, which consists in the combination of the greatest welfare of rational beings with the highest condition of the good itself, i.e., in universal happiness conjoined with morality most accordant to law'. Kant's notion of the good connects directly with virtue, his ethical theory thus assessing not merely discrete acts but most of all agents' characters and ways of life.

For the Hindu texts, the shared good of *Veda*, respectively, is mediated in the first place by rules. And it is rules that promote the virtues that sustain a human life. In other words, laws are the first means of entry onto the religious path. They are an invitation to the rhetorical community associated with *Veda*.³ To think of laws as constraints on freedom is to misunderstand what true freedom is in these religio-legal worldviews. Law prescribes certain activities and demands certain restraints that enable new activities and new knowledge that are otherwise impossible. The repetition of such activities? whether it be related to ritual, diet, marriage, contracts, inheritance, or the suppression of crime? constitutes the normative practice of the

³ Paul Hacker, *Dharma in Hinduism*, 34 J. of Indian Philosophy. 479, 490 (2006). One may compare rules, practices, and virtues of *dharma* to Hacker's distinction of *dharma* before, during, and after its performance or realization

community. Virtues come to be appropriated through socialization in and self-yoking to that normative practice.

If we consider the structure of the famous Laws of Manu⁴, for instance: the first half of the work, which gives detailed rules for the daily life of Brahmins of various kinds and in various stages of life, culminates in an altogether different listing of the “ten-point law.” This list includes what can only be called virtues: resolve, forbearance, self-control, understanding, learning, truthfulness, et cetera. Though it is a stretch to read the text as giving myriad rules that result in a handful of virtues, it is reasonable to view the Laws of Manu as placing first priority on *dharma* as a set of enjoined practices and only a distant, secondary importance to *dharma* as a collection of virtues.

The movement is really chronological. Virtue, being an acquired quality or habit, must be forged in the crucible of practices that conform to rules. All elements? rules, practices, and virtues? are equally important and equally constitutive of *dharma*, but one cannot obtain virtue without rules and practices.

In contrast to the modern legal perspective, this view conforms to the rules that automatically produces virtues or, better, material virtue or virtue-substance. For example, a man who annually cheats on his taxes by exaggerating his charitable contributions. If he, short of being audited and prosecuted, stops this practice in order to conform to the legal rule, then he might be said to have acquired an incremental increase in his honesty-substance. He may be known publicly as an honest man, but society does not normally count mere reputation as true virtue. Still, his virtuous act is itself lawful, good, and incrementally beneficial to his own true virtue. The point from the Hindu law side, however, is that virtue is not an absolute possession but is rather directly linked to what one actually does as measured against the empirical sources of *dharma*. One has the ten-point law in direct proportion to one’s observance of the great variety of *dharma*s. The status of the virtues among the famous renouncers of the Hindu tradition is a different matter, and many different opinions have been given about their legal status and rights and about the prerequisites. In this way, though the law cannot recognize virtue as such, rather only conformable action, it can produce

⁴ *Commentary on Laws of Manu* 2.6, translated in *Manusmrti: With the ‘Manubhashya’ of Medhatithi* 206-08 (Ganganath Jha trans., 1999)

virtue or virtue-substance. In Hindu jurisprudence, it is not *dharma* merely to think “virtuously” about performing rituals, abstaining from certain foods, charging appropriate interest, etc. Once one does act according to rule, however, a virtue-substance is produced.

Now, this does not sound right today because we all agree that law and morality can diverge, that a virtuous person can be legally condemned while a corrupt person is enabled by the law. But, from the perspective of these religious laws, rules must start the process off and are fundamental. The amassing of virtue-substance through good practice insists that virtue cannot precede good practice in the first instance. Virtue-substance once obtained may be “spent” in the further pursuit of goods through practice, but it may equally be “spent” pursuing practices that do not conform to and are not *dharma*. Here, think of the converse case of a man who has always properly paid his taxes but this year decides to fudge things a bit for a new car. Supposing these two hypothetical men sent their taxes in on the same day: which of them at that moment is virtuous? Would it solve the problem if the second man did it to pay for his dying wife’s cancer treatments? In this case, virtue as a moral possession is meaningless because it becomes a game of weighing the relative good produced by two different actions without a way to evaluate which is better. Such explorations in obsessive hypothetical problem-solving, what Pincoffs famously called “Quandary Ethics,”⁵ lead one away from the integration of law, religion, and ethical virtues envisioned in Hindu jurisprudence. Moreover, this kind of tragic conflict of virtues would, in Hindu law, be restated in legal terms as the determination of the proper scope of rules in particular contexts? a determination that Hindu law insists must occur with marked realism and situational reasoning.

It is impossible to underestimate the scale of Kant’s achievement. In *The History of Western Philosophy*, Bertrand Russell opines that ‘Immanuel Kant is generally considered the greatest of modern philosophers. We cannot agree with this estimate, but it would be foolish not to recognize his great importance’.⁶ Talk about being damned by faint praise. Comparisons are always invidious, but we can’t think of a modern philosopher who could be considered better than Kant. Kant’s achievement is immense, effectively bringing to fruition all the hopes of ancient

⁵ Edmund Pincoffs, Quandary Ethics, 80 MIND N. S. 552 (1971).

⁶ Russell, Bertrand, *A History of Western Philosophy*, London: Unwin Hyman Ltd., 1979, p. 731

philosophy in a way that responds to and resolves the key problems of the modern world. Kant achieves the unity of humankind on the plane of reason, of a reason forever denuded of its speculative ambition. Even on the foundation of the fundamental moral soundness of Socratic wisdom, ancient philosophy could not have conceived of such unification, given its deficient accounts of the unity of nature. Kant's achievement is to have demonstrated that this unity emerges from within reason itself. Unity arises from reason's own legislation; it is reason's own self legislation that unifies humankind. Kant points to a reason which grows beyond nature. Such reason does not conform to nature, following its "leading-strings", but grows beyond nature.

The examples of mathematics and natural science, which by a single and sudden revolution have become what they now are, seem to me sufficiently remarkable to suggest our considering what may have been the essential features in the changed point of view by which they have so greatly benefited. Their success should incline us, at least by way of experiment, to imitate their procedure, so far as the analogy which, as species of rational knowledge, they bear to metaphysics may permit. Hitherto it has been assumed that all our knowledge must conform to objects. But all attempts to extend our knowledge of objects by establishing something in regard to them *a priori*, by means of concepts, have, on this assumption, ended in failure. We must therefore make trial whether we may not have more success in the tasks of metaphysics, if we suppose that objects must conform to our knowledge. CPR, B xvi.

