Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1.   Problem analysis:

One of the most important challenges facing pluralistic organizations today is balancing individual differences and particularity with the collective interests and goals of groups, organizations and institutions. The liberal democracy attempts to uphold two very distinct precepts. On the one hand it tries to guarantee equal respect for every person and recognition of differences, whilst relying, on the other hand, on the idea of a social contract, which holds that the individuals' freedom and rights should somehow contribute to some collective good. In an increasingly pluralistic working environment, it has become very difficult to protect and guarantee individual freedoms and rights, whilst finding sufficient common ground to unite individuals in groups that can act collectively for the sake of shared interests and collective goals. In recent history we have witnessed many disastrous attempts at subordinating individual differences to some collective identity or group interest. Notable among these attempts was that of the Apartheid government of South Africa, whose narrow ideological ideals had moral consequences for both those belonging to the group in power and those excluded from power. It not only discriminated against certain groups of people on the basis of race and culture, but also created a limited narrative as to what is acceptable and desirable conduct, thereby seriously curtailing the conscience and freedom of many White South Africans. Many attempts at establishing group interests and collective goals, such as those collective interests defended by Apartheid, have had detrimental effects. The same dynamics are at work in various forms of extreme nationalism, gender bias, and discrimination based on sexuality.

Finding a balance between isolated individuals with subjective interests and its dangerous alternative, totalizing collective structures, is especially challenging when it comes to moral perspectives and decisions. In wanting to avoid another holocaust, more genocide, ethnic wars and hostile working environments, many philosophers opt to discard the ideal of group identities and goals in favor of radical individualism when it comes to making decisions on the good and the just. This reliance on the rational, objective individual subject of

transcendental philosophy has however become problematic in the face of a growing awareness that no individual ever makes impartial, disinterested and objective decisions. When one accepts this and acknowledges the fact that every individual is the product of many communities, power interests and institutions, one has to contend with the fact that the solution to moral discourse lies neither in disinterested rational individualism, nor in homogeneous group ideology. In a world that has become disillusioned with the possibility of absolute truth and justice, as defined and structured by those in power, the dangers of complete relativity and nihilism looms even larger. Furthermore, the complete detachment of individuals from groups and common interests undermines the possibility of cooperation and interaction on those things that we just have to do together. Group affiliation after all is a prerequisite for everyday things like living together in families, societies and nations, producing and selling these goods and services to make money, healthcare and caring for our environment. In order to be able to do this, we need find a way of balancing our individual interests and opinions with those interests and pursuits that form the basis of our group affiliation.

The problem that this study will address is how to deal with moral values[1] in a pluralistic[2] South African working environment in a way that would do justice to the need for moral unity and solidarity within the organization, as well as to the moral beliefs of employees and employers informed by a diversity of value-systems. In order to address this problem in the context of the South African work place, the next section will attempt to provide a description of how this problem is manifesting itself within the South African working environment.

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[1] Moral values will be defined in chapter 2

[2] According to Flew (1979:278), "pluralism" is the view that the world contains many kinds of existent, which in their uniqueness cannot be reduced to just one (monism) or two (dualism). This general, neutral meaning of pluralism can be distinguished from the approach "pluralism", which is normally used in the context of religious pluralism. The approach "pluralism" argues for the positive use of plurality. This ambiguity does not necessarily present a problem for the use of the word in this dissertation, since the connotation of the positive use of plurality is quite tenable in terms of this dissertation's argument that diversity should be redefined and positively employed in dealing with moral values in the workplace. An example of this understanding is that of Cox & Finley-Nickelson (1997:212) that interpret pluralism as the mode of acculturation in organizational cultures that strongly enforce pivotal values, but permit high tolerance for differences on peripheral behaviors.

1.2. National and international factors that influence the South African workplace:

Moral discourse in South Africa takes place within a very specific context. Since morality not only influences, but is also influenced by its environment, it is important to develop an understanding of the South African working environment. The South African workplace has undergone some significant changes over the last few decades. These changes were due, in a large part, to three important transformational processes: the changing nature and composition of the available workforce, globalization and technological innovation.

The political dispensation in South Africa has historically had a direct impact on the way the South African workforce was composed. Due to the systematic institutionalization of the ideology Apartheid since the late forties, racial segregation became a feature, not only of the South African society, but also of its workplace. Different jobs were allocated to specific groups on different levels of the organization through job reservation and other restrictions. Cultural homogeneity was protected by strict territorial segregation. People from diverse groups were not expected to interact. Recent political developments have however also influenced the workplace. The change that has swept South Africa over the last decade has transformed its workplace and also initiated a fundamental reevaluation of what being a pluralistic society means. In the first place, large urban organizations in particular are now faced with an extremely diverse workforce, representing many races, cultures, languages, religions, genders, and economic groups interacting on various levels of the organization. Secondly, even within groups and categories of people previously regarded as homogeneous, plurality and differences are surfacing. For the first time, South African are made more aware of the fact that diversity does not only exist among groups, but among individuals and within individuals as well.

South Africa's position in the broader global business community has also changed in recent times. Whereas South Africa has for four to five decades been isolated from the international community due to the economic sanctions imposed on it's government in protest to its violation of human rights, multinational companies have now re-entered the South African business sphere. Renewed competition, differences in business culture and

practices and the influence of world markets have transformed the playing field for business in South Africa.

As has been the case in so many regions around the world, South African business has felt the effects of the so-called "global village" phenomena. Henderson (1999:3) describes the many problems and possibilities associated with the "global village". On the one hand, more problems and issues have now become global and can no longer be solved unilaterally by national governments. Climate change, cross-border pollution, de-certification, the loss of bio-diversity, space junk, weapons-trafficking, drugs trading, organized crime, nuclear and toxic wastes and epidemics, global terrorism, computer privacy and intellectual property issues are only some of the issues that call for international cooperation and participation. Many of these issues have a direct impact on companies that operate across borders and continents. The global village does however have its advantages. The networked society advances the spread of democracy and a culture of human rights all over the world, and has helped to engage people from all over the globe in debates about moral issues. Access to information empowers citizens, consumers, employees and socially responsive investors. It has also become much easier to share visions, ideas and expertise with regard to sustainable development, the maintenance of social justice and ecological awareness (Henderson 1999:4).

South Africa's inclusion in the global village is directly related to the third set of changes, namely that of the development of technology. Being a unique combination of third world and first world elements, South Africa has been experiencing great changes in terms of the development of technology in the past decade. Technological innovation has not only created new avenues and opportunities for business practice, it has also confronted us with a whole range of unprecedented problems. It changes the way in which businesses are structured. For instance it can rearrange or even abolish hierarchies, communication channels, and levels of command. Furthermore, it decreases the measure of control that managers and supervisors can exercise over their employees; it leaves much more room for individual discretion and therefore also for indiscretions. Technology makes the business world part of a global community in which there are no uniform sets of rules or regulations, and where

the speed of change and development makes strict regulation and controls virtually impossible.

All over the world the rapid development of information technology has posed some serious challenges to established companies. The demise of a centuries old company such as that of the Encyclopedia Britannica is a chilling example of how the development of new technology can cause the sales of a solid and successful company to collapse by over 80% in just a few years. Evans & Wurster (2000:3) indicates how a product of the late-twentieth century information revolution, the CD-ROM, blew away a company who by 1990 had reached its peak with sales of $ 650 million per annum. This tale also indicates how a company's greatest assets can become its biggest liabilities. The history, myths, shared values, and unreflective presuppositions that define the strong corporate culture of these companies at times blind their leaders to events that do not fit into their collective mental framework. Furthermore, established businesses often face even more competitive disadvantages because they are incumbents who are saddled with legacy assets - such as mainframe systems, sales and distributions systems, bricks and mortar, brands and core competencies. Britannica's sales force, built over decades and up to 1990 viewed as the foundation of its competitive advantage, had become obsolete. Evans & Wurster (2000:5) shows how competing in the face of the new economics of information requires cannibalizing those precious, perhaps even destroying them. A lack of flexibility and a failure to adapt to the contingencies and realities of the new technologies can often have disastrous consequences.

The challenges of the new economics of information stretch further than companies strictly involved in the information business. In fact, Evans & Wurster (2000:9) argue that every business is an information business. Information flows across most of the activities of an organization, such as value and supply chains, management structures, and consumer relations. Information forms the glue that holds the organization together. However, for many companies, that glue may now be melting. The fundamental cause is the explosion in connectivity and in the information standards that are enabling the open and almost cost-free exchange of a widening universe of rich information. Evans & Wurster (200:14) describe this process as follows: *"The tidal wave of universal connectivity is melting the*

glue bonding economic activities together. And it will separate, as nothing has separated before, the flow of information from the flow of physical things, allowing each to follow its own economics."

When one compares the old economics of things to the new economics of information, it becomes clear that they operate according to very different logics. Things wear out, can only be replicated at considerable cost, have a specific location and is consistent with the operation of efficient market economies. Information never wears out (except for becoming obsolete or untrue), can be replicated limitlessly without cost, is nowhere and everywhere and actually requires imperfect markets, because originators of information must limit access to their product (through copyright, patents etc.) if they are to profit from it. Information technology also changes the rules by rendering the traditional trade-off made by companies between richness and reach obsolete. In the past a company would sacrifice reaching great numbers of people with its sales force because it chose to provide rich information to a selected market of customers. Information technology now makes it possible to reach endless numbers of people with equally rich information (Evans & Wurster 2000:29).

The information age has also changed the types of moral issues that businesses are confronted with. It limits an organization's ability to predict which moral dilemmas may arise and how its employees will respond to them. The IT environment has become a moral minefield. The flood of articles about the impact of new information technology on the workplace suggests that we haven't even begun to comprehend the moral dilemmas that new technology is bringing about. For instance, *The New York Times* dismissed a number of employees after e-mails with incriminating content fell into the wrong hands - or shall we say - into the wrong chips. In addition, the Double Click-controversy has raised concerns approaching the point of panic about privacy and the use of information on the net (Wall Street Journal March 3, 2000). Employers' monitoring capabilities has also developed far beyond what had ever been imagined possible before. Not only can employees constantly be monitored, but the installation of "keystroke software" on company computers now renders even deleted material open to scrutiny (Wall Street Journal March 7, 2000).

There have been various reactions to the changing circumstances that organizations face at the turn of the century. Some signs of the deconstruction of the traditional hierarchical organization are what Evans & Wurster (2000:202) depict as the deconstruction of ownership, risk bearing and control. Whereas the enterprise was previously owned by an individual or an individual family, ownership grew into partnerships and then into joint-stock companies, allowing multiple people to have a stake in the company without actually controlling it. This made corporate ownership liquid and allowed for many financing possibilities. Not only is ownership fragmented and risk disaggregated, but even the entrepreneurial function itself is contingent on the ability of management to justify its performance. These forms of deconstruction keep extending itself through factoring, leasing and the sale of receivables which allow companies to move whole classes of assets and risks off their balance sheets and onto those institutions better able to carry them. Deconstruction is also materializing in the deliberate breakup of integrated ownership. The recognition of a "conglomerate discount" led many companies to spin off unrelated businesses so that investors could own deconstructed " pure plays" (for example GM selling Hughes Electronics). A further example comes from the world of start-ups. The venture capitalist's portfolio is a deconstructed alternative to the corporate structure. In contrast to corporations, they see ownership as transient and in no sense the essence of their business. A successful investment is liquidated as soon as it becomes attractive to a corporate buyer or to the capital market (Evans & Wurster 2000:204).

The deconstruction of employment is a further illustration of the explosion in richness and reach. The spread of Internet connectivity and the proliferation of electronic marketplaces for jobs are beginning to impact the broader labor market, especially in the professional and managerial field. Rich information and easy access to it enable employees to easily and anonymously tract information about potential jobs that was previously very difficult to acquire. This resulted in the shift towards more continuously market-based relationships between employers and employees. Especially in booming economies such as America where jobs are readily available the cost of switching jobs is dropping as information asymmetries and the cost of searching drop. The glue between employer and employee is melting, and

fluid, collaborative networks substitute static hierarchies. In a country like South Africa the impact of this process can be seen in various ways. Greater connectivity and the development of universal standards for skills and competencies in certain professions make young professionals very mobile. In a country where the push factors such as crime, economic instability and affirmative action are strong, the pull of jobs available on the Net is indeed irresistible, resulting in the almost unavoidable "brain-drain". Those who stay, tend to exit their previously stable jobs, and quit the hierarchical corporate ladder permanently to sell their expert knowledge in the consultancy market. This leads to the infamous revolving door phenomenon, where skilled employees exit the organization and returns at double the price as consultant.

An interesting example of the deconstruction of the traditional form of organizational life can be found in America's Silicon Valley. Workers in the Valley are extraordinarily mobile. Most are electronic engineers, and the homogeneity in background and education facilitate labor force fluidity. Homogeneity and collocation also support community networking, which in turns leads to a high measure of transparency. Reputations are built across the entire community and reputation risk, as in Japanese corporations that guarantee lifetime employment, shapes behavior. One's competitor may in fact be your next colleague, the role of boss and subordinate become interchangeable and therefore a regional culture develops that balances competitive and collaborative values (Evans & Wurster 2000:210). The decentralized "corporation" of the Silicon Valley has eclipsed the traditional hierarchical corporation of Boston's Route 128 and has outperformed the aggressive and competent Japanese corporations without having a finance or human resource department or in fact a CEO. It could do so because of the skill intensity, homogeneity, trust and collaboration on projects of mutual interest. This causes executives to speculate about the possibilities of virtual teaming based on friendship, trust, moral obligation and the rich human connection of professional relationships built on respect. This possibility might not only make Silicon valley-type of economic sense, it may also be way of upholding certain moral standards in a global village.

But how do corporations that still display relatively "traditional" organizational structures deal with the changing environment? When one looks at the way in which organizations are responding to the new competitive challenges it seems as if they are mimicking many of the characteristics of the deconstructed organizational environments by exploiting connectivity and standards. Internally they support the fluid, self-organizing flows of talent, technology and capital and externally they use connectivity to exploit deep collaboration, shared competencies and common strategies. Among organizations alliances are proliferating, indicating that corporations find ways in which to engage in open-ended collaborations in research, design and logistics.

When one looks at the emerging cultural and managerial norms in contemporary organizations they are dominated by three characteristics, namely fluidity, flatness and trust. The hard-wired structure of conventional organizational hierarchies is giving way to soft-wired structures in which people can group and regroup into teams. They can merge for common purposes and then segregate, work on multiple projects simultaneously, and work out the rules and responsibilities of the team without managerial direction. The organization becomes self-organizing and adapting. It reviews, learns from and amends its own procedures and structure as it embarks upon new projects and as it encounters new challenges.

The characteristic of flatness is based on the fact that spans of controls are proportional to reach. Double the span of control, all else being equal, will mean that you need to halve the management layers need in the organization. This flattening in formal management structure goes hand in hand with the flattening of informal channels for sharing, reassuring, and coaching. Multiple informal interventions replace formal plans and reviews, and e-mails replace meetings. Because greater richness and reach imply greater symmetry in information, everyone's actions become more transparent, and therefore the importance of reputation risk increases. Reputation can therefore substitute formal mechanisms of review and control (Evans & Wurster 2000:218). This use of reputation can also be invaluable in dealing with moral issues in the organization, as will be indicated later in this dissertation.

