CHAPTER-II

WESTERN CONCEPTION OF VIRTUE- ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL

Equal importance is to be given to learning ancient, medieval as well as modern history. It is daunted as well as enthusiastic by the challenges which have to be learnt. The operation and the assumption about the nature of philosophy and the approaches or methods would be questioned or shown interest by most philosophers, readers, scholars, learners etc at the ancient time till the present time. In order to offer better understanding of the concerned topic, the subject or related subject has to be turned into a contemporary philosophical viewpoint.

The reason to assess ancient view of virtue into contemporary age is that there are majority of people in this world who have no special philosophical training but at the same time who are interested to (re) learn or ready to accept the contribution of ancient philosophy in this regard. A new comer in the concerned topic might find difficulty in following and accepting some particular viewpoint. It is not strange or wrong to struggle or make an argument or stand point against something in order to get a better outcome and result. The best is ensured to those who struggle and never giving up to fight in hoping for the betterment of the welfare of human beings as well as other living beings.

One of the best ways for learning about the significant features about the doctrines of life is to read and learn the works of great philosophers
and thinkers. From reading and understanding those great works, one might be able to find better ideas or new ideas for the present condition. The supporters of the topic of virtue rely upon the great philosopher known as Aristotle, who classifies virtue as ‘intellectual virtue’ and ‘moral virtue’. He was considered as one of the greatest philosophers of all time. The strength of his definition of virtue will provide more strength and again the weakness of his definition of virtue will also be the foundation point to those who wanted to follow or learn from Aristotle. His ideas and definition of virtue will always be cherished in the fields of morality and ethical life. Aristotle’s conception of virtue provides not only ‘knowledge’ but also the difficulty and greatness about the information regarding the nature and function of society. Since philosophy is intertwined with history, philosophical thought grew out of the life we lived, their involvement in the society, through which and the beliefs they have to strengthen their ideas, thoughts and teachings. The ancient period, in fact, influences the future generation. Even if that ideas or endeavour might not bring great changes or might not be very useful and practical during that moment, there will always be a way for the following sequences of time. This devotion to ancient philosophers like Aristotle paved so much way in ethical portions as well as other philosophical branches. The social, historical and religious life definitely manipulates and controls the view of philosophers at great length. The pre-existing great philosophers are very inspirational in many ways because it gives excitement to modern people in the field of philosophical enrichment.

The earliest western philosophers were Greeks, who lived in the midst of rich culture, language, and can also be regarded as religious, because they not only worshipped many gods but also labelled each God as a reflection of human beings and all other creatures. Besides, they had taken the role of philosophers, as well as scientists, religious leaders, and rulers. During their time, they were always engaged between war and peace. There were times
when they had to evacuate their home, city and land from enemies and rebels. Sometimes, they were blessed with victory and bring back prosperity to the city. These unsteadiness and fluctuation of the condition of the citizen basically and automatically generated mental and physical vibration, in terms of their morality and mind set. The outcome could be negative and positive effect as well.

In spite of all internal and external turbulences or warfare, conflicts between city and city, citizens in general were free, they followed a system of polity called ‘democracy’. However, the result of war with the mixture of freedom created the need for essential or fundamental and suitable system to control and protect the life of the citizen. Out of diligence and love of humanity, great philosophers put forth the importance of values and morality. There were philosophers who even put their life into danger or risk in moulding and guiding for the development of essence of life principles. Life was only worth striving for if it was a good life, and life purchased by disobedience to laws was not a life worth living.¹ Therefore, obedience to law play an important role in the life that is to be worth living. Attention to bodily pleasures is lesser required such as food, drinks and sex, and official acceptance of bodily pleasure is a hindrance and obstruction in the pursuit of learning and developing moral awareness.

2.1 LIFE AND WORKS OF ARISTOTLE:

Aristotle was born after fifteen years after the death of Socrates (384- 323 B.C). He was the son of a court physician, which means that he might have some knowledge about medicine. He migrated to Athens in 367 BC at the age of seventeen and joined Plato’s Academy, where he remained for
twenty years. While Aristotle was at the Academy, there was instability of border province due to war which means that the period was a difficult one for the citizen of Athens. Aristotle also moved to Assos on the north-western coast of what is now Turkey. He got married to Pythias with whom he had two daughters. Pythias was an adopted daughter of Hermias, ruler of Assos, and a friend of Aristotle and both were the graduate of the Academy. Aristotle stayed at Assos until the death of Hermias in 341 BC. After that he was invited to the Macedonian capital by Philip II as a tutor to his son, famously known as Alexander the Great. But there were no records of the detail relationship between the two. While Alexander was conquering Asia, Aristotle was back in Athens, where he established his own school named the Lyceum, where he built up a great library, and had a group of magnificent research students.

Unlike the Academy, the lectures were opened to the public without fee. This shows that he was diligent and a great role model in sharing his knowledge for the benefit of his fellow men.Though, his writings were influenced by his master on almost every page, there was a common criticism of Aristotle being the graduate of the Academy, a student of Plato, the Academy and the Lyceum were regarded as two opposite poles of philosophy. But this is not a big issue concerning the contemporary morality, since one might extract new ideas by following the idea of Aristotle and the other might follow the idea of Plato. The modification and adjustment from previous demonstrator is suitable depending on the circumstances. The most important thing is that they are the most significant factors in the ground of morality.² It is no doubt that views of the nature of humanity, society, and the world will continue to change, moreover, philosophers try to make their theory as true as possible to the moral experience of the prevailing culture.³ Because in the ancient time, life was lived in a lesser technological society comparing with medieval or modern times. Therefore, possible changes, variations and adaptations were expected.
Aristotle’s authentic works on ethical issues are *Eudemian Ethics* which contains eight books and *Nicomachean Ethics* that contains ten books. Though, books 4 to 6 of *Eudemian Ethics* are the same as books 5 to 7 of *Nicomachean Ethics*. Both the works cover the whole ground of his ethics. Though, his work is mainly focused on his later works known as *Nicomachean Ethics*, it is regarded as the Ethics of Aristotle. In this *Nicomachean Ethics*, there are two types of virtue viz. Intellectual virtue and Moral virtue. In Aristotle as in Plato, wisdom is a virtue of the reasoning part of the soul, but again like Plato, Aristotle divides the reasoning part of the soul into two parts. Wisdom (*phronesis*) is the virtue of the lower part, the deliberating part, the virtue of the superior or scientific part of the soul is understanding (*Sophia*), which consists in the grasp of the axioms, and the knowledge of the theorems, of the sciences. Though, the English word *virtue*, which is translated from Greek word *arete* has wider connotation, is the best word which can be put forth. Therefore, it is concerned with truth, which is to have an intellectual virtue that is to be in the secure possession of truth about some field of knowledge.

The *Nicomachean Ethics* provides intermediate connection of virtue and vices that is between any two extreme actions, which has significant position throughout the ethical virtues. It is the work of how men should best live. It has a great continuous impact on the entire European philosophy. He includes diversity of human association as wide as possible. His works contain the supreme happiness *eudaimonia, moral virtue* and *intellectual virtue*, wisdom and understanding which are superior to wisdom. The word of *eudaimonia* literally means in English as ‘happiness’ which does not have produced the equivalent meaning just as *arete* to *virtue*. This has to be considered as the rich diversity of languages of every culture. Whether happiness is regarded as a state of feeling, differing from *pleasure*, for
Aristotle, it is a kind of activity that is naturally accompanied by pleasure.⁶ Ευ means ‘well’ and δαιμόν means ‘divinity’ or ‘spirit’ which indicates that the person lives in accordance with some kind of divinity. Some people prefer to use notions such as ‘well-being’ or ‘flourishing’. This definition demonstrates that this kind of ‘happiness’ is more than just a temporal feeling. The exercises of all the virtues occupy an important place in the life of a happy person. Therefore, happiness and virtue go hand in hand in the progress that we have to make in respect of scientific knowledge and the sphere of our life in attaining what kind or right amount of happiness would satisfy us. Human beings are bounded by elements of basic instinct, which are easily revealed when there has been something novelty, it automatically bring out the greediness, desire for only the best things in life, bribery, impurity of the mind and so on. That is why all the reformers and moral enthusiasts earnestly give maximum effort to raise the value and necessity of moral life. It is the shelter that we can rely on in times of all sorts of harmful events. The recognition of common standard of morality and the teaching of morality of an individual differing from person to person indicates the importance of understanding of society condition and inducement of proper guidance.