A new light flashed upon the mind of the first man (be he Thales or some other) who demonstrated the properties of the isosceles triangle. The true method, so he found, was not to inspect what he discerned either in the figure, or in the bare concept of it, and from this, as it were, to read off its properties; but to bring out what was necessarily implied in the concepts that he had himself formed *a priori*, and had put into the figure in the construction by which he presented it to himself. If he is to know anything with *a priori* certainty he must not ascribe to the figure anything save what necessarily follows from what he has himself set into it in accordance with his concept. CPR, B xiii

By conformity to the object, Kant means conformity to nature. This merely generates the illusions of fundamental heterogeneity, including the apparent heterogeneity of the natures of philosopher and non-philosopher. Kant is clear that reason must be one within the species as a whole. If reason is to legislate unity, it must itself be unified. The reason which is one in the species is “to be found in that reason with which every human being is endowed”. There can therefore be no natural differences in kind between human beings, between philosophers and non-philosophers, only differences in the degree to which human beings have approached the end of their rational nature. The philosopher as such undertakes theoretical inquiry out of duty: “Moreover, the resolution of all our transcendent knowledge into its elements... to the philosopher is indeed a matter of duty” (CPR A 703/6 731; A 726/8 754). The duty of the philosopher is to stimulate human beings to use the reason that is their birthright. In locating the “idea of the legislation” of the philosopher in the reason that is innate to all human beings, Kant democratizes philosophy, holding out the prospect that each man and each woman can become a philosopher, thus bringing the species as a whole to its natural rational end. Such a conclusion casts Plato’s statement that virtue is its own reward in new light. All men and women are philosophers and as such come to lead lives of virtue.

In Nicomachean Ethics Aristotle asserts that humans by nature move towards a certain telos or end – eudaimonia. To achieve this, humans need to practice virtues such as friendship, magnanimity and phronesis. Over time philosophers have disagreed over what exactly the virtues are, but those who agree with Virtue Ethics would claim that we aim to be better than we are – the ideal has not been attained. Doing the right thing means simply the action that is done by the virtuous person. However, what if human life has no telos? According to Iris Murdoch, there are properly many patterns and purposes within life, but there is no general and as it were externally guaranteed pattern or purpose of the kind for which philosophers and theologians used to search. We are what we seem to be, transient moral creatures subject to necessity and chance.⁷

Virtue Ethics is thought to be naturalistic because its claims about our telos and virtues depend on a particular view of human nature. It is also based on

⁷ Murdoch, Iris, *The Sovereignty of Good*, New York, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970, p. 79

developing our fundamental nature and so fulfilling our potential as human beings. This, however, does raise some important questions which are as follows and not covered in this dissertation keeping in mind for future research:

- Do we have a fixed nature or essence?
- Are there particular qualities we should all seek to express?
- Is our nature innate or does it depend on our environment or upbringing?
- If our nature is shaped by our culture, religion or upbringing, can we be held responsible for our virtuous actions?
- If virtues can be expressed in different ways, how does a virtuous person decide which is right; for example, one person might act out of love to help a person die, while another out of love might seek to prolong life at all costs.

Virtue Ethics has, however, shown that ethics is more than obeying rules and is concerned with the value and purpose of human life.

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West Bengal- 734013, India**

Editor-in-Chief

Laxmikanta Padhi, Professor and Head, Department of Philosophy,
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University of North Bengal

Dr. Mayank Bora, Assistant Professor in Philosophy, University of North Bengal

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CONTRIBUTORS

1. DR. DILIP KUMAR MOHANTA is a Professor in the Department of Philosophy, Calcutta University 1, Reformatory Street Kolkata - 700 027(dkmphil@gmail.com)
2. DR. RANJAN K PANDA is a Professor in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, Mumbai (panda.ranjan117@gmail.com)
3. ABHISEK JADAV is a PhD scholar in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (abhishekjadav@iitb.ac.in)
4. DR. SABITA SAMANTA is a Professor in the Department of Philosophy, Department of Philosophy, West Bengal State University, Barasat, Kolkata-126, West Bengal. (sabitasamanta@gmail.com)
5. SAPTAPARNI SARKAR is a PhD scholar in the Department of Philosophy, West Bengal State University, Barasat, Kolkata. (saptaparnis84@gmail.com)
4. DR. JYOTISH C. BASAK is a Professor in the Department of Philosophy, University of North Bengal (jyotishcbasak@yahoo.co.in)
5. DR. KANTI LAL DAS is a Professor in the Department of Philosophy, University of North Bengal (kanti_lal_das@yahoo.com)
6. DR. SOMDATTA BHATTACHARYYA is the Head and Associate Professor in Philosophy at CBPB University, Coochbehar. (somdatta28may@gmail.com)
7. DR. NIRMAL KUMAR ROY is an Associate Professor in the Department of Philosophy, University of North Bengal (nkr.anirban@gmail.com)
8. DR. K. BHIMA KUMAR is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Philosophy, University of Allahabad, Prayagraj (bhimakumar.k@gmail.com)
9. DR. SHAKUNTALA BORA is an Associate Professor in the Department of Philosophy, Guwahati University (shakuntalabora@yahoo.com)
10. DR. REKHA OJHA is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Philosophy and Comparative Religion, Visva- Bharati University. Santiniketan. (drrekha3@gmail.com)
11. SRI DIPANKAR BARMAN is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Philosophy, Khalisani Mahavidyalaya, Chandannagar, Hooghly (dbarman55@gmail.com)
12. DR. BAISAKHI DAS is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Philosophy, Women's College, Calcutta (baisakhi.dassaha@gmail.com)
13. DR. PURNIMA DAS is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Philosophy, Maynagudi College (purnimadas88199@gmail.com)
14. DR. BEDABATI CHOWDHURY is a teacher at Janapriya Nagar Janapriya Vidyalaya, Canning, West Bengal (bedabati@gmail.com)
15. SRI JAYANTA BARMAN is a PhD scholar at the Department of Philosophy, University of North Bengal (jayantabarman1017@gmail.com)
16. DR. POOJA VYAS is the Director (Academics) of ICPR at the Academic Centre of Lucknow. (drpoojaphilosophy@gmail.com)

