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## **Morality and the Child: Levels of Understanding**

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# Morality and the Child: Levels of Understanding

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MICHAEL E. EGAN

## INTRODUCTION

**I**T is quite evident to anyone who reads something about morality or who hears the word used from the pulpit or by the man in the street or who feels within himself the tension he has come to associate with morals, that there is no one clear and easy meaning, no one facile acceptance of the term. In short he finds himself inevitably confused (should he pursue the matter further) and perhaps even frustrated.

The case is complicated for one who has grown up physically and intellectually while exposed to only one cultural pattern. There is the innate tendency to deify and absolutize the already known and tried and to look with suspicion or prejudice upon those whose norms differ from one's own. Current anthropology could fill reams with the differing practices of different cultural groups, and one has only to raise his eyes to the thundering motorcycles of the Hell's Angels or to read the recent issues of *Time* and *Newsweek* about the defiantly different Hippies or to take a stroll through Greenwich Village (the vicinity might be rather distant for some), or read the newspaper reports on Vietnam and race riots and looting and grotesque murders to see evidences of great differences in the understanding of morality in those around him. To the panic-prone, curses on the present world and foretellings of doom (hell and destruction) and a desperate clinging to what one believes

(hardly a commitment: it is a derivative of the instinct for self-preservation) are the answer. To those of a more relaxed nature, the answer lies in doing what one wishes to do.

It is, of course, delightful in a sense: for only men could think and act in such extremities. But at the root of it all, at the root of all the differences and doubts and hopes, one wonders whether there is not still a fragment of sameness: something which gives meaning to the curses as it does to the abandon; something which still points onward along the course of an evolution directed (it is hoped) toward the better.

In this paper, after reviewing some notions of morality—fact and theory—I hope to present what may be an illusion, what hopefully is an insight into the inner workings of man.

#### JEAN PIAGET

Whatever morality is, it begins (as do all other facets of man's person and personality) in childhood. Jean Piaget, an eminent and prolific Swiss psychologist, has written a book precisely on that subject: *The Moral Development of the Child*, and his ideas may serve to shed some light on the situation.

Piaget is concerned with investigating the moral judgment (not the moral behavior) of children. This he does rather uniquely: often playing with them, giving them problems which reveal their moral judgments and so on. His study begins with the game of marbles, noticing in the process the varying ways children understand the rules of the game and how this understanding develops with the passage of years. He goes on to other areas within the child's ken: lying and justice (what is fair or unfair, especially in the area of punishment).

Piaget's concrete findings are what concern us here rather than his methods, though it is reassuring to feel that he bases his findings (rather, his reflections on his findings) so strongly on the observed behavior of children at play and in the home. As will be shown, the same basic pattern emerges (revealing the same fundamental growth) in the rules of the game as in punishment.

Since I am leading in this paper to a re-phrasing of a theory of morality, I hope the unavoidably dense footnoting in the following few sections will be forgiven. We must build a backdrop against which later remarks will come into focus; there must be a certain backlog of understanding to feel the conflict hidden within the term (and the reality of the same) morality.

With qualifications which would be only laboriously inserted here (without being necessary to the establishment of the point we wish to make) left aside for the moment, we might say that Piaget centers all his reflections on two opposites. Note however that these opposites represent the extremes of a continual growth. There is no immediate transit from one to the other. In some cases, the first seems almost to have been done away with;<sup>1</sup> in others, perhaps, the first never gives way to the second and we find the frightfully infantile legalistic mentality of the childish adult. We will more or less list the characteristics of the first and then those of the second of these moralities. Comments (mainly Piaget's further reflections) will follow.

