Chapter II

The Concept of Morality

The concept of Morality has been widely discussed by moral philosophers and has definitely received a good amount of attention over the decades. Morality has been studied and dealt with extensively by different philosophers using different approaches with the sole intention of acquiring a better insight into what Morality is? And perhaps considering the attention that it has received one might think that the work on Morality has been completed. But to think so, one is only committing a big mistake. In spite of the enormous effort directed towards it, the vastness of this subject matter and the increase in newer moral issues in today’s generation, such as the moral issues related to health care, media, computer, bioethics, business, environment, etc., each of them having their own sets of issues to be debated from the moral perspective, and also keeping in mind the future challenges, there is no end to the study of Morality. In fact, due to the rise of moral problems in various aspects of life and the demand for its application all the more, it is but the beginning of an even more critical study into Morality.

To critically analyse and bring forth a reasonable solution to any given moral problem is to have a comprehensive knowledge and clear understanding on Morality itself first. Therefore, though the subject on Morality is vast it is necessary to at least outline the general concept of what Morality is by firstly defining the necessary key terms concerning Morality followed by the various definitions on Morality, Moral Philosophy, Ethics, also explain the use of the word ‘Ethic’ as ‘Moral philosophy’ and why ‘Ethics’ is at times simply used as another word for ‘Morality’. Further, it is also important to outline the scope of Moral Philosophy, the nature of morality, the two major approaches to the study of Morality, its standards, its factors and its categories.
1. Defining Key Terms

The words that need to be defined here are words such as moral, immoral, amoral, non-moral, ethical, unethical, good, bad etc.

William Lillie who has dealt with the nature of ethics holds that the words ‘good’ and ‘bad’ are the most commonly used but are the most troublesome. He has therefore emphasised on the utmost importance to come to some agreement on the meanings to the words ‘good’, ‘bad’, ‘right’, ‘wrong’, etc., that are often used, otherwise agreeing in opinion on any specific judgment at hand will be unlikely. Vague anxiety laden questions like ‘How can I be certain that my morality is right?’ or ‘How can I tell right from wrong?’ were used by John Wilson in his book *Reason and Morals,* to show that only people with doubts asks such questions, and any kind of doubt present only implies that there is a confusion, be it in the meanings of the words, misunderstandings of concepts, etc., as such it is indeed essential to know the true meanings of the words and their usage, and in this case the meanings of the words such as ‘moral’, ‘immoral’, ‘amoral’, ‘non-moral’, ‘ethical’, ‘unethical’, ‘good’ and ‘bad’.

Moral - The word ‘Moral’ as found in the dictionary is defined as an acceptable way of behaving and that someone who is moral behaves in a way that is right, proper or acceptable.

Immoral - ‘Immoral’ is usually understood to be the opposite of moral, which means that it is an unacceptable way of behaving. A person is

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considered to be immoral when he knowingly violates human moral standards by doing something wrong or by being bad.

Amoral - ‘Amoral’ means having no sense or being indifferent to right and wrong. Apart from animals this term can be applied to babies as they are yet to develop their moral sense, and also it can be applied to very few people who lose their sense of right or wrong after having prefrontal lobotomies, that after operation tends to act amorally.  

Non-moral - ‘Non-moral’ means out of the realm of morality altogether. For example, things such as guns may be used immorally, but the gun itself is neither moral nor immoral, it is non-moral.  

Ethical - ‘Ethical’ usually applies to acts that are considered to be right based on the system of beliefs about right and wrong.  

Unethical - The word ‘unethical’ usually applies to acts that falls short of the system or standard.  

Good - ‘Good’ generally implies something that is desirable, acceptable’ etc., and the word.  

Bad - ‘Bad’ is usually meant to imply the opposite of good, that which is undesirable, unacceptable and in short is something that is not pleasing in every manner.