1.3. Individual and collective responses to the South African context:

The current fluid social, political and technological developments in South Africa and in the broader international community have given a new urgency to issues of individual and collective identity. Just as past perceptions and definitions of identity impacted directly on South Africans' moral decision-making, so the renegotiations of individual and collective identity presents new opportunities for moral discourse. Various responses to the issue of identity exist. Some South Africans have come to regard their national citizenship very important. These people tend to down-play cultural differences and celebrating unity. On the other hand, ethnic conflict seems to be on the rise in certain areas, and a certain protective attitude towards culture and language is leading to increased demands for the rights of each community to associate and dissociate on their own terms. This process is especially interesting in the case of the White, Afrikaans speaking community, who had formerly held power in the Apartheid government. Diverse reactions to the new situation exist among members of this group. On the one hand, the liberals want to distance themselves from what they consider an ignominious group designation. They seek inclusion in wider, more inclusive group identity, claiming that they are also "Africans" ("Afrikane"). This use of African should be distinguished from the use of the word "African" that is often used to refer to black people. On the other hand some others are agitating to protect what they see as their unique language and culture by intense lobbying on issues such as first language education, and culture specific programming on state television. Some right wing radical conservatives even claim the right to a separate "homeland", where they can maintain their distinct identity isolated from the rest of pluralist South Africa. Since individual and group identity plays an important role in people's perception of the morally "good", these processes are key considerations in the practice of business ethics in South Africa.

Since the adoption of a new constitution in 1994, South Africans on every level has slowly begun to grapple with the implications of the liberal democracy. It seems as if the existence of common norms in terms of public and private concerns cannot be taken for granted. According to Van Zyl Slabbert (1999:90), a former liberal Afrikaner politician,

many seemingly conflicting value-systems currently exist alongside one another in the South Africa. Whilst South Africa's liberal democratic system is based on an acceptance of a strong human rights culture and democratically elected leadership, many of its citizens come from traditional black African communities where inherited autocratic leadership is the norm. Moreover, during the Apartheid struggle, socialist sentiments were added to the political mix. Democracy is based on the individual and his/her individual rights, whereas group identity is a very important notion in both traditional black African culture and, as I will argue later on, in Afrikaner culture. The socialist expectations of egalitarianism does not fit very well with the deregulated market economy, which South Africa has adopted along with the rest of the international business community. In addition, South Africa's ANC-led government has discovered how difficult it is to maintain law and order in a society based on a strong version of human rights.

The South African society seems to be struggling to find a balance between what appears to be a number of opposing notions: the individual versus the group, democracy versus autocracy, and socialism versus capitalism. This dissertation wants to argue that it is possible for people with different value-systems to work and live together in a moral way within the same society, business organization and social and religious institution. If it is not possible, South Africa faces a grim future.

We have to walk the tightrope between the many daunting extremes, use whatever we can in terms of possible theoretical approaches, and come up with a unique way of dealing with our particular contextual challenges.

1.4. Understanding our present in terms of our past:

If we are to create moral parameters amidst the diversity of viewpoints in South Africa, we have to understand the history that shaped us and impacted on our institutions in this country. This inevitably implies reconstructing some picture of where we come from out of the fragments of historical data and real-life experiences that we have at our disposal. I will attempt to provide some clues with regard to this process, without attempting any

clear-cut, neat metanarrative that explains all the variables in play. The main goal of the next section will be to sensitize the reader to the fact that knowledge systems and institutions embody certain power-interest, that in turn influence the development of moral selves.

Why has diversity been seen as a problem, rather than an advantage, within the South African working environment? Part of the problem, I believe, lies in our view that diversity is something that exists among distinct groups, rather than among and within unique individuals. This seems to create the perception that we can deal with diversity if we succeed in identifying, describing and predicting group behavior. Another approach would be to acknowledge the fact that power relations and knowledge structures influence individual selves, but to argue that the self can also be an ethical force that interacts with knowledge systems and power relations. The latter possibility can only be understood through an acknowledgment of the interaction between knowledge, power and self.

The legacy of South Africa's long history of complicated power relations, knowledge structures, moral languages and ethical approaches has imparted certain limitations, as well as possibilities, to our efforts to address moral diversity in the workplace. As a result of our history, our resources for addressing the moral challenges posed to current organizations are severely restricted. We have to take a critical look at why this is currently the case. When one refers to a plural or plural*ist* society it has the neutral connotation of variety and difference coexisting in the same environment, as defined earlier on in this chapter. In this dissertation, pluralistic serves as the adjective of plurality, retaining its neutral connotation. Yet, in some cases, when people describe a working environment as pluralis*tic*, it indicates that diversity is seen as problematic. Pluralism is not always viewed as something neutral. In fact, diversity has for long been seen as something problematic in the South African context. Why has this been the case in South Africa?

Foucault's structure of genealogical interpretation provides a useful framework for analyzing the way in which diversity had been dealt with in South Africa since 1948 - the date of the rise of the Apartheid government. Foucault's (1994:262) genealogy includes

three possible domains: *"First, a historical ontology of ourselves in relation to truth through which we constitute ourselves as subjects of knowledge; second, a historical ontology of ourselves in relation to the field of power through which we constitute ourselves as subjects acting on others; third, a historical ontology in relation to ethics through which we constitute ourselves as moral agents."*

Knowledge, Power and Self are the triple root of the problematization of thought. To think means to be embedded in the present-time stratum that serves as a limit: what can I see and what can I say today? Deleuze (1988:119) quotes Foucault as saying: *"Thought thinks its own history (the past), but in order to free itself from what it thinks (the present) and be able finally to think otherwise (the future)."* I suggest that we follow Foucault in this three-pronged thought exercise: thinking our past, pushing against the limits of how we think now and attempting to think otherwise in order to realize our potential as moral *bricoleurs*.

In order to analyze the genealogy and archeology of our thought systems and practices, we have to start with Foucault's analysis of **knowledge**. According to Deleuze (1988:51) Foucault helped us to understand that knowledge cannot be separated from the thresholds in which it is caught up, including even the experience of perception, the values of imagination, the prevailing ideas of commonly held beliefs. Foucault describes knowledge in terms of two elements of stratification: that which is articulable and that which is visible, which further implies a distinction between the discursive formations and the non-discursive formations, and between forms of expression and the forms of content (Deleuze 1988:49). He advocates the view that language has the character of a distributive unity, which originated from complex and ever-changing historical complexities. When we accept that each age has a particular way of putting language together, because of its specific groupings, we come to understand the historical being of language.

When analyzing the history of moral discourse in South Africa, we may want to use Foucault's strategy of archeology to help us understand how we constituted our reality in terms of knowledge systems. In South Africa the two elements of stratification: the articulable and the visible gave rise to discursive and non-discursive formations that became

the grid by which we ordered and understood the pluralist nature of our country. For example, cultural and racial differences as articulable and visible elements of the South African reality gave rise to categories and perceptions that influenced the interaction between people. The distributive unity of the language we used originated from the historical complexity of South African life. Let us look at how some of the historical events in the country since 1940 may have left its mark on how we interpret our identity and talk about one another.

The legacy of the Anglo-Boer war and sentiments like the strong desire for self-determination, the struggle for identity in terms of language and culture, and the fear of being outnumbered are some of the factors that may have had an effect in this regard. These factors may have contributed to certain knowledge structures. For instance, South African's pervasive tendency to categorize in terms of "us" versus "them" may be an example of such a knowledge structure. People who display this tendency typically talk about others in terms of salient features such as race and language. When this happens, race and culture become the distinguishing features of identity. This tendency is often accompanied by the notion that separateness or isolation offers the only realistic strategy for survival in a country full of diverse groups and value-systems. These patterns of thinking and talking about one another still influence the way in which moral discourse is being conducted in South Africa. There are many people who desperately try to uphold the "us" versus "them" dualism by simplistically characterizing cultures in terms of their most distinct characteristics. The whole issue of African versus Western values in the workplace is typical of this pursuit. Conservative groups try to isolate themselves from other groups in an effort to ensure self-determination and the preservation of the group as a distinct entity. The struggle for minority group rights is typical of groups that feel that the democratic system has left them outnumbered. As a last resort they organize themselves into strong interests groups and try to exert as much pressure on the government as possible.

Power, the second domain of Foucault's genealogy, has also contributed significantly to the way in which South Africans have dealt with diversity. Foucault does not see **power** as

necessarily repressive. It is practiced before it is possessed and it passes through the hands of the master no less than through the hands of the mastered. Foucault defines power in terms of the relation between forces. Force defines itself as the very power to affect other forces (to which it is related) and to be affected by other forces - it is never singular. Each force implies power relations and every field of forces distributes forces according to these relations and their variations. Spontaneity and receptivity now take on a new meaning: to affect and to be affected. The power to be affected is like a *matter* of force, and the power to affect is like a *function* of force. Categories of power are therefore unique to the 'particular' action and its particular meaning (Deleuze 1988:70-72).

Between power and knowledge there is a difference in nature or heterogeneity, but they also presuppose one another. The difference in their nature relates to the fact that power does not pass through forms, only through forces. Knowledge concerns formed matters (substances) and formalized functions. It is therefore stratified, archivized, and endowed with a relatively rigid segmentarity. Power on the other hand, is diagrammatic and therefore mobilizes non-stratified matter and functions, and unfolds with a flexible segmentarity. These power-relations are local, unstable and diffuse and are therefore not "localized" at any given moment, but rather constitute a strategy, an exercise of the non-stratified. There is therefore no confusion between the affective categories of power (of the 'incite' and 'provoke' variety) and the formal categories of knowledge (such as to 'educate', 'look after', 'punish', etc). The latter passes through the seeing and speaking in order to actualize the former. It is for this reason that institutions have the capacity to integrate power-relations, by constituting various forms of knowledge, which actualize, modify and redistribute these relations (Deleuze 1988:77). Deleuze (1988:81) poses the question as to what primacy power has over knowledge, and power-relations over relations of knowledge. The answer is that the latter would have nothing to integrate if there were no differential power relations.

Power is not simply violence. It passes itself through categories that express the relation between two forces. Furthermore, in relation to knowledge, it produces truth, in so far as it makes us see and speak. Deleuze (1988:83) explains that the visible and the articulable

elements enter into duel. Their respective forms make up two types of 'multiplicity', neither of which can be reduced to a unity: statements only exist in a discursive multiplicity, and visibilities only in a non-discursive multiplicity. These two multiplicities open up a third, which is a multiplicity of relations between forces, a multiplicity of diffusion, which no longer splits into two and is free of any dualizable form. Deleuze (1988:84) describes Foucault's philosophy as a pragmatics of the multiple. This could be why Foucault never attached great importance to universal or eternal questions: they would have merely been massive or global effects arising out of a certain distribution of particular features, in a particular historical formation and a particular process of formalization (Deleuze 1988:90).

Within the South African context, the statement that power is not necessarily repressive might raise a few eyebrows from people who have been repressed for decades by a small minority. However, it is Foucault's insights about the interaction between power and knowledge that might help us understand how the majority of people in South Africa could have been repressed in the way they were, and how we might avoid it ever happening again. Knowledge and power presupposes one another, yet power-relations are supposed to remain flexible, unstable and ever changing. When knowledge systems arrest this free flow and institutionalize power relations in a rigid system, it not only localizes power relations but also stops the disruptive and the creative natural process of force. The nature of knowledge itself is also corrupted in the process. It has the effect of eroding the discursive and non-discursive multiplicity of knowledge systems in such as way that it becomes reified. Therefore it undermines multiplicity and instead a metanarrative, or a grand structure is created which rules out the ongoing search for truth in its specificity. In South Africa the reification of power-relations and the presentation of certain subjective knowledge-systems with regard to diversity as universal and everlasting truths, has allowed injustice to be presented as truth, while institutions of repression became the norm for stability and civilization. The Other was evaluated from the perspective of the norms of reified structures. Knowledge-systems that deviated from the Western norm, were branded "myths, fallacies, uncivilized, unjust, backward, irresponsible, unproductive, and not conducive to development". It became a vicious circle, the knowledge systems legitimizing the institutions and the institutions perpetuating the knowledge-system.

We now turn to the next domain of Foucault's genealogy, i.e. the self. Deleuze (1988:94) poses the question: If power constitutes truth, how can we conceive of a "power of truth" which would no longer be the truth of power, but a truth that would release transversal lines of resistance instead of integral lines of power? How do we "cross the line"? After his analysis of knowledge and power, Foucault seems to have found himself at an impasse -the impasse where power itself places us, in both our lives and our thoughts, as we run up against it in our smallest truths. We realize that all our truths and perceptions are only our own subjective grasps on a reality that on the one hand constitutes us, yet on the other hand constantly escapes us. This can be paralyzing, or liberating and empowering. Foucault proposes the latter.

In order to illustrate this, Foucault provides us with an analysis of some of the practices of the Greeks. Rather than ignoring interiority, individuality and subjectivity they invented the subject, but only as a derivative or the product of a "subjectivation". This is what they discover in the "aesthetic existence" - the doubling or relation with oneself, that which constitutes a free man. This relation to oneself, cannot be reduced to the power relations and relations between forms of knowledge that were the object of Foucault's previous work. He had to reorganize the whole system. Foucault indicates that just as power-relations can be affirmed only by being carried out, so the relation to oneself, which bends these power-relations, can only be affirmed by being carried out. The relation to oneself will not remain a zone independent of power-relations and relations of knowledge. It is not the withdrawn and reserved zone of the free man. Rather, it is to be understood in terms of power-relations and relations of knowledge. It will be reintegrated into these systems from which it was derived. The individual is coded or recorded within a "moral" knowledge, and becomes the stake in a power struggle. At the same time the individual is made subject to someone else by control and dependence, part of the processes of individuation and modulation which power installs, and the subject is also tied to his/ her own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge. The self will always resist codes and powers, and yet be constituted by it because the self is one of the points through which the power-relations pass (Deleuze 1988:103).

If one accepts the fact that power increasingly informs our daily lives, our interiority and our individuality and if it is true that knowledge itself has become increasingly individuated, forming the hermeneutics and codification of the desiring subject, what remains of our subjectivity? It seems as if nothing ever "remains" of the subject, since she or he is in fact created on each occasion, like a focal point of resistance, on the basis of the folds that subjectivize knowledge and bend each power. Does this force us down a nihilist impasse? It seems that Foucault had something else in mind. He identifies two current forms of subjection that have to be resisted. The first form consists of individualizing ourselves on the basis of the constraints that power imposes on us, while the other involves attracting each individual to a known and recognized identity, which is then fixed once and for all. Foucault proposes that instead of submitting to these forms of subjection we should commit ourselves to a struggle for subjectivity as a right to difference, variation and metamorphosis. "Memory" is the real name of the relation to oneself, yet it is not the brief memory that is the opposite of forgetting, but the absolute memory that is one with forgetting, since it is in itself endlessly forgotten and reconstituted (Deleuze 1988:107).

In the South African context we can draw on Foucault's ideas about "the care for the self as the practice of freedom". It provides us with a perspective on our subjectivity and our relationship to ourselves that opens creative and innovative possibilities. We can hardly argue away from the fact that power informs our daily lives, or that it had done so destructively in the past. But power need not only function as repression. That is the hope that Foucault's later works offer us. The struggle for subjectivity as a right to metamorphosis allows us to accept our past and our present without despairing about the future. It requires that we accept the fact that our knowledge, and therefore all our attempts to reach truth, will always remain partial, limited and contextualized. Furthermore it reminds us that power relations passes through us and that we are therefore constituted by it and in interaction with it. We are both its subject and object, and we can therefore have the opportunity and ability to interact with it. We will never be the modern rational subject who creates the world in our own image, but we can expect to be part of the flux of force as it realizes itself in reality every day. The individual seems to be only one point in a

whole web of power-relations, but at the same time exercises his/ her freedom as a force in itself, which co-determines these power-relations.

