

T. M. Thomas

University of Bridgeport

MORAL DEVELOPMENT IN PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Morality has been traditionally considered a philosophical and religious question, and sciences were regarded as amoral. But today, with the increased emphasis on the human relevance of sciences in general and the great advances made in human sciences like psychology and sociology, the role of these sciences in defining the moral dimension of human life has assumed greater importance. Many psychologists, in spite of their differences in presuppositions and orientations, have undertaken the study of morals using a scientific approach. Cognitive developmental psychologists like Piaget and Kohlberg are widely known for their contributions in the area of moral development. Social learning theorists show that moral behaviour is expressed by each person as a result of imitation of other people. Prior to the acceptance of both these theories Freud stirred the moral issue by introducing the concept of conscience giving it a new meaning. In this paper I shall indicate the approach to moral development by these three schools and discuss their relevance to the wider question of morality.

Freudian Psychology: the Superego

Freud with his medical interests and his background of Association Psychology tried to interpret the phenomenon of moral conscience within the framework of psychology under the scientific term superego, an unconscious Censor that rejects and represses into the unconscious sphere whatever is socially unacceptable. He develops the concepts of the id, ego, and superego in order to discuss the ambivalence of moral standards, the emergence in abnormal behaviour of elements long thrust out of consciousness, and in general the whole structure and functioning of the mental apparatus. He believes that the id contains passions.¹ It is the great reservoir of the libido, the

1. Sigmund Freud, *The Ego and Id* (New York : W. W. Norton & Co., 1960), p. 15.

instinctual forces of sexual energy. It is the generator of energy, the dynamo of personality. Freud saw the newborn infant as chiefly id, that is, masses of impulses.² Part of the id, by its contact with the external world, modifies and emerges as the ego. In contrast to the id with its passions, ego represents reason and sanity.

In course of time there is differentiation within the ego leading to the rise of what Freud called the superego or ego ideal.³ It begins to develop at the age of three by incorporating the sense of right and wrong imbibed from its parents. The development of superego is fundamentally a process of identification. The child strives to become like the parents by adopting their behaviour and attitudes. Usually the boy identifies with the father and the girl with the mother. Both Freud and Erikson consider the child's identification with the parent of the same sex as the most important event of the pre-school years.⁴ The child begins to show evidence of having a set of standards of acceptable behaviour, acting in accordance with these standards and feeling guilty if he violates them. "When by the process of identification he demands from himself conformity to a standard of conduct, the superego is said to be making its appearance."⁵ Since the superego exercises a criticizing and censoring power it is regarded as conscience.

The Freudian attempt to give a scientific explanation of moral development has been criticized, amended and further developed by other psychologists in the Analytical School. The interplay between individual consciousness and universal consciousness and the universal psychological archetypes proposed by C. G. Jung, the dominant role of the human will emphasized by Rank, the drive for the attainment of goals and the compensating mechanism defended by Adler, the various stages of psychological development defined by Erickson and the different types of personality character like the hoarding, marketing and productive explained by Fromm are some of the significant attempts in this field. All these psychologists under the leadership of Freud, rebel against what they regard as the root cause of frustration and alienation in Western culture, a purely theoretical and absolutist understanding of moral values. These psychologists

-
2. Clara Thomson, *Psychoanalysis : Evolution and Development* (New York : Grove Press, 1950), p. 61.
 3. Sigmund Freud, *Op. cit.*, p. 18.
 4. Diane E. Papalia and Sally Olds, *A Child's World* (New York : McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1975), p. 341.
 5. G. Murphy, *Personality* (New York ; Harper & Row, 1947), p. 543.

have succeeded in showing that moral consciousness is something integral to the psychological framework of human life. But their efforts to show that the psychological interpretation is both sufficient and necessary for morality have left several problems unresolved. Reason and conscious self-determination that can transcend one's habitual modes of behaviour and criticize even the socially established mores—facts central to any valid moral system—seem to be generally regarded as not very important and neglected by the Analytical Psychologists. But the principal complaint against them is that they weaken the absolute and universally binding character of the moral imperative. The next serious question, whether an individual can by himself discover and judge all moral values central to human life, is left unanswered.

Piaget and the Cognitive Developmental Theory

The second school of thought that is relevant in the context of psychological studies of morality is the Cognitive Developmental Theory as formulated by the world famous child psychologist, Jean Piaget. His basic premise is that moral development takes place as a result of the intellectual growth, and so he focusses attention on the stages of cognitive development. Indeed, the main contribution of Piaget is the findings on four different stages : sensorimotor, pre-operational, concrete operational and formal operational stages. The transition to the higher stages is a necessary condition for moral development. At about the age of seven an important transition is found in the child's ability for mental operations. Show the child two balls of clay that look the same and then flatten one to make it look much bigger. Though at one stage the child reports that the flattened piece contains more clay, at a later stage in mental development he reports that both pieces contain the same amount of clay. Usually this happens at the age of seven when the child moves from the pre-operational to the concrete operational stage. In the next stage, when the child passes from the concrete operational to the formal operational stage at about the age of twelve, he gains the ability to think at the abstract level like an adult and to make decisions by taking into account the various factors involved in an issue. While in the early stages the child is egocentric in the later stages he can project himself in the place of another person and see the question at hand in a different perspective. Moral decisions demand such higher intellectual abilities.

