Anthropocentrism and Non-Anthropocentrism are the two approaches to environment in Environmental ethics (the discipline in philosophy that studies the moral relationship of human beings to the environment and its non-human world and also studies the value and moral status of the non-human life forms). Anthropocentrism holds the view that humans alone are the superior beings; are at the centre of the universe; are the only beings with a moral status; all others exist for instrumental purpose; have no intrinsic worth and are thus not worthy for any kind of moral status. In this approach man’s relation to the non-human world is only in terms of their utility. Non-Anthropocentrism on the other hand seeks to recognise the intrinsic value of the non-human world. It does not regard a thing to be of value because of its utility but considers being of value despite its utility. This approach considers the non-human world as possessing an intrinsic value in itself and does not consider utility as the criteria for value; it extends moral status to non-human life forms.

Over the years these two approaches have taken up different positions under different philosophers, environmentalists, moralists and thinkers. For example, under Anthropocentrism there are those who uphold the view in its strongest sense, yet there are others who make an attempt to slightly re-consider the non-human life form in spite of retaining man’s position as the superior being. Similarly, in Non-Anthropocentrism there are some who extend morality only to those that can feel pain and pleasure, like humans and animals, some to all living beings that includes plants,

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trees, etc., and some go to the extent of including the land, soil, rocks, ecosystem, etc. However, despite the varied positions undertaken by different philosophers over the years to resolve man’s relation to environment; with the rise in environmental degradation even more in recent times the problem still remains. To critically analyse this problem, it firstly demands a thorough study into these two approaches. This chapter will therefore explicitly present the two views.

Here is a detailed discussion on both the two approaches. This discussion will firstly begin by defining key terms, define the concept, present the historical account of the approaches, introduce the philosophers and their views by highlighting their life and works in brief so as to enhance our understanding on each of their views, and finally present the three different approaches under each approach.

1. Defining key terms

The words that need to be defined here are words such as ‘nature’, ‘environment’, ‘natural resources’, ‘anthropocentrism’, ‘non-anthropocentrism’, ‘instrumental value’, ‘intrinsic value’, ‘ecology’, ‘shallow ecology’, ‘deep ecology’ and ‘ecosystem’.

Nature - Nature is defined as that which properly encompasses everything around us, from the organic beings that we normally designate as “natural” to lifeless moon that appears on relatively cloudless nights- that is, the totality of Being.\textsuperscript{141} The word ‘nature’ is used to describe that which is all around us- trees, animals, rocks, and the like.\textsuperscript{142}

\textsuperscript{141} Murray Bookchin, (1996), \textit{The Philosophy of Social Ecology, Essays on Dialectical Naturalism}, Rawat Publications, Jaipur and New Delhi, p.2
\textsuperscript{142} \textit{Ibid.}
Environment - By environment it means, an all pervasive whole wherein subsist all natural beings. It signifies a generic name for both biotic and abiotic species.\textsuperscript{143} C. C. Park states, “Environment refers to the sum total of conditions which surround man at a given point in space and time.”\textsuperscript{144}

Natural Resources - The physical elements such as the space, landforms, water bodies, climate, soil, minerals, rocks, plants, animals, micro-organism,\textsuperscript{145} are the natural resources that ‘nature’ provides that constitute our ‘environment’. They are the primary source of sustenance of life on earth. Natural resources are not unlimited, and therefore call for careful utilisation of them.\textsuperscript{146}

Instrumental value - The instrumental value is the value of things as \textit{means} to further some other ends.\textsuperscript{147}

Intrinsic value - The intrinsic value is the value of things as \textit{ends in themselves} regardless of whether they are also useful as means to other ends.\textsuperscript{148}

Anthropocentrism - Anthropocentrism considers the world only in terms of its utility; the value here is that of the use value or resource value and as such, Anthropocentrism is rightly referred to as the instrumental

\textsuperscript{144} C. C. Park, (1980), \textit{Ecological and Environmental Management}, Butterworths, London, p.28
\textsuperscript{145} Arpana Dhar Das,(October 2003), “Ethical Responsibility Towards Environmental Degradation”, Indian Philosophical Quarterly, Vol. XXX No. 4, p.588
\textsuperscript{148} \textit{Ibid.}
value.\textsuperscript{149} It holds the view that human beings are superior and members of all species are not equal.\textsuperscript{150}

Non-Anthropocentrism - Non-Anthropocentrism considers the world not in terms of its utility but as that which possesses an intrinsic worth. It holds the view that human beings are not superior and members of all species are equal.\textsuperscript{151}

Ecology - Ecology is defined as the pattern and balance of relationships between plants, animals, people and their environment in a particular region.\textsuperscript{152}

Shallow Ecology - Shallow Ecology is the idea that nature exists more or less for the benefit of human beings.\textsuperscript{153} Shallow Ecology and Anthropocentrism share the same approach and are therefore at times used interchangeably.

Deep Ecology - Deep Ecology is the idea that all of nature matters and deserves equal consideration, not just those parts that are important to humans. Deep Ecology movement was founded by Arne Næss. It upholds intrinsic values of non-human life forms.\textsuperscript{154} Deep Ecology and Non-Anthropocentrism share the same approach and are therefore at times used interchangeably.

\textsuperscript{150} Jagat Pal, ( July 2003), “Sterba on Reconciling Anthropocentric with Non- Anthropocentric Ethics”, Indian Philosophical Quarterly, Vol. XXX No.3, p.443
\textsuperscript{151} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{152} John Sinclair, (1987), \textit{Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary}, Collins London and Glasgow, Great Britain, p.448
Ecosystem - Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary defines ecosystem as, “all the plants and animals that live in a particular area together with the complex relationship that exists between all of them and their environment.”

2. Anthropocentrism

Anthropocentrism is the thesis which maintains that human beings hold the most important and central position in the universe. Everything else exists to serve the purpose of human beings and it considers only human beings as having intrinsic value. As defined above, it considers the world only in terms of its utility, and the value here is that of the use value or resource value or rightly referred to as the instrumental value. It upholds the view that everything that exists is at the disposal of man, that man is superior hence man can do everything and anything, and apart from human beings, anything that exist, exists more or less for the benefit of human beings. Non-human nature just has instrumental value and has no intrinsic worth.

