

The Diamond of the Excellent Life: Virtue

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Abstract

The concept of virtue is a word that contains many good values. All values such as wisdom, dignity, justice, temperance, truthfulness, honesty, being respectful, and being responsible describe virtue. Virtue means that a person becomes a good person by reaching mental and spiritual maturity. Therefore, virtue consists of two types. These are virtues of thought and character. A good person and a good citizen are from a combination of both. From the past, philosophical beliefs and religions point to the characteristics of virtuous people. The virtuous person who knows the bad and away from it, and chooses the way to be good, s/he is the type of person that societies want. In this study, first of all, the concept of virtue, its types, and excellence in virtue are explained, then how the concept of virtue is handled according to various philosophical beliefs and monotheistic religions is examined in general terms depending on the literature.

Keywords: Virtue, excellence, life, value.

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Introduction

Virtue has been a concept that confuses the human mind since ancient times, and its meaning has been constantly discussed and tried to be found. It will, no doubt, continue to be discussed and researched well into the future. It is not known exactly when, on what date, or by whom it was put forward. Virtue, a concept that does not lose its currency; it has been used for different words such as sometimes honesty, sometimes integrity, sometimes justice, sometimes kindness, sometimes tolerance, and sometimes being respectful. Is the concept of virtue honesty, justice, or courtesy? Or is it a word that covers all of these? Or are they one of the types of virtue included in the overall concept of virtue? All of these are relative situations, relative to individuals. Being virtuous is a long-term process. The cognitive, emotional and spiritual state of the person is affected by this and may differ depending on the situation. In this study, firstly the meaning of virtue, its types, and excellence in virtue are explained; and then how the concept of virtue is handled in some thoughts and religions is briefly discussed.

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Meanings of the Concept of Virtue

Virtue corresponds to the Greek word "arete" (Sponville, 2004), the English "virtue" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2020), and the Ottoman "fazilet" (Hancerlioglu, 1970a). Virtue concept in the Turkish Language Association Dictionary (2020) goodness, humility, bravery, honesty, etc. general name of qualities; philosophy; it is expressed as the spiritual maturity of mankind. Due to Timucin (1994) virtue defined moral competence as a state of moral maturity that emerges with the combination of good qualities in thought and behavior, and the mental strength brought about by turning toward good and avoiding bad. Hazlitt (2006), on the other hand, defines the concept of virtue as taking the form of a long-term happiness-targeting attitude of the rules of behavior by equating it with the concept of morality. Virtue is the tendency to do the right things for the right reasons, appropriately, honestly, courageously, etc. In fact, this involves two perspectives, the affective and the intellectual. A person can do the right thing and have various feelings and reactions against it. He may dislike doing the right thing, but he may do it anyway; may do the right thing but with conflicting feelings or difficulty; may do the right thing effortlessly and without any internal opposition. On the other hand, the person realizes that it is the right thing to do. A person can apply this in his life by making certain judgments about both right and wrong and by taking people he thinks as reliable as role models or by learning universal rules. The person may display a merely knowledge-based perspective (Annas, 2009).

According to Hancerlioglu, virtue is the power to transcend itself (1970a), and according to Athanassoulis, a power that can act or can be mobilized (2000), the virtue of an entity is its unique competence that creates its value (2014). For example, "A good knife is the one that can cut the best, and a good prescription is one that is very successful in treatment, and a good poison is one that is very successful in the killing." A man's virtue is what makes him human, or rather; it is the specific strength, his humanity that enables him to show his unique excellence. This can be applied to human; human has a function. The good man is the man who performs his function well. Man's function is what is peculiar to it and sets it aside from other beings' traits, that is, is a reason. Therefore, the function of man is reason and the life that is distinctive of humans is life in accordance with reason. If the function of man is the reason, then the good man is the man who reasons well. This is the life of excellence or of eudaimonia. Eudaimonia is the life of virtue-action in accordance with reason, man's highest function (Athanassoulis, 2013; Sponville, 2004). A man who wants to live excellently should use his/her mind. The use of the human mind can lead him/her to the excellence he/she seeks. Virtue is an acquired ability to do good, it is goodness itself, goodness in spirit and truth. Kindness is not something to consider deeply; it is everything to be done (Audi, 2009). According to Rachels, virtue is the character trait (2006) that can be observed in the behavior of good people, but not everybody. Similarly, Swanton defines virtue as a good quality of character, one that responds to a more specific request or is accepted and is in an excellent or good enough way (2005).

