Chapter II

The Theory of Moderation

Mulk Raj Anand’s ideological stance towards the question of protest against sociopolitical evils in the British India was rather eclectic. He was at once strongly influenced by Gandhian philosophy of nonviolence and Marxian theory of armed protest. Unable to dismiss the one completely in favour of the other Anand seems to have evolved a theoretical stance in this regard: an attitude of the middle way between the two. He puts this stance to the test by showing a few men and women caught in certain sociopolitical crises in tackling which they practise a stance of moderation. Though the characters themselves are shown as acting in accordance with their personal impulses, a close analysis of their actions and fortunes compels one to see them in the light of Aristotle’s theory of the mean as elaborated in *The Nicomachean Ethics*.

The concept of moderation envisaged by the Greeks to control their excessive passion and extremism has been adopted by Aristotle to formulate his ethical theory. Aristotle discusses the theory in three major works: *Magna Moralia* (commonly regarded as *The Great Ethics*), *The Eudamian Ethics* and *The Nicomachean Ethics*. It is interesting to relate Durant’s reference to the engraving at the temple of Apollo at Delphi—nothing in excess. Durant further alludes to Nietzsche’s claim: “all these were attempts of the Greeks to check their own violence and impulsiveness of character; […]” (77). These references are sufficient testimony to establish that Aristotle was not inventing but only adopting the Greek idea of moderation and elaborating it with necessary illustrations in *The Nicomachean Ethics*.

In talking of Ethics in general, many scholars are in disagreement about the authorship of *Magna Moralia*. Another significant aspect noticed is that books IV, V and
VI of The Eudamian Ethics and V, VI and VII of The Nicomachean Ethics are identical with one another. After careful studies Lloyd considers The Nicomachean Ethics to be “Our main source of his [Aristotle’s] mature moral philosophy [. . .]” (202). This work has been entitled after Aristotle’s son (Nicomachus) who probably has compiled or edited it for publication. (It is Hardie (7) who refers to Rackham’s view of this editorship or compilation). Hardie proceeds to regard The Nicomachean Ethics (to be entered hereafter with the abbreviation EN) as “one of Aristotle’s more finished works [. . .] an important document for the history of thought on a wide range of questions [. . .]” (9). Of these ethical treatises of Aristotle that have invited volumes of discussions, some of the significant observations on human behaviour made by Aristotle in EN seem significant and operative in the affairs of many protagonists in the realms of drama and fiction.

Hutchinson explains Aristotle’s definition of virtue as “a state (‘hexis’) because it is neither a capacity nor feeling” (5). In Hardie’s words, it is a “‘state’ ‘disposition’ or ‘habit’ [. . .]” (103). It differs from a disposition in the sense that it is “‘more stable and longer lasting’ [. . .]” (Hutchinson 19). He explains it as “a well entrenched sort of disposition [. . .] in virtue of which the thing is well or ill disposed” (20). Hutchinson further observes that “hexis” can be perfect or imperfect and can be either an excellence or a defect for “there is no third possibility” (21). But virtues of a character are perfections (not imperfections) and this excellence is “relative to the appropriate ergon”(30). Ergon is the result of “hexis” and hence the “ergon of the excellence of the soul is a good life [. . .]. So happiness is a good life [. . .]” (44). Hence happiness is the ultimate end or purpose of all actions. Aristotle feels that this happiness “is to be found [. . .] in that activity which is most becoming to man as a rational being” (“Nicomachean Ethics” The Readers 315).
The plan of EN has been laid down by Lloyd, which seems useful for undertaking any study of the text:

Aristotle defines the subject and states the problem in book I. Books II to V deal with moral virtue, first in general, then after a discussion of choice and responsibility, in detail. Book VI deals with intellectual virtue, VII with moral weakness. Books VIII and IX form a digression from the main subject and contain a detailed examination of friendship. In X he picks up the discussion of pleasure, which he had begun in VII and then returns, finally, to the topic of happiness, the central subject of ethics, which he had considered in outline in book I. (202-03)

If an attempt is made to summarize book I (1-33) it is noticed that the basic inquiry in the EN is to recognize the politics of human behaviour which ordains the proper good. Aristotle feels that a young man's life is usually ruled by feeling and hence avoids a discussion. But those who are capable of directing their "desires and actions by reason [...]" (Aristotle 5) are expected to gain profit. If happiness is the highest of all realizable goods, there can be differences of opinion between the common people and the philosophers regarding the definition of happiness. The ordinary people think that the same man is of different temperament at different occasions and hence what brings them happiness also differs. Aristotle remarks: "after sickness it is health, and in poverty it is wealth [...]" (5) that bring happiness to the people.

Philosophers feel that the cause of goodness is absolute good. Aristotle proposes that it is possible for a man to study the questions of politics-- what is noble and good--through good moral training. This training must be capable of equipping man with the knowledge of the principles of action, which places him at the starting point. Hardie quotes Aristotle: "virtue makes us aim at the right mark, and practical wisdom makes us
take the right means [. . . ]" (227). Then he brings in another Aristotelian remark: “the end to be realized is the starting point of practical thinking [. . . ] we assume the end and consider how and by what means it is to be attained” (228).

Aristotle classifies human life into (a) life of enjoyment (b) life of the statesman and (c) contemplative life. The common people exhibit a slavish preference for the life of enjoyment that corresponds to the life of animals. The statesman aims at honour through the exercise of excellence or virtue (“hexis”). What results out of this exercise (“ergon”) is happiness. Aristotle gives the highest preference to contemplative life. This is why he remarks in book X (343) that divine life that surpasses all others in blessedness consists in contemplation. Though it is the activity of God, for man too “this is the right course [. . . ] in the interests of truth” (8). But unfortunately man cannot attain the absolute good implied here. Man can attain only a good that resembles universal good. This good is different in different arts. Aristotle illustrates that in medicine this good is health and in war it is victory. It is for the sake of this end that everything else is done and this good—realizable good—need not be final in all cases. If there is only one final end, it is what ought to be sought and if more than one, the most final of them. Aristotle explains that all virtues like honour are chosen partly for themselves and partly for the sake of happiness. Hence happiness seems to answer the description of the most final good (qualifying it to be called the “ergon”). Aristotle continues to explain that the most complete virtue is the trained faculty for philosophic speculation which brings man the highest happiness. Aristotle’s observation—“one swallow or one fine day does not make spring, neither does one day or any small space of time make a blessed or a happy man” (17)—is relevant in this context. Not only length of life but also perfection of external goods is essential for experiencing happiness. It is difficult to remain happy without what Aristotle calls “furnitures of fortune” such as friends, wealth, political influence etc.
“For, moral virtue or excellence is closely concerned with pleasure and pain” (38). The “furnitures of fortune” can afford pleasure for Hardie observes: “pleasure is an accompaniment of happiness” (299). Aristotle suggests: “pleasure ought to be one of the ingredients of happiness [. . .]” (338). Happiness is a state of feeling, as Ross observes, “differing from pleasure only by its suggestion of permanence, depth and serenity [. . .]” (190). Hence the basic requirement for happiness is perfect excellence or virtue and perfection of external circumstances. These external circumstances are likely to undergo all sorts of changes. The following observation is significant in this context: “If we follow the changes of fortune, we shall call the same man happy and miserable many times over, making the happy man a sort of chameleon and one who rests on no sound foundation” (EN 25). For achieving happiness, says Aristotle, excellent employment of man’s faculties that constitute it is necessary. He adds that philosophic contemplation is the highest of these exercises and people who indulge in this activity require the property of permanence which they preserve throughout their lives. The happy are indulged in philosophic contemplation continuously and are capable of suffering misfortune through the nobility and greatness of their soul. Aristotle thinks that this is the reason why no happy man of this sort is found to be miserable. He shuns what is hateful and base from his activities. Aristotle feels that ordinary misfortunes cannot move him from the happiness that he enjoys, but a number of heavy ones and if these heavy misfortunes fall upon him, he will not recover from them easily in a short time. Aristotle’s definition of a happy man is also interesting to examine in this context: “one who exercises his faculties in accordance with perfect excellence, being duly furnished with external goods, not for any chance of time but for a full term of years: [. . .] who shall continue to live so, and shall die as he lived [. . .]” (27). The contemplative life that Aristotle recommends is the best for man but unfortunately “few men can lead this type of life and Aristotle therefore
adds that, although it is first, the practical life of moral virtue is second [. . .]” (“Nicomachean Ethics” The Readers 316).

