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Indian Ethics

Indian Ethics

- Hindu Ethics
- Buddhist Ethics
- Islamic Ethics
- Christian Ethics
- Jain Ethics
- Sikh Ethics

Hindu Ethics

- Ethics are explained in Hindu philosophy as something that cannot be imposed, but something that is realized and voluntarily lived up to by each individual.
- Ethics that constitute a Dharmic life - that is a moral, ethical, virtuous life - evolve in Vedas and Upanishads.
- Manusamhita initially listed ten virtues necessary for a human being to live a *dharmic* life: *Dhriti* (courage), *Kshama* (forgiveness), *Dama* (temperance), *Asteya* (Non-covetousness/Non-stealing), *Saucha* (inner purity), *Indriyani-graha* (control of senses), *dhi* (reflective prudence), *vidya* (wisdom), *satyam* (truthfulness), *akrodha* (freedom from anger)

Hindu Ethics

- The *Yamas* are the "don't do these" list of self-restraints, typically representing commitments that affect one's relations with others and self. The complementary *Niyamas* represent the "do these" list of observances, and together *Yamas* and *Niyamas* are personal obligations to live well
- *Yamas*: *Ahimsa* (non-violence), *Satya* (truth, non-falsehood), *Asteya* (non-stealing), *Brahmacharya* (celibacy if unmarried and non-cheating on one's partner if married), and *Aparigraha* (non-possessiveness)
- *Niyamas*: *Śauca* (purity in body, speech and mind), *Santosha* (contentment, acceptance of circumstances with optimism), *Tapas* (perseverance, meditation, austerity), *Swadhyaya* (lifelong learning) and *Pranidhan* (right attitude, contemplation)
- Source Texts of Hindu Ethics: The Vedas, The Upanishads, The Bhagavad Gita, The Ramayana, The Mahabharata etc.

Buddhist Ethics

- **Buddhist ethics** are traditionally based on what Buddhists view as the enlightened perspective of the Buddha, or other enlightened beings such as Bodhisattvas
- Four Noble Truths
 - *dukkha* (suffering, incapable of satisfying, painful) is an innate characteristic of existence with each rebirth
 - *samudaya* (origin, cause) of this *dukkha* is the "craving, desire or attachment"
 - *nirodha* (cessation, ending) of this *dukkha* can be attained by eliminating all "craving, desire, and attachment"
 - *magga* (path, Noble Eightfold Path) is the means to end this *dukkha*.

Buddhist Ethics

- Noble Eight Fold Path
 - Right View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration
- Five Precepts
 - Harming living beings, taking things not freely given, sexual misconduct, false speech and intoxicating drinks and drugs causing heedlessness
- Source texts of Buddhist Ethics
 - The Tripitaka, The Digha Nikaya (Long discourses), The Majjhima Nikaya (Medium length discourses), Samyutta Nikaya (Connected discourses), Anguttara Nikaya (Numbered discourses)

Islamic Ethics

- **Islamic ethics** defined as "good character," historically took shape gradually from the 7th century and was finally established by the 11th century.
- The Quran provides a set of moral stipulations which are "among the (precepts of) wisdom, which thy Lord has revealed to thee" that can be reasonably categorized as ten in number.
- Moral Commandments (as per The Quran)
 - **Worship only God:** Do not make with Allah another god; lest you will sit disgraced and forsaken. (Quran 17:22)
 - **Be kind, honourable and humble to one's parents:** And your Lord has decreed that you not worship except Him alone, and to be good to the parents. Whether one or both of them reach old age [while] with you, say not to them [so much as], a word of disrespect, and do not repel them but speak to them a noble word. (Quran 17:23) And lower to them the wing of humility out of mercy and say, "My Lord, have mercy upon them as they brought me up [when I was] small." (Quran 17:24)

Moral Commandments (as per the Quran)

- **Be neither miserly nor wasteful in one's expenditure:** And give the relative his right, and [also] the poor and the traveler, and do not spend wastefully. (Quran 17:26) Indeed, the spendthrifts are brothers of the devil, and the devil is, to his lord, ungrateful. (Quran 17:27) And if you [must] turn away from the needy awaiting mercy from your Lord which you expect, then speak to them a gentle word. (Quran 17:28) And do not make your hand [as] chained to your neck or extend it to its utmost reach, so that you [thereby] become blamed and insolvent. (Quran 17:29)
- **Do not engage in 'mercy killings' for fear of starvation:** And do not kill your children for fear of poverty. We provide for them and for you. Indeed, their killing is ever a great sin. (Quran 17:31)
- **Do not commit adultery:** And do not approach unlawful sexual intercourse. Indeed, it is an immorality and an evil way. (Quran 17:32)
- **Do not kill unjustly:** And do not kill the soul which Allah has forbidden, except by right. And whoever is killed unjustly - We have given his heir authority, but let him not exceed limits in [the matter of] taking life. Indeed, he has been supported [by the law]. (Quran 17:33)

Moral Commandments (as per The Quran)