The use of virtue goes back to ancient thinkers. Socrates states that virtue and knowledge are identical. Essentially, all virtues are based directly on knowledge and wisdom. This information is also good. According to Socrates, the person who fully comprehends the good and the truth is virtuous, just, brave, and so on (McDowell, 1979; Yucel, 2011). A person who can distinguish the good from the bad, the right from the wrong, the things to be feared from the things not to be feared, the things to be done from the things to be avoided, will not commit evil. So, virtue is knowledge (Penner, 1973). In short, a wise and virtuous individual knows himself and is aware of what he knows and what he does not know, and knowledge and reason can distinguish it from others (Akarsu, 1982). To have an excellent character, one must be deliberate well and make correct choices for him/her or anyone (Driver, 2004). According to Socrates knowledge leads people to act right, and ignorance leads to wrong actions. Therefore, the source of moral actions is knowledge. The content of this knowledge is good, and the person who knows what is good and right is virtuous. The fact that an individual can distinguish good from bad shows that he/she is virtuous and wise (Yucel, 2011). If knowledge is a virtue, virtue is knowledge. To be virtuous is to be knowledgeable (Athanassoulis, 2013). People who follow knowledge and the path shown by science are good and happy. Virtue

ensures the happiness of the individual. Socrates expressed his thoughts about virtue, happiness, and wisdom in a general language, but he did not define them in a specific way. Plato, who was his student for the first time, tried to describe the definitions of these concepts (Arat, 1996).

In his dialogue with Meno and Anytos on virtue, Socrates said that virtue is knowledge and can be taught (Platon, 1998). Socratic schools are united in Socrates' view that the greatest goal in human life is the virtue achieved through knowledge (Hancerlioglu, 1970b). Plato, one of the most well-known Greek philosophers, owes much to his teacher Socrates to develop a theory of virtue. Socrates, the first systematic moral philosopher, did not write anything. He gave moral speeches and preached among the public. Socrates believed that knowledge is a virtue. He believed that if one person knows what is good and bad, he cannot but do 'good'. Good is what is there. This is objective, universal, and clear. Thus, knowing good is a virtue (Das, 2018). According to Plato (1998), virtue is the righteousness, order, and harmony of the soul. Evil is the disruption of this order and harmony. Man is free to the extent that he is virtuous because the mind governs the soul of such a man. Since the mind dominates, the virtuous person is happy, balanced, and peaceful. A person who is a slave to his/her passions is unhappiness, disharmony, and restless. As seen, virtue is a science, and it should be examined to realize the good.

According to Plato, people are constantly trying to reach the best and keep it. The purpose of knowledge is to provide this. The knowledge that cannot provide this has no value (Koknel, 2006). The highest thought is the idea of the good. The idea of good is God. Plato argued that God is the highest goodness and virtue is striving to be like God or being perfect and he argues that this is possible by realizing justice. He expresses wisdom as the rule of mind, courage as the law of the heart, and moderation as the rule of emotions (Hancerlioglu, 1970b). Aristotle is one of the greatest scholars of Medieval Greek philosophy. He collected and integrated what was done about philosophy before him. Besides being the founder of logic, he is the creator of many terms still used today, such as politics, grammar, geology, botany, anatomy, psychology, and meteorology. According to Aristotle, virtue is in the midst of all kinds of extremes. For example, he states that it is like generosity in the middle of stinginess and extravagance (Hancerlioglu, 1970b). According to Aristotle, to live virtuously, it is necessary to balance passions with the mind (Baxley, 2007; McAleer, 2007). A person who can make a choice under the determination of reason will know how to distinguish the good from the bad. According to Aristotle, it is not enough to know what virtue is, it is necessary to live it (Keller, 2007; Kristjansson, 2008). It can be said that virtue aims at the highest good, that is, excellence to the extent of the possibilities and happiness as a result.