Aristotle then inquires about other virtues that would help a man in the inquiry about happiness. Aristotle’s concept of a statesman as envisaged in the second classification of life is that of a man who is concerned with a different kind of virtue. This kind of life is within the reach of all men capable of leading a practical life of moral virtue. Hence the theory seems applicable in analyzing the behaviour of all the protagonists created by Mulk Raj Anand. The good Aristotle seeks here is the virtue “hexis” which brings the “ergon” happiness which is an activity of the soul. Hence the virtue sought for is not the excellence of body but that of the soul. (When Aristotle remarks that the soul has rational and irrational parts, it is easy for the modern reader to identify the soul with human mind with its subconscious or unconscious and conscious layers of contrary preferences for arboreal urges and civilization respectively.) Aristotle says that the irrational part is active in sleep and is common to all creatures causing nutrition and growth. This part has nothing to contribute to the excellence of man but the other part (the rational part) is what encourages man to do what is best. He further comments that the irrational and rational parts struggle with each other. In an incontinent man the irrational part succeeds as his impulses run against reason.

The continent man submits to reason while in the temperate and courageous man the irrational part is more obedient for it is always in harmony with reason. This is why Ross brings in Aristotle’s view: “vice is passive obedience to natural instinct, virtue the controlling of instinct by sense of duty or by some other high motive [. . .]” (206). Aristotle classifies the irrational part into two divisions: the vegetative faculty with no share of reason and the faculty of appetite or of desire that takes a share of reason. Similarly the rational part also has two parts: one part possessing reason in itself and the
other part listening to reason from parents, friends etc. Hence, Aristotle’s concept of excellence or virtue is “a habit or trained faculty that is praiseworthy [. . .]” (33). Lloyd’s description which has been quoted earlier refers to Aristotle’s classification of these virtues into intellectual and moral. He further observes: “Books II to V deal with moral virtue, [. . .]. Book VI deals with intellectual virtue” (202-03). This chapter proceeds to discuss books II and III extensively for they seem to provide the basic material for the analysis of Anandian protagonists attempted from the next chapter onwards. However taking into account Lloyd’s advice-- “the general account of moral virtue in book II must be understood in the light of his [Aristotle’s] later discussion of [. . .] practical intelligence [. . .]” (203)--Aristotle’s views in the above books are supplemented with the later ideas for an enhanced understanding of the theory envisaged.

In book II of EN (34-57) Aristotle argues that intellectual excellences are the products of proper instruction. They require time and experience while moral excellences are results of habits or custom. Starting a discourse on moral excellences, Aristotle explains that these virtues are not instilled in us by nature. They are also not against nature. Instead Aristotle says that the aptitude for acquiring these virtues is provided by nature. Joachim remarks: “This aptitude has to be developed by practice or habituation [. . .] into an established condition, or formed state [. . .] which is the virtue. In this respect the acquisition of a moral virtue is analogous to the acquisition of a craft [. . .]” (72). Aristotle maintains that a man becomes just by doing just acts and courageous or temperate by doing acts of courage and temperance. To quote Aristotle: “virtues and vices result from and are formed by the same acts in which they manifest themselves [. . .]” (35). It is in a man’s relationship with others that he manifests these qualities that turn out to be virtues or vices. It is a circumstance of danger that installs a man in a disposition either to feel fear or confidence to be branded courageous or
cowardly. The inquiry Aristotle takes up at this juncture is an investigation into the excellences or good in order to practise them in times of need. The pursuit of excellences must also be in accordance with right reason. The kind of reasoning to be undertaken varies with different subjects and there is no scientific exactness in this matter. Aristotle remarks that in practical matters and questions of expediency there are no hard and fast rules. The person who is involved can analyze the situation and act according to the requirement that the situation calls for. Here, to fall short and exceed are equally dangerous for too much or too little exercise destroys them. This theory is applicable to all virtues, especially temperance and courage. Aristotle tells that a man will be treated as a coward if he fears and expels everything and does not take a stand of his own. A man who goes to the other extreme—that he fears nothing at all—is foolhardy. A man who makes use of all opportunities to enjoy whatever pleasure available at his disposal and refuses none is profligate and who avoids all pleasures is deficient in sensibility. It is in this context that Aristotle decrees: “temperance and courage are destroyed by excess and defect and preserved by moderation” (38). A man who does not indulge in bodily pleasures and rejoices in the abstinence is temperate. If he feels troubled due to this abstinence, he is profligate. Aristotle remarks here that a man who faces danger with pleasure or at least without pain is courageous. If he is pained to face danger, he is a coward. Aristotle holds that pleasure moves us to do what is base and prevents us from doing what is noble. It is through this attraction and repulsion that bad characters are formed. Aristotle suggests that a cure can be effected here by administering the opposite—pleasure or pain. In other words therapy is possible through the pursuit or avoidance of wrong pleasures and pains at the wrong occasion in a wrong manner. Joachim comments:
It is important in reading this part of the *Ethics* to bear in mind that Aristotle is deliberately treating moral goodness from a provisionally abstract point of view. When he comes to discuss the part played (in the formation of character and in the conduct of the good man) by reasoning and thought, much that he seems to be saying here [...] gets modified, a new light thrown upon it. (76)

Joachim’s allusion aims to explain the contradiction that emerges in Aristotle’s views on courage in certain former and latter books of *EN*. Though the view--Aristotle’s former observations on courage are modified by the latter ones--seems questionable, it can be argued: “there are, at least, two different contexts within which courage may be discussed, and, for immediate practical purposes, two different kinds of courage (Jaffa 56). This apparent contradiction requires to be discussed in this study but not at this juncture for fear of digression. Therefore it is taken up only in the beginning of the next chapter.