46 Ibid.
47 Ibid., p.937
48 Ibid.
The words defined above are commonly understood in these terms. However, at times some of the words above are also used as synonyms or used interchangeably and at times one word is used in different senses. For example, the word ‘moral’ is used in different senses. G. Wallace and A.D. Walker pointed out that sometimes ‘moral’ is a term of approval and is opposed to ‘immoral’ or ‘morally wrong’. Philosopher like William K. Frankena also pointed out that the terms “moral” and “ethical” are often used as equivalent to ‘right’ or ‘good’ and as opposed to ‘immoral’ and ‘unethical’.\(^4^9\) At times ‘moral’ is a classificatory term and has as its contradictory ‘non-moral’, but again even as a classificatory term ‘moral’ occurs in a wide range of contexts, for example, that of an individual’s moral principles, moral views, moral convictions which may be distinguished from his religious principles, views, convictions.\(^5^0\) Moral is also at home when applied to noun, for example, the moral point of view, moral reasons, moral considerations.\(^5^1\) In brief, the word ‘moral’ at times have a single sense in all contexts and at times the word has several different senses, as such one cannot exclude the possibility of the word to have more than one sense.\(^5^2\) This being the case, it is important to be aware of the different senses in which they are used. Further, it may be observed that on many occasions ‘Moral Philosophy’ is synonymously used with ‘Ethics’ and also with ‘Morality’. In other words, ‘Ethics’ is used simply as another word for ‘Morality’. Therefore, it is necessary to clarify this before the discussion on Morality begins. To begin with, various definitions on all three will be elaborately given.

\(^{51}\) Ibid., p.4  
\(^{52}\) Ibid.
2. Definitions on Morality

The etymological meaning of the word ‘Morality’ is derived from the Latin word ‘moralis’ which means customs or manners.53 ‘Morality’ is defined as that which involves the notions such as rightness and wrongness, guilt and shame.54 Morality has received different definitions based on different eras and situations. For example, St. Paul suggested that Morality is the work of something natural in man possibly the expression of an innate knowledge of right and wrong.55 For Immanuel Kant, Morality- that is the good or evil of the voluntary action- did not depend on factors external to the person (God and the material world), but on the person himself.56 Bishop Butler called Morality, “the moral institution of life.”57 According to Composta, Sören Kierkegaard essays such as Either/or (1843), Fear and Trembling,(1843), The concept of Dread,(1844), Sickness Unto Death,(1849) and the Exercise of Christianity,(1849), shows sufficient sources for the determination of his moral philosophy.58 For Kierkegaard, morality is the rapport of the action of the sinner with the Faith that saves.59 The great French Philosopher Jean Paul Sartre when working on Morality mentioned that the foundation of morality is authenticity.60 For William K. Frankena, ‘Morality’ refers to something that co-ordinates with but different from art, science, law, convention, or religion though it may be related to them.61 And a rather interesting explanation on Morality was given by Hegel. He in order to explain what Morality is, held that this human world is Morality in the worst

56 Dario Composta,(1988), Moral Philosophy and Social Ethics, Theological Publication in India, Bangalore, p.29
58 Dario Composta,(1988), Moral Philosophy and Social Ethics, Theological Publication in India, Bangalore, p.35
59 Ibid., p.36
60 Ibid., p.38
Besides the above definitions, a recent search on various websites attempting to find some modern definitions on Morality showed the following definitions. Some suggests that Morality speaks of a system of behaviour in regards to standards of right or wrong behaviour. Some suggests that the word carries the concepts of moral standards, with regard to behaviour; some suggests that it speaks of moral responsibility, referring to our conscience; some suggests that it speaks of a moral identity, or one who is capable of right or wrong action etc.

The various definitions provided above may imply two things; that Morality has been well defined in different ways or that because of the different ways in which morality is defined one could be at a loss of knowing what Morality actually is and thereby Morality could still remain unclear and confused to many. Further, another factor that may contribute to the above could be its usage in ordinary language. According to C H. Whiteley, the usage of Morality is not precise and consistent in ordinary language. However, the various definitions are not to be blamed. In the first place one must bear in mind the great variety of contexts in which the word ‘Morality’ has been defined and used and in order to avoid any confusion, one should realise that Morality has been defined by different philosophers according to what kind of Morality they propagate and support. For example, some definitions of Morality point to a certain kind of conduct/behaviour if Morality is perceived and given importance from that specific aspect, some point to a set of system of beliefs or rules, at times it points to mean ‘the quality or fact of being moral’ and therefore

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62 Dario Composta,(1988), Moral Philosophy and Social Ethics, Theological Publication in India, Bangalore, p.32


discusses the Morality of abortion, Morality of regicide etc.;\textsuperscript{65} and some definitions simply state its purpose. Take for example, Kurt Baier’s definition on Morality- “Morality is designed to apply in such cases, namely, those where interest conflicts”,\textsuperscript{66} here he is defining its purpose. In this thesis, ‘Morality’ is to be understood as a code of human conduct/ behaviour in and beyond human world.