17. DR. NIRANKUSH CHAKRABARTY is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Philosophy, Gazole Mahavidyalay, Malda (nirankush4u@gmail.com)
18. DR. BENDANGINLA is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Philosophy, Fazl Ali College, Mokokchung, Nagaland. (ainlajr@yahoo.com)
19. DR. KRISHNA PASWAN ia an Assistant Professor in the Department of Philosophy, Siliguri College (paswankrishna86@gmail.com)
20. DR. L. BISHWANATH SHARMA is the Head and Associate Professor in the Department of Philosophy Manipur University, Canchipur, Imphal, Manipur. (laibishwanath@yahoo.com)
21. DR. SAROJ KANTA KAR is the Programme Officer at ICPR, New Delhi. (sarojkkar@gmail.com)
22. SRI ABHINNSHYAM SHANKAR TIWARI is a PhD scholar in the Department of Philosophy, University of Lucknow (abhinnshyam74@gmail.com)
23. SMT. MADHURIMA BHOWMICK is a PhD scholar in the Department of Philosophy, University of North Bengal (m.bhowmick1994@gmail.com)
24. SMT. RUPON NAG is a PhD scholar in the Department of Philosophy, University of North Bengal (ruponnag93@gmail.com)
25. SRI KRISHNA PAL is a PhD scholar in the Department of Philosophy, University of North Bengal (paulkrishna2015@gmail.com)
26. SRI BIBHAS CHAKRABARTY is a PhD scholar in the Department of Philosophy, University of North Bengal (bibhashchakraborty.cob@gmail.com)
27. SRI SHUBHANKAR PODDAR is a PhD scholar in the Department of Philosophy, University of North Bengal (poddar.subhankarphil@gmail.com)
28. DR. SIMRAN RAINA is a Research Scholar in Philosophy in Department of Philosophy, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University Jammu, (simran14oct88@gmail.com)
29. SMT. MOUSUMI SAHA is a Research Scholar in Philosophy in the Dept. of Philosophy, University of Burdwan (mousumisaha2610@gmail.com)
30. SHUBHRA JYOTI DAS: Tagore on Man's Nature: an Analysis (shubhrajyoti.jnu@gmail.com)
31. DR. N. RAMTHING is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Philosophy, University of North Bengal (ngaleknaonbu15@gmail.com)
32. Smt. Swagata Ghosh is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Philosophy, University of North Bengal (ghoshswagata2012@gmail.com)
33. SMT ANUREEMA BHATTACHARYYA is an Associate Professor in the Department of Philosophy, University of North Bengal (abhattacharyya4@nbu.ac.in)
34. SRI SAHABUDDIN AHAMED JAMADER is a PhD scholar in the Department of Philosophy, University of North Bengal (sahabuddin@nbu.ac.in)
35. SRI AVIJIT GHOSH is a PhD scholar in the Department of Philosophy, University of North Bengal (avijit@mydigitech.net)

EDITORIAL NOTE

This journal is a yearly philosophical journal published by the Dept. of Philosophy, University of North Bengal. As a CARE Enlisted Journal of UGC, *Philosophical Papers: Journal of the Department of Philosophy* welcomes contributions from all fields of philosophy. The editorial policy of the journal is to promote the study of philosophy, Eastern and Western in all its branches: Epistemology, Metaphysics, Logic, Ethics, Social and Political Philosophy, Analytic Philosophy, Continental Philosophy and Philosophy of Science, Mind, Religion and Language. However, it would like its contributors to focus on what they consider to be significantly new and important. The contributions should, as far as possible, avoid jargon and the authour's contention should be stated in as simple a language as possible. *Philosophical Papers: Journal of the Department of Philosophy* is thus, devoted to the publication of original papers in any other of these fields. The Department hopes that followers and seekers of philosophy will receive much light and guidance in the field of philosophical research from these discussions. It is also expected that the contributions/papers in this academic journal will spark fruitful philosophical discussion of the vital issues raised in them.

The Department is happy to present *Philosophical Papers: Journal of the Department of Philosophy* Volume-17, March-2021, before the philosophical community. The Department thanks the esteemed members of the editorial board, Prof. Arvind Vikram Singh of University of Rajasthan, Prof. Kuntala Bhattacharyay of Rabindra Bharati University, Prof. Dillip Kumar Mahanta of Calcutta University, Prof. Gopal Sahu of Allahabad University, Prof. Ranjan Panda of IIT, Mumbai and all esteemed colleagues of the Deaprtment of Philosophy, University of North Bengal for valuable review, suggestion, support to take extra mile for the accomplishment of the publication of this issue. The Department is also grateful to our Vice-Chancellor for the encouragement and support, the Finance Officer (Officiating), the University Grants Commission and the University Press, without which the publication of the journal would not have been possible.

LAXMIKANTA PADHI
Editor-in-Chief

THE DEVELOPMENT OF VIRTUE ETHICS^{*}

SAHABUDDIN AHAMED JAMADER

Introduction:

The concept of virtue is one of the central concepts of moral philosophy. Moral philosophy deals with the questions of morality that discusses how one should live. Here we will make an attempt to elaborate a brief survey of concept of ‘virtue’ from its etymological meaning and historical development to its journey across the century. Virtue ethics gained its popularity in Ancient Greece from the writings of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, though it can be found even before these writings. But it has again become popular in the last part of the twentieth century with the writings of the thinkers like Elizabeth Anscombe, Phillipa Foot, Alasdair MacIntyre and Benjamin Franklin. The word ‘virtue’ is used as an equivalent of the Greek word ‘*arête*’ means ‘moral excellence’. Though ‘*arête*’ in its basic sense designates the “the excellence of any kind, virtue is generally regarded as a quality which is morally good, and thus it is used as a foundation of the principle of good moral being.

The term ‘*arête*’ or virtue has a long history and it is used with many meanings. In the ancient Greece, the notion of excellence was bound with the act of living up to one’s full potential. Homer used the term for both the Greeks as well as Trojan heroes and also for the female figures, such as Penelope, the wife of Greek hero Odysseus. For the Greek and Trojan heroes it is used for their bravery but in the case of Penelope it is known for her faithfulness towards Odysseus. Though *arête* is frequently used to designate bravery and faithfulness, it is more often associated with the effectiveness. When *arête* is used as a quality of man and woman it signifies that the man or woman is having the quality of highest effectiveness. It means that the man or the woman having *arête* use all their faculties - strength, bravery, and wit - to achieve their goal. In regards to the *Iliad* the way Homer describes Achilles is an example of *arête*. Here *arête* is used as the goodness and strength of a warrior. Though Homer used the word to describe the fighting spirit of warriors; many authors applied the term to animals and even to lifeless objects, such as tools and instruments.

* This paper is a subsection of my PhD dissertation for which I acknowledge my heartfelt gratitude and sincere thanks to my supervisor Prof. Laxmikanta Padhi for his kind help.

Sophists' View of Virtue:

By the end of the fifth century B.C., one important meaning of *arête* was popularized by the Greek thinkers. This meaning of virtue or *arête* represents as becoming a good citizen and achieving success in daily life, especially in politics and society. Taking advantage of this, the Sophists claimed that, they possessed the secret knowledge of achieving success in public life. Thus, they were able to attract the young people who were struggling to achieve success in Athenian life. However, the leading Sophists did not practise what they taught to others, because they did not belong to the society of Athens; they were foreigners.

There were few Sophists who were very popular in their time. Protagoras, Prodicus and Gorgias were among them. Protagoras of Abdera came from Thrace; he travelled around Greece as a teacher and lived in Athens for several years, where he got associated with Pericles and other rich and powerful Athenians. Pericles invited him to write the constitution of the newly founded Athenian colony, Thruii, in 444 B.C. Prodicus came from an island of Ceos. His countrymen sent him as an ambassador to Athens but later he is known as a great speaker and a teacher. Gorgias came to Greece from Leontini in Sicily. They all were first generation Sophists. These foreigners became very popular and successful not by becoming good citizens and succeeding in public life, since foreigners could not do such things. They were popular for their teaching. They could convince the Athenian young people that their teachings would help them to develop excellence for success in Athenian life.