Aristotle divides soul into two parts that is rational and irrational, the rational part is sub-divided into vegetative which does not participate in the reason at all, and appetitive which participates in the sense that it is submissive and obedient to reason. Virtue then is a settled disposition of the mind determining the choice of actions and emotions, consisting essentially in the observance of the mean relative to us.⁷ Again, he has classified the virtue into moral and intellectual virtues. Moral virtues are connected with the appetitive part of the soul while intellectual virtues are connected with the rational part. The acquisition of
moral virtue is through practice and on the other hand intellectual virtue is by knowledge. The things that are found in the soul are of three kinds- passions, faculties, and states of character. Passion includes the feeling that is accompanied by pleasure and pain, such as anger, fear, hatred, confidence, joy, pity, desire etc. And faculty includes which can provide and preserve good things, and which can compare and consult many benefits of all kinds of favourable opportunities. By character, it generally means an essential part of personality which includes having the ability to understand, feeling and instinctive by nature. The notion of character, therefore, means the conduct of a person in a unified manner. And also, it is a state concerned with choice, subsiding in man, determined by rational principal and by a man with practical wisdom. Aristotle was the first to give classification of virtues. They are:

1) **MORAL VIRTUES:**

Moral virtues include courage, temperance, justice, liberality, greatness of mind or magnanimity, magnificence, friendliness or fellow feeling, and honesty. Moral virtue comes about as a result of habit, hence also its name *ethike* is one that is formed by a slight variation from the word *ethos* (habit). First we learn how to do and in the mean time we also learn while doing. We must examine the nature of actions, namely, how we ought to do them, for these determine the nature of the states of character that are produced. Now that, we must act according to the right rule is a common principle and must be assumed. Those virtues that reside in the will as their subject render its various acts in loving the good, easier and less painful, and when acquired in perfect
degree, they make the will’s virtuous acts pleasant, they are termed as moral virtues.¹⁰ The usage of moral virtue is in conformity with common practice. Moral virtue is acquired by practice, habit in itself involves repeated performances or actions and practices, and it is not merely a manner of knowledge. It is particularly settled in the appetitive ability of man in which there are tendencies towards something worthy. We become temperate by doing temperate acts, just by doing just acts, brave by doing brave acts and so on.¹¹ According to Aristotle, human being does not either born morally virtuous or born immoral which is actually against Plato’s virtue, that is innate and not an established state of character.

A young human being, in his endeavour of life, will perform different kinds of action. This kind of action will lead to proper formation of brave action into bravery, beginner into an expert, generous into generosity and so on. Once this virtue is attained, it must be activated regularly which means there must be consistency in his action, because man can lose virtue of his action by carelessness. It is not sufficient to be right some of the time or occasionally. Therefore, practice is the efficient cause to bring moral virtue into existence and to maintain its existence as well. Moral virtues are created by the acts performed, and our actions must be in accordance with virtue which is to bring about the virtue in us. These require special need of moral training and guidance by elders and teachers from childhood, so that, one can enjoy while doing or performing moral actions. A person who wants to be virtuous is more likely to perform this or that action regularly. The enjoyment and regularity of virtuous actions produce reliability and effectiveness.
The result of our every action indicates the goodness and rightness of that action. For example, in order to become a courageous person, one must act accordingly. And we become just and unjust by acting in circumstances of danger, and training ourselves to feel unpleasant or pleasant so that we become courageous or cowardly.¹² The moral virtues that arise in us are the result of training and habituation. A child becoming a brave man is because, he is trained as a child to act bravely. One must know the quality of his action with careful choice reflecting on a firm and settled disposition. Our actions and choices to be morally virtuous are defined by reason. Therefore, there are things that necessarily involved in moral virtue that is habitual action.

The moral virtues must be lived to be learned. By living well, we achieve the right habits, these habits are in fact the outcome of virtues. The virtues are to be searched and grasped as they assure to the happy life. The moral virtues of courage, temperance, generosity or liberality, truthfulness or honesty, magnanimity, justice, magnificent are the virtues advocated by Aristotle, which can be widely expanded in each area.

2) **INTELLECTUAL VIRTUES:**

Intellectual virtues are five in number. They include scientific knowledge, understanding philosophical wisdom, intuitive reason or intelligence, practical wisdom and the knowhow of how to live, which is art. Intellectual virtue is the perfection of the ability of reason. It is achieved and increased by instruction.
The most certain and fastest means of gaining knowledge is through instruction. Virtue, being of two kinds, intellectual and moral, intellectual virtue is indebted both in its source and its development to teaching, and it also requires time and experience. The virtues of intellect are divided into those connected with practical thinking, and those connected with purely intellectual thought. Intellectual and other moral, *sophia* or philosophical wisdom and understanding and *phronesis* or practical wisdom being intellectual. When we speak about a man’s character, we do not say that he is wise or has understanding but that he has a good-temper or temperance, yet we value the wise man also with respect to his state of mind, and of states of mind we call those which are worthy of virtues.

i) **Scientific knowledge:**

It is the knowledge of a thing as proceeding from its scientific and necessary cause or causes. Just as there are different kinds of knowable things, there are different species of knowable things depending for their distinction on the particular and specific classes of those knowable things.\(^{13}\) It is scientific because it is the good intellectual habit of demonstrating conclusions. ‘Science’ in the sense that, as opposed to ‘opinion’ which is the knowing of something as only probably true, the knowledge of true and certain conclusion following necessarily from premises. An ‘opinion’ which is liable to be false cannot be intellectual. When things that are capable are removed from actual
observation, we do not know whether they exist or not. Therefore, the object of scientific knowledge exists. Sciences are communicable by teaching and can be learned. Teaching starts from what is already known either by induction or deduction. Induction starts from the first principles and universals, while deduction starts from universals. A person’s knowledge is scientific when his belief is conditioned in a certain way, and knows the first principles, or a person’s knowledge is not scientific when truth cannot be demonstrated. Demonstration consists in reasoning from premises to the conclusion.

ii) Art:

Art is a virtue in the sense that if gives facility to do what is good as a work of reason. While performing many actions, they can be reduced into making and doing. Doing or acting and making is different, they are not contained in each other. Making requires an agent to be appeared into something. And doing also requires an agent but remains in the agent only. All art has the importance of coming into existence. The origin is the artist, its existence depends on the disposition of the maker. The practice of art is how to bring that art into being that is capable of being and not being. The efficient cause is the artist or the producer not in the product. Since the creation is not the same as action, art must be concerned with the result or the creation, but not with action. The three stages in artistic making are- first one is how something is to be made that is the plan or the design. Secondly, the actual work on the material to be used which is accompanied by practical wisdom. Thirdly, the final
result or the completed work, that is the image of the artist, coming into existence. It is very pleasing to see an aesthetic work. Every art, in its own way, exhibit human action and passion.

iii) **Intelligence, Intuition or intuitive reasoning:**

It is said to be a virtue that is naturally infused, enables the understanding to perceive self-evident, necessary and absolute truths promptly and with ease.\(^5\) It literally means the capacity to understand principles, truths, facts, and can acquire knowledge, and knowing how and when to apply that knowledge into practice. A person with intellect will have the faculty of thinking, judging, reasoning and conceptual understanding. It can be the process of knowing without the use of rational processes but at the same time it is necessary to use rational process in order to be useful in terms of participating with other human beings. There is the power of observation, and making decision from one thing to another. The opposite of such intellectual man will be foolish, non-sensical, no consistency or unreliable.