- **Care for orphaned children:** And do not approach the property of an orphan, except in the way that is best, until he reaches maturity...(Quran 17:34)
- **Keep one's promises:** ...fulfill (every) engagement [i.e. promise/covenant], for (every) engagement will be questioned (on the Day of Reckoning). (Quran 17:34)
- **Be honest and fair in one's interactions:** And give full measure when you measure, and weigh with an even balance. That is the best [way] and best in result. (Quran 17:35)
- **Do not be arrogant in one's claims or beliefs:** And do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge. Indeed, the hearing, the sight and the heart - all those will be questioned. (Quran 17:36) And do not walk upon the earth exultantly. Indeed, you will never tear the earth [apart], and you will never reach the mountains in height. (Quran 17:37)
- Source Text: **The Quran**

Christian Ethics

- Christian ethics in general has tended to stress the need for love, grace, mercy, and forgiveness because of sin.
- Christian ethical principles are based on the teachings within the Bible. They begin with the notion of inherent sinfulness, which requires essential atonement. Sin is estrangement from God which is the result of not doing God's will.
- Christian ethics has a teleological aspect—all ethical behavior is oriented towards a vision of the Kingdom of God—a righteous society where all live in peace and harmony with God and nature, as envisioned in the Book of Isaiah.

The Ten Commandments

- You shall have no other Gods but me.
- You shall not make for yourself any idol, nor bow down to it or worship it.
- You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.
- You shall remember and keep the Sabbath day holy.
- Respect your father and mother.
- You must not commit murder.
- You must not commit adultery.
- You must not steal.
- You must not give false evidence against your neighbour.
- You must not be envious of your neighbour's goods. You shall not be envious of his house nor his wife, nor anything that belongs to your neighbour.
- Source Text: **The Bible**

Jain Ethics

- **Jain ethical code** prescribes two *dharmas* or rules of conduct. One for those who wish to become ascetic and another for the *śrāvaka* (householders).
- Maha Vratas (Major Vows)- Applied to ascetics
 - *Ahiṃsā* (Non-violence)
 - *Satya* (Truth)
 - *Asteya* (Non-stealing)
 - *Brahmacharya* (Chastity)
 - *Aparigraha* (Non-possession)

Jain Ethics

- Anuvratas (Minor Vows)- Applied to Householders

1. **Guna vratas**

- *Digvrata*- restriction on movement with regard to directions.
- *Bhogopabhogaparimana*- vow of limiting consumable and non-consumable things
- *Anartha-dandaviramana*- refraining from harmful occupations and activities (purposeless sins).

2. **Siksa vratas**

- *Samayika*- vow to meditate and concentrate periodically.
- *Desavrata*- limiting movement to certain places for a fixed period of time.
- *Prosadhopavâsa*- Fasting at regular intervals.
- *Atihti samvibhag*- Vow of offering food to the ascetic and needy people.

- Source Text: **The Agams**

Sikh Ethics

- The fundamental beliefs of Sikhism, articulated in the sacred scripture *Guru Granth Sahib*, include faith and meditation on the name of the one creator, divine unity and equality of all humankind, engaging in selfless service, striving for justice for the benefit and prosperity of all and honest conduct and livelihood while living a householder's life.

Principle Beliefs of Sikh Religion

- Worship one God
- Treat everyone equally
- Live by the three primary principles:
 - Be always absorbed in meditation and prayer
 - Make an honest income by honorable methods
 - Share earnings and selflessly serve others
- Avoid the Five sins of Ego
 - Pride, lust, greed, anger and attachment
- Keep the Code of Honor
- Source Text: **Adi Granth, Guru Granth Sahib**

Western Ethics

- Meta Ethics
- Normative Ethics
- Applied Ethics



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Western Ethics

Meta Ethics

- **Meta-ethics** is the branch of ethics that seeks to understand the nature of ethical properties, statements, attitudes, and judgments.
- Meta-ethics addresses questions such as "What *is* goodness?" and "How can we tell what is good from what is bad?", seeking to understand the nature of ethical properties and evaluations.

Normative Ethics

- Normative ethics seeks to set norms or standards for conduct. The term is commonly used in reference to the discussion of general theories about what one ought to do, a central part of Western ethics since ancient times
- A crucial question of normative ethics is whether actions are to be judged right or wrong solely on the basis of their consequences
- Theories that judge actions by their consequences were called “teleological,” and theories that judge actions by whether they accord with a certain rule were called “deontological”

Applied Ethics

- Applied ethics refers to the practical application of moral considerations
- Underpinning Theory
 - Utilitarianism
 - is a family of consequentialist ethical theories that promotes actions that maximize happiness and well-being for the majority of a population
 - Virtue ethics
 - are normative ethical theories which emphasize virtues of mind, character and sense of honesty.
 - Deontological ethics
 - is the normative ethical theory that the morality of an action should be based on whether that action itself is right or wrong under a series of rules, rather than based on the consequences of the action

Thank You