The first morality is operative in the child roughly from the age of 4 to the age of 7. It is based on a unilateral respect, where all rules are sacred because they partake in some fashion of the parental authority.<sup>2</sup> This is a morality of egocentrism,<sup>3</sup> a fact hardly surprising in view of the fact that the child of this age can scarcely differentiate his own fantasies from reality, his statements of fact from his wishful (verbalized) thinking.<sup>4</sup> Things are right only if the parents are obeyed in the

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<sup>1</sup> Jean Piaget, *The Moral Judgement of the Child*, trans. Marjorie Gabain (New York: the Free Press, 1965), cf pg. 137 *et passim*. Once in particular Piaget speaks of the upbringing given his daughter in which he from the first stressed her intentions and so on with remarkable maturing in the child. In the references from *Moral Judgement* to follow, it should be understood that the page or pages given are only suggestions; Piaget repeats his findings in many places and in many ways; hence, read *et passim* after all references.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, see p. 56, p. 102.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 93. See also pp. 86-87 and p. 400.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* See also p. 164.

doing; they are wrong if the parents are disobeyed.<sup>5</sup> All actions are judged (even one's own since the child still has himself somehow fused with reality, unsure still of his inwardness versus the world's outwardness) according to their objective face, not according to the intention motivating the actions.<sup>6</sup> The parents exercise moral constraint on the child,<sup>7</sup> and from this adult constraint flows objective responsibility,<sup>8</sup> and, according to Bovet, both the sense of duty and the child's source of moral obligation.<sup>9</sup> Obviously the legal aspect (the police aspect) of an action is important to the child's reckoning during this stage.<sup>10</sup> When it comes to telling lies, for instance, the child does not lie simply because he is told not to lie; there is here no felt need to speak the truth—even as the child might not be able to say what exactly is the truth: what he sees or what he wishes.<sup>11</sup> This stage gives rise to moral realism, which, says Piaget, is the meeting of egocentrism and constraint<sup>12</sup>; indeed, the child's morality is one of heteronomy and objective constraint, a fact which is further reinforced by the uninformed or authoritarian parent's hammering on the legal aspects of an action, independent of all intent on the child's part.<sup>13</sup> The relations of a child during this period are relations of constraint, for an outside system of rules with obligatory content is imposed on him, beyond his understanding and yet in line with his age's intellectual development.<sup>14</sup> It is, in short, a static system of unilateral respect (child to adult) leading to heteronomy.<sup>15</sup>

I feel obliged at the moment to recall to the reader that Piaget formulated these modes of morality only after speaking

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 111.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 183; see also p. 92 concerning the disassociation of the ego from the environment.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* In general, see all of chapter 2 of the book, written in collaboration with M. N. Maso.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 111 and p. 136.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 195.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 134.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 163-164.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 190-191.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 395.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, see pp. 109, 175, 395.

to children, entering their world, using their words, accepting their concepts. As is quite evident throughout the lengthy conversations with children which he prints in his book, there is no distortion of the child's world as he represents this to the adult in adult terminology.

The second form of morality overtakes the developing child somewhere between the ages of 8-12. It represents an enormous growth, of the intellect as of the organism, of understanding as of personality. It is based, not on unilateral respect but on mutual respect, on cooperation,<sup>16</sup> so much so that to a child of these ages a rule has no meaning whatever unless it is mutually agreed upon, in which case it partakes of the sanctity of this interpersonal relationship.<sup>17</sup> Because they have become agreed upon, rules become internalized.<sup>18</sup> The respect may be towards one's elders, but it may also be directed towards one's peers or even those younger than the child. Rather than viewing only the objective face of an action, the child now looks as best he can for the intention of the action,<sup>19</sup> this facilitated, of course, by his growing awareness of himself and of the sometimes dichotomous relationship between his intents and the outcome of his pursued action. Objective responsibility gives way to subjective responsibility,<sup>20</sup> even as the legal aspect of an action yields to the moral aspect.<sup>21</sup> Truth, again by way of example, takes on a value in itself as has been learned through habits of cooperation.<sup>22</sup> This is the morality of inwardness and of subjective responsibility, furthered by the parent's giving of reasons for commands.<sup>23</sup> Moral autonomy (instead of heteronomy) results because the ideal way of acting has become a subjective necessity independent of all external constraint and pressure.<sup>24</sup> The relations of the child are relations of cooperation when the consciousness of the ideal norms at the

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<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 86-87 and p. 171.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 97.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 96 and 163.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 137.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 133.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 134.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 163 and 171.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 137.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 196.

back of all rules is perceived.<sup>25</sup> The static system gives way to the equilibrial limits; cooperation lends itself to autonomy.<sup>26</sup>

The dual morality system might well apply itself to adults in as many cases perhaps as it is applied to children. Adults of the second stage might well train their children according to intentions, where the child obeys rather to please the parents or the family group than to avoid punishment and so on. Quite categorically (and quite justifiably so) Piaget claims it immoral of parents to believe too much in morality.