Like Plato, Aristotle accepted that the virtue of the soul is the most real value. He says that happiness is found only in rational actions and virtuous actions (Arat, 1996). According to Montaigne, the aim of philosophy is to find virtue. This virtue is as the madrasa says, *"it is not settled on top of a steep, rugged and insurmountable mountain. Those who approach it, on the contrary, see it in a beautiful, fertile, and flowering plain. Virtue is above everything else there; but when one knows its location, it can be reached by shady, grassy, fragrant roads, with a comfortable and straight descent like the dome of the sky. Some of them left because they did not visit the district of this high, this beautiful, joyful, amorous, fabulous, incomparable virtue, a virtue that is openly and ruthlessly hostile to unpleasantness, discomfort, fear, tyranny, and which knows nature as its guide and equates happiness and pleasure. In accordance with their weakness, they devised an example of such a gloomy, meticulous, sullen, blunt, sullen, meaningless virtue and placed it among thorns on a distant rock, like a bogeyman intended to intimidate people."* (Montaigne, 1983).

When the definitions of virtue from ancient times to the present had examined, it would not be wrong to define everything that human beings do to reach the good and the truth, as their character briefly, because there is a character under the virtuous behaviors. It can be stated that people with character lead their lives the way humanity wants them to be good, and they live their lives accordingly. So the basis of human values is to be virtuous. These good qualities exhibited to society make him virtuous and lead him to be accepted as a virtuous person. As a matter of fact, doing his job correctly and honestly causes him to be perceived as a virtuous person by other people. Therefore, as stated

earlier, virtue is generally understood as a character trait. It is also important to know the opposite of virtue. A person who does not perform his work properly and honesty can be judged immoral by society. Therefore, the opposite of virtue is immorality. Qualities that are morally unacceptable by society are often expressed as bad. As a matter of fact, while society appreciates the virtuous person, on the contrary, it condemns people who display attitudes and behaviors. In short, doing what is good and staying away from what is bad makes her/him virtuous. Virtue emerges when the right actions are consciously chosen by the person. Of course, these actions can lead to habits in him/her over time. Vice can arise when a person consciously commits bad acts. So much so that if the person is not shown the truth instead of her/his wrong choices these wrong choices can become a habit in time. Vice is the habit of deliberately choosing wrong actions. Due to Annas (2009) a virtue, unlike a pure habit, is a tendency to act for knowledge, and so a tendency that is practiced through the agent's practical reasoning; it is built up by making choices and practiced in the making of further choices. When an honest person decides not to take something to which he is not entitled, this is not the result of a causal buildup from former actions but a decision, a choice that endorses his tendency to be honest (Kiral, 2015). A virtue is a state or tendency of a person. A virtue, though, is not a habit in the sense in which habits can be mindless, sources of action in the agent that bypass her practical reasoning. According to Das (2018), virtue is the habit of controlling instincts and impulses and realizing the well-being of the self as a whole. Vice, on the other hand, is the habit of giving in to instincts and impulses and doing partial good. It can be said that virtue is the habit of willful choice of right actions while vice is the habit of willful choice of wrong actions. A good person is one who lives virtuously - who owns and lives the virtues. A virtue is an excellent trait of character. Of course, there are also character traits that are not virtues. In order for a character trait to qualify as a virtue, it must contain some ethical values (Aydin, 2014), such as justice or benevolence. However, it is not just a matter of taking actions that are just, benevolent, or so on. Virtues are states and tendencies formed through one's practical wisdom. Due to Athanassoulis (2013) practical wisdom is the basic principle that underlies all virtues, and it is the ability to evaluate what is required by the virtue in question. If moral perception allows someone to see what is required of them, practical wisdom allows them to figure out why it is required of them. Since the virtues are tendencies of one, they are ways that he is, traits of his character; so, they contribute to his living his existence as a whole in a certain way.