This point has been pushed further by Michael Allen Fox, when he claimed that animals can be exploited because we are superior to them. Anthropocentric ethicists hold the view that the members of all species are not equal. Anthropocentrism describes the tendency of human beings to regard themselves as the central and most

157 Ibid.
significant entities in the universe, or the assessment of reality through an exclusively
human perspective. Anthropocentrism considers humans as having a greater amount

\textbf{A. Historical account}

Anthropocentrism is believed to be found at the root of the Western Philosophy and Culture.\footnote{Madhabendra Nath Mitra, (2003), “Reflections on Environmental Ethics” in Raghunath Ghosh’s \textit{Truth and Value}, (Essays in honour of Dr. Pabitrakumar Roy) New Bharatiya Book Corporation, Delhi, India, p.408} It is seen in the views of some western philosophers such as Aristotle, Descartes, Kant,\footnote{Ibid., p.409} and 20\textsuperscript{th} century philosopher such as John Passmore. Apart from these philosophers, it is necessary to present the Judeo-Christian belief which many consider it as presenting a strong view on anthropocentrism and this will be discussed along with Aristotle.

Aristotle, a Greek philosopher, is one of the two or three most influential philosophers, and one of the most important founding figures in the history of Western philosophy. During the fifth and sixth centuries B.C, Greek thought was for most part pre-occupied with the mystery of the universe and man’s place in it,\footnote{Michael P. T. Leahy, (1994), \textit{Against Liberation, Putting Animals in Perspective}, Routledge, London and New York, p.76} and Aristotle like the rest sought to provide a reasonable explanation, and he does so in his book \textit{Politics}. He holds that man has a higher status in the society. According to him, man has a higher degree than bees or other gregarious animals. Man alone of all the animals is furnished with the faculty of language.\footnote{Ibid.} He differentiates language from sounds. Mere sounds only serves to indicate pain or pleasure, and this is what animals possess, but language assists in delivering and, in his words, “declaring what is
advantageous and what is the reverse, therefore language serves to declare what is just
and what is unjust.”

Further, Aristotle discusses about the hierarchy of soul in his
treatise *On the Soul*. According to him, living beings manifest biologically based
psychic faculties, but the inanimate ones do not. Plants, animals and man are all living
beings therefore; they all manifest such psychic faculties. It must be noted here that
Aristotle uses the word ‘psyche’ to mean soul. Thus, plants, animals and man have
souls. However, they differ in degrees. He establishes a psychic hierarchy, based on
their biological psychic faculties. He considers plants as having the ‘vegetative’ soul.
The soul of a plant is its capacity to nourish itself, which is indeed a feature of all life,
but this ‘nutritive’ soul is the only potentiality of the vegetables. Animals have the
soul called the ‘sensitive’ soul. Unlike the vegetables they can move around, hunt,
touch, taste, etc., but they are incapable of wishing and choosing, which involves
rationality and a grasp of language. Only humans according to Aristotle are capable
of rationality, and thus humans have the ‘rational’ soul. It is the highest in the
hierarchy of the soul, thus re-affirms his position of man as the dominant being.

Among all of his arguments, his writing in Book I, Ch. 8, 1256 b of the
*Politics* has been the most assertive about man’s position, and this brings us to the
main discussion on the Anthropocentric view of Aristotle towards nature. Aristotle is
considered to be a supporter of Anthropocentrism based on what he wrote in his book

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167 Michael P. T. Leahy, (1994), *Against Liberation, Putting Animals in Perspective*, Routledge,
London and New York, p.76
169 *Ibid.*, p.79
Politics. He writes:

“Plants exist for the sake of animals—domestic animals for his use and food, wild ones (or at any rate most of them) for food and other accessories of life, such as clothing and various tools.”

For Aristotle, nature is to be understood as an organic whole, and the things in it are meant to serve a purpose. Leahy explains that Aristotle understands human beings as a part of the natural world, but is still to be considered as superior to the rest of it in benefiting from the advantages of language. Aristotle believed that nature has made all things specifically for the sake of man therefore plants and animals were on earth for the instrumental use of man. Benjamin Jowett in his translation on Aristotle’s Politics, translates the above text as “we may infer that, after the birth of animals, plants exist for their sake, and that the other animals exist for the sake of man, the tame for use and food, the wild, if not all at least the greater part of them, for food, and for the provision of clothing and various instruments.”

According to some historians like Lynn White, the view of Aristotle discussed above and the Judeo-Christian beliefs found reason to justify their arrogance to nature and other life forms. The Book of Genesis in the Bible is the biblical story of

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173 Ibid.
creation. God created man in His own image and there after gave him dominion over everything on earth. The message given in the book of Genesis states:

“Be Fruitful and multiply, fill the earth and conquer it. Be masters of the fish, sea and birds...”

Michael P. T. Leahy has stated in his book Against Liberation, Putting Animals in Perspective that:

“Aristotle and this particular passage from the book of Genesis are considered as the ‘original twin’ supporters of the view that man is the dominant being.”

According to him, “both provide for man’s privilege, being, in the words of Genesis, ‘in the image of God’ and his having ‘dominion’ over fish, fowl, cattle and ‘over all the earth’ and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.”

Aristotle’s view that nature exists for instrumental purpose is also seen in the works of Réné Descartes, a French philosopher and a great mathematician in the seventeenth century. He was an admirer of Aristotle. He agreed with him that only humans have the ‘rational’ power. Human beings having the faculty of language are therefore higher than plants or lower animals. No plants and animal can enjoy rationality as they do not have the faculty of language. Aristotle denied the ‘rational’ soul to animals, and so did Descartes. However, Descartes’ view on animals

180 Ibid.
is considered to be somewhat harsher than that of Aristotle. Aristotle considered animals as having the ‘sensitive’ soul. He viewed animals as having sense, such as touch, taste, having appetites and even a very minimal desire, a sense in which they are ‘set in motion’ for the sole purpose of nourishment.\footnote{Michael P. T. Leahy, (1994), \textit{Against Liberation, Putting Animals in Perspective}, Routledge, London and New York, p.78} He viewed them as possessing ‘special sensibles’ which animals enjoyed, besides he also accorded animals with imagination, but one without beliefs or conviction as they do not have the potentiality to produce. A belief according to him is produced by persuasion which is possible only through reason, and reason is what animals do not have.\footnote{Ibid., p.79} Although Aristotle denied rationality to animals, Leahy states that he presents a rather sensitive and acute account of animals.\footnote{Ibid.} Descartes on the other hand held that only humans are conscious, having minds and souls and can learn and have language and therefore only humans are deserving of compassion.\footnote{Lawrence E. Johnson, (1991), \textit{A Morally Deep World, An Essay on Moral Significance and Environmental Ethics}, Cambridge University Press, pp.24-25} For him, animals cannot reason.\footnote{Ibid., p.25} Not only does he considers animals as incapable of thinking, but goes further and holds that animals do not perceive, choose, nor feel. In fact, they are not conscious. Descartes uses the word ‘thought’ to mean ‘consciousness’. Since animals are not thinking beings, they are not conscious. It is in his work \textit{Principles of Philosophy} that he writes:

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‘By the word thought I understand all that of which we are conscious as operating in us. And that is why not alone understanding, willing, imagining, but also feeling, are here the same thing as thought.’\footnote{Michael P. T. Leahy, (1994), \textit{Against Liberation, Putting Animals in Perspective}, Routledge, London and New York, p.84}
So the next question that follows is, what are they? Descartes calls them *automata*.\(^{189}\) Descartes answer to this is remarked as deceptively simple.\(^{190}\) Descartes considers them as ever more ingenious mechanical toys, with which the leisured classes of the time used to amuse themselves; but of a superior sort. This is supported by one of his letters to Henry More in 1648 where he writes, ‘it seems reasonable’, since art copies nature, and men can make various automata which move without thought, that nature should produce its own automata, much more splendid than artificial ones. These natural automata are the animals.\(^{191}\) Animals are automata. They cannot reason or feel pain and are like *robots*.\(^{192}\) Here it needs to be pointed out that Descartes did consider animals as living organic creatures. He did not deny life to animals,\(^{193}\) but he denies all thought, by which he means consciousness, to animals. Thinking cannot be enjoyed by those who do not have rationality.\(^{194}\) According to him, animals are “thoughtless brutes,” *automata*, machines, that despite their appearance they are not aware of anything, they do not see nor hear, smell nor taste, they do not feel heat nor cold. In fact, Descartes goes on to state that they do not even experience hunger nor thirst. For him, animals are like clocks. Clocks can keep better time, but like clocks they are not conscious.\(^{195}\) Further, animals were considered as incapable of suffering. It is believed that the conditions of animals reached their lowest point during the time of Descartes.\(^{196}\)


\(^{190}\) *Ibid.*, p.84

\(^{191}\) *Ibid.*, p.85


\(^{194}\) *Ibid.*, p.78

\(^{195}\) Tom Regan, (1983), *The Case for Animal Rights*, University of California Press, Berkeley. Los Angeles, p.3

Another eminent philosopher who holds an anthropocentric view is Immanuel Kant; a German philosopher from Kaliningrad, Russia. Kant’s moral philosophy shared a human dominated view. According to him, human beings should be treated with respect necessary for all human beings on the virtue of being a rational being. Kant holds that a human being must not be treated as a means to an end since he believes that every human should be treated as an end in himself. For instance, a utilitarian would be willing to sacrifice a man if it is important and necessary for saving the Earth or of the many, but Kant on the other hand would allow no such thing. Human beings hold a higher status than other animals for Kant. The reason is that, sentience or the ability to feel pleasure and pain is not what made human special and different from other animals, but what differs and what made humans rank in higher status than other animal is the faculty of reason. He states, “Man really finds in himself a faculty by which he distinguishes himself from all other things, even from himself so far as he is affected by objects. This faculty is reason.” Further, Kant believed that non-human animals had no moral standing and our treatment of them is unimportant and insignificant.

According to Kantian philosophy:

“Genuine ethical behaviour must be driven entirely and exclusively by ethical principles derived from pure reason.”

So because non-human animals do not have the ability to rationalise, Kant concludes that they cannot behave in a moral way or qualify as a moral

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agent.\textsuperscript{201} Immanuel Kant famously denied that animals have intrinsic moral significance. If it’s wrong to treat animals in certain ways, he held, it’s not because the animal is wronged but because some human being who takes an interest in the animal is wronged.\textsuperscript{202}

In the 20\textsuperscript{th} century an Australian philosopher John Passmore is credited for having shaped public debate and for opening up domains of applied philosophy and the history of ideas to the wider world. He is well known for his book, \textit{Man’s Responsibility for Nature}. In his book, Passmore argued and pointed out that there is an urgent need to change our attitude to the environment, and that we cannot continue unconstrained exploitation of the biosphere. However, he argued from an anthropocentric perspective. For him, doing so does not demand for a new and revised ethical framework that seeks to attribute intrinsic value to nature like the non-anthropocentric view does, which to him is but a misguided mysticism or irrationalism, instead he retains the special status of human beings based on the scientific rational explanations.\textsuperscript{203} John Passmore being a critic of deep ecology holds that nothing is gained by insisting that human beings share a moral community with the rest of nature. Passmore argues:

“Bacteria and human beings do not recognise mutual obligation, nor do they have common interests. In the only sense in which belonging to a community generates ethical obligation, they do not belong to the same community. To suggest, then, that animals,


plants, landscapes have ‘right to exist’, is to create confusion. The idea of ‘rights’ is simply not applicable to what is non-human.”

Passmore asks:

“Is it so obvious that a universe consisting of human beings and a cobra is better than a universe consisting of humans only? Should St. Patrick be condemned for driving the snakes out of Ireland? And if to drive them out of Ireland is worthy of praise, should it not be equally praiseworthy to drive them out of the world?”

Tom Duddy explains Passmore view by stating that, for Passmore:

“The core concepts of morality, such as the concepts of right, do not apply to something called Nature. Animals and plants, both individually or collectively, do not recognise mutual obligations, and therefore do not participate in the moral community. The claim that it is intrinsically wrong to cut down trees, or clear a wilderness, or even destroy a species of animal or plant, is ‘merely ridiculous’. It is ridiculous because it introduces a concept of morality which is barely intelligible to us, as if new moralities are the kinds of things that can be devised at will.”

John Passmore made it clear that although there is a need to change our attitude to the environment, there is no need for a change in the ethical framework wherein moral status is extended to the non-human world.

B. Three kinds of Anthropocentrism

Anthropocentrism or the instrumental approach has been distinguished into three main kinds. Warwick Fox in his article, “A critical Overview of Environmental Ethics”, has pointed out that although viewing the non-human world purely in term of
its instrumental value is indeed a thoroughly human-centred approach, it does not necessarily mean that it is destructive or even an exploitative one. Warwick discusses three main kinds of instrumental value approaches. They are:

i. Unrestrained exploitation and expansionism

ii. Resource conservation and development

iii. Resource preservation.