Aristotle proceeds to observe that in matters of pleasures and pain, it is moral excellence that enables man to do what is best. Vice brings the contrary effect. Aristotle observes that there are three things that move us to choose, and conversely, three other things that move us to avoid. Under the first category come (a) the beautiful and the noble, (b) the advantageous and (c) the pleasant. Under the second category come (a) the ugly or the base, (b) the hurtful and (c) the painful. Human beings have a natural inclination for pleasure and the good man chooses the right course of action and the bad man chooses the wrong course of action with regard to pleasures. Here pleasure is actually a test in judging these actions. Whether a man is pleased or pained in a right or a wrong way has a great influence in his actions and if a man is to understand the meaning of his action, he must choose it for the sake of the action itself. Aristotle thinks
that the act must also be an expression of a formed or stable character. Aristotle then remarks that virtues are not emotions. They are a sort of wilful choice. Virtue cannot be exercised without choice. For the exercise of a virtue we are regulated or disposed in a particular way. Hence virtues are habits or trained faculties that elevate a man in good condition to perform a function well. Aristotle points out that in the process of taking, it is possible to take a larger or a smaller or an equal amount absolutely or relatively to our needs. By the expression “a larger share” Aristotle means too large an amount, and by the expression “a smaller share” he means too small an amount. It is the equal or a fair share that Aristotle seems to recommend in the process of taking. Here Aristotle aims at a mean amount or an amount that falls between excess and deficiency. If this falls equidistant from both the extremes, it becomes arithmetical mean that remains the same for all. But this is not one and the same for all. It is a relative value varying from individual to individual and hence never equidistant from either extremes; never one and the same for all. This choice is quite common and Aristotle adds that a master in any art avoids too much or too little and attempts for the mean that he finally chooses. (Though Aristotle argues that it is not an absolute value, he has in mind an ideal value or an exact middle between the vices which he uses to explain the relative value. In a hypothetical situation it is thus possible to observe this absolute value to attain the ultimate result.) Joachim comments: “Moral virtue is an attribute, and its definition ought to be “that formed state which is established in the orectic (appetitive) soul of a man owing to his responding to his feelings in accordance with a certain proportion, fixing them at a mean amount”” (80). Aristotle makes it explicit that virtue or excellence is destroyed either by excess or by deficiency but secured by the observance of the mean. He makes this clear when he says:
it is possible to feel fear, confidence, desire, anger, pity and generally to be affected pleasantly and painfully, either too much or too little in either case wrongly; but to be thus affected at the right times, and on the right occasions and towards the right persons and with the right object, and in the right fashion is the mean course and the best course and these are characteristics of virtue. (46)

Aristotle regards virtue as a kind of moderation which follows the middle course, i.e. a mean between two vices. These vices are two extremes, one on the side of excess and the other on the side of defect. Aristotle also maintains that all actions do not admit of a mean. In matters such as adultery, shamelessness, malevolence etc there is nothing praiseworthy as the actions themselves are absurd. Hence there cannot be allowed a mean for these qualities are blamable even if they are present moderately in one's character. But with regard to the extremes that allow a mean, Aristotle gives a list to illustrate his point. Hence the mean between fear and confidence is courage. If a man exceeds in fear but deficient in confidence, he is cowardly and if he exceeds in confidence but deficient in fear, he is foolhardy. Moderation with regard to certain pleasures and pains is temperance. Here the excess can be regarded as profligacy (extravagance) and deficiency can be called void of sensibility. Aristotle further illustrates that in the matter of giving and taking money, moderation is liberality whereas excess is prodigality and deficiency is illiberality. Honour and disgrace allows high-mindedness as moderation while excess is vanity and deficiency is little-mindedness. Aristotle explains that high-mindedness is a virtue associated with great instead of small honours. Desire for honour in excess makes a man ambitious and the lack of desire makes him unambitious. In analyzing anger, the moderate man is gentle while the man who exceeds in anger is wrathful and who is deficient in anger is wrathless.
Proceeding with his illustration of particular virtues, Aristotle remarks that truthfulness is the mean in the matter of truth. He comments: exaggeration of truth which is one extreme is pretence and understatement of it which is the opposite extreme is irony. As for pleasantness of amusement the mean can be regarded as wittiness whereas excess is buffoonery and deficiency is boorishness. In the matter of pleasantness the mean is friendliness. The excess here is obsequiousness if it has no ulterior motive. It is flattery if it is aimed at some advantage. Deficiency in this area is "quarrelsomeness." Similarly we have modesty between shame and shamelessness, righteous indignation between envy and malevolence etc. Aristotle regards a man righteously indignant when he finds undeserved prosperity. Aristotle also explains another interesting fact in this regard. Moderate disposition exceeds compared with defective disposition and falls short compared with excessive disposition. A courageous man appears foolhardy from the angle of a coward and cowardly from the viewpoint of the foolhardy. Though there is contrast between the extremes, some resemblance can be traced when compared with the mean. Here foolhardiness is more similar to courage than cowardice which is dissimilar to it. Hence that which is removed from the mean is more opposed to the mean. Aristotle remarks that in the matter of profligacy man has a natural inclination to indulge in pleasures and he is more easily led to profligacy than into regular habits. This extreme (profligacy) is more opposed to the mean (temperance) than the deficiency is. Joachim poses a very significant question after drawing an illustration using the opposites "heat and coldness":

It is not quite clear how he [Aristotle] regards these pairs. A thing is said to be hotter or less hot according as the ratio [. . .] of the hot and the cold in it is more on the side of its heat or more on the side of its coldness. 

Does this mean that what from one point of view is two-thirds heat, from
another point of view is one-third cold? So, for example, a state of [. . .]
[passion or feeling] might be described indifferently as much fear (two-
thirds fear) or as little (one-third) confidence? (90)

The question is whether a coward has one-third confidence in him. Aristotle has an
answer to this question: "moderate dispositions exceed as compared with defective
dispositions and fall short as compared with the excessive dispositions [. . .]" (53). As it
is not an arithmetic disposition, "it fluctuates with collateral circumstances of each
situation and discovers itself only to mature and flexible reason" (Durant 76). This leads
to the conclusion that the affinity of the relative mean cannot be defined in terms of
Joachim's one third or two third criterion of similarity or dissimilarity with the extremes
but it lies simply towards one extreme than the other in accordance with mature and
flexible reason as Durant emphasizes. This is why Aristotle, instead of explaining the
fractions of the relationship, simply remarks that one extreme is more prone and similar
to the mean and the other is more opposed. When a man aims to achieve moderation,
Aristotle's advice is to strive to avoid that extreme which is more opposed to the mean as
the first step and to choose the lesser of the two evils to keep well from error. This will
help him to fall into the middle course safely. However Aristotle allows a slight margin
of error on the side of excess and deficiency for he thinks that the mean can slightly be
inclined towards deficiency or excess for which a man need not be blamed. But there is
a practical difficulty in observing this method. In an ideal situation where the mean
remains arithmetically in the middle between the extremes it is difficult to dismiss one of
these extremes and choose the better of the two remaining possibilities. Hence the
choice becomes an outcome of a conflict between the opposites. Another interesting
factor is that when the conflict is between two virtues instead of vices, the difficulty in
making a choice becomes rather problematic. All the Anandian advanced protagonists
have to face this trying situation in resolving their respective crises in the novels discussed in this study.