Scientific knowledge consists in forming judgement about things that are universal and necessary, and demonstrable truths, and every kinds of scientific knowledge, because this involves reasoning, depends upon the first principles. It follows that the first principles of scientific truth cannot be grasped either by science or by art or by prudence. The scientific truth is demonstrable, where as art and prudence is only concerned with
the variable. Nor again are first principles the concern of wisdom, because the wise man possesses the ability to demonstrate such things. So if the states of mind by means of which we reach the truth, and are never led into error, with regard to things both variable and invariable are science, prudence, wisdom and intuition, and if it cannot be any one of the three of them namely prudence, science and wisdom. What remains is that the state of mind that apprehends first principles is intuitive reason that grasps the first principles.$^6$

iv) **Practical wisdom, prudence or phronesis:**

*Phronesis* or practical wisdom is required in regulating our desires, wishes and ambitions, and deciding suitable choices for the benefits of the individual and society as a whole. It strengthens the understanding to judge what ought to be done. It is the medium in which intellectual and moral virtue unites or become closely connected. Practical wisdom is an indication of a man with the power of deliberating well about what is good and useful for oneself and what kind of things will contribute to the good life. It is the realisation of what is good for oneself and for mankind in general. The significance and certainty can be found in the category of other cardinal virtues like fortitude, temperance and justice.

The importance of practical wisdom is also pointed out because it is both the intellectual virtue as well as moral virtue. It is intellect because it involves habit of practical thinking and it is moral because it requires the right intention of a good end.
A prudent man is highly respected because of his ability to deliberate well in attaining good end. He gives instruction and guidance to others from his experiences in order to live for others. The special act of counselling, practical judgement and command gives deeper understanding of prudence and how does it operates. It will inquire into the means and necessary action, helping in decision making and providing suitable means of action, and command to the final act whether to perform or not. The defects of prudence are rashness, thoughtlessness, negligence. Negligence is the most serious defect because it is the refusal of an act that should be carried out.

Aristotle also says that a structure of moral behaviour can be built up, through education and under the guidance of practical wisdom or *phronesis*, it is then easier to proceed to make the right choices and live a moral life. In difficult and dangerous circumstances, *phronesis* understands the condition and situation, it controls the defective instinct of cowardice and the excess of rashness that is charging without thinking, and raise the importance of the mean between the two known as the virtue of courage. Aristotle claims that in a particular circumstance where practical wisdom recommends right action but we do the opposite action, our human mind sometimes fail us. Because appropriate patterns of behaviour have not become sufficiently ingrained, an occasional lapse allows an irrational appetite to overturn a rational decision. The intellectual virtues come in powerful through teaching. Both the moral virtues and intellectual virtues require experience and time for their fruitful result. From the experience and the teaching what we receive
will give us the ability to differentiate what is worthwhile and what is distressful.

v) **Philosophical wisdom or Sophia:**

It is also known as theoretical wisdom. In its literal form, a person with wisdom means the ability to apply and make decision based on the power of knowledge, experience, intuitive and understanding of truth. It studies what can be deduced from the first principles as well as it tries to know what their true meaning is. It is a rational knowledge. It is the excellence of the theoretical intellect. It is also where intuitive reason and scientific knowledge meets. Though, philosophical wisdom has higher intrinsic value than practical wisdom, and also practical wisdom has an instrumental role in promoting philosophical wisdom, ultimately philosophical wisdom is the excellent one that can be achieved by humans because the theoretical intellect is the special features of human nature, since human beings are embodied creatures who are socially active in order to achieve their full development, in which the best form of human life is the ability to exercise intellectual excellence. Therefore, philosophical in the social context the human life or activities require the exercise of the social virtues, that is, the virtues of character, but these virtues are not enough for promoting theoretical wisdom, it also requires wisdom with reason. Reason is the highest faculty in man which helps in achieving the
highest knowable realities. Therefore, wisdom is the highest ethical virtues recognized by Aristotle.

Wisdom or *Sophia* is essential for the happiness or well being of an individual. Just as virtue of courage is best exhibited in times of war or dispute between countries or neighbours, temperance in managing one’s physical pleasures, virtues of wisdom finds its best manifestation in the philosophy of an individual. The power or capability of wisdom elevates human beings to become more superior to other creatures because they are not endowed in the elements of reason. Things that are marvellous, superior, incredible, mysterious but not have usefulness, will not simply reach the highest good unless they are accompanied by intuitive reasoning and scientific knowledge.

Therefore, the moral and intellectual virtues go hand in hand, we must practice what we are taught, by practicing regularly we can become an expert, the experiences that we had will mould and strengthen our action, helping to develop our skills, strategies, with strict discipline and to excel every action in whatever participation takes place. This will lead us to become a virtuous human being. The operation of consistency, readiness, promptness, stability and the enjoyment of an action define us. No one can possess the quality of courage, justice or temperance without practical wisdom, nor can have practical wisdom without courage and the other moral virtues. They are interconnected. Aristotle acknowledges both the plurality of moral virtues and intellectual virtues. The combination of the two makes a man virtuous.
2.1.A *EUDAIMONIA OR HAPPINESS:*

The highest good or the ultimate aim of all action is to attain ‘happiness’, which can be attained only by rational activity. When this activity is properly performed, it becomes the characteristic of virtue. A good life is one that seeks ‘happiness’ or ‘well being’ because it is good to have a good life and live well. Happiness is not just the result of one single act but the result of an act of friendship, nobility and all other moral excellence. The purest and best pleasure is brought out by the exercises of moral and intellectual virtues. The search for gaining pleasure is not to be neglected but should be considered as natural. But the attainment of pleasure is valuable in terms of the relationship with virtuous activities. Aristotle does not reject hedonism totally regarding the favourability of pleasure, he agreed in believing pleasure to be the highest desirable aspect of life. For Hedonist, an action is valuable if it produces pleasure where as for Aristotle, an activity is pleasurable if that action is valuable i.e. in order to attain pleasure an action must be virtuous. The happiness of human being requires the understanding of virtues and hence by understanding virtue more precisely, betters the understanding of happiness.

‘Happiness’ or ‘well being’ is not merely satisfaction with one’s own self, but the exercise of healthy desire and the foundation pillar for an individual, public and professional relationship. As Aristotle had imaged man with happiness is the person who excels all the activities he carried out and has the ability to acquire knowledge are the characteristics of human beings. The life of human is the life of pleasure or enjoyment seeker, a life with political ambitions and contemplative life. \(^{18}\) Since pleasure belongs to the nature of man, it plays an integral part in human life. Along with pleasure, pain is also managed with the power of virtue and regulating their movement and functions. For example, in educating a child, it is not always pleasurable for to
concentrate on studies, while the thought of that child is only focusing on playing with toys, but once a child has started to learn, there will be gradually an enjoyment of gaining knowledge and thus the realisation of the importance of learning. Therefore, the activity of learning or gaining knowledge is the activity of virtue. Hence, Socrates frequently mentioned that knowledge is power and knowledge is virtue.

