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 deposition 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 formulizations; 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*, Yudhiṣṭhira 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 *Manusaṁhitā*, 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 *Manusaṁhitā*, 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 *Manusaṁhitā*, 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 *Manusaṁhitā*, *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 Maclntyre, 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 McIntyre'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 *dharmas*. 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 Maclntyre, law and virtue have to be informed by teleology, a shared good, in order to have authority. The nurturing of virtue for Maclntyre, 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 *Manusmrti*: With the *'Manubhāshya' 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.