3. Definitions on Moral Philosophy

Morality is dealt in philosophy under the branch called Moral Philosophy. Now what is Moral Philosophy? To begin with two kinds of Morality are to be discussed that of Customary Morality and Reflective Morality, and Milton has defined them accordingly. In his words:

Customary Morality is, “The standard and rules of conduct embedded in customs and usage are called customary morality, and it demands that the individual behaves in accordance with social custom and usage, thereby leading to outer conformity- meaning conforming ones behaviour to external standards. It offers definite rules and precepts to guide our conduct.”\textsuperscript{67} and “The Reflective Morality arises when a person attempts to find general principles by which to direct and justify his/her personal behaviour, it has to do with inner conviction. It leads one to search for constant and universal principles and then decide for oneself.”\textsuperscript{68}

Milton holds that there was a transition, a transition from Customary to Reflective Morality, and that this began in western culture with the Greeks who are responsible for the birth of philosophy. They realised in due course of time that there were varieties of customs, laws, and institutions that existed and began questioning if

\textsuperscript{67} Milton A. Gonsalves, (1986), \textit{Right and Reason, Ethics in Theory and Practice}, Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, Columbus, Ohio, p.2
\textsuperscript{68} \textit{Ibid.}
the customs they depended upon was superior, and if it did, why? This eventually led their study to an examination of all human conduct. This part of philosophy came to be known as Moral Philosophy. 69

Philip Wheelwright holds in his book, *A Critical Introduction to Ethics* that “Moral Philosophy, may be defined as the systematic study of reflective choice, the standard of right and wrong which it may be guided and the attainable goods towards which it may be directed.” 70 Moral Philosophy demands that we think for ourselves in critical and general terms and achieve a kind of autonomy as moral agents. 71 George F. Thomas’ statement on Moral Philosophy seems to support the above. He holds that Moral Philosophy arises among those who have become dissatisfied with the moral judgments and practices imposed by their society. This then leads to critically analysing the accepted moral judgments and practices and to clarify the meanings of moral concepts. 72 The domain of Moral Philosophy involves personal inquiry into the reasons for deciding what is the right thing to do or the best course to follow or in any conflicting situations that requires a justifiable act. 73

4. Definitions on Ethics

The word ‘Ethics’ comes from the Greek word ‘ethos’, which when translated means character. 74 The term ‘Ethics’ also refers to understanding and adopting moral values within the home or work place that should be defined. 75 John. S Mackenzie not

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70 Philip Wheelwright,(1935), *A Critical Introduction to Ethics*, The Odyssey Press, New York, p.3


only provides a definition but also explains the key words used in his definition of Ethics. His definition holds, “Ethics may be defined as the study of what is right or good in conduct.”

The word ‘Right’ which is derived from the Latin ‘rectus’ means straight or according to rule, and the word ‘Good’ is connected with the German ‘gut’. A thing is generally said to be good when it is valuable for some end. William K. Frankena describes Ethics as a philosophy that is concerned with morality and its problems and judgments, or with moral problems and judgments. M. A. Gonsalves gives an interesting insight into ethics. According to him, Ethics (moral philosophy, moral theory) grows out of life-situations in which we are confronted with some sort of perplexity or doubt about what is the right thing to do, situations in which different desires strive for opposed goods or in which incompatible courses of action seem to be justifiable. Rekha Navneet said that Ethics is an axiological or valuation theory, which implies a reflective analysis of value preferences, behavioural norms and codes of conduct in a specific spatio-temporal context.

5. Moral Philosophy termed as Ethics

Moral Philosophy is a branch of philosophy that concerns itself with Morality and Ethics. As such based on their nature of interest they are used as synonyms. Apart from this others have attempted to give a more detailed explanation why it is possible to do so and that there is no difference. Jadunath Sinha holds that Ethics is also called as Moral Philosophy as the Greek adjective ‘ethica’ which comes from the substantive ‘ethos’ means customs, usages or habits and the word ‘moral’ which is

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77 Ibid.
78 Ibid., p.2
80 Milton A. Gonsalves,(1986), Right and Reason, Ethics in Theory and Practice, Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, Columbus, Ohio, p.2
derived from the Latin substantive ‘mores’ also means customs or habits. Dario Composta also presented a similar explanation by stating that there is no difference between ‘Ethics’ and ‘Moral’ as the word ‘Ethical’ is a term taken from the Greek and is identified with Latin ‘morale’. John S. Mackenzie also supports the above. We shall use the term Moral Philosophy as Ethics and Ethics as Moral Philosophy in this work.