According to Warwick, unrestrained exploitation and expansionism and the resource conservation and development approach considers the non-human world to be of value or valuable only if they provide instrumental value to humans. This instrumental value that has been emphasised is particularly the physical transformation value. But what is this kind of value? Warwick explains it as the economic value, a value that non-human world is capable of providing. For instance, the non-human world that are being physically transformed so as to benefit the human world in terms of economic value are that of damming, logging, mining, farming, etc. The only difference between the unrestrained exploitation and expansionism approach and resource conservation and development approach is that the former, according to Warwick, does not take into account that there is a limit to such growths whereas the latter recognises and carries out its activities accordingly. This one difference between them leads to a remarkable difference in the kind of obligation directed to future human generations. Nonetheless, these two approaches have been considered as being inadequate, as it has been realised that, the non-human world, even without physically transforming them do provide a number of other instrumental values too.

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The third kind of instrumental value approach is unlike the first two discussed above, where it seeks for physical transformation, instead suggests just the opposite. It argues that the non-human world needs to be preserved. Further, it is an approach that not only seeks for preserving them but holds that it needs to be done so not because it is considered to be of value in its own right but simply on account of its instrumental value to humans. The etymological meaning of the two words ‘conservation’ and ‘preservation’ when looked into points out to two different directions. ‘Conservation’ is derived from two words ‘con’ and ‘servus’ which mean together and slaves, it therefore means working with something as a slave, whereas ‘preservation’ is derived from two words ‘pre’ and ‘servus’ which mean before and slave, means keeping something from becoming a slave.\(^{210}\)

Environmental philosophers such as William Grey, George Sessions and Warwick Fox have provided nine different arguments in relation to the third kind of instrumental value approach that of resource preservation. The nine arguments being human-centred, they have been given predominantly human-centred names. They are the life support system argument, the early warning system argument, the silo argument, the laboratory argument, the gymnasium argument, the art gallery argument, the cathedral argument, the monument argument and the psycho-developmental argument.\(^{211}\) Here the nine arguments are being presented as they are:

**a) The Life support system Argument**

This argument states that we ought to preserve this or that aspect of the non-human world because it is vital to our physical well-being. (Although this is

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\(^{211}\) *Ibid.*
listed as just one argument among nine others, the implication of this particular argument is, of course, immense).

b) The Early warning system Argument

This argument states that we ought to preserve this or that aspect of the non-human world because it is an early indicator of ecosystem deterioration (an argument that applies particularly to animals located at or near the top of food webs).

c) The Silo Argument

This argument states that we ought to preserve this or that aspect of the non-human world because it represents a repository of potentially valuable genetic information for use in medicine and agriculture and so on.

d) The Laboratory Argument

This argument states that we ought to preserve this or that aspect of non-human world because it is of particular relevance for scientific study (e.g., the study of human origins).

e) The Gymnasium Argument

This argument states that we ought to preserve this or that aspect of non-human world because it is good for physical recreation.

f) The Art gallery Argument

This argument states that we ought to preserve this or that aspect of non-human world because it is conducive to aesthetic pleasure and inspiration.

g) The Cathedral Argument

This argument states that we ought to preserve this or that aspect of non-human world because it is conducive for spiritual inspiration.
h) The Monument Argument

This argument states that we ought to preserve this or that aspect of non-human world because it has a symbolic or instructional value of some kind (e.g., the eagle as a symbol of freedom).

i) Finally, the Psycho-developmental Argument

This argument states that we ought to preserve this or that aspect of non-human world on the grounds that contact with non-human nature is essential for healthy psychological development. This last argument is effectively the psychological counterpart to the (physically based) life support system argument.²¹²

All the nine arguments presented above were introduced to emphasise other general kinds of instrumental value and not like the unrestrained exploitation approach and the resource conservation and development approach that focuses on the physical transformation value of the non-human world. The life support system argument emphasises the physical nourishment value of the non-human world to humans; the early warning system argument, the laboratory argument and the silo argument emphasises the informational value of the non-human world to humans; the gymnasium argument, the art gallery, and the cathedral argument emphasises the experiential value of the non-human world to humans; the monument argument emphasises the symbolic or instructional value of the non-human world to humans; and the psycho-developmental argument emphasises the psychological nourishment value to the non-human world to humans (where psychological nourishment value emphasises the nourishment of a deeper or more primitive level of psychological

development than the other experientially based arguments to which it has already been referred).\textsuperscript{213}

3. Non-Anthropocentrism

Non-Anthropocentrism unlike Anthropocentric approach gives serious attention to the moral status of non-human animals and inanimate objects. It does not give importance to instrumental value as the above, but rather gives importance to intrinsic values. According to non-anthropocentrists, many of the early perspectives on environment being human-centred or anthropocentric in nature,\textsuperscript{214} it cannot accommodate within its sphere other non-human forms of life, and therefore over the years attempts have been made to shift from the traditional human-centric attitude to nature-centred approach.

A. Historical Account

Nature-centred attitude campaigns for the need to recognise the intrinsic worth of these non-human life forms, but the traditional definition of ethics reveals such an anthropocentric attitude. M. N Mitra states:

“Ethics is traditionally defined as a normative science of human conduct where the word ‘conduct’ is taken to refer to the collection of voluntary actions. This definition implies that ethics basically deals with human beings and how they relate to other human beings. Its objective is to look after the interest of the members of the human species, their mutual growth and welfare. The traditional concept implies that our moral universe consists only of human beings. Man has moral responsibility towards fellow beings; he has no moral responsibility towards others. Thus, killing a human


individual falls within the moral preview, but killing an animal or felling a tree is not, unless it affects the interest of human beings.”

It is exactly this attitude to non-human life forms, considering them fit for a moral preview if only it affects the interest of the human beings, that non-anthropocentrists fights for. Non-human life forms need to be considered worthy of a moral preview even without their instrumental contributions. They need to be accounted for the intrinsic value that each one of them possesses. Non-Anthropocentrists argue that Anthropocentrism cannot be the foundation of environmental ethics. Jeremy Bentham, Albert Schweitzer, Aldo Leopold, Rachel Louise Carson, founder of deep ecology Arne Naess, Tom Regan, Peter Singer, are some who support this view.