Morality thus far has taken shape only within a social context, and this is most important. Even with the development of moral autonomy, we find external laws internalized (and what right thinking psychologist does not aim at this? Rogers, for instance, is so insistent on the person's needing an internal frame of reference) but internalization is a process of making the external internal. In their source, laws are external. These seem nothing but an inner response to those outwardly created norms; there seems to be a vacuum of inner creativeness when it comes to morality taken in this sense, the sense, incidentally, in which most other writers on the psychological plane seem to take it.<sup>27</sup>

#### SIGMUND FREUD

There is much in Piaget's thinking that Freud might have agreed on; there is much he might have abstracted and re-planted as a development having other roots than those which Piaget indicates. For Freud, of course, morality cannot be considered apart from the conscience and ego-ideal of the superego, and the superego cannot be separated from the Oedipal stage of the child's development, a stage slightly antecedent to or roughly concomitant with the age bracket 4-7 used above by Piaget.

The notion of identification enters Freud's theory quite readily: the child identifies with the parental will either through

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 395-396.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> See, for example, Elizabeth B. Hurlock, *Child Development*, 4th edition (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1956), pp. 543 ff.

fear of punishment (begetting the conscience) or through hope of reward (begetting the ego-ideal).<sup>28</sup> The inhibiting outer forces to which the child is continually subject, be these forces the parents, the society and culture or what have you, become internalized in time, and this basically is the superego,<sup>29</sup> sharing the complex organization of the ego,<sup>30</sup> but at times opposed and even inimical to the ego, existing as the successor of the parents, aiming mainly, according to Freud, at the limitation of satisfaction.<sup>31</sup> As suggested above, the superego is closely related to the Oedipal complex; to Freud, in fact, the superego is the heir of this complex, assuming its position when the complex itself has vacated the post.<sup>32</sup>

Important here, first by way of comment, is the chiefly negative view Freud has of conscience, a word, like morality, subject apparently to many shades of meaning and interpretation. With Piaget he notes the important role the parents play in the formation of moral concepts; with him he sees the external rules and norms of the parents internalized. But Freud goes further: the superego becomes a function unto itself, an integral part of the psychic structure of the person, a thwarting, limiting, unreasoning, blind adherence to parental morals such as these have been received by the child and reinforced by punishment by the parents as well as by their rewards and the child's instinctual fears. Man's whole notion of right and wrong, his discernment of good and evil seems therefore to be nothing but a subliminal continuation of the notions and discernments of his parents, even as his parents (perhaps unwittingly) extended the influence of their parents into the world of society. To Freud, man is rather trapped by these internalized prohibitions, laws, necessary renunciations. He is almost powerless to change in the slightest, even during the

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<sup>28</sup> Calvin S. Hall, *A Primer of Freudian Psychology* (New York: Mentor Books, 1954), p. 31.

<sup>29</sup> Nandor Fodor and Grank Gaynor, Eds., *Freud: A Dictionary of Psychoanalysis* (Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett Publications, Inc., 1958), p. 149, quoting *Moses and Monotheism*, Part III, Section II.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, quoting *The Question of Lay Analysis*, chapter 5.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, quoting *An Outline of Psychoanalysis*, chapter 2.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, quoting *The Question of Lay Analysis*, chapter 5.



course of a lifetime, this cruel master.<sup>33</sup> And because of its reign over his ego, he is subject to the vexations of guilt, of the need for punishments, and of the tension resulting from this psychic conflict of ego and superego.<sup>34</sup> To Piaget's forthright reporting of the child's judgment, Freud adds the mystique of the unknown, the salve of the inevitable and the veiled rage of one bound by bonds he himself did not will but accepted.