What does this mean in South Africa today? If we are going to pursue Foucault's ideas on subjectivity and the care for the self, we will have to go beyond an understanding of where we come from. Yes, we will have to question what ideas, what *telos* and what ideals determined our moral reasoning in the past. But instead of constantly trying to break free from the past we can in fact utilize memory as a strategy of forgetting. This will imply opening up the clutched fists with which we grasped our reality in the past. We do this by opening ourselves to the forces of finitude. Knowledge of the finitude necessarily brings new possibilities.

Foucault's analysis of the self helps us understand how individual South Africans' moral sensibilities could have been manipulated in the way that it had been during the years of Apartheid discrimination. Perhaps, if there had been a greater appreciation of the interactive nature of the relationship between the moral self, power, and knowledge, more people would have recognized how the reified "truths" of Apartheid orthodoxy restricted our vision on truly moral solutions to our society's problems.

Present day South Africa has a new set of orthodoxies and power relations have shifted, but old forms of subjection continue unabated in the places where South Africans work and worship. Diversity is still seen as a problem and strategies to deal with it more often than not involve the subjection of the individual's moral self to some form of moral consensus. South Africans could benefit a great deal from the kind of resistance to subjection that Foucault envisioned. A possible strategy would be to allow individuals' moral selves to be constituted and influenced by relations of power and knowledge in our organizations, while at the same time helping to establish and reform it. It is the goal of this dissertation to explore and utilize exactly this possibility.

1.5. Hypothesis and development of the argument:

It is the conviction of this dissertation that it is as detrimental to meaningful moral discourse to force individual opinions into totalizing moral rules and procedures, as it is to allow individual opinion and whim to rule in the workplace. Moral discourse must be dealt with in such a way that it allows the individual to take part in the development and continual revision of value-systems in the work place. At the same time, this process of moral value-creation must bind the individual to the organization and facilitate the development of mutual trust, responsibility and dedication to the common good.

The legacy of modernism is one of the considerable hurdles that have to be cleared on the way to a truly non-totalizing moral discourse. This dissertation will argue that because of the rationalist assumptions of "objective" moral decision-making, the world was divided into categories, life-spheres, gender boundaries etc. in order to make it rationally comprehensible, manageable and predictable. In general, people are reluctant to let go of seemingly universal structures indicating the boundaries between public and private, fact and value, reason and emotion. In explaining why we can't seem to let go of these universalizing structures that Kant and the modernist philosophers provided us with, Mark Taylor (1997:7) indicates that we as humans do need something to aspire to. He however believes that these things that we need to aspire to are transitory, and in this transitory web ethics and business can come together in temporary unions that is renegotiated as business changes and develops. The web is neither subjective nor objective and yet constitutes the matrix in which all subjects and objects are formed, deformed and reformed. One can use these insights to understand the interaction between individuals (with their unique configuration of values and perceptions) and business structures or organizations that exemplifies certain shared goals or interests. I believe that in this transitory union business goals and ethics become part of the same web, because individuals involved in the workplace brings various value-systems and interests with them and these very personalized, individual interests coexist with the shared goals, business goals, that the individuals shared with each other.

The reality of South African life reflects a combination of strong community values, personified in the notion of ""ubuntu" (you exist only in and through others) with strong individualist notions, personified in our rights-based constitution. The history of South African politics proves that there is no such thing as a value-free public sphere, or the "objective" pursuit of business goals. It is also clear that South Africans certainly do not fit the profile of the unencumbered "transcendental subject". Rather, South African moral agents must be understood as moral *bricoleurs*, who draw on a variety of value-systems when making moral decisions. This point will be argued in detail in chapter 2, when we will go into the notion of the nature of South Africans' identity and the variety of factors that influence their moral decision-making. The insights developed in chapter 2 also shed light on why certain ways of dealing with diversity have met with only limited success. Diversity is a phenomenon that exists not only among groups, but also among and within unique individuals.

In discussing possible ethical approaches, it will become clear that because of South Africa's unique contextual challenges, not all ethical approaches will serve South Africa well. Chapter 3 will evaluate various approaches, and also explore some combination of certain of the ethical approaches. For instance, the Integrative Social Contract Theory (ISCT) attempts to adjudicate certain interests within a contractualist model. This chapter will indicate that most of the traditional philosophical approaches to business ethics with their contextless emphasis on abstract principles and rational reasoning no longer offer adequate strategies for moral discourse in a pluralistic environment. Yet, one has to acknowledge that an either-or approach to dealing with the problems of moral discourse in the work place will not fare any better. What is needed in the current context of moral deliberation is a strategy that combines the best of what philosophy has to offer within a broad framework of a pragmatic strategy that marries the substantive with the procedural, fact with value and rational and emotive considerations.

To merely indicate the problematic nature of certain ethical approaches within the South African context will however not assist us in coming up with a contextualized alternative. Some alternative insights from postmodern literature may prove useful in developing a

pragmatic framework for finding moral unity amidst diversity in the work place. Therefore, Chapter 4 will be devoted to the exploration of some alternative approaches to the functioning of moral reasoning and how that might enable us to understand how individuals can function morally within broader systems without dissolving their individual moral beliefs. We will investigate the notions of openness and concern for the Other as developed in twentieth century French philosophy. Also included will be a number of interdisciplinary explorations into developments within the fields of 20th century American and Continental philosophy, 20th century physics and information technology and developments in the biological sciences.

These insights will provide a basis for the development of a very basic and preliminary framework for moral discourse in contemporary South African organizations in Chapter 5. It will also be indicated how this framework relates to other insights in the current business ethics debate. In doing so, reference will be made to the work of influential writers such as Frederick, Hoffman, Driscoll, Weaver and Trevino. Since such a framework has to be able to function within the constraints of the current organizational context, its viability will be assessed in terms of current trends within the "postmodernism and organizations" debate.

To illustrate the practical value of this theoretical framework for the process of moral deliberation in South African organizations, Chapter 6 will discuss case studies of three different South African organizations. Interviews were conducted with the Christian managers of these organizations to find out how they deal with moral values in the workplace. The way in which their approaches reflect the trends in contemporary organizational theory will be analyzed. Their strategies for dealing with moral values in the workplace will also be discussed in terms of the framework suggested in Chapter 5. Finally a number of practical suggestions as to how moral discourse in these organizations may be improved or enhanced will be provided.

Chapter 2: How moral decision-making operates in the South African workplace

In a pluralistic working environment it is very important to understand why people disagree about moral values and why their moral decision-making processes are so complex and difficult to analyze and predict. In this chapter the way in which individual identity operates and influences individuals' moral decision-making in the workplace, will be examined. The ambiguities and uncertainties arising from complex identity configurations and the variety of factors influencing moral decision-making will be described in order to give us a clear picture of what the challenges will be regarding the creation of a meaningful moral discourse within a pluralistic working environment. The chapter will describe the individual as moral *bricoleur* operating in the context of various value-systems and very specific working environments. The variety of factors influencing moral decision-making will be discussed in terms of three broad categories of influences, i.e. individual factors, organizational factors and national and international factors. These complex value-configurations operating within the individual as *moral bricoleur*, complicate moral discourse in the workplace to such an extent that some of the more common strategies for dealing with moral values in the workplace are proving inadequate (as will be indicated in Chapter 3).

2.1. Individual identity and South Africans as moral *bricoleurs*:

Individual differences in moral reasoning in pluralistic organizations are often understood in terms of salient features such as culture, religion, gender and sexuality. These features supposedly designate distinct groups with distinct communal identities. It is my contention however that one should steer clear of explaining differences between people's moral values and behavior in terms of broad categories such as culture, religion, gender or sexuality. Instead I would argue that each individual is a unique configuration of various values that originate from a variety of diverse value-systems. The individual draws on this unique set of values when he or she or has to make a moral decision. This presupposes a view of identity that sees the individual as more than just the sum-total of the characteristics of group(s) that he or she belongs to.

Lötter (1998: 179) describes how people define, construct and change their personal identities to make themselves unique individuals. He views personal identity as a very individual configuration of diverse components. What make people unique are the diverse components that they can use in an endless variety of ways to construct their own identities. Components within these configurations relate to the person's perceptions and feelings about his/ her body, talents and abilities, cultural, communal and familial values, religion, developmental stage and age group. These components are also part and parcel of the unique way each individual makes moral decisions.

To elevate one of these components to the only or dominant narrative structure, within which identity is to be understood, would be to create a metanarrative that continuously subjects the "Other" to limited frames of reference. This can only lead to distortions. Each individual belongs to many episodic "communities", with various different discourses in which value-systems must be brought into play. Foucault provides us with a comprehensive critique of the limitations and dangers of categorizing people into rigid frameworks. These frameworks or frames of references are directly related to the power configurations operating in society and are therefore characteristics of our own prejudices, interests and fears. Once the limits and boundaries of our own interpretations of others become clear in terms of our own identity and prejudices, it becomes possible to reframe our own identities and those of others. This process of reframing allows for more than one set of characteristics or explanations when it comes to explaining moral behavior. For the moment though, Foucault's views on identity are also helpful in understanding diversity and its impact on morality.

Foucault's philosophical analyses corroborate the idea of individual identity as a complex set of temporary configurations. When explaining how individual identity operates, Foucault (1994:xxxix) is quoted as saying: *"I would like it to be an elaboration of the self by the self, a studious transformation, a slow and arduous transformation through a constant care for the truth."* In explaining the politics of identity Foucault (1994:166) says: *"If we are asked to relate to the question of identity, it must be an identity to our unique selves. But*

the relationship we have to have with ourselves are not ones of identity, rather, they must be relationships of differentiation, of creation, of innovation." MacNay (1994:9) indicates that Foucault's ethics of the self is not oriented towards the recovery of an essential inner identity, but towards an exploration of a myriad of potential identities and ways of existing in the world. Foucault's critique of the constitutive subject of thought, developed during his archaeological phase, proclaims that there does not exist any prediscursive subject that can be located as the origin of meaning. The notion of a unified subject is an illusion generated through structural rules that govern discursive formations. The technique of archaeology - the disclosure of latent, deep-level structures that constitute the condition or possibility of all thought and speech - represents a powerful attack on the subjectivism of phenomenological and biographical approaches to intellectual history.

Van der Ven (1998:108) also pleads for the acknowledgement of the importance of what he calls the dialogical self. The dialogical self as he explains it embodies the voices that represent the various roles an individual plays in different social institutions, roles that may be associated with divergent and even antagonistic convictions, values and norms. This dialogical self can only be viewed as dangerous to the conception of a normal, well-adapted self if the ideal self is conceived of as a whole, united self, which holds its own substance, exists independently, and acts autonomously. If the substantialist conception of the self is replaced by what is called a "distributed self", [a self that is distributed, as it were over various situations, positions and roles], one acknowledges the fact that the self fashions many and varied stories about living and acting in these situations and roles and relates them to others and to itself. This self consists in the diversity and plurality of meaning in these practices, both cross-situational and longitudinal. In telling stories, this distributed self also narrates tensions and conflicts that are the results of various situations and roles the individual enters into, the dialogues it has with itself and with others, and the agreements it reaches with others and with itself. Van der Ven (1998:109) understands socialization as the socialization of the "dialogical self" or "distributed self" and moral socialization as the socialization of the "morally dialogical self" or "morally distributed self".

It seems however, that because of the restricted, substantialist conception we used to hold of identity and the self, we do not really allow ourselves and others to be "dialogical" or "distributed" selves. Instead, we tend to categorize people along binary oppositions. For instance, one of the problems inherent in the way men and women communicate with each other and work together, is the fact that we as humans tend to categorize ourselves and others in terms of restrictive conceptions of the self in an attempt to make the world and interaction between people more predictable.

The postmodern decentralization of the rational subject relativized the priority placed on unity, consistency and rationality as the norms for a well-functioning individual. In fact, feminists pointed out that many of our ideas were basically modeled on the male persona and therefore ruled out elements traditionally considered female, such as emotion, intuitiveness, responsibility and care (see the section on moral development later on in chapter 2 for more detail). Some female respondents in Mills' (1993:143) study on how women deal with gender expectations at work, indicated that they attempt to overcome traits traditionally considered female when entering a professional traditionally associated with males. On the other hand, some others see themselves as positive agents of change, for instance female lawyers improving the law through their female characteristics. Both these responses however indicate that stereotypical categories based on traditional traits and modes of behavior still very much define and guide the debate on gender in the workplace. It seems there is no real deconstruction of the stereotypical descriptions of gender differences in the workplace.

Many contemporary thinkers are challenging the use of gender categories to the core of its sexist assumptions, indicating how certain discourses have been isolated and subjugated in the past. Foucault (1994:41) indicates that the postmodern debate has led to the resurgence of various kinds of "subjugated knowledges". "Subjugated knowledges" refer to at least two things. In the first place it refers to the historical contents that have been buried and disguised in functionalist coherence or formal systemization. Secondly, "subjugated knowledges" also refer to a whole set of knowledge that has been disqualified as inadequate to its task or insufficiently elaborated: naive knowledge, located low down on

the hierarchy, beneath the required level of cognition or scientificity. This involves popular knowledge, though it is far from general commonsense knowledge. On the contrary it is a particular, local, regional knowledge, a differential knowledge incapable of unanimity. This knowledge are concerned with historical knowledge of struggles and the painful memories associated with it.

Mills (1993:137) describes how the language of organizational discourse is reinforced by a number of disciplinary practices through which youngsters are 'schooled' for their role as (gendered) organizational subjects. Schooling in the 20th century has primarily focused on the preparation of children for the world of work. These processes of gender socialization are particularly acute during adolescence. Intersecting discourses concerning sexuality, domestic location and organizational destination are part of developing a gender identity in that it assists the individual in coming to terms with such things as physical sexual maturity, relationships with the other sex, and future options with regard to vocation and marriage. For instance a distinction is made in the way that women are educated to "be", while men are educated to "do". Females are taught to "be" wives and mothers, but males are taught that there are numerous things they have to do if they are to earn and re-earn masculinity. Disciplinary practices can for instance support these stereotypes that correspond with traditional sexist organizational roles.

It has to be acknowledged however, that this type of analysis runs the very serious risk of supporting and affirming the very stereotypes it is trying to eradicate. It does so by stressing the differences between men and women in terms of familiar gender characteristics and categories, instead of superceding such sexual stereotypes. Mills (1993:146) argues that stressing "women's" rights might contribute to the essentialist notion of women. Feminists also depend partially on Enlightenment ideals in the way claims to and visions of gender justice have been formulated. Innate or essential human properties such as natural rights, due process, and equality form the basis of many of these arguments. Mills (1993:146) suggests that this problem should be dealt with by initiating the parallel processes of questioning political, personal and organizational agendas. One should develop

change strategies that challenges sexist and political bias while at the same time encouraging people to periodically interrogate their sense of gendered selves.