The field of ethics (or moral philosophy) involves systematising, defending, and recommending concepts of right and wrong behaviour. Moral Philosophy or Ethics is the study of the right and wrong in human conduct and it deals with societal customs and usage from the point of view of their rightness and wrongness.

6. Scope of Moral Philosophy/ Ethics

According to Prof. Mackenzie Moral Philosophy is classified into at least four divisions. They are- Psychology of ethical consciousness, Sociology of an ethical life, Theories of ethical criteria and the application of this criterion in ethical life. In his words:

a) Psychology of ethical consciousness

“Under the psychological aspect Ethics analyses desires and will in order to provide a psychological explanation of the moral judgment and conscience mainly because morality is largely dependent upon their psychological background. Besides this, it demands that Ethics should consider the effect of the question of the freedom of will upon moral judgment. Further, Ethics makes only the

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84 Dario Composta, (1988), *Moral Philosophy and Social Ethics*, Theological Publication in India, Bangalore, p.26
voluntary actions the object of its judgments when it analyses the
difference between man and animals."^{89}

b) Sociology of an ethical life

“Under the social aspect the ethical assumptions are influenced in
large measure by social customs and traditions. Sociological
studies yield knowledge to this effect and consequently, their effect
upon ethics can be studied.”^{90}

c) Theories of ethical criteria

“Under the theories of ethical standard, the major problem of ethics
has been to describe the ultimate good or the nature of the supreme
ideal of human life through which any behaviour is to be measured
and declared good, bad, right, wrong, etc., many theories about
such a criterion constantly emerge some true and some not. As such
they require critical analyses.”^{91}

d) The application of this criterion in ethical life

“Under practical ethics the various doctrines expounded by various
ethicists are considered responsible for directing ones practical life
as one is likely to follow the ultimate good of whichever doctrine
one accepts. Thereby it becomes necessary to investigate the nature
of that ultimate good which is expounded by some ethical
doctrines.”^{92}

Here two scopes of Moral Philosophy stand’s out more, and they are the
psychological aspect as it not only gives psychological explanation to different moral
judgments but also it extends itself to explain the moral judgments concerning man’s
voluntary actions. It holds man’s voluntary actions to be the object of its judgments
when it analyses the difference between man and animals. Ethics deals with relation
between humans and with animals and environment. The second is the practical ethics
where Moral Philosophy investigates into the nature of various ethical doctrines. The

^{90} Ibid.
^{91} Ibid.
^{92} Ibid.
issue on environment would not have been possible to deal with if Ethics was only theoretical and not practical.

7. Ethics as just another word for ‘Morality’

An important point to be noticed here is that ‘Ethics’ is not always used for the branch of philosophy i.e. Moral Philosophy, but sometimes it is used as just another word for ‘Morality’, meaning that they are used interchangeably, and this is seen among philosophers and other thinkers such as Jacques P. Thiroux in *Ethics Theory and Practice*, who after trying to provide specific definitions so as to distinguish one from the other by way of considering Ethics as pertaining to the individual character of a person or persons, and Morality as pointing to the relationships among human beings, said that:

“In ordinary language, we frequently use the words ‘ethica’ and ‘moral’ (and ‘unethical’ and ‘immoral’) interchangeably; that is we speak of the ethical or moral person or act.”

Stephen M. Perle in his book *Morality and Ethics: An Introduction* has defined Morality and Ethics even more elaborately but nonetheless treated as the same. He holds that:

“Morality is looking at how good or bad our conduct is, and our standards about conduct. Ethics is used to refer to the formal study of those standards or conduct...one might say that morality is ethics in action, but in the end, the two terms can be used interchangeably.”

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95 Ibid.
The same view has been supported by Austin Cline in *Ethics & Morality: Philosophy of Behavior, Choice, and Character*. According to him, Morality refers to moral standards or conduct while Ethics refers to the formal study of such standards and conduct but the terms ethics and morality are often used interchangeably and can mean the same in casual conversation. Peter Singer, a philosopher, who widely deals with the ethical issues mainly with regard to animals, in his work *Practical Ethics* has also used the words ‘ethics’ and ‘morality’ interchangeably to address practical issues like the treatment of racial minorities, equality for women, the use of animals for food and research.