Pre-philosophical conceptions of virtue:

As the teachings of the Sophists gained in popularity in Athens, the sophists also became controversial figures. Their way of making money from teaching virtue also bothered their rival men. The controversies regarding their teaching raised sufficient discussion about excellence or virtue among the Athenian people. At the end of the fifth century Socrates became a major person in these ongoing debates. Socrates and his contemporary philosophers began to discuss about virtue with the prevailing notions of virtues. They pointed out their difficulties and ultimately modified them. The quote from Plato's *Protagoras*, "the Sophist Protagoras describes virtue as deliberating well (*euboulia*) about one's own affairs and... as one plays a

role in public life (*Protagoras* 318E – 319A).⁷⁵ As the discussion started, Socrates asked whether virtue can be taught by teachers and about whether virtue is one or many. He further asked whether there are many virtues and if there are too many virtues then are they separated from one another? From Plato's dialogue we come to know that there are many types of virtues. Plato discusses the virtue of Temperance or *Sophrosyne* in his *Charmides*, his *Laches* deals with Courage, *Euthyphro* with Piety and Justice and the *Crito* is about Justice.⁷⁶ The concept of justice has an important role in Plato's writings; the main question of Plato's *Republic* is 'what is Justice?' Let us consider the six major characteristics that perhaps proposed by Sophist philosophers. Though, later on these characteristic were modified by Socrates.

Virtues are admirable and praiseworthy: It is very difficult for us to determine whether virtues are truly admirable. For example, Odysseus is a more admirable character in Homer, than he appears in Sophocles. In Sophocles' play *Philoctetes*, Odysseus is described as clever and deceitful. But in Homeric epics he is an admirable character. Sophocles describes how Odysseus planned to kidnap Philoctetes and steal his weapon by cheating. By any standard, this act of Odysseus is injustice and shameful.

Virtues are related to actions: This behavioral view of virtue was presented by Homer. He talked of great warriors whose actions were admirable because their actions were heroic and excellent. From the Socratic days it was very clear to the Athenian people that virtue was about deeds, deeds that are admirable and not shameful.

Virtues are based on one's role in life: In Plato's dialogue *Meno*, Meno (a person) begins his discussion of virtue with Socrates by saying that virtue varies with one's role in social life (*Meno* 71E – 72A).⁷⁷ Virtuous behaviors are not same for all people of a society; they vary from person to person. The virtue of a warrior differs significantly from that of a poet, a musician, a politician, an ordinary citizen, a head

⁷⁵ Devettere, Raymond J., *Introduction to Virtue Ethics: Insights of the Ancient Greeks*, p. 61 , Georgetown University Press, Washington, 2002

⁷⁶ *Ibid*, p. 61

⁷⁷ Devettere, Raymond J., *Introduction to Virtue Ethics: Insights of the Ancient Greeks*, p. 61 , Georgetown University Press, Washington, 2002, p. 62

of household, and so on. Virtuous behavior is one thing for a woman living as a wife, another for a man acting as a citizen, another for warriors, and another for children and still very different for slaves. In other words, virtuous behavior is relative to persons' role in life in the society.

Different virtues are not interconnected: Each virtue has its own uniqueness with no connection to any other virtue. Being a virtuous person in a particular field does not entail to be virtuous in other areas of life. For example, a warrior might have great courage in battle but have no temperance to take wine or having sex.

Virtues can do harm to themselves: Virtues can also do harm to the person who is performing virtuous behavior. One courageous soldier could lose his health; even lose his life when he is performing courageously in battle. Neoptolemus, son of Achilles, put his life in danger when he challenged Odysseus by returning to Philoctetes the awesome bow that the Greek desperately needed at Troy.

Wisdom or knowledge is just a kind of virtue: Wisdom or knowledge has no special role. It is just an important form of excellence, such as justice, temperance and courage. These popular conceptions of virtue began to be changed when Socrates and other Philosophers started examining them and criticizing the Sophists account of virtue.⁷⁸ What we know today as virtue ethics is the result of radical modification of the concept by the philosophers.

Socratic conception of virtue:

Socrates and other philosophers show their dissatisfaction to the popular conception of virtue at that time. Though their theory of virtue considerably differ from the popular conception of virtue yet they both agreed on the first characteristic that virtue is admirable and praiseworthy. Socrates modified the second characteristic and thoroughly revised the rest four. For them, virtues are not only actions but psychological states; they are connected with each other. And the last one, practical wisdom is not just a virtue; rather it is a foundational virtue of every other virtue. Let us discuss the seven cardinal characteristics of virtues by Socrates.

Virtues are admirable and praiseworthy:

⁷⁸ Devettere, Raymond J., *Introduction to Virtue Ethics: Insights of the Ancient Greeks*, p. 61 , Georgetown University Press, Washington, 2002, p. 63

As we have already mentioned earlier that this is the only characteristic of virtue that Socrates and his other fellow philosophers had agreed. They both agreed that virtue should have the quality of admirability and praiseworthiness and are in argument with the popular conception of virtue.

Most virtues are psychological states: According to the Socrates virtues are mainly related with the character, habits and dispositions of persons. They explain their views by determining the kind of person one is, and not his actions. Because actions follows from virtuous character, but do not determine a virtuous character.

Virtues are not based on our social roles: The Greek philosophers believe that virtues are rooted in our soul; they are not based on the roles played by a man in the society. Socrates in his *Meno*, explained that virtues such as justice and temperance are not dependent upon the role that a person played in life. Being a good human being one is just needed to have a set of virtues independent of what role he plays in the society (*Meno* 72C -73C).

Virtues are connected: All virtues are internally connected with each other. If a man has one type of virtue, it means that he can have them all. Ancient philosophers believed that all virtues are united or integrated in the character of person, and so are in responsible for each other. For them virtues cannot be separated. If a person does not have the virtue of temperance it follows that he does not have the virtues of justice, love, and so on. Though this theory looks like counterintuitive yet it is clear that, with wisdom as a virtue unity of the moral virtues seems to be inevitable.

Virtues are not contrary to the person's self-interest: Virtues are never in conflict with person's self-interest. Many people think that this theory is counterintuitive. Most of the modern moral philosophers react against it by saying that ethics is about social life, but the interest of the society need not necessarily contradict personal or self-interest. Live and let live is the principle of social living.

Wisdom or knowledge is the foundation of all virtues: All of our virtues require wisdom to move us towards the goal. For Socrates wisdom or knowledge is the only virtue, and for Aristotle and Plato, it is the foundational virtue that creates the others.