Book III (58-98) begins with a discussion of voluntary and involuntary acts. From book II it is concluded that virtue has to operate with feelings and actions. Aristotle observes that an action may be praised or blamed only if it is voluntary. In other words, involuntary action is usually pardoned or pitied. Hence any investigation into virtue, Aristotle comments, must be done only after branding an action to be voluntary or involuntary. Aristotle regards an action done "under compulsion" or "through ignorance" as involuntary. Here the expression "under compulsion" is used to mean that the cause is external and the agent contributes nothing towards it just as in the case of a man who is carried by whirlwind. Certain acts like throwing the cargo overboard on a storm to save a man's own life and that of the crew are sensible. Aristotle adds that in an ordinary situation no man will throw the cargo away if there is nothing to come of it. This leads him to infer that acts done to avoid greater evils like this are of a mixed nature but are voluntary to a certain extent. The fact that the person wills the act at that time makes it voluntary. Hence the state of mind of the agent at the time of action requires to be considered in branding an act voluntary or involuntary. When men endure something disgraceful or painful to secure a noble result they are praised and when they endure it for no noble result they are blamed. At the same time a man who is induced to do a wrong act by pressure is pardoned. A compulsory act is regarded here as one in which the cause lies outside and the agent has no part in it. Therefore it is also an involuntary act. Aristotle further observes that it may sometimes be urged that acts whose motive is something pleasant or noble are compulsory as the agent or doer is forced by something outside him. If this is taken for granted all human acts can be considered only as compulsory for these are motives for every act. Aristotle
regards acting under compulsion against a man's will as painful but "action whose motive is something pleasant or noble involves pleasure [..]" (61). In a compulsory act the cause will be external and the person compelled will be contributing nothing thereto. Aristotle further discusses acts done on ignorance that are not voluntary but involuntary. Every vicious man is ignorant of "what ought to be done and what ought not to be done [..]" (63) and it is this error that makes him bad. Aristotle does not use the term involuntary to denote ignorance of what is fitting. Instead the ignorance that makes this act involuntary is the ignorance of a particular occasion and the circumstance of the act, which are grounds of pity and pardon. Aristotle classifies these particulars as (a) the doer (b) the deed and (c) the circumstance or the occasion of it, the sake of which it is done and the way in which it is done. A man cannot be ignorant of all these particulars for he cannot be ignorant of the doer though he may be ignorant of what he is doing. He who is ignorant of any of them, especially the most important particulars, and acts accordingly can be held to have acted involuntarily. He will feel sorry for what he has done when he recognizes his ignorance. According to Aristotle an involuntary act is one done under compulsion or through ignorance and "a voluntary act is one which is originated by the doer with knowledge of the particular circumstances of the act" (65). Acts done through anger or desire are voluntary. Aristotle feels that all human actions originate from anger or desire and they ought not to be branded involuntary.

Aristotle then proceeds to discuss choice or purpose that he thinks to be most intimately connected with virtue. He tries to mark the difference between choosing and willing. The term willing covers a wider sense for children and animals have will but are not capable of choice or purpose. In fact, irrational creatures do not share choice. Incontinent man desires what he does but he does not wilfully choose it or in other words purpose it. The continent man deliberately chooses an action. In this context Aristotle
remurs that desire and purpose are always in conflict. The object of desire is pleasant or painful but the object of purpose is neither. A man commands a purpose for its righteousness and chooses a thing when he thinks that it is good but the paradox is that some who have excellent judgement fail “through depravity to choose what they ought” (68). A man is more likely to wish the end and choose the means and that way choice deals with what is in our power. Choice or purpose suggests calculation and reasoning and hence something is chosen in preference to other things. Aristotle observes that none deliberates upon the eternal or the unalterable or upon things that always change because they are not things that we can ourselves effect. Human affairs too are not always a matter of deliberation. Instead, Aristotle regards those things that human beings deliberate upon as matters of conduct in which there are rules which hold well but the result of which cannot be predicted. There is always an element of uncertainty about them. Aristotle elaborates: when a man has a particular end in view, he deliberates upon the means by which this end can be attained. When the end can be attained by various means, the man has to consider which are the easiest and the best. If it can be attained only through one means, he considers how it is to be attained using the means and how the means is to be secured. He inquires and analyzes it and if he comes to the conclusion that it is impossible, he gives up the plan. If it is possible, he sets to work. Aristotle emphasizes in this context that its relation determines the real nature of a human act to happiness. When a man claims an act to be chosen or purposed it must be understood as something selected after deliberation. This is why Aristotle defines choice or purpose as “deliberate desire for something in our power [. . .]” (72).

Aristotle significantly observes that it is the commanding part of man that makes this choice. In this context Aristotle refers to wish once again. What a good man wishes for, in Aristotelian terms, is the real object of wish as he is an ideal man capable of
judging each case correctly. There is always a tendency to choose what is pleasant as good and shun pain as evil. Hence a man wishes for the end and deliberates with himself to choose the means thereto. In other words, action concerned with the means will be guided by choice qualifying them to be branded voluntary. Aristotle observes here that acts in which virtues are manifested, are concerned with means. The responsibility of doing a noble deed as well as disgraceful deed lies with the doer and hence virtue or vice is dependent upon the doer. In the matter of choice, virtue is as voluntary as vice and the responsibility of choice of acts rests with the doer for Aristotle points out that he is always punished (or rewarded) for it. Hence when a man repeats a particular kind of act it determines his character. This is why Aristotle says that when a man acts in a way which will make him unjust he will be voluntarily unjust, but it does not mean that if he wishes it he can stop himself from being unjust and be just. The illustration brought in to explain this phenomenon is actually interesting for a comparison is attempted by Aristotle with a stone thrown. Once a stone is thrown, it will no longer be in the thrower’s power to call it back though the beginning of its flight depended on him. In case of virtue or vice, when a man “has acquired it he is no longer free to put it off” (77). Aristotle further remarks that not only mental or moral vices but also bodily vices are voluntary. Those bodily vices which depend on ourselves are censured while those which do not depend on us are not censured. To explain this doctrine Aristotle refers to the example of a man who has lost sight in an illness. No one will censure this man. But if a man loses sight due to excessive drinking, everyone will censure him. Summing up the nature of virtues in general Aristotle explains that they are forms of moderation or modes of observing the mean, which are habits or trained faculties that “depend on ourselves and are voluntary, and that they follow the guidance of right reason”. Hence
Aristotle’s view is that the agent is the master of the beginning of his habit or character “while their growth by gradual steps is imperceptible, like the growth of a disease” (79).