In terms of diversity in the workplace, mention is often made to the so-called glass ceiling that keeps women from achieving high-level management positions. I would like to argue that the glass ceiling is located first and foremost in us, in our own conceptions about the "Other", which is mostly revealed in terms of us-them terminology or as it is also called, binary oppositions. But are these binary oppositions not the cages that keep us captive from others, and even from ourselves? Even staunch feminists such as Carol Gilligan (1982) still resort to binary distinctions between male and female patterns of moral reasoning - men reason according to an ethics of justice, and women reason according to an ethics of care, the details of which will be dealt with in detail later on in this chapter. She does acknowledge the fact that both sexes use patterns of moral reasoning, but never goes further to question why it might be the case that girls *mostly* tend to favor the ethics of care perspective and men *mostly* favor the ethics of justice perspective. The terms of the "mostly", the specificity of the exceptions, are never pursued. Thus even she resorts to essentialism of "the way women are and think" and "the way men are and think". Much of these essentialisms are based on our perception and awareness of the physical differences between men and women. But we hardly ever question whether these physical differences have not prejudiced us in such a profound way that we built discrimination into the way we think, talk, act and perceive one another. For instance, the associations that stereotypical "feminine" characteristics such as sensitivity, emotionality, responsibility and care sometimes have may lead to women not being considered for managerial positions, because they are considered too weak, or too emotional, or too involved in personal relationships and responsibilities to focus on their work. Many young women are being denied the possibility of promotion because their employers fears that they may have children and become less committed to their work. One can hardly deny that there are definite differences between men and women and the world may just be a better place because of it. Yet, do we ever examine our most deep-seated prejudices in order to create real space for the "Other" in this world? Do we allow the "Other" to move between multiple identities, as Mary Gentile (1995:11) describes it, or in Van der Ven (1998) terms, to dialogically negotiate their beliefs

and opinions with others and with themselves, to associate and dissociate freely with groups, to realize all the potential that is seated in the "distributed self"?

My thesis is that because of the way in which identity operates, dealing with diversity in the workplace should not be limited to attempts to divide the workforce into distinct groups divided along cultural, language or gender lines. Rather, each individual should be acknowledged as a unique configuration of various value-systems. This will mean that it would be impossible to describe the moral values, assumptions or predisposition of a distinct group in order to predict behavior of the individual belonging to that group. Instead, one will have to contend with the fact that individuals may make unpredictable, even incommensurable decisions when faced with a moral dilemma because of the fact that he or she is a very unique configuration of various value-systems. Depending on the situation, the individual might even decide to reverse previous moral judgments or to incorporate some other perspectives into his or her moral reasoning. This means that the individual can never be depicted as a static or fixed identity, whose behavior will become predictable in due course. Under certain circumstances a young African, female employee might draw more strongly on certain traditional values in her evaluation of a moral dilemma, whereas in another situation, she might decide to override her traditional sentiments in favor of her professional ambitions, and career opportunities. In another phase of her life, she might decide that her gender and her desire to have children override her career ambitions, etc. One could refer to this process of drawing on various value-systems in various circumstances as "changing gears". The fact that individuals might "change gears" in the workplace leads to unpredictability and volatility, but also to creativity and innovation.

In a pluralistic workplace, where individuals with "distributed selves" or "dialogical selves" interact, moral dissensus is inevitable. However, plurality and diversity should be seen as a positive resource in dealing with moral issues in the workplace. Instead of overcoming the discomfort with differences by suppressing plurality, Streng (1993) argues that differences are significant and that the need to consider these differences informs the manner in which moral communities develop. As Streng (1993:93) puts it: *"Only by taking the present conflicts and differences seriously can we develop the character dispositions,*

the "virtues," including the intellectual and emotional skills, to handle the "otherness" of other people." Because the information revolution has made us all neighbors in a shrinking world, we must deal with differences and conflicts through sensitivity instead of a dichotomizing flight-or-fight mentality. We must allow difference to infuse each situation and when consensus ensues episodically, we must refrain from embodying this temporary consensus into a new local consensus that must necessarily guide all the following episodes. The alternative to taking differences and concrete contexts seriously is to create abstract universal principles, which in fact in themselves also embody certain power relations and subjective interests, even though they are presented as timeless, value-free truths. This argument is supported by the analysis of traditional ways of dealing with business ethics in Chapter 3.

The dangers of abstract categories and binary oppositions become apparent in the way it influences our thinking about one another in the workplace. Iris Young (1990:171) speaks of the oppressive character of group difference if we define it as absolute otherness, mutual exclusion, and categorical opposition. In terms of this logic one group always occupies the position of the norm, against which all others are measured. An alternative to this approach of essentializing, stigmatizing and treating differences as oppositions, is to understand difference as specificity or variation. In this logic, group differences should be perceived of as relational rather than defined by substantive categories and attributes. In this relational understanding, the meaning of difference becomes contextualized. Group differences will be more or less salient depending on the situation.

This strategy of developing an understanding of the characteristics in play in a specific context, may enable us to actualize this relational understanding of difference. Young (1990:172) argues that what makes a group a group is a social process of interaction and differentiation in which some people come to have a certain affinity. My "affinity group" in a specific situation comprises those people with whom I feel most comfortable, who are more familiar. Affinity names the manner of sharing assumptions, affective bonding, and networking that differentiated groups from one another, but not according to some common

nature. The salient feature of a person's group affinities may shift according to the social situation or the changes in his or her life.

Pieterse (1996:55) indicates the immense contribution that the "politics of difference" of Young, Rutherford, Soja, Hooper etc. makes to the postmodern debate. An important aim of the "politics of difference" is the struggle for the broadening of numerous/multiple spaces to name, expose and challenge the socialized assumptions that enable certain groups or individuals to remain in power. Instead of claiming to have discovered identity or plurality politics, postmoderns indicate that "identities" are not fixed or static. As Pieterse (1996:57) puts it: *"Even the obvious ones (identities) such as race, gender and sexuality are profoundly ambiguous, unstable and fluid. Anti-essentialism in terms of identity politics is critical to avoid simplistic and dichotomous understandings about groups."* A postmodern approach to identity constitutes an attempt at transcending engraved essentialisms of modernist-identity politics. It visualizes a world in which multiple subjects with many, changeable identities are located in varying (also changeable) subject positions. Many critics find relativism and flux of this way of dealing with identity and truth unlivable. I do not agree. In my opinion this life-style and mind-set represents a very viable alternative for a pluralist society such as South Africa. As Pieterse (1996:61) argues - it will not only challenge Christians in South Africa to humility and modesty, but it will also enable all South Africans to become translators and negotiators.

What I would like to plead for at this stage is that we acknowledge that identity is constituted by the unique configurations of various traits, perceptions, assumptions and value-systems within the individual. We therefore have to allow the individual to draw upon the wealth of all the various value-systems within his/ her identity when making moral decisions. Stout (1988:293) describes a *moral bricoleur* as someone who makes a selective reappraisal and an eclectic reconfiguration of traditional linguistic elements in the hope of solving the moral issue at hand. Stout (1981) uses the Wittgensteinian family-concept in reference to various types of moral reasoning. Through engaging in dialogue with other moral traditions, we are enabled to recognize something of the relations of one family of moral language in another tradition. Often our moral language is made up of various

fragments. We, for instance, combine elements of our religious value-systems, such as obedience to God, with cultural and political value-systems such as an ethic of rights. Thus I would like to adopt Stout's designation of "the moral *bricoleur*" for the moral agent who, after being exposed to various value-systems and after being exposed to the "Other" through unapologetic dialogue, draws on the unique configuration of values that make up his/her web of beliefs. In my opinion morality in the workplace depends on this day-to-day discourse, which is the sphere in which an individual's configuration of values comes into interaction with other individuals' configuration. This intersubjectivity is like a turning kaleidoscope in which the moral *bricoleurs* unconsciously changes his/her configuration by episodically making use of all the various value systems that make up his/her configuration. In certain episodes the individual may for example make use of both western and African values, combining these with capitalist and feminist values to address the need of that specific episode. In another episode economic or political values will be underplayed whilst the cultural and the sexual may function stronger. This mix of values is what makes morality in the workplace interesting but also unavoidably difficult to predict.

The notion of the moral *bricoleur* should not be misunderstood as a return to radical individualism. In terms of our new liberal democracy, South Africa's post-Apartheid society has to determine what the role and place of the individual is going to be, and how this individual should relate to collective norms. In this process, we have to guard against notions of the individual transcendental subject with its claim to objective rationality and contextless freedom. A strong emphasis on human rights can lead to moral problems if it results in egoistic individualism. Alasdair MacIntyre (1988) describes the difficulties that often accompany individualism. He calls modern individuals "ghostly selves", since they lack any strong community context within which their moral value systems are grounded. He argues that moral discourse becomes incomprehensible, since the shared meanings and virtues of a community no longer affect the individuals who live in it significantly.

Robert Bellah's (1985) *Habits of the Heart* exposes how individualism functions within the American community. He identifies two versions of individualism in American society. The first is utilitarian individualism, which primarily focuses on maximizing the financial and

social self-interest of the individual as an end in itself. This form of individualism produces entrepreneurs that create wealth, and managers that try to ensure optimum production and progress for their companies, in order to maximize the financial self-interest of its shareholders. The second form of individualism is expressive individualism. This type of individualism represents another version of the pursuit of self-interest, namely that which allows the individual the freedom to pursue the lifestyle and associations that he or she chooses. This form of individualism produces therapists, whose prime task is to help the autonomous individual to choose the roles and commitments she/he will make, not on the basis of higher truths but according to the criteria of life-effectiveness as the individual judges it (Bellah 1985:47).

Because of these two forms of individualism sharp distinctions are created between the public and the private sphere. The public sphere is where one pursues profit. The private sphere is where one can express one's own preferences and liking in what Bellah calls "lifestyle enclaves". These enclaves supposedly compensate you for the time, effort and social interaction that one sacrifices in one's working life, by allowing one to choose one's "lifestyle", the community where one wants to live, the people one wants to associate with, and the social activities one wants to engage in. Two criteria of the "good" underlie these two forms of individualism. Both forms of individualism are however based on a cost-benefit analysis of individual gains. In the case of utilitarian individualism, the good is more external in nature, i.e. a good income and financial progress. Expressive individualism on the other hand, finds the good in the notion of "feeling good", or experiencing oneself as free, comfortable, and authentic.

Bellah (1985:154) considers individualism the "first language" of American moral life. The communities individuals participate in are described as "practices of commitment" which form their "second language". Where the cost-benefit analysis of individualism breaks down in explaining their behavior, Americans "invent" second languages out of the failing fragments of their first language. For instance, Bellah (1985:157) describes the case of a man who came to a point in his life at which he decided to put his marriage and family life before his career. When asked about the reason for his change of perspective, the .

individual replied: *"Proceeding through all these stages in life together.... It makes life meaningful and gives me the opportunity to share with somebody, have an anchor, if you will, and understand where I am. That for me is a real relationship".* According to Bellah (1985:157) the individual is struggling to express his marriage as a community of memory and hope, a place where he is not empty, but which essentially defines who he is.

According to Bellah (1985:79) the individuals he talked to used the term "values" to refer to those incomprehensible, rationally indefensible ideals they choose when they have thrown off the last vestiges of external influence to reach pure, contentless freedom. These ideals correspond with Michael Sandel's idea of the ideal self, which is "unemcumbered" in its absolute freedom. Bellah (1985:80) considers the language of "values" as it is commonly used as self-contradictory precisely because it is not a language of value, or moral choice. It presumes the existence of an absolutely empty unencumbered and improvisational self. Bellah therefore chooses not to use the term "value" at all if possible.

The question that one should however ask is whether the American use of the term "value" is not precisely an indication of the grave problems associated with individualism and the type of cost-benefit analysis that supports it. When confronted with questions concerning their values, people can only offer individual preferences as to how to achieve the greatest wealth or the greatest personal satisfaction. This is indeed a sign of an impoverished moral culture. Bellah's analysis indicates that in the American society sharp divisions exist between the facts of the business world and the process of profit-generation, and the fuzzy world of values. It is clear that this exaggerated emphasis on the individual also supports other dualisms such as public versus private, and rational versus intuitive, which has important implications for ethical reasoning. In analyzing the South African workplace, this dissertation will argue that these dualisms does not correspond with the reality of South African life, and that it should therefore not be used as parameters within which employers and employees attempt to establish normative guidelines for the workplace. The strong distinction that is often made between the economic world and the private world of moral values is artificial and meaningless, since both are often operative within the same environment. Economic values, like moral values, attempt to mediate the best possible "good"

for all those involved. Cases which involve sacrificing the interest of one party for the sake of maximizing the interests of another, amounts not only to immorality, but also in the long run to bad business.

Why is it so important to realize that the moral *bricoleur* is not synonymous to the modernist individualist self? In the first place, the moral *bricoleur* needs precisely his or her connectedness to various value-systems to have something to draw on when making moral decisions. Secondly, radical individualism creates subjectivist closure, within which it becomes impossible for the self to meet the Other. It also becomes impossible to recognize and utilize ambivalences and difference within the self. An analogy can be drawn between Derrida's notion of the deconstruction of texts and the interaction between the various value-systems in play in the individuals and between individuals. Differing value-systems and deliberations about the "good" in a particular situation may lead to conflicts, either internally within a single individual, or in the interaction between individuals. This interaction can play a very valuable role in the process of developing the moral self.

Derrida's (1981) theory of **deconstruction** is helpful in understanding what can be achieved by unapologetic dialogue, in which parties freely put their current ideas and value-configurations on the table and allow other individuals to do the same. He (1981:12) describes the benefits of the "general strategy of deconstruction" as follows: *"The latter [the general strategy of deconstruction] is to avoid both simply neutralizing the binary oppositions of metaphysics and simply residing within the closed field of oppositions, thereby confirming it".* In the process of confrontation between different cultural and religious understandings of virtue, our own moral viewpoints must be put on the table unapologetically, but with the openness to allow other moral viewpoints to deconstruct our own. It is of course possible, indeed desirable, that this will be a process of mutual learning, understanding and renegotiation and that the other participants will also find themselves addressed and changed by the interaction. It should however not be the goal of participants within the moral discourse to polemically convince the other person (s) of his or her view. The goal is not to establish a single, mutually sanctioned truth, but to engage in a process of mutual understanding and learning. Deconstruction should also not be understood as the

total dismantling of our morality, but as an opportunity to understand the limited nature of all subjective value-systems, thereby making self-transcendence possible. What is required is the willingness to expose the depth of one's own convictions while recognizing the depth - if not accepting the formulations - of another person's convictions. In a global context authentic individual virtue is measured in terms of an individual's ability to learn, to cultivate "taste", to evaluate, and to place specific events in perspective. Streng (1993:100) indicates the value of this approach: *"The difference between this kind of cultivation and what we earlier called an 'imperial' incorporation of strangers into an essentialist normative tradition is that the skill development, the cultivation of character dispositions, requires multiple experiences within oneself and among people."*

The idea of the moral *bricoleur* implies a move away from foundationalism towards a neo-pragmatic way of dealing with moral decision-making. The main objection to neo-pragmatism is the perception that it promotes relativism. Reeder (1993:193) however argues that neo-pragmatism agrees with relativism that there are no ahistorical foundations, but that it insists, contrary to relativism, that the building blocks of moral systems are not arbitrary. Both foundationalism and relativism make the mistake of assuming that we reason solely from general principles or criteria to more specific judgments. On the neo-pragmatist account general principles or criteria do not require any justification independent of their relation to specific judgment, because justification consists of a dialectic between judgments in specific cases and the application of generalizations to new cases in the light of which the generalizations themselves are modified. The neo-pragmatist will also deny that moral systems are conceptual schemes into which we are locked to such an extent that it is impossible to translate or understand other moral systems. Reeder (1993:194) argues that given the possibility of the enrichment of our own moral language through the process of learning another scheme as a new language, it is always possible, although often difficult, to achieve understanding. Our hope does not lie in a moral Esperanto that will replace our diverse and particular moralities, but rather in partial agreements. The goal should not be to develop widely shared justifications. It is important to realize that neo-pragmatism does not rule out the search for grounds for our most general beliefs. It also allows for certain universals as a basis for understanding. Neo-pragmatism appreciates the degree to which we

live in particular and diverse webs of meaning. This is why neo-pragmatism is a helpful perspective as to how a *moral bricoleur* make moral decisions.