2.1.B THE GOLDEN MEAN:

The central ethics of Aristotle is the ‘golden mean’ or ‘moderation’. The word ‘mean’ literally means that which mediates or occupies middle position among other things or among the two extremes. The ‘golden mean’ of Aristotle is to avoid the extreme or the excess or deficiency. The ‘mean’ is supposed to provide a standard of well functioning. It is complemented by reason, which finds the equilibrium of every action of the too much and too little. Whenever reason acquires the ability to control and to achieve proper direction of good life, virtues and happiness are fulfilled. Reason as the balancing principal means that there are certain things which reason cannot give aids such as killing, robbery, bribery and so on, since there is no ‘mean’ in that action for that action itself is not in the category of virtuous act. The mean that is to be found depends on the circumstances and must be discerned by careful judgement. To have and to manifest a moral virtue such as temperance involves feeling an appropriate degree of its associated emotion for example, desire for bodily pleasures, in the case of temperance and making the appropriate choice of such pleasures, avoiding excess and deficiency in feeling and action. The mean is the measure of the goodness of virtuous action. The mean is what is appropriate, neither too much nor too little, and it is ‘relative to
us’ as human beings, not as different individuals – there are not different virtues according to our different vulnerability to such pleasures. But what ascertains what is suitable? For this one needs, as a complement to a given moral virtues, the intellectual virtue of *phronesis* and practical wisdom. Aristotle’s account of this important virtue is fraught with difficulties, but it is clear that he views it as a kind of moral knowledge, a grasp of a moral reality that the appropriate way to respond in these circumstances is to feel like this and to act in this way. In the case of strength and health, an athlete might destroy his strength and health by eating too much or too little. But the proportionate amount will increase his strength and health and will preserve his ability in competing with others. And also the same principle goes to the virtues of courage, which is the mean between cowardice and fear of nothing or over confidence in everything. Therefore, a courageous man is not the one who fears nothing at all but who moderates his emotion, that is, virtues of courage is the mean of perfection of one’s action.

It is evident that Aristotle’s view privileges knowledge of what is morally appropriate in a particular set of circumstances over universal moral truths. Some go further and claim that his view is particularistic in refusing to acknowledge any important role for universal moral principles in moral knowledge. But, Aristotle makes it clear that he identifies the interdependence between the development of moral virtue and its intellectual counterpart, practical wisdom, so that one cannot just possess the one and then the other, learning to feel and act in the appropriate way goes side by side with acquiring the understanding of the appropriate way. Ethical virtues are concerned with passions, pleasure and, action in which there are excesses and defects, but virtues find and choose for them the intermediate, co-operated by practical wisdom and understanding. The regulation and maintenance of internal will with the help of the doctrine of virtues will help a man to become moral.
The followings are few of ‘the golden means’ of moral virtue:

1) **Courage:**

In times of fear, courage is the mean between rashness and cowardice. It has a strong, positive quality which gives rise to admiration. For we always admire brave or courageous man. It is the best known virtue among other virtues. A brave man being rational and sensible will confront life threatening evil, since it is a natural reaction to experience fear in the presence of danger, but a courageous person will control his fear and overcome it eventually. It is certain that there are things which we ought to fear and there are other things that we ought not to fear. In a courageous action, there is readiness to sacrifice one’s own life. The most common example of courage can be carried out by the characteristics of a soldier, who fights for his country, the one who faces the danger of death for the love of his country. For Aristotle, death or life sacrifice in war is the greatest and most honourable danger. In those circumstances of facing the danger, it is the right thing to fear, from the right motive, right way and the right time, with confidence under corresponding conditions, is brave. This is restricted to the citizen soldiers in the battle field. Above this, bravery may be demonstrated in any action regarding the welfare of society. It is the fundamental disposition of an action to develop into its full perfection.

Different kinds of courage are applicable in times of political danger, professional danger and the danger of anger and pain. In modern days, there are varieties of the exhibition of
courage not only in the battleground. Once, fear is overcome, when
certain similar situation arises, it will become our habit to face that
situation with practical wisdom which will develop the virtue of
temperance, justice and so on. It is true that one virtue
complements the other, no single virtue can be properly and fully
developed without the others.

2) Temperance:

In other words, it means self-control or self-discipline,abstinence, continence and restraint. The pleasures towards which
human has the most tendency by nature are the indulgence of food,
drinks and sex. In these activities, the first and immediate act of
temperance is to moderate and regulate the sense of enjoyment and
fancy. And in the absence of such enjoyment, it is certain to have a
feeling of sadness or sorrow, but the virtue of temperance will
control accordingly. Temperance is primarily concerned with the
pleasure of touch and secondarily the pleasure of sense. They are
the basic and natural tendencies connected with the natural
operation of human being’s reproduction. In this regard, human
beings are bound to reproduce and preserve human life, such that
an excessive inclination can easily arise. The best is to refrain
from sexual activity other than the intention of producing one’s
own children. Abstinence in the case of sense of desire for food,
sobriety in the case of intoxicating drinks, and chastity in the case
of sexual activities are the three virtues concerning temperance. It
is not required to rule out the desires and appetites for pleasure but
the regulation according to wisdom is more important. One must apply the mean of temperance in order to become moral in every activity. It is moderation without renunciation of physical activity. Over-eating will cause physical ill-health and also it will upset the mental set up as it can give inferior complex to the body appearance and function. The physical excitement and the distraction can be controlled and overcome by the virtue of temperance. Temperance is the virtue of the mean, moderating the emotions of enjoyment and sorrow and especially the pleasures of touch, and taste in order to achieve the good of reason in the lustful manner. In times of pleasure, temperate is the mean between profligate and aloof.

The virtue of temperance can be exhibited in the activity of human being as well as animal. Even animal can feel or enjoy the physical pleasure, they can be hungry, thirsty, and need to reproduce. It may be beyond the view of Aristotle, but in some way, we human beings sometimes have to learn things from animal behaviour. They eat because they are hungry and need to survive for themselves or for a mother to her babies and not just for their appetite. Sexual activity is performed also but not for pleasure but a necessity for reproduction. Although, they are treated as irrational beings or lower beings.

3) **Generosity or Liberality:**

In times of sharing, generosity is the mean between prodigal and stingy. If we want to be generous, we need to encourage ourselves to do things for others and gradually generosity will become part of our lives. It is included in rendering
our possession like valuable things or money to others. And that kind of activity is the best to use of our material possession. It is true that a hard working person understands the worthiness of his material possession even in terms of money. For an ordinary person without the sense of virtue, would not understand the worth or sweat of the hard earned. This may be the case and gap between the useful and the useless man. But the virtue of liberality moderates one’s wealth by the will of that man is ready to distribute his wealth to others for benefit.

Ordinarily, prosperity or wealth can change a person’s character by being rich and prodigal, being unfortunate and stingy. But whether a person is rich or poor, the virtue of generosity will be illuminated by the power of virtuous acts. The treatment of money value is different from person to person. If it is treated as useful thing, it can do a lot of upliftment and improvement to others. Though the intention of spending money to others is good, it can be easily confused with spending for oneself which will only point at prodigality. Extravagant life will eventually destroy the life of human being. There is a better scheme of spending money, that is in skilful manner, regulating money by becoming a giver instead of a taker. This skilful manner means giving to the right people or to those who deserve or the needy, which is also with the right amount and at the right time. The acquirement of a wealth is to accept with sincere gratitude and a feeling of respect.