We may question (without responding for the moment) whence came the idea of anything being right and wrong originally? Did the first men who broke through the barrier of reflective thought and thus to self-determination absorb the animal milieu around them, or had they some unique understanding? And why should we be condemned to act as our forebears have acted, think as they thought, judge as they judged within the society that they created and we further? It is for sure that the superego is a reality; it is also for certain that men feel guilt emanating from its conflict with ego (but why should ego conflict with the superego in the first place unless it tended of its own in a certain direction?) and that many react either by abandoning all hope and desire of living a moral life or by making more rigid what is already rigid and universalizing what they experience as an inner absolute, trying desperately to thrust upon others the ravages taking place within their own spirits, the fears and anxieties they experience, the unquestioning and unchallenging submission to what is larger than themselves. These people are indeed children.

#### EMBARRASSED WANDERINGS

Many are the theological moralists (if we can call the above social moralists) who try to defend their views of morality within the system and by means of the concepts left to them by Freud and others. They shrink (as the people to whom they address themselves also shrink) from the barren and harsh terms used by moralists of the past centuries. They

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<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, quoting *Moses and Monotheism*, Part III, Section II.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 70, quoting both *Civilization and its Discontents*, chapter 7 and *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, chapter 3.

worry how to explain sin (as Christians understand or misunderstand the term and the reality) within these terms, how further to understand Christ's redemption as a meaningful and necessary act on God's part toward a humanity weighed down with guilt (real and felt) and wrong-doing.

Some would simply delay the process of informing the child of the intricacies of the matter, as would Davis.<sup>35</sup> Since the notions of sin and hell and so on cannot be understood by a child (or a childish mind), do not teach the child of them. This is an advance; but confusion and fear of the law still holds tight sway over the hearts of many. Others, as Oraison, point more directly to the different character of sin, placing it within an interpersonal and religious context (that of man's relationship with God) but failing again to note the sources within man that make sin (and love) possible.<sup>36</sup> Still better, authors such as Monden, in his excellent book *Sin, Liberty and Law*, distinguish (as need to be distinguished) levels of ethics: the level of instinct, the moral level (roughly corresponding with Paiget's notion of morality) and the christian-religious level.<sup>37</sup> Still there seems something lacking, something of the experienced being (or rather, of the experience of being) which has not been put into words. Even as the reader goes out to accept his words (which open to many trapped by an infantile obsession with the law a new vista of freedom and confidence), something else within holds back. There is nothing wrong said; only something which seems incomplete. And that is where I would begin in the next section.

#### TOWARDS A THEORY OF MORALITY

I wish first to make it clear that the tack I take in the following is not to be taken as Christian, Christian itself meaning informed by the unique Christian revelation. This is something else again, of a different order and of a quality (consider-

<sup>35</sup> Charles Davis, "Announcing Mortal Sins," *America*, 1965, 112 (No. 6), p. 193.

<sup>36</sup> Abbe Marc Oraison, *Love or Constraint?* trans. Una Morrissey (New York: J. P. Kenedy & Sons, 1959), pp. 97-100.

<sup>37</sup> Louis Monden, *Sin, Liberty and Law*, trans. Joseph Donceel (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1965), pp. 4-12 *et passim*.

ing its source) transcending by far the reflections offered here. I wish rather to discuss the possibility of yet another moral source within the human person, such that it applies to all men and may well form the basis for true religious morality.

To begin with, we noted above that the morality discussed by Piaget as that discussed by Freud, deals mainly with the person's response to the outward law, be this written, exemplar or oral. Further, though this external normality may be internalized, as in fact it is, it remains something not of the creation of the person. The person may well deal with the internalized law in a creative way, still its 'otherness' is undeniable. We noted also that Freud speaks of the superego as a psychic function which is often in conflict with the ego, and we posited the query whether this does not reveal that the ego itself is tending toward something of its own, a direction not placed on the ego from without (as would the superego tend to do) nor forced on it from below (as the id might force the ego) but created out of the depths of its own self-presence, founded within the ego's unique understanding of itself. If this is so, then we have found another source of morality within the person other than the morality based originally on adult constraint and the child's response to this constraint, even though this constraint might later fade and its partner, unilateral respect becomes mutual respect and cooperation.