I would like to argue that in South Africa a moral agent could hardly be anything but a *moral bricoleur*. Not only are South Africans exposed to a great variety of diverse value-systems that infuse their identity, but they are also often exposed to a wide variety of unique circumstances. These influences, both inside and outside of the organization, play an important role in their moral reasoning. People often argue that economic considerations, political agendas, policy decisions and general business activities operate in a sphere quite distinct from one's private moral considerations. In this view, morality only refers to those behavioral guidelines provided by one's religion or culture and they mostly refer only to one's private interpersonal relationships. Public morality is guided by certain constitutional (legal) parameters and therefore has certain minimalist values built into a procedural system and seldom requires much substantive deliberation and evaluation. Modernist dichotomies between fact and value, and between public and private have not only been severely criticized from a philosophical point of view, it also ran into very concrete difficulties in our previous political dispensation. How many times did we not hear justifications of acts of violence and deceit in terms of these distinctions at the hearings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission? Individuals applying for amnesty were regularly making the claim that the immoral acts they were committing or required to commit as part of their professional or political life did not in any way influence their private lives, their relationships with family and friends, or their commitment to their religion.

2.2. Factors that influence moral decision-making in the workplace:

When we speak about moral values we must constantly be asking ourselves the question: What considerations, relations and behavior is part of what we view as "morality". I would suggest the following parameters: Moral consideration is the process by which one tries to take into account what one's decisions, words, actions, or dispositions imply for the balance of one's own interest with those of other people, the environment, God or a supreme being. In determining this balance one has to take into account one's perception of the "good" and

how it can be realized. Moral values are those values that translate one's perception/ view of the Good Life into concrete opinions, words and actions. This definition excludes the Kantian view of moral values as universal constructs which proposes that one should be able to universalize one's moral beliefs to all similar situations. This critique of Kant's theory will be substantiated in detail in chapter 3. I believe in the singularity of the moment of moral decision-making. Moral values are specifically chosen priorities in accordance with which one weighs the interests of all the various parties involved in a concrete context or situation.

We get a glimpse as to what this may mean when we read that for Foucault as a thinker, the ethical substance, the prime material of moral conduct, is the "Will to truth". The will to truth is interpreted as "the way that the individual has to constitute this or that part of himself as the prime material of his moral conduct" (Rabinov 1994:xxix). Foucault hoped to reinvent a mode of subjectivation in which this ethos would be a practice of thought formed in direct contact with social and political realities. Rabinov (1994: xi) makes the following assertion as to the way in which Foucault viewed ethics: *"Norms are active states; error is a condition of truth"*. If we accept the fact that norms should no longer be viewed in abstract, universal terms, but instead as part of an individual's search for truth in a specific situation, we should also acknowledge that various factors may influence the way in which the interests of various parties are weighed during moral decision-making. If this is the case, these factors are an integral part of all normative deliberations.

Within the context of moral deliberation in the workplace, I have identified the following relevant factors: **individual factors** including age, personality, education, career development and ambitions, moral reasoning patterns and moral character, financial position, social structure; culture, religion, and political alliance; **organizational factors** such as organizational structure and systems, culture and history, remuneration, career planning, skills development and training, and ethics and compliance programs; **national and international factors** such as political systems, trust in the government and public service, development issues, economic pressures, legacies and prejudices, civil society initiatives and business culture, North-South divisions, and globalization and multinationals.

These factors influence the way in which morality is concretely expressed through context specific interpretations of moral values. As such they are of pivotal importance in the process of moral consideration. For instance, someone whose financial position is such that it influences his or her ability to feed his or her children, may give priority to financial considerations in deciding whether or not to take bread from the shop where he or she works without permission. Financial considerations have very specific moral implications and could influence the way in which the individual defines honesty, justice, and loyalty in a specific situation. One could hardly argue against the fact that when one takes something, either secretly or by force, that does not belong to you, you are being dishonest. But when one tries to argue for the maxim of justice here one runs into difficulties: Justice for whom, to whom, against whom? Does justice say everyone who work should have the right to eat? But shouldn't it then also demand the right to work for everyone? Should one not be able to expect from justice the right to earn a living and provide for one's children? But could justice provide the conditions within which all of this would be possible? It is clear that there are no simple answers to these questions. The demands of loyalty display similar complications: To whom should one be loyal? Does loyalty to one's children legitimize disloyalty to one's employer? In the end one has to choose how to define justice and loyalty and whether honesty should be one's primary consideration. These concrete questions will determine the meaning of justice in any specific context. Abstract generalizations about the value and importance of justice have no real contextual moral meaning.

2.2.1. Individual factors:

- **Personality:**

Since this is not a psychological study, it will not go into too much detail about the influence of various personality traits on moral decision-making. Suffice to say that researchers have suggested that certain personality traits may influence ethical behavior. These traits include ego strength, Machiavellianism and locus of control. Socialization also plays a role in an individual's ethical behavior and co-determines his or her value-system and style of moral decision-making (Van Zyl & Lazenby 1999: 15). Fritzsche (1997:89) described a number of relevant personality variables in detail. He identifies three personality traits that acts as

moderators of an individual's personal values in decision-making activities. They are ego strength, field dependence, and locus of control. Ego strength is actually another term for self-confidence and is strongly associated with personal beliefs. A person with high ego strength relies more on his/ her own values and is therefore less likely to be influenced by others. Field dependence refers to the extent to which an individual tends to make use of information provided by others to clarify issues when situations are ambiguous. People with a high field-dependency may therefore make decisions in the workplace that are likely to deviate from similar decisions they would make outside the organization when they do not have access to others' information. Field independent persons are more likely to limit the information they use in making decisions to information they already own (Fritzsche 1997:91). Locus of control reflects people's understanding of the control they have over life's events. An "external" believes that destiny, fate or luck controls life's events. An "internal" believes that he/ she can control life's events by his/ her own actions. Persons with an internal locus of control are more likely to feel a sense of responsibility for results and are more inclined to rely on personal values to guide their behavior (Fritzsche 1997:91). These variables cannot explain an individual's moral decision-making on their own. They always function in interaction with a variety of other factors that influence the individual.

- **Moral development:**

Various theories on moral development have been formulated in various disciplines. Psychological, educational and cultural explanations abound. In order to illustrate the way in which moral development could influence individual moral decision-making, I am going to look at two theories concerning moral development. The first, by Kohlberg, is a linear theory that suggests a certain progression in the development of individual moral reasoning. The second, by Gilligan, criticizes the assumptions of Kohlberg's theory and advocates an alternative of looking at moral development. Steward and Sprinthall (1991:249) see Kohlberg's analysis as a good description of the different phases of moral development. I will briefly indicate some of the difficulties pertaining to the issue of moral decision-making that may be encountered in each phase.

Stage 1   Concern for obedience and punishment

Problem: The individual tends to fear legal penalties, but finds loopholes

Stage 2   Concern for co-operation with others for the benefit of self-interest and reciprocity

Problem: Since bargains are struck in self-interest, he/she tends to sell to the highest bidder

Stage 3   Concern for enduring personal relationships

Problems: Conflicts of interest and risks of nepotism may arise

Stage 4   Concern for law and duty

Problem: No discretion can be allowed and this leads to inefficiency because of reliance on systems and red-tape

Stage 5   Principled reasoning

Problem: Hypothetical reasoning, tend to idealize and set too high ideals, cannot bring principle to shed light on specific situation

Kohlberg's assumptions with regard to the characteristics of mature moral reasoning and successful moral decision-making could be criticized for the way in which they inhibit women from making their contribution on equal terms. Although Kohlberg's description of the development of moral reasoning skills has long been hailed as an excellent analysis of development towards moral maturity, his critics accuse him of deliberately excluding women from his experiments, because they were displaying strategies of moral reasoning that didn't collaborate his theories.

Comprehensive criticism of Kohlberg's approach has been provided by feminists such as Carol Gilligan. Gilligan suggests that there are different ways in which people perceive moral problems. These differences reflect the different dimensions of human relationships that give rise to moral concern. Gilligan (1988:74) poses the idea of the "ethics of care", as opposed to the "ethics of justice" of Kohlberg. The justice perspective draws attention to problems of inequality and oppression and holds up an ideal of reciprocity and equal respect. The care perspective draws attention to problems of detachment or abandonment and holds up the ideal of attention and response to need. Though both sexes use both perspectives,

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the care focus on dilemmas are more often found amongst women and the justice amongst men. Gilligan (1988:82) argues that both perspectives represent mature moral reasoning and should be acknowledged as such.

In the case of the ethics of care it is impossible to describe such a strictly linear process of moral development. It involves a more random use of various considerations in order to provide care and concern in each specific situation. This phenomenon corresponds with the idea of *the moral bricoleur*, who makes use of various moral impulses in an eclectic way. The same individual may for instance draw on an ethics of justice in some situations and prefer to operate according to an ethics of responsibility and care in another situation. For instance, a female executive might subscribe totally to an ethics of justice in terms of certain working relationships, but might subordinate this ethos to an ethics of care if the needs and interests of the team she is responsible for are at stake. These internal conflicts often give rise to difficulties in terms of moral decision-making. In this respect it is also important to note that the justice focus and the care focus do not always support the same moral decision. Detachment, which is the mark of mature moral judgment in the justice perspective, becomes THE moral problem in the care perspective, i.e. the failure to attend to need.

The predominance of the justice perspective in public life can be attributed to various factors. Patriarchy has lead to systemic socio-economic and political injustices, and the restriction of women to the private sphere and child-rearing responsibilities. For centuries the place of women was in the home, and her views were generally seen as inferior to those of men because of her lack of education. Therefore the views of women and their moral arguments were systemically excluded from the public sphere. When operating in a business environment, within which the justice orientation dominates, women tend to react in one of two ways. The ones who enter into leadership positions may refrain from using arguments that reflect a care perspective in the workplace and adopt, and sometimes even excel, in the ethics of justice. The result is not only the impoverishment of the moral discourse because valuable perspectives and problem-solving suggestions are lost, but also in the compromising of these women's integrity as they have to silence some of the moral voices inside them.

Other women shy away from positions in which they will have to justify their moral decisions or give guidance to others. In these cases the organization loses valuable leadership potential and ends up alienating women who feel that the playing field is not as level as it is portrayed to be.

Addressing these problems will take more than a few gestures made towards women from a typical justice perspective, that is, by means of rhetoric of rights and equality and tokenism. A fundamental re-evaluation of the type of moral arguments that will be considered legitimate within the workplace is necessary.   Women should not be allowed into the workplace or into CEO positions on the basis of how well they can employ the male reasoning of the ethics of justice. They should be allowed to make alternative moral arguments based on relationships, care and responsibility for others, as well as justice reasoning, if they so choose. Gilligan's attempt to describe the elements that are excluded and repressed because of male dominance and the priority given to male standards however run the risk of reinforcing the stereotypical views that women possess characteristics and forms of reasoning that are totally distinct from men. Although Gilligan acknowledges that both men and women draw on the responsibility and care perspective in their moral reasoning, her work is often cited in a way that paradoxically tends to confirm stereotypical and discriminatory views of women. The point that Gilligan and others want to make is the recognition that various forms of discourse, reasoning and acting exist and that all individuals should have the freedom to employ whichever form they choose in every sphere of life.

- **Types of moral reasoning:**

Individuals may also make use of various types of moral reasoning, i.e. deontological or teleological or some combination of these. According to deontological reasoning certain moral rules or desirable behaviors are seen as ends in themselves. Immanuel Kant, the father of deontological theories, is well-known for his development of the Categorical Imperative. It is based on two basic precepts. The first is that it should be possible for anyone making a moral decision to universalize their own judgement as to what constitutes the morally correct behavior in a given situation to all similar situations that may arise in

future. The second precept of Kant's theory is that one should never treat another human being as a means to an end but always as an end in itself. Teleological reasoning prioritizes desirable outcomes. One of the most prominent exponents of teleology is Utilitarianism. Utilitarian moral reasoning is aimed at always maximizing the pleasure of the most people involved in any given situation, and minimize their pain and discomfort. There are many varieties of deontology and teleology, as well as a number of approaches that were developed in reaction to it such as ethical relativism and situational ethics. These theories will be discussed in depth in Chapter 3 in order to examine their most basic assumptions and to critically evaluate their applicability to the unique demands of the South African context. What is important here is to take note of the fact that these various patterns of moral reasoning play an important role in the way people make moral decisions.

In order to illustrate this, let us look at a simple example. Take, for instance, the way in which a Kantian and an Utilitarian may view taking home stationary from work for their children's use. The Kantian would immediately put this action to the universalization-test. If all employees were to take stationary home to their children, there would be none left at work. Furthermore, taking something that belongs to someone else amounts to stealing, and if stealing were to be made a universal maxim, there would be chaos. The Utilitarian may look at this situation from a completely different perspective. Taking home stationary does not harm the company in any direct way, since it is of very little monetary value, and the parent might compensate for the use of company property by working longer hours. It could be argued that kids should be compensated when their parents work longer hours, because they get to spend less time with them. This give-and-take approach therefore maximizes both the interests of the organization and the family, without hurting either.

- **Gender and sex:**

Lötter (1998:183) makes a distinction between sex and gender. Sex has a biological connotation and several physical characteristics and conditions have to be taken into account when determining someone's sex. In the case of gender, psychological and cultural connotations outweigh the biological considerations in the concept of sex. Gender refers to the way in which the individual appropriates, transcends, conforms or ignores the standards

of masculinity and femininity prevalent in society. In fact, it is thought that every individual has a certain degree of both masculinity and femininity and that the ratio of one or the other can vary in the same individual at different times. This complicates the way in which gender stereotypes can function as explanatory tools for predicting or explaining individual behavior.

A woman's gender may be one part of her identity, but she may also be an ambitious professional, a good golf player and a keen baseball supporter. Because it is one of the most obvious aspects of her identity, her gender may become the pre-eminent determining aspect of her role in an organization. Her employer's perceptions and expectations of her may therefore be based on stereotypical views about the abilities or characteristics of women. As a result she may be seen, for instance, as a good candidate for managing relationships in a supervisory capacity. However, she will probably not be invited to the occasion where the actual deals are being made or relationships of trust are being built on the golf course. When gender or cultural communities become the only or dominant narrative structure within which identity is understood, a metanarrative is created that continuously subjects the "Other" to pre-established explanatory and distorting tools. If gender could be reframed differently, employees, especially female employees, would be liberated to contribute far more to the organization than they are currently being allowed.