The two types of people are giver and the other one is taker. The taker is not to be simply blamed since the reason behind being an unfortunate one now a days is beyond measure. The characteristic of a generous man is giving and it is associated with magnanimity. They are likely to be the victim of getting cheated
because they are pure hearted. The givers are easy to praise because of their voluntary gift or contribution. Praise is bestowed upon them. The taker on the other hand is not praised but who receives with sincere gratitude with respect, knowing that it comes from the right sources and knowing not to take from the wrong one, then become justice. A person who never shares or gives anything to help others is called stingy. Comparing with today’s society, it is a society of ‘money talks’. Someone who is stable and affectionate in nature, makes friends easily and cheerful in their company, will show an act of kindness, consideration and care. But Aristotle’s conception of virtue involves an act with ‘reason’. This involves the understanding of the comprehensive importance of others’ good in a well conducted life. One might distribute his wealth out of fear of robbery or impoverish by force, but this is not the nature of liberality. If the wealth of man is to be measured according to the total amount of money that he has, then being liberal is impossible for a man who does not have huge amount of money. But according to Aristotle’s virtue of liberality, it is the disposition of the giver, the bountiful, who has the readiness to give a reasonable proportion of what he has. Thus, liberality is not measured by the greater or lesser amount, but the inner qualities or dispositions which always urge the man to act liberally.

Magnificence is also concerned with wealth, but not like liberality or generosity. It involves only that of expenditure. A magnificent man is liberal but a liberal man is not necessarily a magnificent man. For example, a magnificent man is like an artist, that means, he is well skilled in his work. He knows how to measure and calculate his vision of works. The expenditure on his work may cause him huge amount to fulfill his visionary works of
art. But in that same amount that is required on that thing, a
magnificent man will know that he can make other things more
worthy and more practical than spending on that piece. Likewise,
he will spend more if it is necessary in order to gain praise and
recognition, but that will mean an excess. But magnificent man will
produce with lesser or cheaper expense on the same work.
Therefore, the difference between right expenditure and great
expenditure arises. However, making worthy of the total
expenditure is a common characteristic of the magnificent man.

4) **Truthfulness or Honesty:**

In terms of expression, honesty is the mean between
boastfulness and humbleness. It means being true to oneself and to
others. It consists in telling the truth, not to run away from truth,
firmness on words and also doing the right thing. In its extreme
zone that is boastfulness, an individual will put himself in front of
everyone else and he will just show off what he has done well to
others. This means, he is afraid that others might not notice his
good deeds. These kinds of people do not even care to tell a lie for
the sake of honour. They are expecting and longing for praise and
adoration. Some also try to gain material things from those who
praise them. They do not hide their feelings. This kind of act ruins
the value of society. Another kind of good doer might not want to
show or reveal his good deeds and remain hidden away from those
whom he rendered his help. He will simply stay humble. Though,
his quality is better than being boastful, there is no intention of
gaining or being corrupted mind. But it is sometime burdensome
for those who want to give their sincere gratitude and respect or honour, because the good doer just does not give the chance to others to whom he rendered his help. He wanted to hide his feelings from them.

Now as the balance between these two types of people lies the mean, that is ‘truthfulness’ or honesty, straightforwardness and decency. Here, the true nature of the individual is depicted. He is outwardly and inwardly true and simple. There is no drama or deceiving character. He finds ‘pleasure’ in his good action. Though remarkable the action performed, it is difficult to be purely regarded as honesty. Because it is easily be confused by the negative emotional impact of such action. The decency of an individual is always measured by not only his actions but also by his words, which he actually does not speak or announce for himself.

The quality of men differs from person to person which is correct to a great extend. The quality of politeness, who is cheerful, who helps others to get rid of their pain or troubles without hesitation, besides there are persons with evil minds, who cannot see good in others, always criticising other good deeds out of jealousy. One who does not pay attention to the trouble which one inflicts to others as long as it does not affect one’s life, one who always put oneself the most important person to beckon all the desirable things in life, one who does not try to adapt or change, adjust oneself, are the types of people who does not have fellow feeling. They are lacking the quality of modesty or shame. For, every child in its endeavour of life, passes through shyness, timidity, embarrassment, humiliation or confusion regarding its personality, behaviour or character. If the children are not provided
comfort or kind of relief from elders, parents and teachers, they are very vulnerable and easy to fall into damage of life. Otherwise, if they are mended and guided at their appropriate times of need, it is possible to use their shyness or feeling of shame as a proper instrument for the improvement of their contribution in social activities.

5) **Magnanimity**

It is made up of two Latin words, that is *magna*- ‘greatness’ and *anima*- ‘soul’ or ‘mind’. Therefore, it is known as ‘greatness of soul’, a high perfection of virtue. The greatness of mind occurs when our mind values great things, hope for great things, and when one engage with only what is important. This greatness or quality of mind is inevitable and necessary in overcoming in times of hardship. Therefore, the virtue of magnanimity is defined as the virtue which steers or drives and strengthens the irascible appetite to great deed, which is worth of honour. Irascible appetite being engaged is concerned with kindness, gentleness and good tempered, its will automatically help a person in facing and overcoming hindrances of life in order to achieve what is great and honourable. One who does not give up, who stands firm and determinant in what he pursues, hoping to achieve what is worth are the characteristics of conception of magnanimity. It is an ideal virtue amongst other virtues. It is recognized as the highest virtue in Aristotle’s virtues. It beautifies and complements all other virtues. Doing supremely noble virtue is a virtue of magnanimity. The greatness lies in terms of excellence not only in art but basically in character. Being magnanimous
means to put oneself in danger even death, it will step into the realm of fortitude or courage.

There are four excesses of magnanimity. First ‘presumption’- one who keeps on trying to reach the end that is beyond one’s ability, that is, over confidence in one’s strength. It can happen due to ignorance or inconsiderateness. The second one is ‘ambition’- an excessive ambitious person has the desire to struggle for the sake of honour, recognition and attention which is not even meant for him. There are many historical leaders who can be labelled as excessively ambitious. The third one is ‘vainglory’- it is the unreasonable and inappropriate desire for fame and praise even though it is not worth for praise. The forth excess of magnanimity is ‘pusillanimity’- that is denying one’s capability. It involves inferiority complex. A person does not regard himself as worthy when he actually is worthy. He does not know his own qualifications. The refusal to accept and regulate one’s ability is usually because of laziness, cowardice, and ignorance. It is important for a person without a psychological defect always to be aware of the defects and the excess of virtue, because the awareness will complement the perfection of virtue. The defect and excess can gradually disturb the mental dispositions. The awareness and obedience of the ‘mean’ can put a person into more maturity level and be more beneficial for the development of society. He is independent in a good way, he humbly helps who needs help, his position in the society does not divert his disposition. He highly regards truth and does not allow himself to be polluted by what people say about him. His life is influenced by good deeds. He is forgiving to those who have done harm to him,
he simply sees perfection in his possession, and he does not have jealousy for desiring the excellence or good fortune of others.

It is also to be considered a person that is magnanimous, if he has the quality of temperance. A magnanimous man is he who knows his worth, that means who does not put himself higher than everyone or who feels less worthy, low minded or despicable than everyone else, because that will be the deficiency known as pusillanimity. Since the primary concern is honour with dignity, he will moderately treat joy and distress over fortune. Being overjoyed regarding his wealth or being over distressed in times of misfortune is not the quality of a magnanimous man. Those who are well to do or prosper in material possession, those who have the opportunity of easy availability of material assistance or aids especially like money to spend whether it is hard earned or inherited, they can be put into the category of magnanimous persons. They will delightfully serve others, knowing their value, without exploiting powers and their own influences upon others. These types of men are the ideal men and imbibe all human qualities in him.