Virtue requires freedom: A person is called virtuous only by freely choosing his or her actions. So virtue requires personal freedom, the freedom of choosing actions. A person becomes just only by choosing just actions repeatedly, he became honest by choosing honest actions repeatedly, temperance by choosing temperate actions

repeatedly, and so on. Without the freedom of personal choice authentic virtuous character cannot be constituted. However, it is also true that freedom does not alone guarantee virtue. Choosing to do something does not necessarily mean that what is chosen is good.

Plato's notion of virtue:

Plato's account of virtue can be found mainly in his two different works, one is *Protagoras* and the other one is *Republic*. In Plato's dialogue *Protagoras*, Protagoras (a person) claimed that virtue is some kind of a whole with different parts, such as a human face is a whole with different parts (nose, eyes and so on). He says that a person could have some virtues but not all, just as a person could be missing a part of his face, an eye, for example. Like this a person could be courageous but might not be temperate or just.⁷⁹

The other account of virtue was expressed by Plato in his famous dialogue *Republic*. But there is no common view in the *Republic* and in the *Protagoras* regarding the notion of virtue. Plato begins his statement concerning the human soul. He divides the human soul into three parts: appetite, spirit and reason. Each part has its own desires. Appetite (*epithumetikon*) is the part of the soul which is predominant in animals; it is lusting for bodily pleasures. Appetite is desires whatever gives pleasure and such as food, sex, power and wealth. Spirited (*thumoeides*) part originates in the emotions; it intends to find whatever is appearing good in a particular situation. When I am attacked or victimized it may appear good to charge against in anger, when faced with a danger it may appear good to back down in fear, when a family member dies it may appear good to downfall with grief, and so on. The third part, rational, (*logistikon*) desires whatever is truly good. The rational part relies on reasoning to decide in each situation whatever activities that are good or bad for my life considered as a whole.

For Plato, virtue lies in the proper relation between the components of the soul. Reason should guide the soul and help us to determine what is right and what is wrong, spirit must follow the reason and appetite should obey both spirit and reason.

⁷⁹ Devettere, Raymond J., *Introduction to Virtue Ethics: Insights of the Ancient Greeks*, p. 61 , Georgetown University Press, Washington, 2002 p. 79

According to this view virtue is nothing but a magical or accurate ratio of the components of the soul. Considering the conception of virtue, Plato suggests that only by the state of the soul, in which reason governs and both appetite and spirit are following reason can knowledge of the good and hence virtue be acquired. Though Socrates and Plato both give an importance to desire for ethical-decision making, they also differ in regarding to some other points. Socrates thinks that all our desires are rational. But Plato acknowledges the existence of non-rational desires which are appetitive and spiritative. For Socrates, all the things which go wrong are due to ignorance. But in the case of Plato it may be due to ignorance and in some cases it also may be due to non-rational desires. For Socrates, our ethics is totally rational but Plato says that though ethics is rational we also need knowledge to shape and form our desires, educate and cultivate good habits.

Aristotle's analysis of virtue ethics:

Though Aristotle is treated as the protagonist of virtue ethics, it does not mean that he was the first person to deal with this topic. He was the first philosopher who discussed ethics as a separate part of philosophy and the different kinds of virtues that form our good life. *Nicomachean Ethics* is the name normally given to Aristotle's best known work and central text for the study of ancient virtue ethics. It is commonly believed that *Eudemian Ethics* is written before the *Nicomachean Ethics*. The *Nicomachean Ethics* is not easy reading for the new comer students, it was meant for the audience of advance students who were sufficiently familiar with Aristotle's philosophy and terminology. Both the works of Aristotle are important to grasp the inner implications of Greek virtue ethics.

According to Aristotle, virtue is neither a passion nor a faculty; it is a state of character. In the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle offers a definition of virtue thus - "Virtue is a state of character concerned with choice, lying in a mean, i.e. the mean relative to us, this being determined by a rational principle, i.e. by that principle by which the man of practical wisdom would determine it."⁸⁰ Aristotle's definition proposes to adopt a middle path which has been much discussed. Virtue is considered as if it lies between two vices which are two extremes. For example, courage is the middle path between the extremes of rashness and cowardice. Such a middle course

⁸⁰ Ross, David (Trans.), *The Nicomachean Ethics*, p. ix, Oxford University Press, New York, 2009

will be relative to vices of the extremes depending upon the actual circumstances of the individual.

Bertrand Russell claims that “there are two kinds of virtues, intellectual and moral, corresponding to the two parts of the soul. Intellectual virtues result from teaching, moral virtues from habit.”⁸¹ Aristotle says that Plato has divided the soul into two parts, one is rational and the other is irrational. The irrational part is divided into the vegetative (such as plants) and the appetitive (such as animals). The expression “character virtue” is used for the original Greek Word “*ethike arête*”. Though some of the translators translate “*ethike arête*” as “moral virtue” or “ethical virtue”, these translations do not signify the actual meaning of “*ethike arête*”. Firstly, the English word “moral” and “ethical” do not serve the same purpose as the notion of “character” serve. Secondly, the expressions “moral virtue” and “ethical virtue” are commonly used to denote the virtue only that is relevant to what we call today morality or ethics, though the master virtue or fundamental virtue is not “moral virtue” or “ethical virtue” but is another kind of virtue namely intellectual virtue (*dianoetike arête*).⁸²

The revival of virtue ethics:

In the second half of the twentieth century, some highly significant changes in the moral philosophy has been happen. Before these changes, moral philosophy was divided between two traditions. These traditions were Kantianism or deontological moral theory and utilitarianism or consequentialist moral theory. Kantianism is based on the work of the eighteenth century German philosopher Immanuel Kant while on the other utilitarianism is based upon the writings of the British philosopher Jeremy Bentham, J. S. Mill and Henry Sidgwick. Kantian moral theory proposes that morality must be universal and based on impartial law of rationality. We all know that Categorical Imperative is the foundation of Kant’s moral theory. For him, do not make false promises to get your desires. Because no one can will that, if someone will that, that would be a law of nature and everyone who wants to get their desires should make false promise. And if anyone further asks that why I

⁸¹ Russell, Bertrand, *A History of Western philosophy*, p. 185, Unwin Hyman Ltd., London, 1979

⁸² Devettere, Raymond J., *Introduction to Virtue Ethics: Insights of the Ancient Greeks*, p. 66 , Georgetown University Press, Washington, 2002

could not will this, then Kant may reply that if this happens then promising could not survive, making false promises is not in accordance with laws of rationality.

Utilitarianism is a moral theory to which Kant implacably disagreed because this theory evaluates value of a particular moral theory only by comparing the well-being of human beings. Here moral action aims at the good of human well-beings and what is rational also. This theory does not aim solely at one's own well-being. It is again an impartial theory because it obliges us to produce greater amount of overall well-being as possible. However, in 1958 Elizabeth Anscombe attacked on both of these ethical traditions. For her, both of them speaks for a foundation of morality, such as obligation but these notions are nonsensical when there is no such law-giver (God) is assumed. As many of us do not believe in God, Anscombe suggests a foundation for ethics and this foundation is the notion of virtue as a part of human flourishing.