Although both have their own definitions and assigned with specific roles, what stands out vividly directly or indirectly is the fact that they both have something to do with the concept of good and bad and Stephen M. Perle thinks that this is something most people realise. And as long as they work towards the same direction and in this case towards better conduct in various aspects of life by studying and adopting important moral codes which is the basic essence of Morality and Ethics, it is safe to conclude that they can be used to mean the other. As such the words ‘Morality’ and ‘Ethics’ will also be used interchangeably here as well.

8. Universal Nature of Morality

An important nature of Morality certainly have to be discussed here; that of the universal nature of morality. The Stoics have made this very clear when they

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pointed out that ethics derives from a universal natural law. Kant’s famous maxim: ‘Act only on that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law’ simply reveals that he also subscribed to the same thought or idea. R.M Hare who further developed and modified Kant’s theory definitely considered ‘universalizability’ as a logical feature of moral judgments. From Utilitarian’s like Jeremy Bentham, J.J.C Smart to leading contemporary critic of Utilitarianism to Continental philosophers like the existentialist Jean-Paul Sartre and the Marxist Habermas who seem to differ in many ways from each other still agreed that Ethics is in some sense universal. They agree that the justification of an ethical principle cannot be in terms of any partial or sectional group. Ethics takes a universal point of view. Ethics requires us to go beyond our own likes and dislikes, beyond ‘I’ and ‘You’ to the universal law, the universalisable judgment, the standpoint of the impartial spectator or ideal observer, etc. This universal nature of Morality which has been accepted by many ancient philosophers still continues even among today’s contemporary philosophers. For example, philosophers such as Peter Singer who seem to propagate this view has mentioned in his Practical Ethics that:

“...from ancient times philosophers and moralist have expressed the idea that ethical conduct is acceptable from a point of view that is somewhat universal.”

And accordingly Morality needs to possess consistency and comprehensiveness. George F. Thomas also believes that philosophers are not content until Morality is established on a more solid basis of general principles which are consistent and comprehensive. It needs to be based on fundamental principles

102 Ibid.
103 Ibid., p.11
104 Ibid.
approved by reason, and since reason is common to all men, moral principles must be universally valid.\textsuperscript{105}

9. Two Major Approaches to Morality

The two major approaches in the study of Morality are

a) The Scientific Approach or Descriptive Approach.

b) The Philosophical Approach

The first approach, i.e., the scientific or descriptive approach is most often used in the social sciences for the sole reason that they deal with human behaviour and conduct,\textsuperscript{106} as is done by anthropologists, historians, psychologists, and sociologists.\textsuperscript{107} This approach is empirical in its nature as it involves itself with the sort of inquiry that works on observing and collecting data’s on human behaviour and conduct through which certain conclusions can be drawn. Jacques gave an example with regard to this. He presented an example based on psychologist. He gave the example of how psychologist might bring out their conclusions that human beings often act in their own self-interest after thoroughly observing the way humans behave in varied situations. Psychologists according to Jacques have merely observed how humans behave or act in different situations then go on to describe what they have observed and finally provide a conclusion. It is thus descriptive and scientific in this sense as it has nothing much to do with the moral or ethical behaviour but rather works on studying and observing how human beings act on various situations and

\textsuperscript{105} Paul F. Fink,(1977), \textit{Moral Philosophy}, Dickenson Publishing Company, Inc., p.397
\textsuperscript{107} William. K. Frankena,(2007), \textit{Ethics}, Prentice-Hall of India, Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi, p.4
thereby describe how they do in fact behave.\textsuperscript{108} Stephen M. Perle holds that descriptive approach is simply describing how people behave.\textsuperscript{109}