6) Justice:

In its widest sense, justice means righteousness, decency, impartiality, uprightness, rectitude and integrity. In its narrower sense, it means the function of the right acts through the regulation of law. Justice for Aristotle has to do with treating others fairly. It is mainly concerned with the good of others than individual peace. The just man will enquire the whole situation by wisdom, and will
make certain decision or action, not partially but as a whole. The interest of justice is upon individual as well as society. Justice is divided into three parts. They are explained as follows:

i) **Distributive justice:**

It deals with the distribution by merit of things like wealth and honours in proportion to desert. It carries out the recognition of the entire matter of right distribution and harmonious relationship of each part. It is an act of intellect to judge correctly. It is not just or fair to bereave others property for self seeking. It is a form of justice because by which the society through the government or ruler distributes rewards, honours, and also responsibility to its members or citizens. It is based upon proportional equality. For example, payment of tax to government. A person with higher income will pay more tax and lesser income means paying tax in proportionate to his rightful income.

ii) **Commutative justice:**

The will of an individual to give others what is due according to absolute equality is known as commutative justice. For a shopkeeper and a buyer, it is justice for both the parties if there is equal value of profit. The shopkeeper will gain some amount of profit from what he has sold and the buyer will also gain
the same value of what he had bought. It is not fair for the buyer if the seller over price the material that he is selling. The desire to have more than one can afford, is unjust. And also seeking personal gain at the expense of others is unjust. That kind of person will jump at anything which he thinks would be beneficial for himself, and does not even care to corrupt other than his share.

iii) **Corrective justice**:

It deals with punishments. It is also called criminal justice. What is just is determined partly by nature and partly by convention, while it’s by nature just that criminals be punished, the civil law determines which punishment goes with which crime.²⁰ It involves justification by the supremacy of law. It is common understanding to refer to who refuses to obey law as an unjust man, who intentionally or repeatedly violate laws. Since the aim and function of law is to promote the common good. Therefore, disobedience to law is the characteristic of the unjust man. The just man is both law abiding citizen and purely fare.

In order to feel safe, the good of others come in to the attention of someone’s life. In certain situations we may not be so fortunate in our original natures. We may be fearful, repressed, unkind or selfish and short tempered people. Therefore, the distance between someone who is considered as virtuous and someone who is regarded as unethical becomes wider. Then, the requirement to become virtuous and to do the deeds of virtue takes an important place in the welfare of the society. It is not simply a case of saying
that we have a moral obligation to try to acquire virtuous dispositions and to perform properly to such dispositions. One can think and say that one has an obligation to be more kind, generous or gentle person. However, one who has such dispositions and undertakes the appropriate action is one who has already acknowledged an obligation. Those who act accordingly will find an enjoyment and satisfaction which are worthwhile and rewarding. Such people will feel that they have a purpose and meaning and give completeness to everyone’s life. The manner of embracing and blending the well-being of others into one’s concerns, sense of value, what it is worth spending time is quite different from an action with obligation.

In Greek culture, ‘excellence’ took an important place which means everyone were encouraged to compete with one another in many areas of life including sports or athletic, intellectual and aesthetic activities. The social and economic environments play an important part in the manipulation and impact of the mean of virtue not only for a group of people but also for every individual. Because of the possibility of individual differences, the flexibility of virtue in the realm of ‘mean’ has appeared depending on a variety of circumstances. For example, an act of bravery in a comfortable society and an act of bravery in a battlefield has different connotations depending on the circumstances. The mean of virtue for person to person is feasible, for the meaning of ‘mean’ in Aristotle is not a mathematical or objective which is absolute and fixed, but a relative mean and not static.

Besides its culture, Greek religion was well administered in some way and as public social practice, festivals and public celebrations was common. As long as one participated in the expected way and recognized the moral behaviour, the details of what one believed separately were not given much importance. It was a matter of doing one thing and being a trustworthy member of the society, always ready to carry out one’s duties as a good citizen.
and to serve in the fleet in war. It was not much about a religion of salvation in the Christian sense, the ideas of immortality and eternal salvation did not have much important role in classical culture. Aristotle’s spectators would have consisted of well to do, young men and the noble. He gave suggestions to those who are too young to understand ethics attending to lectures on the subject because ethical understanding comes not only through philosophy, but also first through ethical activity itself, we learn by doing. Aristotle was eager to point out to the young politicians in his audience that ethics is the primary source to politics. The point of studying ethics is to understand the nature of individual human happiness which is the ‘end’ of studying ethics. Politics will include that end, in the sense that it will decide how the human good is to be pursued, and how the good of one person is to be balanced against another.

From the foregoing sections, we have elucidated the major doctrines concerned with morality as enunciated by Aristotle and their subtle nuances. Though, Aristotle equipped his countrymen with the essential ethical teachings, his contributions to logic, politics, ethics etc are still discussed, debated, quoted and questioned. This shows that his analysis of moral behaviour from various perspectives is applicable even to-day. Since they have universal appeal and have the potency of withstanding the test of time. It will be no exaggeration, if we hold that Aristotle’s study of ethical codes has been a beacon light for personal illumination. In this thesis, we have to apply the moral notions of Aristotle in the socio-political lives of the Mizo people who inhabit a limited settlement in the mountainous regions in the North Eastern part of India.
2.2 **LIFE AND WORKS OF THOMAS AQUINAS:**

The flourishing period of Athenians school and their philosophy came to decline in 529.²¹ It travelled many years and to different places. The Roman world had been officially declared as Christian for some two hundred years. The clash between Christian and the paganism was a clash between monotheism and polytheism. In this way the spread of Christianity brought about changes or replacement in metaphysics as well as the changes in ethics. The Greek word *hamartia* is used in Aristotle’s works indiscriminately for any form of error, from murder to spelling mistake.²² This is a word representing ‘sin’ in Christian theology. Christianity is one of the most important philosophical contributors to medieval philosophy. The changes include the truthful and edifying sacred text known as the Bible from Homeric poems. Henceforth, many philosophers flourished all over the world. Eventually, during the thirteenth century, many thinkers stood out and above all others, one was St. Thomas Aquinas, an outstanding thinker of the Middle Ages, was a Catholic priest and Dominican monk. He wrote two comprehensive treaties of philosophy and theology: the *Summa Theologicae* and the *Summa Contra Gentiles*.²³ In *Summa Theologicae*, which is divided into three parts, in the Part I, he started with God and the arguments for the existence of God, and this work comprises of hundred and nineteen questions about God, creation, angels, six days of creation, essence of man, land divine government. Part II deals with man and comprises of three hundred and three questions about man, habits, types of law, vices and virtues, prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance, grace, religious life versus secular life. Part III deals about Christ and comprises of ninety questions including incarnation, the Sacraments, the Resurrection etc.
Thomas Aquinas was professor at Paris University in the thirteenth century, born in 1225 in Italy. He was the philosopher who more than any other brought Christian philosophy to terms with Aristotle. He developed and altered Aristotle’s ideas on his working on the relationship between Aristotelianism and Christianity. For Aquinas, he added supernatural ways of acquiring practical wisdom infused by God which was not found in Aristotle's ethical works which was acquired by experience and over time. Thomas Aquinas’ moral philosophy can be found in the second part of his *Summa Theologiae*, and subdivided into the *prima secundae* which contains the general part of ethics. The second part *secunda secundae* contains teachings on individual moral topic. He wrote a commentary on Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics* line by line. Accepting Aristotle’s work on happiness, he identifies that ultimate goal of human life with happiness is beyond pleasure, wealth, nobility, an action in accordance with intellectual virtue. For him, there are three types of action- an action which we do for their own sake, and wanted as end in themselves, for example the pursuits of philosophy. Secondly, an action is performed because it is a means to the end, for example taking medicine for the sake of one’s health, there is an intention to achieve the ends by the means. Thirdly, an action with consequences, it may be unwanted or unexpected which an intentional action has brought out. This intention or the purpose of an action becomes voluntary action.