To explain the notion of human flourishing, Anscombe refers the great Greek philosopher Aristotle who was the main inspiration for modern virtue ethics. In his *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle argued that “the best life for human being... consists in the exercise of the virtues (or the ‘excellences’)”⁸³ Aristotle talks about the necessity of *eudaimonia* and he was perhaps the most radical virtue ethicist ever. His radicalist view on virtue can be traced when he says that “there is nothing worth having in life except the exercise of the virtues.”⁸⁴ To discuss the notion of virtue, few questions that frequently comes in our mind which are as follows:

- What is virtue ethics? Someone may reply in a positive way that suggests us to act virtuously. According to this theory we should live a virtuous life. But this is not enough to explain this theory, for example, Mill may probably agree with this line. His reason would be – one should act virtuously because it helps him/her to produce greater amount of overall well-being. And similarly one Kantian may agree that one should be virtuous because it is an act which is in accordance with moral law.

⁸³ Crisp, R. & Slote M. (Ed.) , *Virtue Ethics*, Oxford University Press, UK, 2013, p. 2

⁸⁴ *Ibid*, p. 2

- But, how then, a virtue ethicist reacts to it? It must provide some ultimate moral reasons that are neither utilitarian nor Kantian, yet it makes some essential rationality of virtue itself. Here, virtue ethicist's straight-forward answer – I should not tell lie because it is dishonest, not because it is against the moral law, nor because it produces greater amount of overall well-being. So, the notions of virtue are mere basic than that of utilitarian or Kantian moral theory. It may also replace the notion of obligation, that utilitarians or Kantians are based on and moreover at least they do not need such language. Another feature of virtue ethics that makes it alienated from those two is its focus on moral agents and their lives, rather than focusing on one's discrete actions (telling a lie, making false promise, giving alms to beggar).⁸⁵

So far we have seen, Anscombe's article '*Modern Moral Philosophy*', which was published in 1958, is considered as the inauguration of present revival of virtue ethics. Anscombe, in her article discusses few topics which are in some way or other related to the idea of a revived virtue ethics. But, the main reason that attracted its importance to all is its strong criticism of modern and contemporary moral philosophers and their theories. Though the entire criticism has not been univocally made by the modern virtue ethicist, Kantianism and religious ethicist would also criticize this point. The revival of virtue ethics inaugurated by Anscombe based on two further factors in her thinking –

- i. She claims that notions such as “moral obligation” require a legislative model of morality in order to make sense.”⁸⁶
- ii. She also claims that “Kantian ‘self-legalisation’ is not a sensible notion.”⁸⁷

With both of these assumptions, Anscombe argues that secular moral philosophy that has no law-giver cannot make sensible use of moral obligation and rightness or wrongness of an action become tied to moral obligation. But the problem is, how can we do ethical statements? Anscombe simply answers that ethics can be done or based on the idea of virtue and human flourishing. To explain the ideal model of ethics that everyone should follows, Anscombe lead us back to fourth century B.C.

⁸⁵ Crisp, R. & Slote M. (Ed.) , *Virtue Ethics*, Oxford University Press, UK, 2013, p. 3

⁸⁶ *Ibid*, p. 4

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, p. 4

ancient Greek philosophers, Plato and Aristotle. Yet, she warns us that we do not have actual understandings of the notion of virtue because Plato and Aristotle both of them do not clarify that notion and before we say what virtue is, we must have clear conception about the terms like – ‘intention’, ‘pleasure’ and action. Hence, according to Anscombe, we must have a clear idea about philosophical psychology otherwise it is better to stop moral philosophy.

Virtue ethics differentiates itself by its *aretaic* notions, such as, ‘virtue’, ‘admirability’ and ‘excellence’, which are basic than deontic notions for Anscombe and even it can replace the deontic notions, such as rightness, wrongness or moral obligations. Anscombe’s argument against the emptiness and attributions of moral obligation, clearly favours the virtue ethics and probably this is the most rigorous attack that have been made in the contemporary history of ethics. Thus, after criticizing those popular ethical theories and showing the inappropriateness of the recent moral theory, we should encourage our self to do an ethics Plato and Aristotle does. In other words, once we have an idea of philosophical psychology, then, we must do an ethics, which have virtue ethical commitment to make virtuous character or an ethical theory that primarily concern the character traits.

Anscombe made an extensive research and discussion on the recent development of contemporary moral theory, criticizes them and done an extraordinary achievement to the revival of virtue ethics. Yet, there are many present day ethicist, both defenders and opponents of her theory, do not agree with the assumptions she had made in her article ‘*Modern Moral Philosophy*’. According to many contemporary Kantians, they “can make more sense of self-legalisation than Anscombe supposes”, and there are few virtue ethicists who think that “deontic notions of right and wrong need to be tied to typical, familiar assumptions about moral obligation”, rather they naturally emerges from *aretaic* notions, such as excellence and evil.

About the Book

This book offers thoughtful discussions of a variety of topics related to different ethics. This should provide enough material both for help as in understanding differences among different forms of the concept, discuss the concept of traditional moral concepts and their modern evolution, explore some old topics by reinterpreting them traditional concepts, argue about the same article that deals with the different subjects under the condition and parameters. Some important issues regarding philosophical concepts of material and spiritual characters of spirituality are also discussed. There are some articles discussing on monotheism from the view of application.

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12

Kantian Ethics of Virtue: An Appraisal

*Sahabuddin Ahamed Jamader**

Introduction:

It is generally accepted that Kant was merely a deontologist. Kant has criticises virtue theory in order to establish his own deontological view. Many philosophers believe that his ethics is a mere formalism. On the other hand, virtue ethics concentrates mainly on character, or what kind of person one should be, this might be differentiating virtue ethics from other ethical concepts such as deontology or consequentialism. Virtue ethics deals with the idea of human flourishing. For them, ideal or intrinsic character of a person is more foundational. As we can see, Kantian ethics and virtue ethics are opposite in nature. But it is hasty conclude that virtue does not play any important role in Kantian ethics. My aim is to shed some new light on Kant's moral theory, especially to the role played by virtue in his ethical theories. Kant in his later writings especially the second part of *The Metaphysics of Morals* (1797), "Doctrine of Virtue", provides sufficient support to his virtue theory.