- **Cultural influences:**

In understanding the way in which culture influences moral decision-making in the workplace, various cultural aspects in terms of which individuals may differ from one another can be identified. Lane, DiStefano & Maznevski (1999:31) identify six basic issues within cultural value-orientation frameworks that could be identified within various societies throughout time. These six aspects may help us understand how an individual's cultural orientation could influence his or her moral decisions.. The six issues are as follows:
1) Relation to nature
2) Orientation to time
3) Belief about human nature

4) Mode of human activity

5) Relationships among people

6) Use of space

Before we look at the various ways in which these aspects are understood by various cultures and how they may influence moral discourse in the workplace, we should take note of how Lane, DiStefano & Maznevski (1999:31) sees culture. In their view culture is not a combination of the properties of the 'average citizen', or some modal personality, but rather, among other things, a set of likely reactions of citizens with a common mental programming. They therefore identify five caveats that has to be kept in mind when mapping out cultures:

The first caveat reminds us that variations exist in all cultures, and that there is therefore no such thing as cultural homogeneity. No culture is so simple that all members of that culture believe that only one way of dealing with an issue is appropriate in all situations. Rather, each culture may have an ordered preference of variations for solving a particular problem.

Secondly, Lane, DiStefano & Maznevski (1999:32) warn us that one should not confuse personality with culture. Confusing the individual level with the group or societal level is such a common error that it has been identified and named the ecological fallacy in the social sciences. It manifests itself in two ways: The first is a tendency to project the cultural values known to be held by a group onto an individual who is a member of that group. The second tendency is to project from individuals to groups. Both types of fallacies are forms of stereotyping and are to be consciously avoided. One should refrain from resorting to any one of two extremes. Culture is certainly relevant, but in no way deterministic.

The third caveat has to do with the fact that cultures are dynamic and therefore change over time.

Fourthly, culture should not necessarily be understood in terms of national culture or country. Various cultures and subcultures may exist in one country. Each of these may even have their own language. Lane, DiStefano & Maznevski (1999: 33) for instance point out that deaf Americans have their own language - American Sign Language.

The fifth caveat would have us remember that any one person can belong to many cultures simultaneously. One may for instance share a national, school, and gender culture at the same time.

The sixth and final caveat requires an acknowledgement that this framework itself represents and reflects a distinct orientation towards life, namely mastery, which will be discussed in more detail later on.

Lane, DiStefano & Maznevski's (1999:37) identify three possible variations in a culture's relation to nature. Cultures may have an attitude of subjugation towards nature, live in harmony with nature or seek mastery over nature. These attitudes may exert an important influence on people's professional lives. People with an attitude of subjugation to nature may, for instance, be more qualified, hesitant and vague in their goal-setting because they believe that certain things are inevitable and cannot be determined by us as humans. Someone with an attitude of mastery however, may be more specific, confident and unambiguous in his or her goal setting.

When it comes to cultures' orientation towards time, Lane, DiStefano & Maznevski (1999:39) identify three orientations, namely past oriented, present orientated and future orientated. When one considers traditional African cultures and certain eastern cultures one may have to add a cyclical orientation to time as well. These orientations to time influence the way in which people work. At work, people who are oriented towards the past may normally seek an extension of past behavior, while those orientated towards the present may seek short-term solutions and those oriented to the future may seek long-term solutions.

The third issue relates to variations in the way in which human nature is perceived. Cultures may view human nature as basically evil, as neutral or mixed, or as positive and good. Control systems, management style and organizational climate may all be influenced by a person's cultural orientation in this regard. If one believes that humankind's basic inclinations are fundamentally good, one would probably opt for loose, information-based control systems,

choose laissez-faire, participative management styles and prefer collaborative, informal organizational climates.

The fourth aspect that cultures differ on is their preferred mode of human activity. Lane, DiStefano & Maznevski (1999:43) distinguish three focuses of activity. The first is being, the second containing and controlling and the third is doing. The being mode has the following characteristics: it allows emotional decision-making, it prefers a feelings-based rewards system, is spontaneous and is satisfied with vague, feeling-based and intuitive measurement systems. In cultures that prefer containing and controlling actions, the decision-making criteria is rational, logic-based, concerned with balanced objectives as desired outcomes and prefers the use of complex, qualitative and broad measurement systems. The doing mode has pragmatic decision-making criteria, is results-orientated, compulsive and use simple, operational measurement systems.

Cultures also differ with regard to the way in which they view relationships among people. The three basic orientations described by Lane, DiStefano & Maznevski (1999:46) is hierarchical, group-orientated and individualistic. These orientations impact on organizational structure, communication and influence patterns, reward systems and teamwork within organizations. For instance, in cultures that have a hierarchical orientation, the organizational structure tends to be based on vertical differentiation, its communication is authority based, its rewards are status-based and its teamwork is regulated and formal. Culture who prefer individualistic relations opt for informal, flexible behavior vis-a-vis structures, their communication patterns are multiple, as-needed and open, their reward system is individually based and teamwork is voluntary and informal.

One more aspect with regard to which cultures may differ is their spatial orientation. Lane, DiStefano & Maznevski (1999:48) identify three possible orientations, namely private, mixed and public. Cultures with a private orientation prefer one-to-one and secret communication patterns, their office layout places emphasis on barriers and privacy and their interaction patterns are physically distant, one-to-one and serial. The public orientation in turn displays wide, open communication and influence patterns, they prefer

office layouts that are open and interactive and their interaction pattern is physically close, with frequently touching and engaging in multiple relations.

Lane, DiStefano & Maznevski (1999:49) argues that one may even be able to set up a complete integrated matrix to show how cultures that live in subjugation towards nature, will generally also be oriented to the past, believe that people are intrinsically evil, have a being mode of activity, prefer hierarchical structures and maintain a one-to-one, physically distant social orientation. Lane, DiStefano & Maznevski's framework is immensely helpful in mapping out differences in terms of distinct variables. However, one might question whether these variables always coincide with a particular cultural group's boundaries. It is not hard to imagine someone who, for instance, live in subjugation towards nature, yet displays a long-term time-orientation, and believes that all people are intrinsically good, while preferring the containing or controlling mode of activity, or individualistic relationships between people, with a strong sense of private space and one-to-one communication. Mapping out culturally influenced patterns of behavior is definitely interesting and can provide the basis for discussion amongst participants of different cultural groups, but an individual's behavior should not be limited to a predetermined space within the matrix. He or she should be allowed to freely locate him or herself in such a matrix by voluntarily associating or dissociating with the cultural frameworks they encounter or participate in, rather than being determined by them. If Lane, DiStefano & Maznevski's warning that cultural frameworks should not function as deterministic structures is to be heeded, one is better off not trying to predict how cultural orientations with regard to the six issues at hand coincide within the individual.

The oversimplified and deterministic use of culture as explanatory tool has become an especially pressing problem in the South African context. In South Africa easy recourse is often made to salient features such as culture in explaining individual moral behavior. Because of Apartheid indoctrination and a history of separate development, many stereotypes exists pertaining to cultural differences among South Africans. Differences do of course exist between people from different cultural backgrounds, but when culture is used as explanatory tool in explaining moral reasoning and moral decision-making, problems

become evident. Salient differences are isolated and lead to stereotypical views of individuals based on an essentialist approach to identity. One of the most common examples of using cultural differences to explain moral conflicts is that of so-called African time versus Western time. As a result of the fact that many black Africans grew up in an environment where time was not measured as accurately and did not have the same meaning as in a more linear, Western culture, their work ethics and reliability in terms of dead-lines and appointments, are often called into question. Moral judgments are then made, such as: Africans are lazy, they steal time, they are unreliable and irresponsible and they have no respect for other people. The derogatory nature of these claims and its clear moral content highlight the crucial role that cultural differences can play in understanding the dynamics of ethics in a pluralistic workplace. Explanations that rely solely on cultural stereotypes are very often racist and ignorant in nature.

I have argued extensively in a previous paper (Painter-Morland 1999:151) that culture effects the individual in a much more complex way than essentialist theories suggest. For instance, many of the differences between white and black had previously been explained in accordance with the Africa-Western dichotomy. In this conception white people had a Western orientation and were therefore rational, with a linear view of time, orientated towards the future, materialist, and individualist. Black people were expected to conform to an African orientation which implied that they were irrational, or emotive, had a cyclical view of time, were thought to be orientated towards the past and the moment, whilst displaying non-materialist, communal values. The reality however is that many individuals in South African organizations display a very unique combination of many of these traits. You may for instance find a young black African who is very ambitious and materialistic, and oriented towards the future, but who believes in ancestral forces and strong communal ties. The individual is a *moral bricoleur*, who extracts values from various backgrounds and influences in an eclectic way in order to address the situation at hand. This of course has direct implications for moral decision-making processes in the workplace. It becomes difficult to predict individual moral behavior, because each individual's moral composition is unique. It is also very hard to establish a set of common values and practices for the whole organization, especially in organizational environments as diverse as the public service.

Hilliard (1996: 22) writes: *"Although indecisiveness about common ethical values and norms are not in itself wrong, it created numerous difficulties in the public service because it complicates the compilation of a uniform and generally acceptable code of conduct for all public servants and office-bearers."*

- **Religion:**

During the previous dispensation, 77% of the South Africa's population was considered Christian, and the importance of religious diversity was often underestimated. As a result, people often referred to religion in an effort to find common ground. However, statistics gathered under the previous government tended to exclude large majorities of Africans, especially in the rural areas, and the fact that there was less freedom of religion under the previous dispensation, render these figures highly questionable.

The 1996 census (CIA World Factbook 2000) showed that 68% of South Africans, who indicated some sort of religious affiliation, considered themselves Christian. This seems to vindicate the perception that South Africa's population is religiously homogeneous. However, minority religions now receive protection under our new Constitution and can therefore no longer be ignored in moral discourse. Furthermore, it needs to be acknowledged that the Christian religion has historically displayed many variations in terms of spirituality, confession, and organization. Therefore, even among those people who consider themselves Christian, many differences exist. It would thus be misleading to think of the Christian religion as a basis for consensus.

This does not mean that religion has no role to play in South African moral discourse. After the demise of Apartheid churches tended to turn to personal, domestic matters, because the distinction between private and public had become a firmly established feature of the new democratic South African society. This is an unfortunate situation in a society that is in desperate need of moral reconstruction. Even though religion currently tends to be under-emphasized within business ethics debates, it is still a very important part of many people's lives and therefore still plays a crucial role in individual moral development. Internationally, only 16% of the world population indicates no religious affiliation (www.adherents.com). If

this trend is reflected in the South African population, religious affiliation should be acknowledged as an important component of people's moral configurations. The relationship between religious considerations and ethical considerations in business was been confirmed by a questionnaire surveying the interests of members of the Council for Ethics in Economics in Columbus, Ohio (Childs 1995: 5). When asked how they viewed the role of personal religious belief and heritage in making business decisions, virtually all the businesspeople involved agreed that it was "very important". A sizeable study done by the Center for Ethics and Corporate Policy in Chicago also provided considerable evidence for people's need to integrate their faith and daily work (Childs 1995: 6). According to Childs (1995:7-11) there is a lot of reluctance in business circles to apply explicitly religious values in their professional activities. He attributes this to the following five reasons. In the first place the lingering conviction in the secular world is that objective reason can lead us to moral truth along the path of neutrality. Secondly, people tend to equate religious ethical ideals with a few commonly held principles such as not stealing, not harming others deliberately, and lying or cheating, and thereby short-circuits more probing moral reflection. In the third place, there remains a long-standing dualistic assumption that spiritual life and businesses belong in separate worlds. One of the key moral issues business people often identify is "the reintegration of the self and values in the workplace". This seems to indicate that business people find the compartmentalization of life troubling. Fourthly, the church has often been hostile in its attitude towards business and has tended to neglect addressing the specific daily needs of those in business. Finally, businesspeople often operate with a stereotype of the church as out of touch with "the real world" and incapable of understanding that world.

Childs (1995:2-9) identified a number of areas in people's professional lives that are thought to be influenced by the religious convictions that underlie their basic moral considerations. These areas include: the purpose and meaning of life and human society and the individual's sense of vocation; the intrinsic purpose of business as an expression of social relationships and activities and the way in which business fulfils its responsibilities towards and within this social structure; and the guidance that religious principles provide

with regard to the way an individual should think, talk and behave in his/her everyday life (Childs 1995:8).

- **Political pressures:**

Politics influences individual moral-decision-making in various ways. In terms of political corruption, the gains that elected officials gather through immoral practices, such as corruption etc., primarily exerts an influence on the political process. In the case of bureaucrats however, political decisions can also affect their willingness to corroborate with a corrupt system. In the case of South Africa this cuts two ways. On the one hand, bureaucrats who have been appointed under the Apartheid regime are now experiencing a severe lack of job security because of affirmative action and nepotism. They feel that they are justified in exploiting the system while they still have access to resources. On the other hand, black South Africans have been kept out of senior positions in the public service so long that some of them feel justified in "taking their turn to ride the gravy train". This type of corruption influences the everyday activities of the public service.

- **Financial pressures and Social pressures:**

It is a basic reality of life that an individual that is either in financial difficulty or under economic pressure because of aspiring to a lifestyle outside of his or her financial means, will more easily be tempted by the financial or social gains of corruption. In the South African public service there are many individuals who, because of injustices in the past, have been deprived of a decent lifestyle and now feverishly pursue the luxurious lifestyle they feel they have always deserved.

All kinds of social pressures, resulting from various social contexts that individuals participate in, play a role in moral decision-making. The most basic social setting for the individual is that of family and friends. For instance, the fact that many individuals come from single-parent families and are often single parents themselves, decisively influence their moral decision-making. Friends and other social interaction outside the workplace often define the way in which people deal with problems, communicate their feelings, and

deal with disagreements. These aspects ultimately influence the way people treat each other and interact at work. Furthermore, one's position in the society also plays a role in what you deem acceptable or not. Status or influence is valued within all cultural backgrounds. It is a question of improving the position of the individual vis-à-vis other role-players. Media influence, beauty, charisma, social connections etc. are al priced attributes that people are willing to pay a price for, even if it may compromise other value-systems that form part of their identity.

But even within the organization social pressures are a reality. Various "subcultures" exist within the organization. They all have their own hierarchies, work ethic, conflict-resolution strategies, ways of communicating (sometimes even a very distinct way of speaking or of using certain words), dressing and relaxing. The degree to which the individual is susceptible to the influence of the group may vary according to age, career development, ambition etc. Powell (1998:51) argues that cohesiveness in organizations often has distinct limitations. This conclusion is supported by other research. The "group-think" phenomena can become a very serious threat to ethics within an organization. Groupthink can be described as the tendency of members of highly cohesive groups to lose their critical evaluative capabilities. The net effect is that individuals tend to behave in accordance with the group's norms even when this means going against what they would normally do outside the group setting. Conversely, an unethical person who is part of a group with high ethical standards is more likely to behave ethically (ICAC 1998:7).

Some empirical studies conclude that what a person's peers do is the best predictor of his or her ethical behavior. It is thought that perceptions of peers' behavior influence the respondents' unethical behavior more than the respondents' own ethical beliefs. Some studies show that groups can have a larger capacity for ethical decisions than the average capacity of the individual members of the group. However, it was also found that groups composed of individuals with similar levels of ethical judgment, tend to poorer ethical decisions than the average of the individual members. This attests to the dangers of homogeneous groups. Groups composed of diverse individuals, on the other hand, tend to improve their level of ethical decision-making compared to the average of the individual

members in the group. It was also found that those individuals with the best ethical reasoning skills tend to exert the greatest influence on the group process (ICAC 1998:8).