The Philosophical approach is said to have two parts. They are normative or prescriptive ethics and metaethics or analytic ethics. Normative Ethics is considered to be the opposite of scientific or descriptive approach as it mostly concerns itself with what and how a person should in fact act or behave by prescribing, rather than describe how people do behave.\textsuperscript{110} It makes an effort to establish norms or provide appropriate behaviours with regard to the way people should act.\textsuperscript{111} Normative Ethics mainly deals with moral standards by way of creating and evaluating them. In other words, it is an attempt to figure out what people should do or whether their current moral behaviour is reasonable.\textsuperscript{112} To continue with the example of self-interest which Jacques presented above to explain the descriptive approach, he says that, in this case, a normative ethical philosopher would go beyond the description and conclusion of the psychologist and will actually want to know whether human beings should or ought to act in their own self-interest. Further, it may be pointed out here that this alone might not be enough for a normative ethical philosopher, he/she may go further ahead to the extent of finding and bringing out a conclusion that is definite and backed with evidences that human beings should always or should not always act on their own self-interest as a result of various arguments considered critically and carefully. A normative ethical philosopher may consider these three options. The


\textsuperscript{110} Jacques P. Thiroux, (1977), \textit{Ethics Theory and Practice}, Glencoe Publishing Co. Inc., Encino, California, p.4


three options will be again explained with the previous example that of self-interest. Egoism (which holds human beings should always act in their own self-interest) or Altruism (which holds that human beings should always act in the interest of others) or Utilitarianism (which holds that human beings should always act in the interest of greater number).\textsuperscript{113} It is speculated that traditionally, most of the field of moral philosophy has involved normative ethics and to name a few Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Mill, etc., were normative ethical philosophers. They discussed problems concerning ethical issues that were normative in nature and were instrumental in setting up ethical systems prescribing what a good or virtuous human being ought to do or ought not to do. William K. Frankena also points out in his second edition of \textit{Ethics} that Socrates who is considered as the patron saint of moral philosophy was doing a sort of normative thinking in Plato’s dialogue, the \textit{Crito}, when Socrates was deciding whether or not he should escape from prison. The argument that shows this normative thinking takes place between Socrates and his friend Crito. One is considered doing the normative thinking of Socrates sort when anyone asks what is right, good or obligatory and may take the form of asserting a normative judgment such as, “I ought not to try to escape from prison”, “It is always wrong to harm someone”, “I ought to keep my promise”, “It is wrong to break the rule of the state”, etc., by way of providing reasons that have been prepared ahead. William also says that it may even be in the form of a debate within oneself or with someone about what is good or right in a particular case or as a general principle.\textsuperscript{114} Jacques when discussing on Normative Ethics went a step further by bringing to our attention that whoever is interested in the prescriptive approach to ethics, whether one prescribes or not to any of the norms

\textsuperscript{114} William. K. Frankena,(2007), \textit{Ethics}, Prentice-Hall of India, Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi, p.4
given is considered a normative ethical philosopher on the ground that they both deal with the prescriptive ethical systems.\textsuperscript{115}

Metaethics or Analytic Ethics often looks at how people determine for themselves what norms to follow.\textsuperscript{116} Metaethicists do not prescribe anything, nor do they deal directly with normative systems, they are only indirectly involved with the normative system by way of concentrating on reasoning, logical structures and language instead of the content and rather than being descriptive or prescriptive, it is considered as being analytic in two ways. Metaethicists analyse ethical language and also analyse the rational foundations for ethical systems or the logic and reasoning of various ethicists.\textsuperscript{117} For example, what do we mean when the words ‘right’, ‘wrong’, ‘good’, ‘bad’, etc., are used?\textsuperscript{118} How can ethical and value judgments be established or justified? Can they be justified at all?\textsuperscript{119} It has been claimed that although metaethics has been used by a number of ethical philosophers or in fact by almost all ethicists, it has become the sole interest of many ethical philosophers in this twentieth century.\textsuperscript{120}

Having discussed on the two major approaches on Morality, one can easily conclude that this discussion on Morality which is concerned about the humans relation to nature, is not seeking the approach of the first kind, that which describes

\textsuperscript{115} Jacques P. Thiroux, (1977), \textit{Ethics Theory and Practice}, Glencoe Publishing Co. Inc., Encino, California, pp.3-4
\textsuperscript{117} Jacques P. Thiroux, (1977), \textit{Ethics Theory and Practice}, Glencoe Publishing Co. Inc., Encino, California, p.4
\textsuperscript{118} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{119} William K. Frankena, (2007), \textit{Ethics}, Prentice-Hall of India, Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi, p.4
\textsuperscript{120} Jacques P. Thiroux, (1977), \textit{Ethics Theory and Practice}, Glencoe Publishing Co Inc., Encino, California, p.4
how people behave or how they do behave, but on the kind of approach that instead of describing, prescribes how people should behave by way of analysing whether or not their current moral behaviour is reasonable.