Towards the end of book III Aristotle takes up the virtues courage and temperance for a detailed discussion. He explains that courage is a mean between the feelings of fear and confidence. Fearful things such as disgrace, poverty, disease, friendlessness, death etc. usually produce fear but every kind of these extremes does not give scope for courage. There are certain things that ought to be feared. Aristotle explains that a person who fears disgrace is an honourable man with due sense of shame and the man who does not fear it is shameless. He exhibits certain resemblance with a courageous man in the sense courage is also a kind of fearlessness. A man need not fear anything that is not the product of vice such as disease and poverty. But Aristotle adds that it is not strictly courage, in being fearless of these things, even though there is some obvious resemblance here also. A man ought not to be called cowardly for fearing outrage to his children or his wife or for fearing envy and things of that kind. Gangu’s fear for his daughter in Anand’s Two Leaves and a Bud, for example, need not exactly be termed cowardice since his consequent caution reflects his love for her. Similarly, Aristotle feels that a man cannot be called courageous if he is unmoved when there is prospect for whipping. In fact courage is to be displayed in facing greatest terrors. Of all things the most terrible is death but Aristotle remarks: death by water or disease does not give any scope for courage. The noble act of facing death in a battlefield gives ample scope for the expression of courage. Aristotle’s view is in support of the fact that war involves the greatest and noblest danger. Hence a courageous man is one who faces an honourable death and “all sudden emergencies that involve death [. . .]” (81). The courageous man is fearless in the presence of illness and at sea while landsmen fear death by water. This is why Aristotle sums up that the circumstances that call for
courage are those in which skill is displayed and death is somewhat noble. In illness and at sea there is scope for neither nobility nor skill.

Aristotle makes a further observation that fear is not excited in all men by the same things and defines fearful things as those which surpass man's power to face them. In other words, these things excite fear in every rational man. All men do not experience fear thus excited in the same measure. Aristotle regards a man who always preserves his presence of mind as courageous and adds that though he is afraid of fearful things he will endure them as "reason bids him, for the sake of that which is noble; for this is the end or aim of virtue" (82). This is supplemented with the fact that the courageous man must endure and fear what he ought to "from the right motive, in the right manner, and at the right time, and similarly feels confidence [...]" (82-83). In fact, the courageous man controls his feelings and actions taking into account the merits of each case as reason bids him. To this man, courage is a noble thing and hence the motive of courage also remains noble. This noble motive is what provides him with the potential to act courageously in each case. Of the characters that run in excess, Aristotle remarks: the man who exceeds in fearlessness has no name. At the same time, if a man is overconfident in the presence of fearful things he is called foolhardy. He actually pretends courage that he has not. He imitates the role of a courageous man facing danger though he is a coward at the bottom of his heart. He indulges in a show off and when the real danger comes he withdraws. A coward, according to Aristotle, is an over-fearful man who fears what he ought not to. He is deficient in confidence and experiences excessive fear in the presence of pain. This fear of everything makes him discouraged in contrast to the courageous man whose confidence implies hopefulness. Hence courage is "observance of the mean with regard to things that excite confidence or fear [...] and chooses its course and sticks to its post because it is noble to do so, or because it is
disgraceful not to do so” (84). Aristotle emphasizes the point that the act of seeking
death as a shelter from poverty, love or any painful thing is not at all an act of a brave
man but that of a coward. Running away from such troubles is a mark of effeminacy.
After discussing the courage proper, Aristotle remarks that there are five other forms of
courage. The first kind is political courage. This resembles true courage. People face
dangers because of legal pains and penalties on the one hand and honours on the other.
The impulse behind this sort of courage is virtuous with a sense of honour, desire for
noble thing and aversion to reproach. But political courage encompasses with in its
sphere inferior men who are forced to fight by their officers. They are inferior because
they are forced to do a courageous act due to fear and not due to sense of honour and
what they try to avoid is pain, not disgrace. The act of courage is the consequence of
compulsion from the commanding officer in their case. Aristotle observes that a
courageous man acts not out of compulsion but due to the feeling that it is noble to do so.
Secondly, experience in certain matters is considered to be courage. This is the reason
why regular fighters feel less alarm in warfare and are efficient in attack and defence.
They are provided with the best kind of arms and are skilled in the use of these weapons.
They enjoy the advantage of trained over untrained men. This is true in the athletic
contests too. There, it is not the bravest but the strongest with body in the best order that
succeeds. The regulars originally meet the danger because they have an impression that
they are stronger but when they learn the truth that they are being defeated, they are
compelled to run away. They are afraid of death more than disgrace and this cannot be
Aristotle’s ideal of courage. Thirdly, people include anger within the meaning of the
term courage. Some people turn like wild animals in sheer anger and they are taken to be
courageous. The reason is that a courageous man is also full of rage. Sheer anger
provokes in a man the eagerness to rush on danger. But a truly courageous man is
always moved to act by what is noble with rage helping him in his attempt. In case of beasts, it is pain (inflicted by blows or by fear) and rage which makes them rush on danger without "foreseeing any of the terrible consequences" (87). Though Aristotle distinguishes it from courage proper, he thinks that this kind of courage whose impulse in rage seems to be most natural can be converted into real courage if deliberate purpose and right motive are added to it. Aristotle comments that though "anger is a painful state, the act of revenge is pleasant [. . .]" (88). He adds that men who fight from these motives may fight well but they are not courageous. They indulge in these acts because they are driven by passion. They do not feel the nobility of the deed and are never guided by reason. Yet they bear some resemblance to the courageous man. They too cannot be branded truly courageous. They are confident in facing danger because they have often won in defeating their opponents. The sanguine man also establishes some resemblance with the courageous man. The confidence of the sanguine man arises out of his feeling of superiority that makes him think that he will win without receiving a scratch. When he realizes the truth that it is not possible to defeat his opponent, he runs away. On the other hand, the courageous man chooses to face even a terrible situation as it is noble to do so and base to refrain from doing so. Aristotle remarks: "it needs greater courage to be fearless and cool in sudden danger than in danger that has been foreseen; for behaviour in the former case is more directly the outcome of formed character, or in other words, is less dependent on preparation" (88). Aristotle further explains that a man may choose how to meet what is coming after calculation and reasoning. But when it happens suddenly, the choice is done according to a man's character. Fifthly, Aristotle speaks of men who are unaware of the danger they are facing. They also appear courageous to an observer. They are somewhat like the sanguine man, though they are inferior to them in the fact that they do not have any confidence in themselves. The
sanguine man’s courage that arises out of his false belief holds him to the ground for sometime. But he disappears from the scene the moment he realizes the danger involved in the act.