Types of Virtue

According to Aristotle, there are two types of virtue. These are the virtue of thought and character. The virtue of thought is acquired and developed through education. It requires experience and time for its formation. The virtue of character is acquired by habit, that is, shortly it comes from habit. None of the virtues of character exist as a trait bestowed by nature, because natural things can never become habits. Just as someone tries to get used to a falling stone by throwing it upwards thousands of times, the stone does not get used to going upwards. Likewise, the flame cannot go down. These and all similar natural events cannot form a habit. However, due to their natural nature, people can develop virtue through habits (Sonmez, 2002). According to Battaly, being virtuous requires being smart, empathetic, open-minded, and courageous (2015). According to Cobett, virtues are freedom from envy, passion for independence, determination and hard work, patriotism, honesty, and justice (Macintyne, 2001). Due to Hume can be listed generosity, humanity, compassion, gratitude, friendship, loyalty, diligence, meekness, benevolence, mercy, moderation, and equality as natural virtues. For him, the artificial virtues include justice, fidelity to promises, and allegiance to the government (1978). According to Plato, the main virtues are wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice. In fact, the first three virtues in Plato's theory of virtue are based on his metaphysical triple soul understanding. Plato believed that the human soul is determined by three basic tendencies: reason, instinct, and appetite. While reason can lead to intellectual activity or wisdom, instinct can lead to courage and an appetite for temperance (Das, 2018). Aristotle added generosity, pride, good-naturedness, truthfulness, and humility to these (Dejardins, 2006). According to Brightman (1969), types of virtue are temperance, courage, wisdom, justice, benevolence, and honesty. All of these are both individual and social. But temperance, courage, and wisdom are essentially individual principles;

justice, honesty, and benevolence are social principles. According to Rachels (2006), types of virtue are as in Table 1.

Table 1
Types of virtue

Benevolence	Fairness	Reasonableness
Civility	Friendliness	Self confidence
Compassion	Generosity	Self-control
Conscientiousness	Honesty	Self-discipline
Cooperativeness	Industriousness	Self-reliance
Courage	Justice	Tactfulness
Courteousness	Loyalty	Thoughtfulness
Dependability	Moderation	Tolerance

When Table 1 is examined, the personal characteristics of individuals usually stand out. Therefore, this list can be enlarged by adding other personal characteristics. As a matter of fact, there seems to be no limit on the characteristics that make an individual virtuous. What is any kind of good? The answer to the question ends in virtue. Since it is not possible to explain all kinds of virtues described above here, Plato put forward as the main virtues; wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice are briefly explained (Akarsu, 1982; Arat, 1996, Das, 2018). These are; (1) wisdom (Sophia) is the virtue of reason; dominates mental life with his clear view of mental health; (2) courage (Andreia) is a behavior of the mind to make various judgments on the things to be feared and not feared, to protect the individual against pleasure and pain, to the dangers that may come against both himself and the outside; (3) temperance (Sophrosyne) is the self-sovereignty of the individual, the lower parts of the soul, conscience and desires must depend on reason; the idea of whom to obey and to whom to command must be compatible with reason, (4) justice (Dikaiosyne) is a tool in establishing the harmony of the whole. It is that each part of the soul does its part in the whole and assigns itself to it. In justice, the inner state of the soul, the order in the inner action and the fulfillment of the duty are in question. Thus, if the parts of the soul do their part well and all of them are in harmony, the virtue of the soul acquires a correct quality and establishes a correct connection between its parts. To be just is to have the habit of following the right reasons with respect to the rights of others. Due to Hume (1978) justice originates when individuals are aware that stability of possession would be useful to each of them individually but is only possible if all and each steadfastly avoid disturbing one another's transferable goods. As this awareness extends and becomes more reliably effective in the behavior of one's friends, there comes to be effective is a convention by which each respects the possessions of others. Only then can the ideas of justice and injustice arise and, with them, the ideas of property, rights, and liabilities. In general, it can be said that virtue contains the character traits that make a person excellent. According to Battaly, two key ways to be an excellent person are by getting good ends or effects or having good motives (2015). Virtue is an important concept that shows the human being who he/she is. So that virtue requires good motives and good action. As you can see, there is not much consensus on what virtue is exactly, but there are at least some points where it meets the common denominator. Virtue includes avoiding harm and being intentions and good action. Human beings can acquire habits of doing right, good things for him/her and others and these habits may be called virtues. Since virtue provides the structure of a morally decent common life, virtuous people tend to contribute to the common good. Due to Schneewind (1990) it is obvious that everyone has a better chance of living a good life in a society dominated by virtuous people than in one where there are few. Because a virtuous person is one whose standing dispositions lead her to do the acts required by the laws of morality.