Jeremy Bentham was not only a great philosopher but was also an English jurist as well as a legal and social reformer. He is mostly recognised for his contribution towards Utilitarianism and animal rights. He became the most influential of the utilitarian’s, through his own work and that of his students such as John Stuart Mill. His Utilitarianism is expounded in his work *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, a work written in 1780. The well-known phrase for Utilitarianism is, “the greatest happiness for the greatest number”. This philosophy is

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216 Ibid., p.410  
also known as “the greatest happiness principle”, or the principle of utility. Here, happiness is identified with pleasure and the absence of pain.\textsuperscript{219}

Bentham is widely recognised as one of the earliest proponents of animal rights.\textsuperscript{220} Unlike philosophers such as Aristotle, Descartes and Kant who held the view that there can be no moral considerations to other non-human beings due to the lack of rationality, Bentham believed that rationality cannot be the ground for allocating morality to animals. His view on animal rights can be seen in his book \textit{Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation}.\textsuperscript{221} He argued that the ability to suffer and not the ability to reason must be what it should be based upon. According to him, if reason alone were the criterion by which we judge who ought to have rights, human infants and adults with certain forms of disability might fall short too. And they would also have to be treated as though they were things.\textsuperscript{222} He wrote in 1789, just as slaves were being freed by the French, but were still held captive in the British dominions:

“The day has been, I grieve to say in many places it is not yet past, in which the greater part of the species, under the denomination of slaves, have been treated by the law exactly upon the same footing, as, in England for example, the inferior races of animals are still. The day may come when the rest of the animal creation may acquire those rights which never could have been withholden from them but by the hand of tyranny. The French have already discovered that the blackness of the skin is no reason a human being should be abandoned without redress to the caprice of a

\textsuperscript{219} Arpana Dhar Das, (October 2003), “Environmental Degradation,” Indian Philosophical Quarterly, Vol. XXX No 4, p.601
tormentor. It may one day come to be recognised that the number of the legs, the villosity of the skin, or the termination of the *os sacrum* are reasons equally insufficient for abandoning a sensitive being to the same fate. What else is it that should trace the insuperable line? Is it the faculty of reason or perhaps the faculty of discourse? But a full-grown horse or dog is beyond comparison a more rational, as well as a more conversable animal, than an infant of a day or a week or even a month old. But suppose the case were otherwise, what would it avail? The question is not, Can they reason? Nor Can they talk? But, Can they suffer?"223

Bentham holds that moral status should be given to animals on the ground that they suffer.

Albert Schweitzer, an activist for animal rights, also presents a Non-Anthropocentric approach. In 1915 he argued in his book *Reverence for life* the ethical standard for killing. Schweitzer believed that we should take life only for necessary reasons and even then, it should be done with respect for what was killed.224 Schweitzer defended a bio-centric ethics that locates inherent value in all living things. According to him, all life is “sacred” and “something possessing value in itself.”225 His approach when compared to Immanuel Kant’s rational a priori approach holds a rather contrasting view. Schweitzer’s work shows that his ethics is rooted in the experience of life as an empirical hypothesis, and as such, in this sense closely related to Friedrich Nietzsche and Arthur Schopenhauer. Schweitzer was influenced by Arthur Schopenhauer’s voluntarist metaphysics according to which ultimate reality is *will*. "Behind all phenomena” there is will-to-live, and each organism constitutes

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part of that will – a will both to survive and to develop according to its natural tendencies.\textsuperscript{226} However, unlike Schopenhauer, Schweitzer though his religious convictions were highly unorthodox, yet he was deeply religious. They hovered somewhere near pantheism but were closer to biotheism – the view that God is manifested in and constituted by all life.\textsuperscript{227}

According to him:

“The Essence of Being, the Absolute, the Spirit of the Universe, and all similar expressions denote nothing actual. The only reality is the Being which manifests itself in phenomena.”\textsuperscript{228}

He writes:

“I am a will-to-live, with desire for self-preservation, self-perfection, pleasure, happiness, and avoiding pain. All other organisms have these same desires, feelings and aspirations... as in my own will-to-live there is a longing for... pleasure, with dread of annihilation and wider life and for... pain; so is it also in the will-to-live all around me.”\textsuperscript{229}

Therefore, since I value my life I must (in consistency) value all other life, “for I shall know that it longs for fullness and development as deeply as I do myself.”\textsuperscript{230} Here are some of the passages that reveal the intentions of Schweitzer:

“Affirmation of life is the spiritual act by which man ceases to live thoughtlessly and begins to devote himself to his life with reverence in order to give it true value. To affirm life is to deepen, to make more inward, and to exalt the will to live. At the same time the man who has become a thinking being feels a compulsion to give to every will to live the same reverence for life that he gives to

\textsuperscript{226} Albert Schweitzer, (1987), \textit{The Philosophy of Civilization}, Prometheus Books, Buffalo, p.57
\textsuperscript{228} Albert Schweitzer, (1987), \textit{The Philosophy of Civilization}, Prometheus Books, Buffalo, p.304
\textsuperscript{229} \textit{Ibid.}, p.309
his own... This is the absolute, fundamental principle of ethics, and is a fundamental postulate of thought.”

“Standing, as all living beings are, before this dilemma of the will to live, a person is constantly forced to preserve his own life and life in general only at the cost of other life. If he has been touched by the ethic of reverence for life, he injures and destroys life only under a necessity he cannot avoid, and never from thoughtlessness.”

Martin maintained that:

Schweitzer’s outlook has had a “cumulative impact in moving us toward a sense of oneness with nature of a sort aptly conveyed in the phrase “reverence for life” - reverence for life as a whole, as well as for particular organisms.”

Over the years Non-Anthropocentrism has extended itself not only to the welfare of the animals alone but also to that of the land, water, ecosystem etc. This is seen in the works of Aldo Leopold who stresses on the intrinsic value of land. He was a renowned scientist, scholar and an environmentalist, and is considered as a pioneer of the American environmental movement.

He is also known as the father of wildlife ecology. He has been influential in the development of modern environmental ethics and in the movement for wilderness conservation, his ethics of nature and wildlife preservation had a profound impact on the environmental movement, with his bio-centric or holistic ethics regarding land. From a very young age, Leopold found interest in the natural world. He eventually went on to pursue a degree in forestry at

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232 Ibid., p.236
233 Mike W. Martin, (1993), “Rethinking Reverence for Life”, Between the Species, Vol. 9, pp. 204-213
Yale University. After Yale, Leopold joined the U.S. Forest Service where he was later assigned to the Arizona Territories. It was here that he began to see the land as a living organism and eventually led in developing the concept of community. His book, *A Sand County Almanac*, (1949), is one among the most outstanding works directed towards the natural world.

Lawrence E. Johnson states:

> “Aldo Leopold’s *A Sand County Almanac* was a great impetus and inspiration to this line of thought in this century. Certainly his ideas and insight were a great inspiration.”