After explaining the difference between the character of the courageous man and those who are taken for courageous, Aristotle remarks that courage is concerned with the feelings of confidence and fear not in equal proportions. Courage illustrates itself more clearly on occasions of fear. A man who behaves as he ought to in situations inspiring fear is designated as courageous by Aristotle rather than the man who behaves so on occasions inspiring confidence. The thinker justly praises this behaviour of enduring painful things as he feels that it is more difficult to endure pain than to keep away from what is pleasant. Aristotle does not mean here that the outcome of courage is not pleasant. But he feels that death and wounds are equally painful to the courageous man and are against his will, though he chooses to endure them due to the feeling that it is noble to do so and base to abstain from doing so. Aristotle explains further: when a man is “endowed with every virtue”, the happier he will be and death appears more sorrowful to him. Life is “more worth living” to this man than that of any one else. Aristotle adds: “he deprives himself of the very things and it is painful to do that” (90). Aristotle calls this man no less courageous because he endures this pain and more courageous because, despite the pain, he chooses the noble conduct in a warfare depriving himself of the very best things in life. This is why Joachim comments: “The exercise of courage, therefore is painful […] yet the end is pleasant to the courageous man, though its pleasantness is obscured by necessary painfulness of the wounds and death […]” (121). It is in this context that Aristotle’s observation--“the rule that the exercise of virtue is pleasant does not apply to all virtues except in so far as the end is attained” (90) -- is to be analyzed.
Joachim offers a satisfactory commentary on this aspect as well as on certain other views of Aristotle:

good action is pleasant only so far as the agent attains his end: the actual activity will involve at least effort and often pain. [...] genuine courage is not necessarily the most valuable form of courage for the professional soldier. The soldiers in a professional army should be men whose lives are of little value to them--i.e. who are ready to risk them for small pay.(121-22)

Aristotle comments that there is perhaps no reason why the courageous man whose life is most worth living to him should not be less efficient than the ordinary soldiers who are not so courageous and have nothing good to lose.

Aristotle implies here that the choice of the courageous man could leave scope for the possibility of imposing restraints on his efficiency to preserve his valuable life. This must be viewed in the light of the fact that the life of the virtuous man is more worth living than that of anyone else leading a life of less virtue. Here Joachim explains that the spirit behind the actual choice must be to rule out all confusions involved in interpreting the distinction between what the choice means to the courageous man in contrast to the other sort referred to. He further remarks: “the most extreme courage is that of a man who has most to lose--who sacrifices a valuable life and feels intensely the value of what he is sacrificing. [...] to achieve the noble deeds of war [...]” (121).

Secondly, Aristotle discusses temperance for he considers these two the virtues of the irrational part of human soul. He proceeds to remark that this virtue is a mean observed with regard to pleasures and is not concerned with pains in the same manner. Aristotle explains that it operates itself in the field in which profligacy manifests itself and considers that it is required to “accept as established the distinction between the
pleasures of the body and the pleasures of the soul, such as pleasures of gratified ambition or love of learning" (91). If an attempt is made to explain this virtue in Aristotelian terms, it must be taken into account that a man who loves honour or learning is delighted by that which he loves. When this happens it is not the body but his mind that is affected. Yet this man is neither called temperate nor profligate for his behaviour with these pleasures. He cannot be called so for enjoying any pleasures which are not physical. Temperance is concerned with pleasures of the body but all bodily pleasures do not admit this virtue. To illustrate this Aristotle says that men who use their eyesight in enjoying painting cannot be regarded so though it is possible to take delight in colours as one ought to and more or less than one ought to. This does not apply to hearing as well, for example, taking delight in music. To sense of smell too this term is applied only accidentally. Aristotle says that the man who takes epicurean delights in the smell of savory dishes is profligate as these smells remind him of what he lusts after constantly. The lower animals can enjoy eating but they fail to rejoice in these smells though the announcement of its presence comes through the smells. Aristotle illustrates: when the nearness of an ox is indicated by its lowing, the lion gets delighted in anticipation of a meal (92). It is with the pleasures of these lower animals--the pleasure of touch and taste--that Aristotle applies temperance and profligacy. Taste plays only a very small part here for the function of taste is to distinguish flavours. Delight is afforded not by this discrimination but by the actual enjoyment of them, "the medium of which is always the sense of touch [. . .] in the pleasures of eating, of drinking and of sexual intercourse" (93). Aristotle censures profligacy as it attaches itself to man's animal nature. Hence to take delight in them is brutish. Aristotle further observes that a gymnast too enjoys the pleasure of touch--in rubbing and warm bath--but what marks the difference is that the profligate enjoys the sense of touch of certain parts only and not
body as a whole. Talking of human desires and appetites Aristotle says that some are
common to the race while others are individual and acquired. The desire for food is
natural and “every man when he is in want desires meat or drink, or sometimes both, and
sexual intercourse, as Homer says, when he is young and vigorous” (93). All men do not
desire to gratify their wants nor do they desire the same things for such desires appear to
be individual. The fact that different people are pleased by different things is only
natural and Aristotle remarks that there are some things which all men like better than
others. In the matter of natural or common desires one can err only towards excess for
natural desire or appetite is for filling our want simply and it is utterly slavish nature to
acquire this vice. Aristotle then considers individual pleasures--which attend the
gratification of individual desires. Aristotle remarks that here too men err because they
are fond of taking delight in wrong fashion. Profligates exceed in all these matters for
Aristotle says: they take delight in certain things (which are hateful) in which they ought
not to delight and if it is right delight with regard to any of these things they take delight
“in them more than is right, [ . . . ]” (94). Hence excess in these pleasures is profligacy
and is a thing to be blamed. With regard to pains, Aristotle observes: “a man is not
called temperate for bearing them or profligate for not bearing them [ . . . ] (95). A
profligate is pained at not getting certain things, says Aristotle, but the temperate man
can abstain from these pleasures without feeling pain. The profligate desires for not only
all pleasant things but also the most intensely pleasant and chooses them in preference to
all other things. Hence in failing to get them and in lusting after them he feels pain.
Though all appetites are painful, Aristotle remarks that it appears strange to feel pain for
the sake of pleasure. Aristotle admits: “people who fall short in the matter of pleasure,
and take less delight than they ought to in these things are hardly found at all” (95). This
opposite extreme showing insensibility is scarce in human nature that there is no name
for such a man as he does not exist. But the temperate man observes the mean in these things and takes no delight in what the profligate delights in. He disdains the delights of the profligate but when they are totally absent he desires them moderately, yet not at the wrong time. He wishes the things that are pleasant and conducive to health moderately and in the right manner and other pleasantries too in the same fashion if they are not injurious or incompatible with what is noble or beyond his means. He will not care for them in a way that is not befitting to his character as he is always guided by reason. After observing these facts, Aristotle says that profligacy is more voluntary than cowardice and a man is urged by pleasure to become a profligate and by pain to become a coward. He adds that pleasure is chosen and pain is avoided as pain upsets the sufferer and pleasure allows free play to the will. Hence Aristotle blames profligacy more. Aristotle has another reason also for casting this blame on the profligate. A profligate can train himself to behave rightly during those occasions without the involvement of any risk while with fear the case is contrary. As for a coward, Aristotle remarks:

Character called cowardice is more voluntary than the particular acts in which it is exhibited. It is not painful to be a coward, but the occasions which exhibit cowardice put men beside themselves through fear of pain, so that they throw away their arms and altogether disgrace themselves; and hence these particular acts are even thought to be compulsory. (96-97)

Aristotle points out that the particular acts are voluntary in a profligate. The acts are done by the profligate with appetite and desire exhibiting resemblance to the behaviour of children. The appetites of the temperate man are always in agreement with reason for he desires only what he ought to, as he ought to and when he ought to; aiming only at what is noble.
In book VI (180-207) Aristotle points out that the soul consists of rational and irrational parts. Aristotle classifies the rational faculties into two: those that depend on invariable and those that depend on variable principles. The first one is illustrated as scientific or demonstrative and the second one is called calculative or deliberative faculty. Aristotle explains the latter as a habit or a formed faculty of choice or purpose following upon deliberation involving calculation of means. The faculties that guide us in action and apprehension of truth are three--sense, reason and desire. Brutes have sense but are incapable of action. In the case of the other two there are two modes of reasoning that Aristotle points out--affirmation and negation or assent or denial--and two corresponding modes of desire--pursuit and avoidance or attention and repulsion. Aristotle rightly explains that the function of practical intellect is the apprehension of truth in agreement with right desire. A prudent man is able to deliberate well about what is good or expedient for him with a view to well being or living well. Hence prudence is a formed faculty that apprehends truth by reasoning or calculation in the domain of human good or ill. Aristotle also remarks that prudence once acquired will never be lost. When it is applied to individual affairs this faculty is regarded as practical wisdom. When Aristotle says that prudent man must deliberate well, what he means by good deliberation is correctness in judging what is expedient to a particular end of which prudence has true conception. This intellectual virtue, Aristotle says, has an interdependent place alongside the moral virtues due to the reason that moral virtues ensure the rightness of the end and prudence ensures the rightness of the means. Anandian advanced protagonists are deeply concerned with the rightness of the means they resort to and this accounts for their shift from moderation to heroism with regard to their end. In the case of Ananta and Maqbool (in The Big Heart and Death of a Hero respectively) the compulsion of the circumstance urges them to forgo their earlier
moderation and modify their prudence in accordance with the demand of the situation for heroism.

Book VII of EN (208-50) begins with a discussion of certain “states or types of character that are neither identical with virtue or vice respectively nor yet generically different” (209). Aristotle entitles this part of the book “Characters Other Than Virtue and Vice”. He discusses continence and incontinence in this part of the Ethics. Aristotle thinks that it is in the matter of pleasure and pain that the continent and the hardy and the incontinent and the soft men manifest their characters. Of the sources of pleasure, remarks Aristotle: “some are necessary [ . . . ]” (220)--bodily processes such as nutrition and propagation of species and others with which profligacy and temperance have to do. Aristotle groups the incontinent with profligate and the continent with the temperate as they have to do only with bodily appetites and pleasures. The profligate is carried along as a result of his own deliberate choice or purpose holding that what is pleasant at the moment is always to be pursued. The incontinent man thinks otherwise but pursues it all the same for it is a particular kind of uncontrolled disposition that makes him incontinent. It is a state of “having knowledge without using it [ . . . ]” (217). This is why Ross remarks: “the incontinent man differs, however, from the profligate in that the latter acts from choice, thinking that he ought always to pursue the pleasure of the moment, while the former does not think so but pursues it nevertheless” (222). In other words, the incontinent man commits the error with clear knowledge of virtue (temperance) but an uncontrolled disposition in himself prevents him from exercising the choice, whereas the profligate chooses the vice (pleasure) solely for its pursuit. This is what Aristotle means when he says: “whereas the other three [profligate, continent and temperate] deliberately choose what they do, the incontinent man does not” (222).
Aristotle further observes that a profligate is not given to remorse for he follows the deliberate purpose while the incontinent man is apt to feel remorse. Hence the former is incurable of his defect while the latter is curable. This is why Aristotle regards profligacy as a full formed vice. Aristotle proceeds to observe that the vicious man knows not but the incontinent man knows the nature of his acts. Hence profligacy is chronic but incontinence is intermittent badness. This is why when the fit is over and the better part of the incontinent man reasserts itself he recognizes the badness of the act. It is the character of the incontinent man to pursue bodily pleasures that exceed the bounds of moderation which is to contrary to right reason. The incontinent man has knowledge in “the same sort of way as those who are asleep, mad, or drunk” (217). This is why Aristotle compares the incontinent man to a state that always makes excellent decrees and has good laws but never carries them out.

A continent man is one who abides by a right purpose while the other abandons the true reason and the right purpose. It is the nature of the continent and the temperate man never to do anything contrary to reason for the sake of bodily pleasures. The continent man has bad desires but the temperate does not have any. The temperate man takes no delight in what is contrary to reason but the continent man is of a peculiar nature to take delight in them but does not allow “to be swayed by them” (237). Ross makes explicit three degrees of badness, “incontinence (or weakness of will), vice, beastiality--and corresponding to them three degrees of goodness--continence, virtue, ‘heroic and divine virtue’ [. . .]” (221), which suggest that incontinence is only half bad compared with the vice profligacy. The incontinent “acts voluntarily (for in a manner he knows what he is doing and with what object), and yet is not bad” (238). This is why Aristotle adds that he desires it though he does not choose it.
Evaluated in this analogy, the continent man is less virtuous compared with the temperate (virtuous) man and this fact might have influenced Ross to set the hierarchy in the order--continence, virtue, heroic virtue--placing continence one step below virtue. It is the recognition of this biformity (of combining identity and difference between incontinence & profligacy and continence & temperance) that makes Aristotle place continence and incontinence under a separate heading each.

In the second part of book VII, Aristotle evaluates pleasure in detail. He holds that some pleasures are bad and some pleasant things are unhealthy. However, learning and study offer a kind of pleasure that inspires man to study and learn more. He states:

pleasures of a certain kind are pursued by brutes and by children, and that freedom from the corresponding pains is pursued by the prudent man--the pleasures, namely, that involve appetite and pain, i.e. the bodily pleasures (for those do so), and excess in them, the deliberate pursuit of which constitutes the profligate. These pleasures, then, the temperate man avoids; but he has pleasures of his own. (243)