- **Occupational or professional background:**

People with a strong professional background who work within the corporate world often experience a conflict between their professional values and the expectations of a competitive business environment where certain business goals, targets, and responsibilities towards shareholders and clients all vie for priority. For instance, a legal expert is part of the corporation's legal team and therefore should therefore put the interests of his or her employer, the corporation and its shareholders first. This professional may find it difficult to reconcile these expectations with the demands of the legal profession's code of conduct and the priority it places on serving justice and the best interests of all those involved in each situation.

2.2.2. Organizational variables:

- **A lack of common moral vision within an organization:**

A lack of common moral vision could be attributed to many factors within the South African situation. Culture and religion are two of the factors that have already been mentioned. Even within apparently homogeneous cultural and religious groups, individuals, as *moral bricoleurs,* tend to have different moral configurations. It therefore becomes very difficult to predict how an individual's moral reasoning will take place. This uncertainty can even lead to what Andre (1995:489) depicts as "diversity stress". Diversity stress can exist in any situation where beliefs and values differ. Diversity stress becomes morality stress when managerial decisions are shrouded with ambiguity and competing moral principles. The fact individual are moral *bricoleurs* does therefore not mean that a company should not provide their employees with some common core values in order to create some unity amidst the diversity. The core values can however not operate in isolation of the broader vision and mission of the company and its business goals. An ethical organization begins with its vision and mission. If ethical values are not part of this broader strategy, individuals will be

tempted to view moral decisions as something that cannot be reconciled with "business as usual". This can have a detrimental effect on individual's moral decision-making.

- **Ethics and compliance programs that support ethical behavior in organizations:** Studies done by the Independent Commission against Corruption in Australia, ICAC (1998:1) indicated that an individual employee is likely to behave according to the group norms that function within the organization that they work for. This is the case even when they are required to go against the moral values they would usually ascribe to outside of the group setting. Highly cohesive groups run the risk of making unethical decisions when they are not led by managers who encourage the expression and consideration of diverse moral perspectives. The opposite is also true: highly cohesive groups that emphasize ethical behavior can result in more and better ethical decisions. They also found that an unethical workforce perpetuates itself, because ethical staff tends to leave when they discover that their moral inclinations bring them into conflict with the expectations of the organization. Ethics in the organization impacts on job satisfaction, commitment to the organization, employees' levels of stress and staff turnover.

What kind of organization will have a positive influence on individuals' moral decision-making? ICAC (1998:13-22) identifies the following elements of a good ethics and compliance program: a clearly stated mission and core values jointly identified by the whole workforce; a code of ethics and business conduct; the effective communication of the company's values to all involved in and with the organization; leadership's commitment to and participation in the program; ethical strategies for managers; ethics training; rewards and sanctions; procedures and rules; structures, systems and adequate resources to achieve goals; and interaction with and feedback from the external environment. It should be made clear however that the existence of these aspects within an organizational culture cannot guarantee an improvement in the standards of ethical behavior of individual employees. Certain prerequisites exist for the successful functioning of these measures. For instance, ethics training must look at actual unethical practices in the organization rather than discussing intangible universal values. The goal should be to translate abstract principles into specific job decisions. Furthermore, the mere existence of a code of conduct does not

stop unethical behavior. It has to be accompanied by clearly proposed sanctions if it is to minimize the likelihood of unethical behavior (Brien 1997:51). The type of code, its formulation and the marketing of the code should fit the organizational culture, its informal and formal practices as well as the type of business conducted by the organization. More specific suggestions as to how these aspects should be dealt with within the pluralistic context of South African organizations will be discussed in Chapter 5.

ICAC (1999:9) has developed a set of questions to assess the status of an organization's ethical framework. These questions include:

- Have you got a Vision and Values statement?
- Does a code of ethics and/ or a code of conduct bring them to life?
- Do staff and stakeholders know about these values and codes?
- Is there an effective training program?
- Are the organization's key strategies and plans (for example, the corporate plan), aligned with its core values?
- Has the organization conducted a recent risk assessment? What are the high-risk areas? Do the organization's policies and procedures acknowledge the relative risk levels of the activities they cover?
- Do policies and procedures reflect the organization's vision and values?
- Are key systems to enhance ethical behavior in place? E.g. recruitment, internal reporting, grievance handling, internal investigations, complaints handling, performance management including disciplinary and reward systems?
- Do these systems reflect the values and vision of the organization?
- Does your organizational structure accommodate values based management and participative decision-making?
- How does the organization deal with the external environment? For example, the organization's clients and suppliers?

- **Leadership commitment to ethics:**
In their study of the influence of leadership and management on ethical behavior in the workplace, ICAC (1998:14) found that staff are more likely to do what they see their

supervisors doing than adhere to their company's ethics policy. They include a comparison between what were the most important factors influencing ethical behavior, and which factors determine unethical behavior. The ICAC survey found that the following four factors exerted the most influence on employees' *ethical behavior* (from most to less important): the individual's personal behavioral code, the behavior of company managers, the formal company policy, the behavior of colleagues. The factors that exert the greatest influence on *unethical behavior* were (from most to less important): behavior of company managers, the ethical climate of the industry, the absence of company policy, the behavior of colleagues, and employees' personal financial position. Middle managers reported that senior management was the source of most of the ethical conflicts that they encountered within their working environment. These conflicts were mostly related to the concealment of information, a lack of concern for the long-term effects of certain decisions and actions, and the unfair treatment of individuals. Studies have also shown that the opinions of a company's CEO exert a powerful influence on employees' ethical behavior. Both formal and informal statements from CEO's that support ethical decisions resulted in an increase in ethical decisions compared to companies where no such statements were made by their CEO's. Personal ethical goals were mostly cases subordinated to the CEO's ethical views (ICAC 1998:15).

- **Stakeholders:**

The extent to which an organization is accountable to its stakeholders greatly influences the care its employees take to maintain their trust, respect and cooperation in all decision-making and conduct in the workplace. Fritzsche (1997:63) refers to a ranking of company stakeholders provided by Harvard Business Review. The priority of stakeholders in descending order was customers, stockholders, employees, local community, society, suppliers, and government. A certain degree of variation may of course exist in this order. For instance, in the manufacturing industry customers enjoy priority over stockholders. It was found that although stockholders do exhibit some concern and support for ethical behavior, they were generally more concerned about whether the company's behavior was legal, rather than ethical (Fritzsche 1997:63). It is interesting to note in this regard that the United States Sentencing Guidelines made the creation of an ethical business culture

legally compulsory, by promising greatly reduced liability penalties to companies that met its criteria for establishing an ethical organizational culture. Further encouragement is provided by the fact that the US market tends to penalize firms who were accused of specific transgressions. Firms that had engaged in bribery, tax evasion, theft of trade secrets, financial reporting violations, or violations of government contracts experienced a significant decrease in the value of their stock within twenty days of the announcement of the transgression. The image of the firm and the information received by customers about the firm, whether through advertising or negative press, definitely influence the market. Yet it is unclear to what extent the penalties received in terms of loss of stakeholder trust act as a deterrent for unethical decisions and behavior. Fritzsche (1997:63) reports that studies found that a firm that has incurred a violation is more likely to become a repeat offender.

- **Features of the organization - size, resources and industry:**

The culture that develops in an organization over a period of time influences the way an individual employee makes decisions. This culture is often directly influenced by specific organizational variables, such as its size, resources and the industry it is involved in. The ICAC (1998:21) research indicate that illegal behavior is likely in the following Australian organizations: those with scarce resources, but even more so in organizations where resources are plentiful; those operating in highly dynamic environments; organizations that are large in size; organizations that have had three or more prior violations; organizations that trade in food, lumber, petroleum refining and transportation equipment. It would be interesting to see what industries or types of business ventures tend to be more prone to unethical business-practices in South Africa. The following factors tended to influence the standard of ethical decisions of managers negatively in Australia: mergers; rapid growth; the addition of a foreign operation; and decentralization.

- **Ethos:**

Within a democracy, many workers, especially those in the public service, and those who are involved in industries that provide goods and services to the public, often find themselves in a situation where they are expected to uphold two distinct value-systems. Pugh (1991:10)

identifies two distinct value-systems, namely that of the bureaucratic and the democratic ethos, that co-exist in the workplaces of democratic states. These value-systems are very different in nature. The bureaucratic ethos has long been associated with the historical mode of modern public administration. Within this ethos content values are assessed against established rational goals and objectives using instrumentalism and utilitarianism as the criteria for action within a strong hierarchical system. Within the democratic ethos values such as personal liberty, private property, equality and social equity/ justice are deemed most important. The methodology of the democratic ethos is also quite different from its bureaucratic counterpart. It tends to be more deductive, dialectical and deontological in nature, which means that the rightness or wrongness of the action is being considered rather than outcomes (Pugh 1991:17). In South Africa at the moment, democracy, empowerment and personal freedom are being celebrated as the first fruits of democracy. However, South Africans seems to be so used to operating in the bureaucratic ethos of hierarchies and utilitarianism, that they do not have the skills or competencies to cope with democratic freedoms. This seems to be a problem within all young democracies.

- **The nature of the position held by an individual in the organization: discretion, seniority, and type of authority.**

The seniority of the post a person occupies and the measure of authority he or she exercises influences the risk for unethical behavior. The more discretion a person has to exercise in the course of his or her work, the easier it will be for this person to commit corruption. As Klitgaard's (1998: 3) metaphorical formula states: $C = M + D - A$, or Corruption (C) equals monopoly power (M) plus discretion (D) - accountability (A). In the case of South Africa, the public service inherited a system where there is a notorious lack of accountability. To make the situation worse, the previous exclusion of many South Africans from public service and the inferior education and training of black South Africans resulted in the unfortunate reality that many public servants are not sufficiently skilled and experienced to handle their responsibilities. Incompetence tends to breed further corruption, since public servants often rely on hearsay or the authority of others when making decisions. Affirmative action policies tries to redress historical imbalances, but sufficient in-house training and advice are not always available to meet the urgent needs at

the pace it is required. This makes the public service especially vulnerable to consultants and big-money-business to enter the system illicitly. As Moody-Stuart (1997:6) puts it: *"Huge sums are being spent on development and redevelopment, on major capital works and equipment supply. Most significantly, key decisions are being taken by men with very little business experience and no personal wealth."*

- **Role(s)-conflict within employees:**

Van Wart (1996:526) argues that employees often experience problems with role definition. He ascribes this to what he calls "role interests" that require employees to balance a number of competing objectives. Van Wart identifies five competing role interests: public interest, legal interest, personal interests, organizational interests and professional interest. As part of the social fabric of society, business is expected to serve the common good of the public. At the same time, however, every corporation has to protect its own interests, as well as those of its employees and stakeholders. It also has to be remembered that employees are human beings with personal interests such as family and friends, as well as with financial and social problems. As citizens of a new democracy all South Africans also have special legal interests with regard to upholding the Constitution. Add to this the professional requirements and Codes of Conduct that they are expected to adhere to by virtue of their professional training and obligations, and the stage is set for complicated ethical dilemmas.

- **Salary, working conditions and job security:**

Within the market approach it is often argued that market forces tend to control corruption. Public officials therefore need to be lured from the broader job market by competitive remuneration. As Rose-Ackerman (1997:28) argues: *"If officials are paid much less than people with similar training elsewhere in the economy, only those willing to accept bribes will be attracted to the public sector"*. In an argument against pay-for-ethics, Hood (1995:197) however argues that opposition parties will almost always use this as a stick to beat the ruling party with, and secondly, the public would hardly support such a policy, or if they do, demand at least the same privileges and living standards for themselves. Work

pressures, dangerous working environments, and a lack of job security may serve as justifications for people to supplement their income in illicit ways as a type of "danger pay".

2.2.2. National and International factors:

- **Legal parameters**

The extent to which American business have paid attention to ethics over the last decade and the pace at which good quality Ethics Programs across America had been developed, is due to what Hoffman & Driscoll (2000) call the carrot and stick approach. They (2000:9) argue that the Federal Sentencing Guidelines that imposed a mandatory system of heavy fines and rigorous probation conditions for organizations convicted of federal crimes, acted as important stimulus for Ethics Programs across America. The Sentencing Guidelines present companies with both a carrot and a stick as an inducement for dealing with moral issues in the workplace. Not only does it cost a company under prosecution far more if unethical conduct leads to a lawsuit (the stick), but the Federal Sentencing Guidelines also promise to reward companies that have effective ethics and compliance programs in place, by either not prosecuting them at all, or at least reducing their fine if they are found guilty (the carrot).

The Sentencing guidelines provide seven very basic guidelines for organizations to keep in mind when they go about developing an ethics and compliance program (Hoffman & Driscoll 2000:10). They are:

1) Establish compliance standards and procedures.

2) Assign high level individuals to oversee compliance.

3) Exercise due care in delegating discretionary authority.

4) Communicate and train all employees regarding company values and compliance procedures.

5) Monitor, audit and provide safe reporting systems.

6) Enforce appropriate discipline with consistency.

7) Respond to offences and prevent reoccurrence.

The Sentencing Guidelines have also been criticized as being guilty of "regulatory overkill and over deterrence". Cohen (1992: 147) argues that some regulatory offences in the corporate world cause little or no harm at all, and that it is therefore simply unjust to punish them so severely. However, the Federal Sentencing Guidelines sent a very clear message to corporations that it is not only their duty to do all they can to uncover, report and punish unethical and illegal conduct, but that it is also their duty to prevent it from happening (Ferrell, LeClair, & Ferrell 1998:354). No longer can companies hide behind the excuse that nobody knew, and that it is really nobody's fault. This is very important if one considers that in 58.5% of the cases in which organizations were sentenced under the guidelines in 1998, personnel with substantial authority were involved in or tolerant of the criminal activity. None of the organizations sentenced in 1998 had an "effective program to prevent and detect violations of law" in place (U.S. Sentencing Commission 1998:2100:2).

Hoffman & Driscoll (2000:11) argue that the Federal Sentencing Guidelines acted as a good impetus to make corporations pay attention to ethics programs, but that many companies have gone far beyond what the Sentencing Guidelines required. The reason for this is that corporations soon realized that an effective compliance system based on legal requirements is not enough to curb unethical behavior. Much more than compliance with legal requirements is needed. What legal standards do however achieve is to bring to the attention of corporations the importance of taking responsibility for ethics within the work place. In the South African business context this is one of the most important messages that the Government and the legal system could possibly send to corporations regarding their commitment to creating an ethical business culture. We may not need the exact same format as that of the US Federal Sentencing Guidelines, but some legal parameters that stress the importance of proactively combating unethical behavior in the workplace would be invaluable.

National history and current circumstances:
A number of reasons have been proposed for the incidence of malpractice and corruption in South Africa. Van Zyl & Lazenby (1999:16) indicate that following factors may play a role in the tendency of South African business to resort to immoral practices:

- A declining and stagnant economy as well as overload and a fear of retrenchment among employees.

- Government structures and regulation that does not adequately control unethical conduct and corruption.

- Sanctions imposed as a result of the Apartheid regime compelled businesspeople to act in "secrecy" and these actions often resulted in unethical practices.

- The excessive limitations on the media who were thereby prevented from exposing corruption and malpractice.

- Uncertainty and fears about the future

- Beliefs that ethics and business for profit are irreconcilable.