Further, Leopold’s essay titled “The Land Ethic,” published in *A Sand County Almanac*, (1966), is now considered as an important text of American environmental ethics for his important revolutionary ideas were revealed in this very chapter. Carrie Wilson states that it is here that:

> “Leopold displayed concern for the intrinsic value of non-human life and also that of life communities or ecosystems. His view of life value exceeded that of plants and animals to include waters and soils as well. He also introduced the idea of “biotic right”.

In which all life sharing the earth had an equal right to live and sustain life regardless of their presence or absence of economic advantage to us. Though Leopold was not the first to suggest the idea of ethical extension, he is still thought of as the most important mind of holistic and bio-centric ideas.

**Ernest Partridge has in a simple manner presented** the fundamental tenets of the Land Ethic. They are:

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i. “Land” (which we would now call an “ecosystem”) is a system of interdependent parts: best regarded as a “community”, not a “commodity.”

ii. *Homo sapiens* are a member, not the master, of the land community.

iii. “The Whole informs the part” - that is, we can only understand and appreciate our place in nature, and the place of our fellow creatures, in the context of an understanding of the whole.

iv. Our duty is to preserve the *integrity, stability and beauty* of the biotic community. 240

His book was a result of his realisation on the lasting consequences of individual action on the landscape, 241 and also dissatisfaction with the prevailing ethical system. Aldo Leopold argues that “we have a well-articulated human-to-human ethic; what we need is a comparable human-to-land ethic.” 242 He writes, “land is to be loved and respected” 243 an act that can only be possible with an extension of moral status. He calls upon for the need of re-evaluating man’s relationship to the land that is being inhabited and to act in accordance with a “land ethic” that “enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants, and animals, or collectively: the land”. 244 For Leopold, the land and the biotic community were beings with an intrinsic right to exist. His book very clearly points out that ethics and rights need to be extended to the land, as according to him, doing so necessarily

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244 Ibid., p.239
“changes the role of Homo sapiens from conqueror of the land-community to plain member and citizen of it.”

Huey-li Li states that “Leopold acknowledges the intrinsic values of nature in the theorizing of environmental ethics.”

Another Non-Anthropocentric approach to non-human life forms is seen in the works of Rachel Louise Carson, an American marine biologist and conservationist who wrote books that are today being enormously credited for advancing the global environmental movement. She has been called the founder of the U.S. environmental movement. Rachel Carson began her career as a biologist in the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries, and became a full-time nature writer in the 1950s. As a marine biologist she wrote the widely praised 1951 bestseller The Sea Around Us which gave an historical account of the oceans. This won her financial security and recognition as a gifted writer. Linda Engelsiepen speaks of her as one who provided a passionate, poetic argument for questioning the status quo in the midst of social climate. In the late 1950s, Carson turned her attention to conservation and the environmental problems caused by synthetic pesticides. This followed the publishing of another important work Silent Spring (1962), which effectively brought environmental concerns to the American public. This book focused on the problem of pesticide and other chemical pollution. According to Linda, “Rachel Carson

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245 Aldo Leopold, (1966), A Sand County Almanac, New York, Oxford University Press, p.240
envisioned a time when birds had disappeared and the spring was silent, and gave a voice to those who could not speak for themselves.\textsuperscript{254} \textit{Silent Spring} eventually brings about awareness in the national pesticide policy.\textsuperscript{255} It led to such landmark legislation as the U.S. Clean Water Act,\textsuperscript{256} and also to a nationwide ban on DDT and other pesticides.\textsuperscript{257} The book also inspired environmental movements that led to the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency. Yet according to Philip Cafaro, Rachel Carson has received little attention from environmental ethicists.\textsuperscript{258} It was only later that Rachel Carson was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by Jimmy Carter.\textsuperscript{259}

Rachel Carson is considered to be an important environmental thinker.\textsuperscript{260} She gave importance to the evaluative or ethical premises, and this is reflected in her work \textit{Silent Spring} which is filled with ethical statements and arguments that were short yet emphatic. Carson attempts to point out the necessity of the moral considerability of non-human beings.\textsuperscript{261} According to her, creatures both wild and domesticated are innocent of any harm to man and therefore do not deserve the cruelty mankind inflicts on them. Inflicting unnecessary suffering and causing unnecessary loss of non-human life are morally wrong. In fact their existence is responsible for a pleasant living, and further adds that such acts of cruelty only diminishes one as a human being. Carson certainly extends moral considerability to the animals’ part and moral responsibility

\textsuperscript{261} Ibid.
on our part. She further argues that a true civilization is not that which seeks to dominate or destroy the non-human world, but it is that which seeks to protect and understand it.262

Carson’s ethics were Non-Anthropocentric as she recognised the moral considerability of non-human beings. She recognised the flaws of Anthropocentrism and thus made attempts to transcend anthropocentrism which is seen in her earliest book, Under the Sea-Wind and those that followed later. Philip states that “Carson's book which gave her fame, also took non-anthropocentrism as a key intellectual goal”. He further adds, “Non-Anthropocentrism is thus a key to Rachel Carson's ethical philosophy, which contains the three complementary and equally challenging injunctions: Respect nature! Know nature! And Place yourself in proper position.”263

Carson was followed by Arne Næss, a highly influential Norwegian philosopher whose ideas about ecology and humans’ relationship with the environment have informed and enriched many of today’s green activists and movements.264 Næss who earned his doctorate at the city’s university at the age of 27, became its youngest professor. Apart from being an activist, Næss was also a keen mountaineer. Mountains were at the centre of his vision and he often asked audiences to practise the Taoist injunction to “listen with the third ear” and “think like a mountain.”265 In 2005 he was decorated as a Commander with Star of the Royal Norwegian Order of St. Olav for his contribution towards social work.266 Næss was greatly inspired and influenced by Rachel Carson's 1962 book Silent Spring, which

263 Ibid.
265 Ibid.
eventually resulted in the founding of Deep Ecology, and as such it is viewed as the key towards his vision of deep ecology. The term ‘Deep Ecology’ was termed by him in 1972. As the pioneer of this Deep Ecology, Arne Naess, puts it: “To the ecological field-worker, the equal right to live and blossom is an intuitive clear and obvious value axiom”.