* *Sahabuddin Ahamed Jamader is a PhD research scholar in Philosophy, University of North Bengal, Siliguri, West Bengal.*

I

According to Kant, morality is derived only from a non-empirical standard of rationality, namely the Categorical Imperative. It is the highest principle of moral action. For him, rationality is the conceptual feature of our willing to decide what is right for us. Here reason will decide the standard of rightness, independently of any empirical inclinations and dispositions of the agent. Hence it is cleared that all our duties could be derived from reason, and their justification is independent of any empirical facts about one's feelings or other characteristics. Kantian ethics has long been criticized by the communitarian and Hegelian perspective. For them, Kantian ethics is purely deontological. It is generally accepted that Kant has nothing to offer to the virtue theory. He should be responsible for the turn away from virtue ethics to rule ethics or deontological ethics. According to Communitarian philosophers, like Michael Sandel, Kant's conception of morality is asocial and ahistorical because he gives all his efforts to emancipate the individual from the community, but on the contrary Hegel trying to bridge a gap between the individuals and the community.

Let us discuss the fundamental features of virtue ethics. On the contrary to Kantian ethics, virtue ethics concentrate mainly on character, or what kind of person one should be. Virtue ethics discusses the ideal of how to live well, and this might be the difference by what we can differentiate virtue ethics from other ethical concepts such as deontology or consequentialism. Virtue ethics deals with the idea of human flourishing. Virtue ethics does not emphasize on right or duty, value or good. For them, ideal or intrinsic character of a person is more foundational. With the help of an ideal one could judge, what action is right, and what things are good. The ideal or standard of right action is determined by performing the action, whatever an entirely virtuous person would do. The ideal of the person must be independent of any understanding of right or good. Instead of saying "do this" virtue ethics says "be this". Instead of saying "kill not" they say "hate not".

Today, virtue ethics holds a major position with two rival theories i.e. deontology and consequentialism. In the West, virtue ethics starts its journey with Plato and Aristotle and in the East, it is traced back to the works of Mencius and Confucius. It holds its crown until the age of Enlightenment but during the nineteenth century it suffered from an eclipse. It was Anscombe who recall its regime in her milestone article *Modern Moral Philosophy* in 1958. Anscombe clearly shows her dissatisfaction with two ethical theories i.e. deontology and consequentialism, which dominates that time. Anscombe changed the way in which we generally understand normative ethics. She criticized our modern moral philosophy as it exclusively deals with the obligation and duty. She mainly criticizes J. S. Mill's utilitarianism and Immanuel Kant's deontology, as they both claim their universal applicability on ethical action. Both of this theory relies on rules of morality that claims their applicability to any moral situation. This approach founded on universal principle that ultimately results in a rigid rule. And according to Anscombe these rigid rules founded on obligation has no meaning in modern secular society. Thus, Anscombe proposed a different way to deal ethical philosophy. She called a return way, inspired by Aristotle and that is virtue ethics, which emphasizes on character, virtue and human flourishing.

In this paper, my aim is to show that Kant's work on virtue has been ignored by his readers as they paid their attention exclusively to his ethics of duty, sometimes characterized as deontological ethics. Many philosophers consider Kant's ethics as a mere formalism. I will try to show that Kant's ethical theory is not just based upon the rules but upon agents and the kinds of lives they live. My aim is to establish that Kant has paid equal importance to both rule-ethics as well as virtue ethics.

It seems that the title of this paper is misleading. It also seems contradictory to discuss about the virtue theory of Kant. The question remains "whether Kant has said anything about virtue theory". The contemporary virtue ethicist does not agree with this view. According to them, virtue either as a generalized disposition

or as a set of particular traits of a person simply does not figure as a core feature of Kant's moral theory. It provides the non-empirical foundation to the ethical theory of Kant. Kant has made an effort to analyze the rational will and a conception of self-governing reason rather than discussing the kind of a person one should be.

II

It is enough for the critics of Kant to claim that he should not be considered as a virtue ethicist and the oppositeness which they contain is not altogether wrong, but it would be hasty to conclude that virtue does not play any important role in Kantian ethics. The aim is to shed some light on Kant's moral theory, especially to the role played by virtue in his ethical theories. Kant in his later writings expressed the effort to support this connection between ethical theory and virtue. The major ethical writings of Kant are *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785) and *Critique of Practical Reason* (1789). These are generally taken to be the major sources of his ethical theory. It has been said that the views expressed in these books are the only ethical concept accepted by Kant. Kant has developed, extended and sometimes modified his views in his later writings. It is very painful to hear that his later writings have not given so much scholarly importance as his earlier works. In his later writings, especially the second part of his *The Metaphysics of Morals* (1797), "Doctrine of Virtue", provides support to his virtue theory or the theory based on moral agents. He also shares his earlier insights in *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* (1798) and *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* (1793).

In the later writings of Kant, he discusses some topics frequently which can be an important contribution to this paper. In *The Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant provides a conception of moral virtue and the character of ideal person by establishing the duties of virtue. He talks about two forms of duties; one is duties to oneself and duties to others. Every rational agent should pursue these duties, but these should be performed in accordance with

more or less virtue. Kant stated the difference between perfect and imperfect duties. He also discusses how one's duty to perfect oneself. His notion of imperfect duty gives theoretical resources for holding practical conflicts between different types of duties. In his later work he also emphasizes the dispositions, which, one ideal moral agent should develop. Kant introduces his understanding of virtue as strength of will. He also concentrates on moral actions and feelings, such as love and respect, and the role played in doing our duty.

Let us argue that Kant has been read too one-sidedly as a propounder of the rule ethics or deontological ethics. Kant has a very deep interest in virtue ethics and *The Doctrine of Virtue* is an important work on virtue ethics which was written by Kant. *The Doctrine of Virtue* is the key text where Kant discusses the practical aspects of his ethical theory. The work is originally the second part of *The Metaphysics of Morals*; it represents the highest development of ethical theories with which Kant has been struggled for so many years. Though *The Doctrine of Virtue* has an important role in Kantian ethics, it has been neglected for so many years, since it is written.

III

According to Kant, good will is a very important characteristic of morality, but good will is not a virtue, virtue is something beyond good will. Kant in his *The Metaphysics of Morals* gives an account of virtue as strength of moral will, something that requires time and practice to develop.¹ Kant builds his virtue theory on the basis of character and the conception of good will. According to Kant, "It is impossible to conceive anything at all in the world, or even out of it, which can be taken as good without qualification, except a *good will*. Intelligence, wit, judgement, and any other *talents* of the mind we may care to name, or courage, resolution, and constancy of purpose, as qualities of *temperament*, are without doubt good and desirable in any respects; but they can also be extremely bad and hurtful when the will is not good which has to make use of these

gifts of nature, and which for this reason has the term '*character*' applied to its peculiar quality."² For Kant, "Power, wealth, honour, even health and that complete well-being and contentment with one's state which goes by the name of '*happiness*', produce boldness, and as a consequence often over-boldness as well, unless a good will is present by which their influence on the mind - and so to the whole principle of action - may be corrected and adjusted to universal ends".³ Therefore, Kant concludes that "a good will seems to constitute the indispensable condition of our very worthiness to be happy".⁴

It is clear that Kant's position on the concept of *good will* would authenticate an agent-centered ethics against the rule or act-centered ethics. This view contradicts the conventional idea of Kantian ethics. Kantian ethics is generally considered as the rule-centered ethics or deontological ethics. Robert Paul Wolff in his book says that it is "noteworthy that the philosopher most completely identified with the doctrine of stern duty should begin, not with a statement about what we ought to do, but rather with a judgment of what is unqualifiedly good".⁵ It is also clear that for Kant, unqualified good is not the performance of certain discrete acts in conformity to rules, but a condition of '*character*' forming the basis for all of a person's actions. So, the question of '*good will*' can never be answered with certainty to look upon the discrete actions and decisions. For the question of '*good will*', it is necessary for anyone instead of look upon the discrete or particular acts or deeds he should assess the lives the agents live. Kant says a person cannot be "morally good in some ways and the same time morally evil in others".⁶ Moreover, a person cannot express his good will in one instance and evil in another. Consistency of character must be present at all times.