Let us, for the sake of clarity, call the morality thus far discussed by Freud and Piaget the *morality of society*. Its inception is somehow inextricably linked with the whole process of socialization; to satisfy the Freudian we may speak of the conflict, within the domain of this morality, as the conflict of superego and ego, of introjected parental attitudes and personal attitudes or what have you; to satisfy the follower of Piaget we might include within the domain of this morality the whole process which grows from heteronomy and unilateral respect and moral constraint to autonomy (realized only with the internalization of the hithertofore outward law) and mutual respect and cooperation freely willed. This morality defines the right and wrong of a person insofar as he is a member of a given society: the society of the family, the neighbor-

hood, the state and so on, and of the culture and cultural demands of that society. As the society is without and the person, to exist meaningfully, must become a member of that society and express himself within the defined limits mapped out by that society, there is indeed a great deal of conflict and the pressing need for internalization, this perhaps in proportion to the quantity and the quality of the demands made on the individual in and through his society.

But I feel, and hope to explain why I feel so in this paper, that there is still another morality and another source. Let us, again for clarity's sake, call this morality the *morality of the person*. It is not linked (except in the totality of the person) with socialization proper; it is linked rather with the individual's experience of what it is to be a human being, to choose for himself, to actualize and determine his own mode of existence, to search for and find a substratum to all he does, giving continuity not only to his actions but to what he is and will become and wills to become. There is here no essential conflict of superego and ego; if conflict there is, the conflict is within the ego as the involuted center of man's psychic life. Yet a qualification is in order: the ego is not a datum, neither a static quantity nor a dynamic (that is to say, living and active) quantity. The ego is continually a process, a consciousness which is and yet is always becoming more, expanding, expressing itself in new and varied ways, open to itself, to its roots (as these exist in the id and through the id to the inner parts of the world) and open to the world in and through and as living body.

It is in this always blossoming center of the human being that a man knows himself and decides for himself what he is and is to become. It is here that he is present to himself; it is from this inner source that all ultimate meaning flows to inform his otherwise faceless and indefinite acts.

This latter may require a bit of explaining. Let us look at it this way: we are aware that in all our actions (a certain way of glancing at a person will do as well as our way of dealing with people) there are two levels not always or necessarily uncongruent. The first is the outward level, seen by all, capa-

ble of being interpreted in as many ways perhaps as there are viewers, the perimeter, possibly the defense line, sometimes at least the transparency of the second level. This latter is the level of meaning. Which is to say nothing but that our actions are symbols (or symptoms, if you will) of our inner selves. To take a simple example: we discover—on some moon-lit night—two pairs of lovers. At the same moment, the men of the pairs are professing their love of their lady companions. They both use the simple words "I love you." Wonderful, we might say; they are both in love—it is obvious: they have both just said so. But let us wait a moment and examine the situation. I agree that both have used the same words; both have followed the culture's norms for professing love (they did no love dance, for instance); but did they mean the same thing. When the one said 'I', how did he understand his 'I': is it really his innermost self, or his unto now uninflated ego (used in another sense now!) or does he speak of himself as a collection of biological needs? And we ask the same about the other. Likewise, what does he mean by the word 'love': is it desire, or need, or adoration, or flippancy? And the word 'you': how does he see the other, his lady companion? Is his view stopped short by her physique; does his view see the other person really as other; does it mean, perhaps, you as you are now in this spot under this moon—but tomorrow? who can say? The words are valid only as symbols. The meaning within is the thing. So with all our actions, whatever they are.

And we go further. We may, I feel, push back the levels of interiority quite far, until we come to a level, perhaps one even hidden from the person himself, which is as it were the source of all the person's outer manifestations. It is on this level that we seek the clues and cues of and for continuity and oneness and meaning. This is the ego in its evolving depths, as it ever and again looks at itself in its process of becoming and answers for itself the meaning of its existence now and the meaning it wishes to have in the future.