He is considered to be the first to have made the distinction between Shallow and Deep Ecologists. He defined Shallow Ecologists as anyone whose concerns are confined to his fellow humans and to a narrow selection of non-human life, mainly those that serve human purposes, besides Shallow Ecology, he believed, meant thinking that big ecological problems could be resolved within an industrial, capitalist society, whereas deep meant asking deeper questions and understanding that society itself has caused the Earth-threatening ecological crisis. For him, what we need is an attitude of ‘respect for nature’ which will not be centered on human interest alone. His platform of Deep Ecology involves the following formulations.

i. The flourishing of non-human life on earth has as much intrinsic value as the flourishing of human life.

ii. The value of non-human species is independent of the usefulness these may have for narrow human purposes.

271 Ibid.
iii. The richness and diversity of the earth’s life-forms are valuable in themselves and contribute in any case to the flourishing of all life forms on Earth.\textsuperscript{272}

iv. Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except in so far as it is necessary to satisfy vital needs.\textsuperscript{273}

His philosophy in its first form was known as ecosophy T – wherein the T stood for the Tvergastein mountain hut where he lived and worked. An interesting approach that Næss incorporated in his ecological vision was adopting the teachings of Spinoza, Gandhi and Buddha. The Gandhian non-violence was applied on several occasions. His deep ecology entered the mainstream green movement in the 1980s and was later elaborated by George Sessions in Deep Ecology for the Twenty-first Century (1995). Næss wrote about thirty books. Through his books and lectures in many countries, Næss taught that ecology should not be concerned with man's place in nature but with every part of nature on an equal basis, because the natural order has intrinsic value that transcends human values. Indeed, humans could only attain “realisation of the Self” as part of an entire ecosphere. He urged the green movement to “not only protect the planet for the sake of humans, but also, for the sake of the planet itself, to keep ecosystems healthy for their own sake.”\textsuperscript{274} Næss hoped for this movement to widen compassion towards non-humans; however he made it clear that it did not imply diminishing compassion towards humans. Stephan Harding, a close friend of Næss argued that Næss accepted that “since we are humans, we have to put humans first,” but at the same time he was against violence. According to him, “We don't say that every living being has the same value as a human, but that it has an


\textsuperscript{273} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{274} Ibid.
intrinsic value which is not quantifiable. It is not equal or unequal. It has a right to live and blossom.

He states:

“I may kill a mosquito if it is on the face of my baby, but I will never say I have a higher right to life than a mosquito.”

Tom Regan, an American philosopher who contributed largely in animal rights theory, also presents a Non-Anthropocentric outlook on animals. He is universally recognised as the intellectual leader of the animal rights movement. Among many of his works that he has focused on the philosophy of animal rights he is best known for his book, *The Case for Animal Rights*. It has significantly influenced the modern animal liberation movement. It is here Regan argues that non-human animals bear moral rights. Regan argues that rationality cannot be the condition for extending moral rights to humans and non-humans. He made an argument against the Kantian stance of animal morality, as Kant holds that animals do not deserve moral status as they are not rational beings. Regan argues that moral consideration should not be based on our ability to reason. While Regan supports that reason is a great and positive feature, he challenged that reason alone cannot account for making a life valuable or morally worthy. For him, one common attribute that each of us has is a *life* and that is what matters to us. It is the crucial attribute to both humans and non-humans. In Regan's terminology, we each experience being the “subject-of-a-life.” If this is the true basis for ascribing inherent value to individuals, to be consistent we must ascribe inherent value, and hence moral rights, to all subjects-of-a-life, whether human or non-human. The basic right that all who possess

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276 Ibid.

inherent value have, he argues, is the right never to be treated merely as a means to the ends of others.\textsuperscript{278} And never to be treated as a means, that one has the right to be treated with respect, and which further includes the right not to be harmed. According to Regan, “there would be more harm in the death of a normal, healthy dog than there would be in the death of a person who was irreversibly comatose, as the dog would have more opportunities for satisfaction than the irreversibly comatose human.”\textsuperscript{279}

Peter Albert David Singer, a philosopher of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century wrote a book titled *Animal Liberation* in 1975\textsuperscript{280} that greatly influenced the field of animal ethics. Through this book, Singer argues and presents the utilitarian idea that “the greatest good of the greatest number” is the only measure of good or ethical behaviour. He holds that there is no reason not to apply this to other animals. He introduced and popularised the term “speciesism”, which was originally coined by Richard D. Ryder, which he used to describe the practice of privileging humans over other animals.\textsuperscript{281} He also specialises in applied ethics and approaches ethical issues from a secular, preference utilitarian perspective. His most comprehensive work in ethics is his *Practical ethics* in 1979.\textsuperscript{282} The book deals with problems that were selected on two grounds; relevance and the extent to which philosophical reasoning can contribute.\textsuperscript{283} He deals with problems such as euthanasia, abortion and infanticide. Singer is one of the best-known among modern philosophers, and certainly is considered to be the most controversial. Singer upholds the view that there needs to be “a sound moral

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\textsuperscript{279} Tom Regan, (2004), *The Case for Animal Rights*, University of California Press, Berkeley., p. xxxiii
\textsuperscript{282} Peter Singer, (1979), *Practical Ethics*, Cambridge University Press, London
\textsuperscript{283} *Ibid*, preface vii
basis for relations with those outside our own species— the non-human animals”. This according to him can be possible only when we accept the principle of equality, in which rests the principle of equal consideration of interests. For Singer, as equality is usually accepted as embracing and extending to all human beings, it only implies that all humans are equal, which is to say again that no one person’s interest, or no groups, must take precedence over those of other person’s or groups simple because they are that person or a member of that group. The sense of equality is summed up in Singer’s principle of equal consideration of interests as:

“The principle of equal consideration of interests acts like a pair of scales, weighing interests impartially. True scales favour where the interest is stronger or where several interests combine to outweigh a smaller number of similar interests; but they take into account of whose interests they are weighing.”

This shows Singer’s utilitarian approach. The principle of equality implies that concern for others ought not to depend on what they are like or what abilities they possess. According to him, the fact that other animals are less intelligent does not entitle one to exploit them or disregard their interests. This principle provides for a sound moral basis for relations, and this according to him cannot be limited only to humans. It needs to be extended. He argues that extending the principle of equality beyond our own species is simple, and that is to understand the nature of principle of equal considerations of interests.

In his 1975 book *Animal Liberation*, Singer presents his agenda. He points out the mistreatments imposed on animals by the human race and argues that although human beings have a long history of mistreating

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animals, there is no moral justification for such behaviour. He considers causing unnecessary suffering is morally wrong. According to him, the fact (in so far as it is a fact) that non-human animals lack human intellect and moral understanding is irrelevant here; it's no more right to make a dog suffer than it is to do the same to a human imbecile or new-born baby. An entity should matter to us if it has the capacity of mattering to itself. However, if it is unable to do so, then, as Peter Singer says:

“Nothing that we can do to it could possibly make any difference to its welfare.... [and consequently,] there is nothing to be taken into account.”