Ethicists and Philosophers over the years have experimented with different kinds of approaches while attempting to solve different kinds of moral issues. Paul F. Fink holds that philosophers have adopted significantly different positions in regard to Morality, but pointed out that the overall pattern of their thinking remained essentially the same, and that was to systematise morality. In his book *Moral Philosophy*, Paul presents a section about approaches called Modern approaches, under which he discusses the various modern positions that Hobbes, Bentham, Mill, Kant, Friedrich Nietzsche adopted so as to resolve moral problems. To solve moral issues, or deal with any kind of dilemmas concerning Morality, certain kind of moral standard or standards/ ultimate principle needs to be formulated and adopted, and this is what the above philosophers have done. Each of them not only formulated their set standards and principles but also reformulated and defended the positions of earlier philosophers so much so that their efforts are now responsible in producing ethical theories that represents both distinctive and important developments in moral philosophy. Let us consider each one of them.

Thomas Hobbes being a secular philosopher did not present a religious outlook but rather took the position of giving self-preservation and self-enhancement as the ultimate end of human conduct. Bentham and Mill popularly known for their

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124 Ibid.
Utilitarianism Theory took the position of the Greatest Happiness Principle which constituted as the ultimate criterion for judging the rightness and wrongness of human conduct. Kant develops an approach that is considered to be opposed to both Hedonism and Utilitarianism. His position was the principle of Categorical Imperative, which requires individuals to be both consistent and objective when it comes to making moral judgments. For Friedrich Nietzsche, his approach as Paul puts it; was a ‘striking’ position, as Nietzsche had no intention of reducing Morality to a “basic principle” or “final system” that was to be accepted and put into practice by everyone. Instead he calls upon for a trans-valuation of all earlier moral systems and by doing so a new, higher, and more noble Morality would emerge- a Morality that gives utmost importance to the intellectual integrity, mental and physical health, spiritual wholesomeness and aesthetic sensitivity. This is also termed as the New Morality.¹²⁵

10. Standards of Morality

Vernon J. Bourke asks, “What is the ultimate standard of the morality of human action, and what is the proximate standard of these actions?”¹²⁶ Jacques P. Thiroux also asks how are we to define a right or wrong action or a good or bad person? What are the human standards by which such decisions are made? These are then, the greater part of the study of Morality.¹²⁷ Some of the standards that moral philosophers have laid down for examining moral issues over the years have been that of the law as standard, value as standard, pleasure as standard, perfection as standard, society as standard, etc. To explain how these various standards have been employed

¹²⁵ Paul F. Fink,(1977), Moral Philosophy, Dickenson Publishing Company, Inc., p.228
an example can be taken from one of the standards above, that of the standard as law. Here, Morality is based on law, no activity is right or wrong in itself, law judges it. There are two kinds of laws presented, that of the external and the internal. The external laws are classified into four divisions- law of community, law of group or tribe, law of state and law of God.\textsuperscript{128} The internal law is the law of the inner conscience. Morality is based not on knowledge, or beauty or any other quality but on the intuition of the inner conscience. According to this theory, to obey dictates of inner conscience is right and to go against it is wrong.\textsuperscript{129} Similarly, the rest of them have given their standards accordingly.

Laying down certain standards have been considered necessary in order for any moral judgment to have any real validity,\textsuperscript{130} as such to work on the moral judgments with regard to environment, laying down a certain standard is hence a requirement. In this thesis, Rationality will be considered as a standard for dealing with environmental issues. One may ask, why Rationality? The answer to this is simple. Rationality employs reason to argue, deliberate, choose, explain, prove, etc., to any question and evaluates accordingly. Rationality in fact refers to a certain standard of excellence. It compiles reasons for the solution of the problems in hand. Rationality involves performing in accordance with the best reasons one has, to conform one’s performance (what one believes, feels or does) to what is in

\textsuperscript{128} Dr Vatsyayan, (1981), \textit{Ethics Made Easy}, Kedar Nath Ram Nath Publishers, Meerut, p.67
\textsuperscript{129} \textit{Ibid.}, p.69
\textsuperscript{130} William Lillie, (1967), \textit{An Introduction to Ethics}, Allied Publishers Private Limited, New Delhi, p.116
accordance with the best available reasons.\textsuperscript{131} Besides, Rationality is a necessary condition of the applicability to one’s doing on moral principle.\textsuperscript{132}