Excellence in Virtue

Virtue has been an important concept used by humanity, which has always been trying to get excellence since the first ages, to reach this. Virtue has maintained its existence without losing its importance as a concept that has been examined differently by different researchers (Prior, 1991; Merritt, 2000), sometimes as conforming to traditions, sometimes as approaching God, and sometimes as knowledge. No matter how it is handled, virtue in its essence is an important upper value that human beings should have. The virtuous person can show many sub-values such as honesty, integrity, and fortitude in his/her life. Virtuous people are accepted by society because of the beautiful values they display. People trust and respect those whom they consider to be virtuous and whom they accept. Virtuous people have a high reputation in society. Because what they say, what they do, their thoughts about life are always directed toward the good. They are constantly in search of choosing what is good for humanity and they strive for it. Perhaps the most important reason for the discussions and writings on virtue is nothing but the search for human beings to express it better. As a matter of fact, virtue has always been the subject of discussion since the first age of philosophers, and its dark sides have been tried to be brought to light. Obviously, each research has revealed a different view of virtue. All the discussions and writings show the effort made to express virtue in a more excellent way. In fact, it is the general expectation of societies that the human being, who is an excellent being, should make excellent his life process, in other words, the humanization process, by showing an important value such as virtue. It seems that this search for the humanization process to reach the best will continue as long as the world exists.

Education is an important factor in the humanization process of people. It is perhaps the most important factor that affects people's thoughts and behaviors. Education is an important tool that enables a person to exist and be himself/herself. Education shapes people's perspectives on life, from thought to character. One can clarify what is good and what is bad through education. A person can put the desired good in the center of his life through education as a way of thinking and living. As a matter of fact, in the ethics of thought and character that Aristotle put forward, there is the best situation for humans. However, learning the good in thought can be meaningless without putting it into action. A person can learn honesty, integrity, benevolence, that is, types of virtue, but if he does not apply them in life, it can be meaningless. In general, it is not enough to apply them once. It is necessary to make these virtues permanent behavior. For example, finding a full wallet when one does not need money, taking it and giving it to security, and when the same person needs money, taking a full wallet and giving it to security is a point of excellence in virtue. The important thing here is that the person can perform the right behavior in any situation. A virtuous person should be able to exhibit the ideal behavior expected of him in any situation, that is, excellent behavior. The person who wants to be virtuous should be able to make the right and good actions a habit and place it at the center of his life. He/she should not turn away from good behavior; he should struggle to get the best. Indeed, this is what makes him excellent in virtue.

According to Kiral (2020), virtuous people are the pioneers of excellent behavior, considering that excellence is humankind's constant pursuit of achieving the best within the available means. It is important for them to achieve the best in the best way, and there is no limit to this. When they make an pursuit of excellent way of life, they pay attention to it in all their actions. A person in pursuit of excellence is happy with what he has achieved as a result of his actions. Virtuous people are people who stay away from evil in their lives and seek the best. Living in an improving way is an activity, the continuing activity of life, and living in a looking for good, excellent, etc. way is a specification of what that is. One of the central concepts in explanations of virtue theories is that of character. The virtues are understood as character traits. Since there is a multiplicity of different character traits, one's character is the collection of such patterns. Character composes a link between who you are and what you do. The virtues are moral character traits and as Aristotle emphasized virtue is "a purposive tendency, lying in a mean that is relative to us and determined by a rational principle [orthos logos], and by that which a virtuous man would use to determine it." (Athanasoulis, 2014). According to Das (2018), virtue is an excellent character trait. As a matter of fact, according to Kiral, excellence is an important character trait too (2017). In general, everyone is in search of the best in life. When looking at the roots of virtue in ancient Greek philosophy, it is seen that it corresponds to the concept of *arête*