Aristotle asserts that pain is bad and undesirable. He maintains the belief of all men that happy life is the most pleasant one and happiness involves pleasure. He adds that the goods of the body, external goods and good fortune are also essential for man to become happy. He refers to the pursuit of pleasure by all animals which indicate that pleasure in some way is the highest good. The pleasure that man pursues is not always the same. Aristotle observes: "bodily pleasures have come to be regarded as the sole claimants to the title of pleasure, because they are oftenest attained and are shared by all; [. . .]" (245). According to Aristotle, pleasure is the unimpeded exercise of the faculties and though there are desirable pleasures, the pleasures of the body with which the profligate is concerned are not desirable. The faculties and activities that do not admit excess beyond
what is good (the mean) do not admit excessive pleasures. However bodily goods admit excess and a bad man pursues them or enjoys the delight derived from their pursuit to an extreme extent. In case of pain, not only excess pain but also general pain is to be avoided for “the opposite of the excessive pleasure is not painful, except to the man who pursues the excess” (246-47). Aristotle tries to examine the causes of human pursuit of pleasure in this context. First of all, he points out the efficacy of pleasure in expelling pain. That way it works as an antidote that compels man to pursue it (including bodily pleasures) in excess. Aristotle says that the remedial pleasures are felt while a want in us is being filled up and therefore they are only accidentally good. People are not blamed when the pleasures they pursue are harmless. To expel pain the opposite pleasure or any other pleasure that is sufficiently strong can function well. If there is no antecedent pain to a particular pleasure, it never admits excess. Such pleasures are delivered from what is naturally and not accidentally pleasant. Aristotle brands the pleasures that have restorative effect as accidentally pleasant and those which stimulate the activity of a healthy system as naturally pleasant. Aristotle concludes the discourse with an observation that nothing can provide man uninterrupted pleasure as man is mortal. The only exception is God, the immortal one, who enjoys simple pleasure.

Book X (318-54) opens with Aristotle's further remarks on pleasure. Hardie feels that "the discussion of pleasure and pain in VII was inserted by an editor who might have felt that the piece dealt with the subject from an angle different from that of the discussion in X [. . .]" (3) was suitable there. This is why there is no repetition of points in either of these chapters. In book X Aristotle observes that pleasure and pain are made use of to function as rudders in the instruction of the young as they are very closely connected with human nature. In developing a virtuous character a man must feel delight only in "what we ought to delight in, [. . .]" and must feel hatred only in "what
we ought to hate, [. . .].” (EN 318). Aristotle thinks that these feelings are spread throughout human life and through a correct choice of them a man can practise the virtue and achieve happiness. He brings in the view—“pain is falling short of normal state, pleasure its replenishment”. He refutes this view and explains that pleasure is not mere replenishment “but while the process of replenishment is going on we may be pleased and when the process of exhaustion is going on we may be pained” (323). It must be viewed in terms of the process of nutrition where want involves pain and in satisfying the want pleasure becomes the replenishment of the previous pain. In the case of the pleasures enjoyed by a mathematician or even in the instance of sensuous pleasures there is no replenishment for there is no lack of anything. Aristotle further states that disgraceful kinds of pleasures are regarded as pleasant only by ill-conditioned persons and comes to the conclusion that there is clear distinction between pleasures derived from noble and base sources.

A pleasure will not become complete by lasting longer. Instead it affords superadded completeness to the exercise of human faculties. Aristotle argues that human beings are incapable of continuous pleasure. The reason is that the person who is exercising these faculties gets exhausted easily. It is also to be understood in this context that the exercise of a faculty of an individual is always dependent upon the things that he loves most. The musical man loves to hear melodies and the studious man loves to apply his intellect to speculation. This is why a lover of the flute fails to attend an argument in an atmosphere filled with music of the flute. His delights are with the music that it will interrupt his exercise of reason. Aristotle remarks: “whenever a man is exercising his faculties on two things at a time, the pleasanter business thwarts the other [. . .]. Thus when anything gives us intense delight, we cannot do anything else at all, and when we do a second thing, we do not very much care about the first [. . .]” (331). This is what
leads Aristotle to the theory that pleasure from another source is almost equivalent to the pain from the activity itself. The pain arising from it always hinders the exercise of a faculty. In making a choice between two virtues instead of two vices, the influence of this principle seems to have great relevance. The above cited principle regarding the pleasure-pain conflict is shown to be significant in the analysis of Anand’s advanced protagonists. They are often found to be in a temporary emotional impasse before finally resolving the conflict in favour of their preferred course of action.

It is noteworthy that pleasure can be derived out of good activity as well as an activity that is not good. Pleasure that is proper to the former activity is good and pleasure that is proper to the latter is bad. Pleasures of the intellect can be called purer pleasures than those of the senses. Pleasures that are sorrowful and hateful to one individual will be pleasant and lovable to another. The standard of measure which can be applied here is by putting pleasure to the test of virtue for what gives pleasure to a virtuous man can be taken as true pleasure and “what he delights in will be pleasant” (334).

It is observed from this detailed discussion that human beings choose certain acts in preference to certain others to attain “the most final good”. Aristotle remarks in the concluding section of EN that happiness which is “sufficient in itself” gratifies the stipulation to be called so, as “nothing is expected from it beyond itself” (335). The happy life involves the exercise of the highest virtue and Aristotle conceives here a serious life that is devoid of all amusements. In fact, he views amusements as recreation that is essential only when man fails to work continuously. This is why he regards serious things better than laughable things. The faculty of reason apprehends things that are noble and divine. As alluded to in the opening part of this chapter, the exercise of this part of man brings perfect happiness as in the case of God whose only activity is
contemplation. But Aristotle is doubtful whether it is possible for human beings to lead a contemplative life. This is why he remarks that few men can attain this state—in an Indian context only a few like the Buddha were able to attain this state of bliss.

When the contemplative life is reserved for the divine, it is the practical life of moral virtue that can be operative in the lives of ordinary people. It is rated secondary but Aristotle's intention in this discourse is to provide guidelines for the observance of the moral virtue to those who strive to lead a moderate life. This is why Mercklen regards the exercise of virtue as "a middle stage between the life of passions and that of contemplation". He adds: "The Nicomachean Ethics is [. . .] an explanation of the virtues of this middle sort of life [. . .]" (417). Aristotle stresses the importance of the external goods which are essential for the enjoyment of happiness. This is referred to as "furnitures of fortune" in the beginning of this chapter. Hence wealth is needed for a liberal man, strength to a courageous man and liberty of indulgence to a temperate man for the enjoyment of happiness. In addition, Aristotle views purpose and action also to be essentials for the completeness of the practice of moderation in a human being. This is clear when Aristotle says: "in practical matters the end is not a mere speculative knowledge of what is to be done, but rather the doing of it" (346). He feels that the majority of people refrain from evil action due to fear of punishment and not out of their realization of its foulness. Under the guidance of passion they pursue pleasure and do not have any conception of noble pleasures as they have never tasted them. Aristotle observes that a man guided by the sway of passions refuses to listen to the arguments to correct him for passion yields only to force and not to reason. Aristotle thinks that a man who is to be good ought to be well nurtured to lead an excellent way of life and must refrain voluntarily or involuntarily from vile acts. This is possible if men live subject to some kind of reason and manner of living backed by provisions of legislation and force.
Aristotle here emphasizes his preference of individual education under the system of private education where each gets what he needs. The object of interest in this study is the complexity involved in the hero’s choice of the middle way when two virtues—courage and temperance—establish conflict in his psyche instead of two vices as in normal occasions. Anandian protagonists with the ordeal to work out a compromise between the love for a woman and the love for protest against some social evil call for an analysis in the above light.