Singer tackles the ethical issues of non-human animals from a utilitarian perspective. He makes Utilitarian foundation of his views more explicit in his later works.

B. Three main kinds of Non-Anthropocentrism

Here discussed below are the different approaches to Non-Anthropocentrism. They are:-

i. The Sentience Approach

ii. The Life Approach

iii. The Holistic Approach

The Sentience Approach or the Sentio-Centrism holds that all and only sentient beings have moral standing, such as, for example, mammals, perhaps all vertebrates and may be some invertebrates like humans, cows, woodpeckers, etc. Among the non-anthropocentrists Peter Singer and Tom Regan fall in this category. Both of them

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consider the moral status of animals and their extensive work on it is widely responsible for the rise of various animal rights movements around the world. As such this approach is also variously referred to as the animal liberation or animal rights approach. It holds that an entity is intrinsically valuable and deserves moral consideration if it is a being that is capable to feeling pain and pleasure i.e., if it is sentient. Peter Singer who undertook Bentham’s utilitarian view advocates, as already mention above in his Non-Anthropocentric approach, that we should take into account the interest of an entity which matter to us in the context of actions that are taken, that might affect it, if it indeed has the capacity of mattering to itself. If on the other hand, it is unable to do so, meaning it cannot feel, then according to him, there is nothing that can be taken into account.\textsuperscript{290} Warwick Fox in a very simple but precise manner explains this very approach of non-anthropocentrism. He points out that, “For the advocates of the sentience approach in its purest form, sentience represents the only defensible boundary of concern for the interests of others.”\textsuperscript{291} Thus, according to him, the elaboration of this approach into a comprehensive environmental ethic looks like this: first, we should recognise the intrinsic value of all sentient entities, not just humans; second, and as a direct consequence of this, we should ensure that, in our decisions, we take into considerations not only what is of instrumental value to humans but also what is instrumental value to non-human sentient entities. This means, for example, that we should aim to preserve rainforests not only because of their instrumental values to humans but also because of (a) the intrinsic value of the sentient creatures that live in them; (b) the instrumental values of the rainforests to the

\textsuperscript{290} Peter Singer, (1975), \textit{Animal Liberation, A New Ethics for our Treatment of Animals}, New York Review/Randome House, New York, p.8

\textsuperscript{291} \textit{Ibid.}, p.9
sentient creatures that live in them; and (c) the instrumental values of the rainforests to non-human sentient creatures that live elsewhere.\textsuperscript{292}

The Life Approach or the Bio-centric individualism is the approach which holds that all and only living beings are having moral standing. Here apart from humans and animals, it also includes trees, bacteria, etc. This criterion of intrinsic value which advanced in the environmental philosophy gives serious consideration to life itself. Paul Taylor and Albert Schweitzer are those non-anthropocentrists who supports this view. Albert Schweitzer’s book Reverence for life is but a representation of this approach. He points out that one must recognise any living thing as something that possesses value in itself and that it is an intrinsic worth. It is life and it is scared.\textsuperscript{293} His work is now carried out in the contemporary philosophy in the works such as Kenneth Goodpaster and Paul Taylor.\textsuperscript{294} This approach holds that though the non-human world such as plants is not capable of feeling, we are to consider the actions we carry out as that might affect them. It upholds the view that living things of any kind have a particular interest in maintaining their own integrity, whether sentient or not.\textsuperscript{295} Paul Taylor in his book Respect for Life represents the major extended development of the life approach to date. He writes, “individual organisms (not supra-organisms or quasi-organisms [such as species, ecosystem, and the ecosphere]) that....are seen to be organisms having a good of their own - and, hence, to be

\textsuperscript{293} Albert Schweitzer, (1987), The Philosophy of Civilization, Prometheus Books, Buffalo, p.57
intrinsically valuable.” Moral status is extended not on the bases of it being capable of feeling pleasure and pain like the sentience approach but on the bases of it having a life.

The third is the Holistic Integrity Approach or the Eco-centric Holism. This approach holds that natural non-individuals have moral standing or intrinsic value and are deserving of respect, for example, ecosystems, natural processes, land and/or Earth itself. Aldo Leopold, J. Baird Callicott, and Holmes Rolston are those who support this view. This criterion of intrinsic value which was advanced in the environmental philosophy gives moral status even to those non-human life forms that do not have the capability of feeling pleasure and pain and also do not possess any kind of life in them. This view is seen in Aldo Leopold’s *Land Ethic* where he clearly expresses his concern for the non-human life forms as well as the life communities or ecosystem. Leopold considered them as having intrinsic value. For him, land must not be considered as a commodity but rather must be regarded as a community. This understanding of Leopold has now been carried on in contemporary environmental philosophy by philosophers such as J. Baird Callicott. The holistic approach according to Warwick states that:

“Certain kinds of whole- most accurately described as autopoietic systems- are self- making and self- renewing, meaning that they actively create and maintain their own integrity. In other words, it points out that these wholes can be said to embody (i.e., give concrete form to) an overwhelming interest in maintaining their

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own integrity, and that the various expressions of this non-sentient interest should be taken into considerations in the context of their actions we take that might affect them.”

Further:

“The advocates of this approach seeks to preserve holistic integrity in the ecological realm which clearly means seeking to preserve the self-renewing capacity of ecosystems, and that, in turn, means seeking to preserve the characteristic diversity of ecosystem.”

The Non-Anthropocentric approach seeks to extend moral status to the non-human life forms by way of recognising their intrinsic worth. However, it must be pointed out that not all non-anthropocentrists have the same outlook with regard to recognising their moral worth. Some of them such as Tom Regan and Peter Singer only consider the intrinsic worth of only the sentient beings, and hence say they only deserve moral status. Here only those that can feel pleasure and pain deserve moral considerations. Some others such as Paul Taylor and Albert Schweitzer recognise the intrinsic worth of not only the sentient beings but rather extends moral status to all living beings, that includes, trees, plants, bacteria, etc. Yet others such as Aldo Leopold, J. Baird Callicott, and Holmes Rolston go even further so as to include not only all the living but most importantly the non-living. For instance, they consider rocks, land, the eco-system, etc., as deserving moral status.

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