(excellence or virtue). A virtue is a tendency built up by doing the right thing and obtaining an increasing understanding of what this is, and why. As Aristotle says, in general, everyone seeks not the traditional but the good (Annas, 2009, 2011). As a matter of fact, at the basis of Aristotle's theory is a commitment to perfectionism - a commitment reflected in many writers on value. This is the view that the core defining feature of persons is rationality and so that human excellence must involve the best or the most perfect showing of rationality (Driver, 2004). In essence, this is where excellence and virtue intersect. Both are character traits and seek the good or the best. The best life is one that incorporates both. Excellence in virtue, then, must be made a habit. The virtuous person is virtuous to the extent that he can continually pursue the good. If there is continuity in virtuous thought, attitude, and behavior, it can be said to be a virtue. In the absence of these, unfortunately, it will be difficult to talk about virtue. An honest person should be able, to tell the truth in a way that does not include arrogance and indiscretion in every situation without putting the other side in trouble. Knowing how to live well and constantly striving to practice it in the best way is important to excel in virtue. Virtue is a concept that makes its owner good and reputable. Due to Slote, a virtuous person is one who is morally good, excellent, and admirable for acting properly (1992). Being virtuous is the state of human life, which is in the process of continuous development. Essentially, any answer to the question of what one should do or how to live would correspond to virtues. In fact, the journey for the better is continuous. According to Adams, the understanding of goodness in the process is built around the concept of extraordinarily excellent good. God is both the example and the source of all goodness. Other things are considered good to the extent that they resemble God. Indeed, God is the most perfect being. Many of the most important and most trusted excellences here are those of persons or qualities or actions or works or lives of persons (2002). In that case, virtue can be expressed as the person who is in search of excellent, as the person who comes closest to God. So, virtue is a long-time process to require conscious choice and affirmation.

In fact, virtue is equated with excellence, as stated above. According to Das (2018), Plato's theory of virtue aims to establish a good society, an ideal state. According to him, to build an ideal society, the functions that need to be performed must be clearly defined. Plato stated that an ideal society can only be established when people realize their excellence. Plato defined virtue in terms of excellence. A person by birth excels in one of the three aspects of the soul by possessing a preponderance of it, obtains its corresponding virtue: excellence in mind with its knowledge gives him the virtue of wisdom; excellence in the action of the will gives him the virtue of courage, and excellence in the activity of the emotional appetite gives him the virtue of self-control and temperance. When wisdom, courage, and temperance function harmoniously together and are regulated and governed by reason, justice emerges as the accompanying virtue. Wisdom is the virtue of the rational part of the soul. Courage is the virtue of the emotional part. Temperance is the subordination of desires to reason. Justice is the harmonious work of reason, emotion, and desire under the guidance of the mind. People can show all virtues. The important thing is to do your best while displaying virtues. Virtuous behavior is not exclusive to anyone, and each individual can show their best. Excellence in virtue also includes being able to use the virtues possessed. The ability to demonstrate these basic virtues at the highest level can make one excellent. Such that, the simultaneous manifestation of wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice, and the emergence of other virtues, and ultimately can lead to reaching excellence in virtue.

Virtue: According to Philosophical Beliefs and Religions

Every religion has interpreted virtue in its own way. VI. century BC is three godless beliefs, two in India and one in China. All three beliefs aim at human virtue and are based on human virtue. The founders of all three religions did not put forward their prophecies and did not speak of God. They showed themselves as guides. In Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, the existence of God was conveyed to humanity through his prophet. The prophets of these religions stated that they were sent by God to shed light on humanity. Virtue according to philosophical beliefs and religions is briefly explained below.

Virtue in Jainism

Jainism is one of the religious movements that emerged in India. The founder of Jainism is Mahavira, also known as Jain. Jainism advocates that all living beings are equal and nonviolent. It aims at spiritual independence and equality without resorting to violence whatsoever. So, Jainism has a philosophy that strives to reveal human excellence. According to Jainism, there is no such thing as creation. The universe is infinite, not created, because it already exists. People should be able to continue their lives without harming any living creature. Beings have neither beginning nor end, they are all immortal. Beings are divided into three classes such as undeveloped, developing, and freed from the process of rebirth. Jainists believe that they would achieve independence from the cycle of rebirth. According to this philosophy, people should have a very strict diet; they must die by starvation and attain virtue, because a person's self-control, suffering, and dying are considered a virtue. In Jainism, every person is responsible for their actions. Every living thing has an immortal, eternal soul. This supreme spirit enables him/her to think and act in the right way, in accordance with the spiritual nature of life. It is especially important to show equal respect and compassion to every being. As a matter of fact, in their education, they teach great respect for every way of life, strict vegetarian rules, asceticism, non-violence even in self-defense, and being against the war. So that Mahatma Gandhi is one of the important examples of this. Jainism includes a philosophical understanding that glorifies love and compassion. The meaning of God in Jainism is the unchangeable characteristics of the pure soul of every living being; wisdom, infinite knowledge, foresight, consciousness, and happiness are important virtues. It is important to reveal human excellence in Jainism. Jainism does not consider it necessary to recognize a higher being than the excellent human, in other words, God. As a matter of fact, in Jainism, there is no belief in an all-knowing supreme being, namely God (Chapple, 2007; Hancerlioglu, 1970b). As can be seen, virtue in this belief is based on self-discipline. So much so that one's upbringing with poverty and getting used to it can express as virtue.