Here, as Pierre Fransen has pointed out, a choice which is in its own way fundamental and basic is made and ever and

again reaffirmed.<sup>38</sup> All of man's acts and thoughts are obviously of their nature incomplete: we are able to put all of ourselves not at all into one act. (Going back to our lovers above, we might notice how many times and in what many and varied ways lovers express their love. One saying of the delightful words does not suffice, for the 'I' [and his appreciation of the same] and the 'you' [and his understanding of her growth as a person] are never quite the same, nor did the former expression sufficiently capture the persons as wholes.)

But to return to the issue of the choice, we ask from what precisely are the various alternative to be chosen. Basically, we find two. The one is parallel (on this deepest level of human existence) to psycho-physical phenomena: regression or ossification. This means fundamentally a chosen type of selfishness, an obsession with the self and its demands, a refusal to grow, to go out of oneself, to risk oneself. Remember, however, that we are talking on the level of inner meaning. A person may in fact express himself externally as the world's greatest lover and philanthropist; he may in fact use this as a symbol of mockery and hatred. The other alternative is love. Again, on this level of meaning. Someone (quite philosophically) once said that love, as being, has many forms. It is not too hard nonetheless to see many of man's otherwise 'socially objectionable' actions as warped symbols of his craving to love and be loved and his reaction to the frustration of the same. Again, this love is a choice, resulting from the ego's presence to its opening self and its decision regarding itself and its meaning. The intensity and the time of this growing awareness and strengthening resolve in one's choice varies greatly undoubtedly. The characters of *Tobacco Road*, save one, are far from the ideal: yet again, we ask the meaning of their crude (by our standards) actions.

Do we, however, have the right to narrow the choice down to two alternatives in speaking of this inner-ego conflict and decision? Do we have the right to assert that man's fundamental choice lies behind all his actions giving them (however va-

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<sup>38</sup> Pierre Fransen, "Towards a Psychology of Divine Grace," *Cross Currents*, 8 (1958) p. 214 *et passim*.

ried their faces) their unique meaning and value? Dare we speak as psychologists while treating of such matters?

I believe so. Rightly understanding the word, I believe that man reveals in all his psychic operations (his needs and longings, his hopes and fears as well) that he is born to love. He is not born a lover: this is learned bit by bit. But witness the same growth of which Piaget speaks viewed from this standpoint. Notice that the child (from his earliest days—some would even have it, from his pre-natal days) will shrivel as a person or die if he does not experience love, love in all its varied manifestations. The words of the poets, too, are more than vague and far-off dreams: they reveal in all their beauty the longings of man. See around us the creative effect of love, the unique and again creative vision of love. See how the withdrawal of love (or even the threatened permanency of this withdrawal) can cause such terrible upheavals within the maturing as within the child's psychological personality. Sense too, if you will, the meaning of the anguish so often felt today, so frequently written about. Does not the anguish again reveal the psychology of the person, does it not speak of his inability to live without some assurance of reciprocated love?

Again, on another plane, we have it from the eminent paleontologist, Teilhard de Chardin, that evolution (of the individual as of the race as of the world at large) progresses by successive periods of involution, and that the last and greatest of these involutions is the involution of love (such that love is *the* operative power for evolution at work in the world today) which so perfectly combines the seemingly incompatible; the totalization of mankind and the individual's personalization.<sup>39</sup> "Love alone," he would write, "is capable of uniting living beings in such a way as to complete and fulfill them, for it alone takes them and joins them by what is deepest in themselves."<sup>40</sup> Love, that is, stands at the center of what we are. But love remains a choice; the peak perhaps of man's experienced freedom is that he can choose to love or not to love, that

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<sup>39</sup> Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *The Phenomenon of Man* (New York: Harper and Row, 1959), pp. 260-263.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 265.

love cannot be bought nor sold. That love is given and given freely, and that anything else is pseudo-love, unreal, destroying.

It is this, really, that gives man that inner awareness of what he ought to become. The yearnings of man as conscious of himself have a direction of themselves, and yet these yearnings must themselves be directed. For as Augustine once noted, a man becomes what he loves.