The relationship between intention and morality can be carried out by human action- good that is rendering help, bad that is robbing or stealing, and indifferent action which is walking in the middle of the street. Whether good, bad or indifferent, actions that are performed have a purpose or intention. A good action which is served for good with suitable state must produce virtuous intention. Likewise, the bad intention can spoil good act, but good intention cannot restore bad action. Thomas Aquinas says that an act may have two effects, one is foreseen and intended and the other foreseen and not
intended. For example killing for self defence, killing itself is already not a good act. But who killed somebody or thief in defending oneself is different case. The effect of one’s action is for the protection or preservation of the victim’s life and the other is the death of the thief. Though, the effect is evil or bad but not intended, means of bad action does not produce good effect but the good action supersedes the harm.

In the moral sphere, Thomas Aquinas studied individual virtue and added more virtues following Aristotle and Christian tradition. They are the three theological virtues – faith, hope and charity. They are the supernatural virtues in the sense that Thomas Aquinas strictly mention them as unattainable by merely human efforts. He wanted to restore and enrich Aristotle’s work with the role of Divine Law in the Christian moral system. He accordingly and seriously considered the virtue of faith and the sin of disbelief, heresy or controversial opinion and conversion of one’s belief. Faith is ruled according to Divine Truth, charity according to His goodness, hope is according to the immensity of His omnipotence and loving kindness.² In Aquinas morality, he puts forth the importance of love of God and love of neighbour to start with every moral action. Aquinas elaborated Aristotle’s claims about the best life for human being. According to Aquinas, intellectual vision of the divine essence in the next life is a human beings supernatural ultimate end. In order to enable such ends God infuses them with certain theological virtues above the acquired moral and intellectual virtues given by Aristotle. We should approach Him by believing, hoping and loving.²⁵ The journey to attain the purpose of human life that is ‘happiness’ here on earth and after life is long, complicated and at the same time fundamental. Moreover, in order to enable human beings to attain that end, he argues that God infuses them supernaturally with certain theological virtues which include faith, charity and hope over and above the acquired moral and intellectual virtues identified by Aristotle. These infused virtues are modelled on and play a role in the economy of redemption and
salvation analogous to that played by the Aristotelian virtues in the attainment of *eudaimonia*.²⁶

1) **FAITH:**

Faith, according to Christian scriptures, is being sure of what we hope and certain of what we do not see.²⁷ It is a kind of belief, and it is somewhat under our voluntary control. From the point of view of religion, faith is the instrument of knowing God. It is also used to refer to a type of personal trust that is faith in God or something, which means the value of an individual is recognised. It excludes absence of any kinds of trusting relationship with God or something. It is a belief in what we know but cannot necessarily prove its evidence or existence by seeing with our own eyes, hearing with our ears or touching with our hands. There is faith in the absence of something to proof, in the absence of supporting verification and there is also believing something that we do not know to be true. But it will be an error to affirm that faith always involves belief in the absence of evidence and proofs, and also faith need not be baseless that is, we can have a good number of proofs for thing that we have faith in it. Aquinas puts forth two sets of virtues which are natural and supernatural or acquired and infused. Therefore, we are divinely endowed with some additional sources of activity and such sources of action are called theological virtues.

Thomas Aquinas took faith as a belief on authority or testimony. It is also used in the sense of acknowledgement or acceptance of revelation, a gift of God given to men, and trust or obedience. It is an intellectual knowledge of revelation accompanied by belief and trust. Faith as a human response to
God’s revelation, then those who think of revelation as primarily propositional in character naturally emphasize faith as consisting of belief. Those who respond as a non-propositional account of revelation, in which God reveals Himself through events, naturally think of faith as consisting of something like personal trust. There are basically three types of revelation namely indirect or natural, direct or personal, and self-revelation. It consists of particular events, experiences, teachings, and often mediated through a prophet, apostle, or other exceptional religious individuals in the form of verbal testimony.

Aquinas holds that truths about God naturally fall into two types: truths that ‘exceed all the ability of the human reason’ and those ‘which the natural reason also is able to reach’. Aquinas goes on to say that both types of truths are revealed by God and are fitting objects of human belief, since if those truths that human reason can in principle apprehend were not also revealed, they would be known by only a few people, and even for those people their grasp of these truths would come only after long inquiry and would be mixed with error. But faith, trust and belief are intertwined in a number of ways. Faith is primarily trust in God as a person. If one cannot put trust in another person, one does not believe the person’s existence either, or if one believe the person that is good, hence, some beliefs seem necessary for trust. Furthermore, one of the ways trust manifests itself is an acceptance or willingness to believe what another person tells me, not only in the sense where I have independent reasons to believe what I have been told, but because of the person’s verbal testimony. Hence, trust in God naturally manifests itself as an acceptance or willingness to believe what God has revealed.
The central theme is the harmony between ‘Christian faith’ and ‘human reason’, as explained by Aristotle. Aquinas claims that faith and reason go along and support one another when we approach them correctly. That is, while reason gives us some basic truths about God and morality, divine revelation builds on these and provides other truths that exceed the powers of reason. Aquinas’s thinking about morality has two parts, the ‘moral philosophy’ or the part based on human reason and ‘moral theology’ or the part based on Christian faith. In moral philosophy, the Christian revelation is not required, that is, natural laws and they can be known by natural reason in which he simply follows Aristotle. But in his moral theology, revelation is required that is called as the ‘Divine Laws’. To those who claim that they have faith knows that they have, but for those who do not have will not understand. And this does not mean that faith is not reasonable because to have faith is to believe.

A person with virtue of faith will live the life of what is true and an authentic life which is shown by God. Living by faith does not restrict our life but it sets us free from doubt because it helps us to understand what is real, true and what is not. It helps and strengthens us in trying to achieve which human beings are striving for all through the lives. It directs and gives illumination in our life. It purifies the thought to walk in the right path. The way we look at and view at things to do is shaped and guided our habits by faith in a positive manner. It helps us in making decision of what would be the most beneficial in structuring of our lives. The light of faith is to have a fruitful human life, which is living the life of excellence morally. Aquinas believes that the moral principle is polluted by sin, for that human beings need the theological virtues
in order to have a unified or complete life. It builds the relationship with our fellow human beings. It also provides stability to the mind.

Faith is an important condition for religion as well as ethical life for the attainment of salvation or ends, therefore the absence of doubt is necessary, and the opposite of doubt, belief, trust, commitment and acceptance are the vital substances. It is often criticized as lack of evidence and that human reason is limited. But for Aquinas, this limitation can be solved by faith. The power of faith is so strong and powerful because the argument for its truth is stronger than the set of arguments made against it. It is the disposition which makes possible to increase knowledge, makes self sacrifice in action easy.

2) **CHARITY:**

The word ‘charity’ comes from the old French *charité* and the Latin *caritas*. Charity signifies not only the love of God, but also a certain friendship with Him, which implies, besides love, a certain mutual return of love, together with mutual communion. Therefore, fellowship with one another is in the performance of charity. Just as it is the base for the other theological virtues of faith and hope, and it is also impossible without the two. It is the virtue that helps us to love God and to love our fellow human beings. It also involves sharing one’s property with another without any hesitation or doubt, but instead with a pure heart given by God and with a sense of love with one another. The virtue of charity is
recognised in every culture and religion, and for the necessities in the social well being as well as personal lives. It is also the combination of an act of giving and receiving, which are the fundamental elements of being charitable. The basic necessity of life is to love and to be loved, it boosts our inner self and then our outer part of body, eventually which lead us to the attainment of happiness. Although it has a special relationship to other virtues, it remains one limited form dependent upon a subject and does not have the all encompassing role of grace. It is not the immediate result of Trinitarian (composed of three parts) presence but emerges from that gift of grace.\textsuperscript{31}

Aquinas speaks of the love of charity as being like the love of friendship. When we love our friends, we open ourselves to enjoying them for their own sake and we wish good things for them. This is exactly the attitude he thinks we should have towards creation, all of its creatures, and God.\textsuperscript{32} Some examples of charitable acts such as giving food to the hungry, giving water to the thirsty, providing clothes and shelters to the homeless, encouraging those who are despair in life, giving education to those who cannot afford, helping those who are less fortunate, giving medicine to the sick, and showing respect, care and love senior citizens etc. were regarded as acts of love of those in need.