Immoral business practices are often the result of the phase of development in which an economy and businesses in general find themselves. The fact that many businesses are currently struggling for survival in South Africa often make them susceptible to a reasoning of "bread first, morals later", as Rossouw (1994) indicates. One also finds that a certain business style that condoned immoral practices for a variety of political and socio-economical reasons in an effort to protect and support a certain ideology, persists in the new dispensation long after that ideology has been abandoned. Another contributing factor is the existence of structural deficiencies and inadequate training and development that are a legacy of certain political policies. The policy of "Separate development" for instance, tried to maintain separate homeland structures for black people while the main development of infrastructure were restricted to urban areas within the "White territories". Likewise, "Bantu education" provided Black people with inferior education. The struggle against Apartheid and the violence, instability and trauma associated with it created an environment in which family structures where moral values should have been taught were destroyed. Moral education was further eroded by the fact that many South Africans got used to justifying their immoral acts in view of what they considered to be a higher political cause. On both sides of the struggle, those defending and those fighting against the Apartheid ideology, people found reasons to repress their moral conscience for the sake of survival and overcoming their opponents. This war mentality led to significant erosion of the moral conscience of many people in South Africa.

Furthermore, recent developments in the country have changed the playing field for many South Africans. Van Zyl and Lazenby (1999:20) indicate that various new challenges face businesses in South Africa and that these will influence the way in which moral business cultures may develop:

- Businesses face the challenge of motivating white employees that face job insecurity because of affirmative action policies.

- Seemingly homogeneous workforces are something of the past and South African managers now have to face up to diverse workforces. This diversity does not only imply cultural or religious diversity, but the huge variations between individual *moral bricoleurs*.

- The perception exists that because of the new dispensation everything has to be changed. This not only leads to the loss of valuable assets in terms of people and structures, but it also creates despondency amongst many South Africans who are left with the impression that everything is falling apart. These negative perceptions should be eradicated.

- The speed of change and all the diverse developments that coincide within many South African organizations make them more vulnerable to the threat of immoral business practices.

- **The African legacy:**

Africa is said to have a history of systemic corruption, secrecy and nepotism. Various theorists have argued that this is due to the previous cultural and political practices that have historically been the hallmark of traditional political systems. They have argued that the succession of corrupt African despots who had ruled for short periods of time only to be overthrown by a now familiar pattern of military coups, has created an environment in which corruption had become endemic. But as Alatas (1986:45) has convincingly argued:

" *The history of corruption in the United States is convincing proof that corruption is not correlative with either pre-modern or modern conceptions of bureaucracy, family ties, civic consciousness, the gift institution, or governmental ethics*". Alatas further argues that it is a fallacy to assume that in premodern societies there is no clear perception on what constitutes corruption. In Hindu, Buddhist and Islamic [and one may also argue African traditionalist] societies there are a variety of checks and balances to preserve the common

good and the public interest. Recent research has however shown that the combination of an unstable national situation with pervasive unethical organizational cultures can lead to an "everyone does it" attitude that is hard to get rid of. Sen (1997: 9) argues that this is due to the role played by "conventions of good behavior", and how these conventions have emerged and been sustained in different societies, regions, and organizations. The ethical climate of an organization can be described as the cumulative collection of prevailing practices and perceptions and includes variables such as shared values, heroes and heroines, managerial policies, rituals and ceremonies (Upchurch & Ruhland 1996:1086). These prevailing practices are definitely influenced by national heroes, shared national values, as well as national rituals and ceremonies. If these are corrupt, the organization will probably reflect these values.

- **International changes:**

In the past decade the world has experienced a whole sequence of very significant events that have forever changed the face of international politics, economics and social issues in the world arena. The end of the Cold War, the tearing down of the Berlin Wall and the fall of communist regimes all over the world had all been of particular importance in this regard. By 1988, Wood (1994:18) reports, the demonstrations of power and influence displayed by the United States on every possible occasion had been replaced by a whole series of other phenomena: globalization, tribalization, nationalization of policy and the localization of politics. Together, these phenomena had been responsible for much greater complexities that we were previously accustomed to. Wood (1994:18-25) describes four fundamental changes that have transformed the world. The first set of these fundamental changes is the increasing interdependence of the global economy and the fluidity of political-military alignments as the major framework within which national policy and strategy is approached. Globalization refers not simply to the interdependence of separate entities but to the fact that their capital investment, manufacturing bases, and markets are becoming increasingly global in character. Globalization means that the very nature of international economics is being denationalized and that the ability of national governments to control economic flows has been substantially reduced. International control such as can still be exerted is only possible at enormous material and human cost.

However, economic globalization is not the only relevant phenomenon. Tribal sentiment is also very much in evidence, both within and across national boundaries. Even as much of the world has become part of an increasingly integrated economy, historical antagonisms and romanticized ethnic, religious, and cultural differences show renewed resilience (Wood 1994:19). Politics seems to have become more local, whereas business is becoming more global. This interaction places increasing pressures on local governments to both protect the identity and interests of local populations, while at the same time establishing themselves as players in the global arena.

Wood (1994:21) speaks of another factor that complicates national and international business, one that exists on the level of state and society. Contemporary free and pluralistic societies are typically built on the premise that many associations, belief systems, and interactions are private and voluntary and that government power should be exercised in a way that allows an extensive private sphere. The unity of the whole is maintained by a common national market and the constitutional protection of individual rights and responsibilities, within which the rights of groups are basically derived from individual rights and duties. Pluralistic societies however inevitably encompass a wide variety of preferences with regard to life-styles. There is increasing pressures on national governments to legitimize, guarantee and sometimes even fund the myriad definitions of happiness as it is found in all these various life-styles. These pressures do not only create problems on a national level, but also on an international level. The integration of economic forces, the movements of displaced communities, and the transnational character of many tribal identities contribute to the fact that governments have much less real authority than their citizenry may believe.

A further international factor pertains to strategic choices that have to be made in the post-cold war world. Should we opt for a global institutional and normative order, a so-called "minimum world public order"? Wood (1994:23) explains that if one conceives "order" as the control of unauthorized coercion across state boundaries, one could seek to define norms and to strengthen either state or international capabilities so as to limit aggression while

improving self-defense and genuine police action on behalf of the global order. The United States has already declared itself eager to engage the US in joint actions on behalf of the international community, in order to give content to the "New World Order". Wood (1994:25) believes that the United States' leadership role in establishing a new international order will be of crucial importance in decisions made in business and society across the world.

- **North - South divisions:**

Talks about the "New World Order", a "Global Ethic" and other internationalist projects are severely hampered by the lingering remnants of the colonial order in the developing world. Banuri (1994:72) is of the opinion that there are significant differences in the way the Northern and the Southern hemispheres view international issues. He rejects claims that these differences are due to the fact that Southern hemisphere governments have their own political agendas, or a result of their chronic need for financial aid. According to Banuri the North still fail to appreciate that the South has different experiences, perspectives and ways of looking at the world. For instance, the South does not see the environmental problem as something that is being caused by the poor, but rather as the result of the rich consuming eighty percent of the world's resources. Environmental problems are caused by power, by the ability to export one's problems elsewhere. Banuri (1994:72) maintains that the South does not trust the processes of decision-making in the North. The citizens of Southern hemisphere nations often do not trust the processes of collective decision-making in their own countries, let alone at a global level. He further argues that one cannot talk about institutions at a global level, or relationships at a global level, without talking about justice and injustice.

Another important factor that is often underestimated is the fact that the South has other voices besides those of governments; voices which are not talking about the transfer of money or technology from the North to the South. Banuri (1994:73) says: " Instead of discussing institutions of power and responsibility, Southerners might rather want to talk about decentralization, establishing institutions and property rights, giving autonomy to local institutions, and so forth." He maintains that Southerners look at institutions like the

World Bank differently. They believe that talk about healing the planet is basically the arrogance of the North. Even the way in which "development" is discussed reflects only the northern point of view. It assumes that economies with the high level of consumption of the North are the norm to which the South is to aspire to. Yet, aren't these ideals precisely part of the global problems that we are dealing with? Banuri's views may be relegated to only one of the many contradictory voices from the South, but his comments make it very clear that many issues surrounding the North - South divisions remain to be addressed, and that these issues will continue to impact our ability to discuss and address moral problems.

2.3. Perspectives on diversity and the development of new approaches:

Having established that identity is made up of a very unique configuration of value-systems, and that moral decision-making is influenced by a wide variety of factors, this dissertation will argue that diversity can be a valuable resource in establishing meaningful moral dialogue. Diversity should however not be understood as different groups of people that can be identified according so certain essentialistic group characteristics. Rather, diversity is to be found in the diverse value-systems that form part of each individual's moral decision-making. Moral *bricoleurs* should be empowered to draw on this wide variety of value-systems in order to make their moral contribution in the workplace. There are not many precedents of organizations that managed to tap this rich resource of diversity. We can learn from the mistakes that have been made by organizations that tried to accommodate diversity in limited ways. But more importantly, we can draw on the insights of organizations that managed to create an environment where individuals' unique inputs could flourish. This section will evaluate certain perspectives on diversity in order to establish which may be helpful in tapping all of the moral resources that moral *bricoleurs* in South Africa have to offer.

Thomas and Ely (1998:80) identified three basic paradigms to dealing with diversity that may provide us with some scope as to what may be possible in various forms of dealing with diversity. The first of these is the **discrimination-and-fairness paradigm**. Within this approach, the focus is primarily on equal opportunity, fair treatment, recruitment and

compliance with government regulations. The main goal of this approach is to treat everyone equally because it believes that people are fundamentally the same and that important differences between them are not supposed to play a significant role in the workplace. The success of diversity programs within companies that ascribe to this approach is measured in terms of their ability to recruit and maintain a diverse workforce. The staff therefore becomes diversified, but the work does not, because employing a diversified workforce does not guarantee that minorities will be allowed to influence a company's dominant strategies, procedures, and ways of going about the work. More often than not, they are simply expected to fit in, to be assimilated into "the way that we do things around here". Because these organizations pretend to ignore differences, they are unable to appreciate the valuable contribution each individual can make in terms of solutions and suggestions on the basis of his or her unique identity. Differences are not only the result of people's unique cultural heritage, but also stem from each individual's unique value-configuration. The discrimination-and-fairness approach runs the risk of being perceived as tokenism, patronization and reverse discrimination. People from minority groups feel that they are not being employed for their unique, valuable contribution and their qualifications, but rather because of the group they belong to. Other employees within the organization are also often unhappy because they see themselves as victims of reverse discrimination.

The second paradigm is the **access-and-legitimacy paradigm**. Within this approach the motivation behind creating a diverse workforce is that we are living in a multicultural country, with markets made up of people from all different kinds of groups and cultures. Under these circumstances, having a diverse workforce make economic sense. Whereas the discrimination-and-fairness paradigm is primarily concerned with conforming to the demands of justice and equality, this paradigm has economic motivations in mind. If the organization wants to serve this diverse community and access its markets, the composition of the workforce should reflect the demographic composition of the community it serves (Thomas & Ely 1998:83). This market-based motivation for diversity has certain advantages, because the competitive advantages it offers are often qualities that an entire company can easily understand and therefore support. However, it also has its limitations. Organizations that ascribe to the access-and-legitimacy paradigm tend to push staff with niche capabilities

into differentiated pigeonholes too easily. The capabilities that these people could contribute to the organization as a whole is often not appreciated. These unique contributions are therefore often not integrated into the organization's work. The motivation for creating and maintaining a diverse workforce within this approach is often a crisis-oriented need for access and legitimacy. The result is that employees often feel exploited. Other opportunities within the organization that may not be directly related to the particular niche-market segments are often closed to these employees, even though their training and experience may be in mainstream markets in which they might have previously worked (Thomas & Ely 1998:84).

A third paradigm is emerging that relates diversity to the variety of individual perspectives it offers. Ely & Thomas (1999:19) calls this the **integration-and-learning perspective.** Organizations that ascribe to this perspective have developed an outlook on diversity that enables them to incorporate the variety of unique perspectives represented amongst their employees into the main work of the organization. This means that they enhance their work by rethinking primary tasks and redefining markets, products, strategies, missions, business practices, and even cultures (Thomas & Ely 1998:85). Ely & Thomas (1999:23) cites the example of a law firm primarily that focused primarily on female clientele in employment-related disputes. In the light of their mandate to protect and advance the economic rights and interests of low-income women, they identified their failure to attract female clients of color as a shortcoming. They therefore decided to diversify their all-white program staff. Up to this point it may appear to be a typical case of the access-legitimacy paradigm, yet this firm went further. They hired a Latino attorney with the specific purpose to expand their work to the Latino community and to demonstrate their commitment to represent all low-income women. However, they went even further. Over the next ten years, they underwent a transition from staff composed entirely of whites to one that included a program staff that was at least half women of color. Even more important was the fact that the demographic composition of the program staff entirely reshaped the character and priorities of the firm's work in ways that was previously unanticipated. Members learned from their diversity and integrated what they had learned into the core work of the organization. They expanded their functions to work around minimum wage and

manufacturers' liability - aspects that previously fell outside the firm's scope because it was not thought not to be strictly related to sex discrimination. But because their new staff understood the context and realities of their clients, they were able to make their firm aware of how these issues affect women (Ely & Thomas 1999:23). One female attorney is quoted as saying: " *[Diversity] doesn't just change whom you sit next to every day. It means differences in terms of how you see the issues, who you can work with, how effective you are, how much you understand what's going on...*" The success of this approach is due in large part to the priority it places on "process", i.e. time spent on exploring different points of view, deliberating about how and whether they should inform the work, and listening to people's stories and so that they are able to say what is in their hearts.

Thomas & Ely (1998:86) indicate that there are certain preconditions for getting to the point where diversity really makes a positive contribution to the way in which work is perceived and done within an organization:

1) Leadership must understand that a diverse workforce will embody different perspectives and approaches to work, and must truly value variety of opinion and insight.

2) The leadership must recognize both the learning opportunities and the challenges that the expression of different perspectives presents for an organization, and accept the time and effort that will have to go into it.

3) The organizational culture must create an expectation of high standards of performance from everyone, therefore it doesn't expect less from certain employees than from others.

4) The organizational culture must stimulate personal development and attempt to bring out people's full range of useful knowledge and skills.

5) The organizational culture must encourage openness, have a high tolerance for debate and discussion and should support constructive conflict on work-related matters.

6) The culture must make workers feel valued in order to make them feel committed and empowered to take the initiative in applying their skills and experience to the organization's benefit.

7) The organization must have a well articulated and widely understood mission that makes it clear what the organization wants to accomplish. In this way changes and new initiatives will be grounded in common purposes that everyone is working towards.

8) The organization must have a relatively egalitarian, non-bureaucratic structure that promotes the exchange of ideas and welcomes constructive challenges to the usual way of doing things.

2.4. Conclusion:

This chapter came to the conclusion that individuals operate as *moral bricoleurs,* who draw on a variety of value-systems in order to address the moral issues they are confronted with. The behavior of these moral agents cannot be predicted by referring to one of the groups that they belong to. Moral *bricoleurs* are also more than the sum-total of the characteristics of all the groups that form part of their distributed identities. Therefore, diversity is not something that exists only among groups, it also exists among and within individuals. When dealing with moral discourse in a pluralistic environment, diversity can only become a positive force if individuals are allowed and empowered to draw freely on various aspects of their distributed identities to address the moral issues they are confronted with. Ethical approaches used within organizations should facilitate this process. Unfortunately, not all ethical approaches succeed in doing so. Chapter 3 will indicate some of the limitations of ethical approaches commonly used in dealing with moral dissensus.