Love, implying as it does the gift of oneself to another (and often it is the gift of the other to the other!) involves the dynamism of man—again a psychic truth—toward greater and greater consciousness. For every movement outward toward another, there is another counterbalancing movement inward.

Ossification too is possible, and we have all witnessed those who are paralyzed by the fear of going out of themselves, a fear which is a fear of rejection. Regression takes on a deeper meaning: a person wills not to love but wills solely to be loved, to be forever the grasping child, the dependent child, the loved and not the lover.

This is the morality of the person. It provides the continuity which flows from action to action. It defines the person who is a person within society and therefore subject too to the morality of society. But when we have on the one hand those who would rigidly obey all the demands of society and on the other those who defiantly resist these same demands, we do not throw up our hands in panic. This is but one morality, but one source within the person challenged. To limit ourselves to this one is a grievous oversight. There is yet another, that which we have just spoken of. And therefore Freud who limits all conscience to the negative, who sees the superego as something which must be depersonalized sufficiently to allow some freedom of movement misses the whole point and sees but a part. For conscience also exists on this second level and it is positive: it involves man's choice of what he wants to be before himself and before all reality. Man is assuredly capable of becoming many things (though he may express only two fundamentally different options through all his varied actions) and therefore he must choose and face the conflict of that ego



function which is the morality of the person, feel within himself the tension of becoming what he chooses to become, the anguish of not being sure of the total outcome, because the total outcome in this sphere cannot be assured by the perfect confluence of one's life with the law—with any law, even that which is said to be divine. The Hippies even as the perfect law-abider have not finished with morality. They too experience within themselves in whatever confused or repressed or ignored or fearing way the tension of becoming a person.

It is, by way of note, interesting that it is to this level and not to the level of social morality that Christ appealed. For his appeal was to the inner man, beyond all the facade, so that he could accept and love the adulteress (condemned by social morality) and tear to pieces the pharisee (the epitome of all that social morality called for) because he called forth to the depths of man's heart and looked to their intentions and understood (perhaps as no other has or could) the symbolic and symptomatic value of their actions and called all to learn to love a Father who is Love.

#### BACK TO THE CHILD

The relevance of all this to childhood is undoubtedly important but difficult to conceptualize. I point out here only a few areas of possible application and development.

First, it is obvious that the child must be raised in an attitude of love, in an environment which from the first looks to the intent and not to the material deed. When the child comes of age, he must come to realize by whatever means possible that there are two moralities, that the importance of these is relative to issues at stake, that the second we have described is the first and most important, that he can best become a member of society by learning to live it.

The climate must further be one of openness, with the use of authority minimized and love-oriented responses maximized; one in which the person is free to be himself (strangely, many who are convinced that morality exists only on the first level—especially those who see this level as applying to their relations

to God as well as to their parents—feel that this means total license to do what one wishes. This is not so: one is freed only to the extent that he loves, and to the extent that he loves he feels himself free also—because they fall into meaninglessness—of the petty demands of the law). This is a climate in which inwardness is apt to develop.

The child must never be identified with his mistakes. No one is the way he is, for all men (children too) exist as processes, alive to all sorts of possibilities, never quite completed, though many are the mummies walking among us who have already all the answers, who no longer face the task and the challenge of remaining alive: the price perhaps is too great, for the price is life itself.

#### BY WAY OF CONCLUSION

We have found—if speaking of findings here is legitimate at all—that the child and man have indeed two moralities: the morality of society and the morality of the person. The former, according to Piaget is subdivided into two parts: that of moral restraint, heteronomy and unilateral respect and that of co-operation, autonomy and mutual respect.

The two have different sources within. That of society is based on (using Freud's terminology) the conflict of the ego and the superego; that of the person is rather a function of the self-present ego-in-process. Both must be taken into account when speaking of the morality of man. The one (of society) is rather static and in its source always external; the other (that of the person) is from the first internal and dynamic, a creative process, the process of creating oneself.

Life must be lived with both moralities.

Real life is possible only with the morality of the person.

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