Virtue in Buddhism

It was put forward by a thinker named Gotama living in India. Gotama wanted people to remove the will to live from their hearts and argued that only in this way people would get rid of the pain. Also, Gotama said, "don't believe something because you heard it, don't believe it because your ancestors believed it, and don't believe it because I said it. Believe in what you have heard, tried, and found true for you." According to Gotama, with a prince, a peasant; with a monk, a pariah; he called out to all humanity, arguing that a bad woman and a good mother are one. Due to Gotama, positive virtue rules; endure the suffering, think about the sufferings of other people, share the joys and sufferings of others, be good, be merciful, do not hold grudges, forgive what has been done to you, and make sacrifices for others (Hancerlioglu, 1970b). According to Gotama, all people have an equal right to life. However, he accepts that people who face life's difficulties, share the pain of others, and lend a helping hand to them are more virtuous. Virtue in Buddhism is an excellent character trait. Encourage, develop, and foster people to be virtuous. Teach them generosity, patience, wisdom, and moderation. Thus, it can be said that it will lead to the growth of virtuous individuals (Garfield, 2007).

Virtue in Confucianism

Confucius is a thinker living in China, whose aim was to spread virtue, dealing only with people and human-related objects. Confucius argued that the main purpose of man is to live well and long, and virtue is a must for this. According to Confucius, who argues that virtue is also from the knowledge of people and is a work of knowledge, individual differences arise from personal knowledge levels rather than physical structures. Virtues of Confucian philosophy; respect your ancestors, show love to your parents, your homework; determine by comparing the respect and love that the child should have for his father, the father for his child, be a loyal friend, get along well with people, respond to injustice with justice, love people, do not do to others that which you don't want you to do (Yucel, 2011). As mentioned before benevolence, wisdom, trustworthiness, forthrightness courage, unbending strength, and so on are ethical virtues, but Confucius had emphasized that the pursuit of ethical virtues cannot be without a love of learning (Lai, 2013). As it is seen, Confucius stated that virtue can develop with mutual respect and a love of learning. However, he argued that in order to lead a good life, he had to

put into practice an important motto. He left humanity with an important motto "Do not do to others what you don't want to be done"

Virtue in Christianity

Jesus, the Prophet of this religion, sees the real virtue in poverty and states that those who can reach God's level will be poor but virtuous. Jesus tries to establish the social order by uniting people in poverty. According to him, all people are the children of one father, in other words, they are equal and siblings. Only the poor can reach God. According to him, effort should not be made for anything. God provides the sustenance of every living thing in nature. According to this religion, the greatest virtue is poverty (Erdem, 1990; Hancerlioglu, 1970b). According to Christian belief, sins that are in human nature and generally accepted as the basis of all evil; are arrogance, greed, lust, envy, gluttony, anger, and sloth. Such behaviors lead people to sin. Virtuous people need to stay away from these behaviors. Virtuous people should be chaste, temperate, generous, diligent, patient, kind, and humble (Lovin, 2011). In this religion, it is stated that people who endure the troubles caused by poverty are virtuous.

Virtue in Judaism

Faith in God is important. Instead of offering various gifts and offerings to God, he should be worshiped in accordance with the principles of inner purity and justice (Erdem, 1990). Moreover, the virtuous person must have the wisdom to understand the world. Virtuous people are expected to show virtues such as trustworthiness, loving-kindness, common decency, and compassion as responsible individuals. They must exhibit generosity, wealth, and charity behaviors to help society move forward. In order to live at peace with himself, he must have humility, modesty, contentedness, and an inclining towards good. He/she should have a pure heart and have a sense of shame. It should make a good name among the people and keep the peace. However, he/she must adhere to the Torah and fulfill the orders there (Borowitz & Schwartz, 1999). Jews also have a testament called the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments could actually be seen as the key to being virtuous. There are expressions that directly emphasize virtue, such as doing good to parents, not committing adultery, not killing, being just, and keeping promises. Then, the person who wants to have virtue should apply these Ten Commandments in his/her life.