Thomas Aquinas strongly puts the concept of charity very important in Christianity as well. It perfects the will and by so doing, he attaches it to the supernatural good of man, which is God. It is defined as a theological virtue that causes love of God above all things, and, therefore, as the object of our happiness. Charity, then, is the most perfect love that man can have, the love of God
which puts in order all other loves, desires, and acts. By reason of this virtue of charity, man is directed to his last end, God himself. Through charity, man loves God Himself, and consequently, with this virtue man is directed to ultimate and supreme end which instigates and directs all the moral actions of man, giving the moral acts and virtues an excellence and value which they could not possess of themselves. Human beings have the obligation to love their neighbours which is understood that love of neighbour as essential elements to the mission of attaining the ends that is ‘happiness’. The realisation of the act of charity should be well understood because anyone could become poor and the riches and human abilities could be lost easily by natural disaster or some diseases. In the act of charity, there is disinterestedness in something in return other than the love of one another. The human effort alone is weak, but with the help of Divine grace, it is attainable and it is also an act of true humanity.

The virtue of charity is often confused with liberality and vice-versa. In that case, in the moral theology, charity is the virtue of loving God in a supernatural way, which does not simply signify merely the giving of money for help and benefit of others. Only when we give money out of love of God, the act is then united or connected with the virtue of charity. In modern days, the virtue of charity is quite exploited by the rich people by donating their valuable possession or money to the poor people or countries in order to escape tax payment required by the government. But in the Christian theological perspective of virtue, it is totally different. It includes disposition of love and affection of fellow human being.
3) **HOPE:**

Hope is an important phenomenon in human life. It directs the will by pointing to its supernatural end as something accessible to man. It is defined as a theological virtue that makes us desire God as our highest good, and expect with a firm confidence leading to perfect happiness and the means of attaining it, because of God’s goodness and power. Hope moves our will to direct our actions to it by making us trust that this end, though difficult to attain, will be ours by the assistance of divine omnipotence which elevates us and helps us to overcome the difficulties in a good moral life. When there is hope, it gives values and a perception of meaning in life. The opposite of hope is despondency, anxiety, fear and despair and they often occur in human life. Therefore, hope can be translated as an expectation of something desired. And the opposite, despair means losing hope or without hope. This means that having hoped for something indicates the future, that is, what will come in the future. Faith issues in hope, according as it experiences the power of Christ in the pressure of temptation and affliction. Therefore, life is faced with spontaneity of assurance. It takes energy from charity, knowledge and all the virtues.

Hope is a gift that instils in us the desire for something worthwhile to take us to the final state of happiness. It serves to focus our view in the right direction and towards our final goal. It has a special importance in times of grave difficulties of life which our emotional weaknesses pull us into the pit of despair as if there is nothing more to live for. The nature of human being is looking for something ahead of us. This means that there is an important
force which helps us to keep going until we reach that end. In our
day to day endeavour, there are disappointments and disasters, but
hope helps us to understand and enlighten our will to focus on the
eternal things rather than something temporal. It is a kind of
reminder that there are, according to our approach towards good
thing in life, things which will not provide our outward satisfaction
and things that are worthy to strive for. The virtue of hope gives the
purpose to our actions, helps to prevent us from discouragement,
and sustains us in times of failure.

According to Thomas Aquinas, hope is something to hold
on to God. Otherwise, hope can be mistaken with hoping for
something bad to happen to someone, which is in fact false opinion.
An expectation in the sense that an acquirement of blessings even
when it is not the actual aim  but with the help of the Divine, being
hopeful will be blessed eventually. It brings pleasure in itself that
possess virtues rather than distress, in that it makes the things one
hopes for present in some sense insofar as one is confident of
achieving it. Hope, despite obstacles, takes them as a challenge of
life and the acceptance of such obstacles will be overcome.

St.Thomas Aquinas had Christianized Aristotle’s views and with the
influence of St.Augustine, the greatest of the early moralist in the medieval
period, St.Thomas Aquinas summed up medieval teaching. In him the
terminology and thought of Aristotle provide the foundation for evangelical
ethics and the distinguishing Christian morality is regarded as supplemental to
the realm of world-wide ethics. The supernatural happiness as given by
Thomas Aquinas is the activity of our highest faculty that is knowledge toward
the highest object God, it will bring ultimate fulfilment and is ought to be the
highest end of all our actions. In the orientation of ourselves toward the
ultimate happiness, the three theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity are the main significant ones.

Aquinas and Aristotle both recognize that virtue is not its own reward and has little meaning apart from an ultimate goal. A man is virtuous because his actions correspond to an objective norm, which for Aristotle was knowable by reason and for Aquinas by reason and faith.³ The combination of three theological virtues of Aquinas, the moral and intellectual virtues of Aristotle help and pave the way for our life, here on earth and after life for those who believe in God. It completes the values and virtues of human ethical life. It gives confirmation and confidence to our future life which every human being needs. They are the driving force in human life towards the future. Thomas Aquinas’ moral philosophy mainly focuses on the notion of happiness. For him, the best moral thinking will help us to become filled and content considered as the creatures that we are. The quality of a faithful, hopeful and charitable person will have sympathy, respect, compassion, tenderness, pity, gentleness, obedience, patience, thankfulness, a forgiving spirit and a sense of humility. Therefore, a man becomes stern and passive and active by seriously adhering to these kinds of virtues.

According to Fordyce, “Virtue is the highest Exercise and Improvement of Reason, the Integrity, the harmony, and just balance of affection; the health, strength and beauty of the mind. The perfection of virtue is to give reason free scope, to obey the authority of conscience with alacrity, to exercise the defensive passions with fortitude, the private with temperance, the public with justice, and all of them with prudence, that is, in a due proportion to each other, and an entire subservience to a calm diffusive benevolence—to adore and love God with a disinterested and unrivalled affection, and to acquiesce in His providence with a joyful resignation. Every approach to this standard is an approach to perfection and happiness, and every deviation from it, is a deviation to vice and misery.”³⁶ The above
quotation provides with ample scope for the exemplifications as well as the illustration of virtue from moral and theological perspectives.

Modern philosophers in the West did not develop ethical theories since their major concern was promoting metaphysical and epistemological thinking. Critical evaluation of reason and experiential phenomena paved the way for linguistic analysis and ascertaining human existence. The contemporary philosophers paid more attention to the non-metaphysical issues like, science, language, logic, mathematics etc. However, hedonism, utilitarianism, idealism, Marxism, and Kant’s critique of Practical Reason are some of the moral doctrines promulgated by western philosophers. As our main concern here is to highlight the life of the Mizo Tribal and their conception of virtue, let us focus our analysis on Aristotle’s views and the medieval conception of moral values which are found in the lives and messages of the people of Mizoram.
ENDNOTES:

2. Ibid., p.57.
4. Ibid., p.63.
5. Ibid., p.68.
15. Ibid., p.85.


22. Ibid., p.104.


25. Ibid., p.143.


29. Ibid., p.324.


31. [http://cdn.theologicalstudies.net/58/58.2/58.2.3pdf](http://cdn.theologicalstudies.net/58/58.2/58.2.3pdf)


34. Ibid., p.362.