It follows from Kant's conception of good will that he gives much more importance to agents rather than actions. Therefore there is a relation between '*good will*' and '*virtue*'. In the *Doctrine of Virtue*, Kant defines virtue (*Tugend*) as "fortitude in relation to the forces opposing a moral attitude of will in us".⁷ For Kant, a good

will is one that constantly acts from the motive of respect for the moral law. Human beings are possessed with urges and inclinations which may lead them to act contrary with reason. Human wills are therefore in a perpetual state of tension. But, on the contrary, a virtuous person is one who is able to control his natural urges and inclinations which other men cannot. Thus, it does not follow that the virtuous person has the ability to accomplish the target which he sets out to achieve, but he has to show the mastery over his inclinations and natural urges. Kant concludes that ‘human morality in its highest stages can still be nothing more than virtue’.⁸ Because he thinks that some wills are better than others, and only a holy will with no wants that are contrary to reason, possesses an absolutely good will.⁹

IV

To say Kant is a virtue theorist needs a re-interpretation of what Kant actually understand by a maxim. According to Kant, maxim is a ‘subjective principle of volition’.¹⁰ Thus, it follows that a maxim is a policy of action which a particular agent adopts at a particular time and place. So, it is more logical to say that the principle is subjective rather than objective because it depends on the agent’s intentions and interests. We need to accept that a maxim is a rule that prescribes a specific action. But, this view is rejected by Onora O’Neill and tries to convince us by an agent’s *underlying intentions*. According to O’Neill, Kant’s maxim is better understood by the agent’s underlying intentions rather than his discrete or specific actions and intentions. If we understand the new interpretation of maxim then it is very easy for an interpretation of Kant’s ethics as virtue ethics. Underlying intentions of an agent means the sort of a person the agent is and the kind of life the agent lives. And the kind of person an agent clearly depends upon his virtue and vices. So, there is a difference between underlying intentions and specific intentions. The specific intentions of an agent are not always expressed in the kind of person that the agent actually is. O’Neill deeply emphasizes this connection between underlying intentions and being a certain sort of person.¹¹

For Kant, human virtue is valuable but precarious achievement of pure practical reason. To preserve it, we must prevent our own empirical inclinations. Kant understands virtue to be more than a mechanical habit. It is acquired by repeated practice of an agent but determined by a rational principle. Kant did not seek to return to the philosophical ideals of ancient times but to realize them in novelty. Kant's attempt is not to recover the virtue theory of ancient times but to define a conception of virtue which is appropriate in the modern age. Kant's understanding of virtue as the cultivation of habits is explained his awareness of the human capacity for self-deception and rationalization. This might be the reason why did he misunderstand Aristotle. He believes that Aristotle talks about virtues as mechanical habits. But Kant emphasizes the good will is achievement of pure practical reason. He has no relation with the view which invites the degeneration into mechanical habits.

Though most of the Kantian interpreters think that Kant was just a deontologist but it is very difficult to agree with them. We will discuss what Kant actually says about virtue, not only showing his high estimation of virtue but also showing the centrality of virtue, in his practical ethics. Kant's position on good will is considered generally as act-centered ethics and for which it is criticized by many philosophers. But I argue that Kant's good will offers us a clear view of agent-centered ethics which is contrary to the act-centered ethics, though Kantian philosophy is identified with the doctrine of formal duty, not with a judgment like what one ought to do. Virtue is the central theme of Kantian ethics and the foundation of all types of moral judgments. However, this is not contradictory to Kantian ethics but it is defined in accordance the moral law. Therefore, I will try to show how Kant combines rules and duties concerning different acts in his virtue ethics.

Kant's virtue theory reveals the mystery of human morality. According to Kant, rational beings, such as humans are also finite rational beings. In his *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* Kant opines, "We know of only one species of rational being on earth; namely, the human species". On the other hand the unearthly

rational beings are omnibenevolent, omniscient, and omnipotent. According to Kant, “For finite holy beings (who could never be tempted to violate the duty) there would be no doctrine of virtue but only a doctrine of morals”. “Only the moral relations of human beings to human beings” and “human duties to one another” is called ethics.

In the preface of the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant opines, “Intending to publish someday *Metaphysics of Morals*, I issue this *Groundwork* in advance.” This is just a preliminary step for future *Metaphysics of Morals*. It is purely theoretical and may be considered as a foundation for future moral studies. Kant believes, “as a philosopher, he has to go to the first grounds of this concept of duty, since otherwise neither certitude nor purity can be expected anywhere in the doctrine of virtue”. This supreme moral principle leads to legal rights and moral duty. Kant’s *Critique of Practical Reason* is another important work that presupposes the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*.

V

There is a difference between Kantian ethics and Rawlsian liberalism, Rawlsian liberalism suits today’s demoralized modern world in which right prevails over good but Kantian ethics is not. Kant’s ethics demands a moral requirements to transform the society at top to realize the highest good: ‘the moral law... determined for us... a final purpose towards which it obliges us to strive, and this purpose is the highest good in the world possible through freedom’. Thus, Kant’s definition of good is directly connected to virtue and his ethical theory is not connected with discrete acts but to the lives and character of the agent they live.

Conclusion:

From the above, it can be said that virtue plays an important role in Kantian ethics. But this does not mean that Kant’s ethics is only virtue ethics and nothing else. It is more prominent to say that Kant

combines both rule and virtue ethics to develop his ethical empire rather than virtue or rule. Both agents and actions have their own significant part to play in Kant's ethical theory. In this paper I have tried to reject the dominant view that Kant is only a deontologist and tries to establish him as a virtue ethicist. So, Kantian ethics of virtue discusses the highest concept of good, not just rules and acts.

Notes & References:

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2. Immanuel Kant; *Groundwork of The Metaphysics of Morals* ; trans. by H. J. Paton; in *The Moral Law*; London: Hutchinson's University Library; p. 59.
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President, ISSHC 2019 &
HOD, Department of Library & Information Science
Jadavpur University

(Prof. Samar Kumar Mondal)

Coordinator, ISSHC 2019
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Jadavpur University

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