11. Factors of Morality

Morality is further considered as having a number of factors, factors through which various moral judgments are analysed accordingly. William K. Frankena when working on the concept of Morality and Moral Philosophy stated that there are a number of factors involved in Morality. He has listed six different factors that constitute the institution of Morality. According to him they are

a) The factor concerning certain forms of judgment in which particular objects are said to have or not to have a certain moral quality, obligation or responsibility.

b) The factor concerning the implication that it is appropriate and possible to give reasons for moral judgments.

c) The factor concerning some roles, principle, ideals, and virtues that can be expressed in more general judgments and that form the background against which particular judgments are made and reasons given for them.

d) The factor concerning certain characteristic natural or acquired ways of feeling that accompany these judgments, rules and ideals, and help to move us to act in accordance with them.

e) The factor concerning certain sanctions or additional sources of motivation that are also often expressed in verbal judgments, namely, holding responsible, praising and blaming.

\textsuperscript{131} David Copp and David Zimmerman, (1984), \textit{Morality, Reason and Truth}, Rowman & Aclanheld Publishers, USA, p.199

f) Finally the factor concerning a point of view that is taken in all this judging, reasoning and feeling and is somehow different from those taken in prudence, art and the like.\textsuperscript{133}

By taking these factors into account when analysing any given ethical judgment or judgments, it allows the ethical judgment at hand to be dealt with critically before arriving at any concrete conclusion. As such they are an integral part of Morality.

Most traditional moral relations are extended only to human beings, and only human beings can, conceptually speaking, be the domain or converse domain of any moral relation. Accordingly, the relation is between human beings but not between humans and non-humans, or between non-human and another, as such it becomes irrelevant to talk on any issues pertaining to such areas as environmental ethics wherein some reference to something non-human is unavoidable.\textsuperscript{134} A number of philosophers have debated on this very issue, for it makes sense to say that only humans have the rational maturity to judge, and hence can enter into a moral relation, but plants or non-human animals do not have the ability to judge as they do not possess that level of rationality.\textsuperscript{135} This being the case, how do we then accommodate our relation to amoral beings? R.M. Hare has opted for a moral reasoning on the issue of environment.\textsuperscript{136} 20\textsuperscript{th} century moral philosophers have for the past three or four decades begun to focus on such issues wherein the converse domain of a moral relation is something non-human.\textsuperscript{137} An attempt has been made to extend moral

\textsuperscript{133} William. K. Frankena,(2007), \textit{Ethics}, Prentice-Hall of India, Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi, p.9
\textsuperscript{135} Ibid.
relation to the non-human animals, and now this has been discussed under one of the categories of Morality.

12. Categories of Morality

The four ethical categories according to Jacques are religious, social, individual and the natural.\textsuperscript{138}

a) Religious Morality refers to a human being in relationship to a supernatural being or beings. This relationship being with a higher authority such as God, one will be charged morally responsible if one violates any prescribed holy laws, and will be considered as an immoral act towards God even without acting immorally towards anyone.

b) Individual Morality refers to an individual code of morality. This code of morality need not be sanctioned by any society or religion. It is not a moral code demanded by any supernatural being like the above, but rather it is a moral code that an individual finds within oneself, and acts according to what the person’s conscience allows one to do. This category is about the obligations that individuals have to themselves.

c) Social morality refers to social code and conduct. It studies the moral relationship with other human beings. It is considered to be the most important category that cuts across the other ethical categories.

d) Natural morality refers to code and conduct with nature. It studies the moral relationship of a human being to nature. Initially man did not concern himself too much with this ethical category of Morality; however with the increase of destruction on environment, man’s relation to nature has been critically

questioned. As a response to this, many have come up with various moral
codes towards nature. Here it sees nature as good in itself and as such worthy
of moral considerations. In this category one is morally responsible to
nature.¹³⁹

By outlining the scope of Moral Philosophy and elaborately discussing its nature,
its two major approaches, its standards, its factors and its various categories, the moral
issues surrounding environment can now be considered accordingly. The existing two
approaches to environment that of the Anthropocentric Approach and Non-
 Anthropocentric Approach has proved to be a constant challenge to the
Environmental philosophers for many years.

California, p.5