Virtue in Islam

The religion of Islam is different from Christianity, which is the religion of Jesus, and Judaism, which is the religion of Moses. It can be said that Judaism is for a nation only, and Christianity is for personifying God. Islam is the last of the monotheistic understanding of religion, which started with Judaism and connected with Greek philosophy in Christianity. The religious book of Islam is the Qur'an and its prophet is Muhammad. In Islam, there is destiny, that is, the belief that everything is arranged by God and that it happens because God wishes. It is stated that those who keep the orders of God and stay away from evil will be rewarded with heaven after death. Farabi, who followed the footsteps of Aristotle and was called the second teacher, has extensively studied the concept of virtue in the religion of Islam. Farabi used the expression "It is God who makes a person virtuous." in his work called "Uyun-ul-Mesail". Farabi states that everything is done by God, and the cause of goodness and evil is destiny. According to Farabi, the virtues that people should have are as follows; to have full organs, to be understanding, to have a strong memory, to be smart and prudent, to speak well, to be willing to learn, not be fond of food-drink-entertainment, to love truth, to abhor lying, to be religious, to be fair, to avoid evil, and to be good at one's job (Erdem, 1990; Yucel, 2011). As can be seen, it can be stated that according to Farabi, it is not enough to fulfill the requirements of the religion of Islam in order to be virtuous. In general, people who are virtuous in the religion of Islam can have the following virtue: to respect and love people, to be honest, to be reliable, to like helping people, to like working, to stay away from bad behavior, to take care of the trust, to oppose injustices, to get along with people, to love nature and animals, to be fair and to be knowledgeable, etc. The people who are virtuous avoid evil things such as lies, slander, ridicule, gossip, hypocrisy, jealousy, and vindictiveness.

According to Ibn Sina, one of the Islamic thinkers, the highest happiness is the union of God and the human mind. He pointed out that man will unite with God by being pure and clean, and for this, both the mind and the soul must be cleaned. He stated that the combination of faith and reason leads to wisdom and that wisdom is the mother of virtues (Sonmez, 2002). Haci Bektashi Veli (2020), on the other hand, argues that personal weaknesses such as jealousy in the inner world of the individual, money, greed for promotion, pride, and excessive pleasure-loving can only come to light through virtue. It is a virtue for an individual to use his mind to enlighten the material things around him with knowledge, to find the truth with his will, and to start using it. He says that the virtuous individual does not have daily pleasures, grudges, and jealousy, and thus does not harm his environment.

Conclusion

The word virtue is a concept that includes many good thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors, and it also constitutes the core of being human because it contains many values. These include the values that all societies want their citizens to have, such as being humble, being truthful, being merciful, being honest, being fair, being reliable, being tolerant, etc. These can be communicated to followers and believers in different ways in philosophical views and monotheistic religions as discussed here. Some of the virtue expressions conveyed are to be respectful to parents, not to do evil, not to steal, to fulfill responsibilities properly, not to kill, not to be jealous, to be a good person by clearing the soul and mind, etc. Societies maintain their existence with the rules that ensure their continuity and with virtuous people who abide by these rules. For this reason, it is necessary for the future and welfare of societies to acquire value judgments that include the concept of virtue in children from an early age. Therefore, parents, teachers, and society must fulfill important tasks. In order to expect virtuous behaviors from people, virtue must first be taught and made a way of life. So, virtuous behaviors should be known and applied by parents and teachers who are role models. They should be role models of how to think and to do this successfully they require to have a specific approach rather than a guaranteed correct conclusion to their training. Thus, in the long run, the whole society can have virtuous thoughts and display virtuous attitudes and behaviors. However, in order to exhibit virtuous thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors, the mind bestowed on man by God must be used in a way that will reveal the best. That is, excellence in virtue can emerge with wisdom and then the harmonious combination of other values. It should not be forgotten that one of the most important ways to approach God, that is, the perfect being, is to show virtuous behavior. In that case, it is necessary to exhibit excellent attitudes and excellent behaviors in virtue in order to approach the perfect one. Shortly, the diamond of excellent life is excellence in virtue, but this is so hard, a very long way, and requires a lifetime's struggle, endeavor, and commitment. Are you ready for this? If you say, "I am ready"; what can I say except "Welcome to an excellent life."?

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