According to Piaget "All morality consists in a system of rules, and the essence of all morality is to be sought for in the respect which

the individual acquires for these rules.”⁶ He observed children playing marbles and presented stories to them to find out their ability for moral reasoning. Take the example of two boys : John broke twelve glasses by mistake and Henry broke two purposely. A young child will look at the damage and report that John is more wrong while an older one will consider the intention and select Henry though he broke only two. Piaget argues that it is the intention of the person that makes an action moral or not. Based on such stories he concluded that children typically pass through two phases of morality. He called the first, the morality of constraint when something is imposed from outside by authorities. The second phase was called the morality of co-operation or autonomy when rules are conceived as flexible and intentions are more important than consequences. Piaget indicated that the shift from the morality of constraint to the morality of co-operation was the result of the interaction of social, emotional and intellectual forces.

Kohlberg's Six Stages of Moral Development

Kohlberg agrees with Piaget's basic stand on moral studies, though he has extended and elaborated them into six stages. Like Piaget he assumes that the capacity for moral decisions grows, paralleling the child's intellectual development. Both of them focussed more on the intentions of people than on their actual moral behaviour.

For his studies Kohlberg selected youngsters who were ten years or a little older and stayed with them for eighteen years. Such longitudinal studies won the attention of people and made Kohlberg the key-figure on moral development during the 1970's. Hypothetical situations on moral questions were presented to children and adults to find out the level of development the person had achieved. Kohlberg analysed their reasoning to determine the level of moral maturation. Among the several dilemmas presented by Kohlberg the following is widely known. A woman is dying of cancer. A new drug has been discovered and it is available at a certain drug-store. The price of the drug is so high that the husband finds it difficult to raise the necessary amount. He tries to borrow money and fails. Then, in desperation, he breaks into the store and steals the drug. Should he have done that? Why? Depending upon the reasons given by people Kohlberg was able to place them at different levels or stages of moral development.

6. Jean Piaget, *The Moral Judgement of the Child* (The Free Press, 1932).

Three Levels of Moral Judgment

Kohlberg distinguishes three levels of moral development: the pre-conventional or pre-moral level; the conventional level; and the post-conventional or autonomous level. The child is responsive to the notion of what is good and bad provided by parents and other members of the society. The reasons for the child's moral judgments are different from those of adults. Moral decisions are primarily egocentric, based on one's own self-interest and material considerations. The next level, conventional, begins at around the age of ten when the child is less egocentric and more sociocentric. The child conforms to social conventions, motivated by a strong desire to maintain, support and justify the existing social structure. The youngster moves on to the next level, post-conventional, at around the age of sixteen when moral decisions are made not by conforming to the existing social order, but by a consideration of universal principles of justice, equality and human dignity. Each level is divided into two stages, thus forming a total of six stages.⁷

Stage One : Obedience and Punishment Orientation. Moral decisions are made for avoiding punishment. The child submits to authority, especially that of parents. The main motive for obeying a rule is to avoid punishment and to achieve gratification. The reason for not taking a toy from a friend is the fear that he will be punished by his mother or father. In the moral dilemma presented above, the young man decided to steal the drug because "if he let his wife die, many people would blame him." Or he may decide not to steal because "he would probably be caught by police and put in jail for stealing the drug."

Stage Two : Instrumental Relativist Orientation. At this stage right behaviour is what satisfies one's own needs, thus expressing a hedonistic outlook. The notion of reciprocity begins to emerge and under certain conditions the needs of others are taken into consideration. However, this reciprocity is based on exchange of favours, rather than a sense of loyalty or justice. A child while sharing his cookies with others usually expects something in return. The bribery in the adult world is another example. The young man, whether he steals the medicine or not, is greatly concerned about his own interest.

-
7. Rolf E. Muuss, "Kohlberg's Cognitive-Developmental Approach to Adolescent Morality", *Adolescence*, Vol. XI No. 41 Spring 1976, pp. 41-42.
 8. Jay M. Smith and Don-David Lusteran, *The Teacher as Learning Facilitator* (Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1979), p. 117.

Stage Three : Interpersonal Concordance Orientation (“good-boy” “good-girl”). In this first stage of conventional level of morality the youngster wishes to seek the approval of others. Good behaviour is what pleases or helps others, thus confusing social approval with the right action. The child tries to win the approval of his social group especially the peer group, and lives up to the expectation he thinks others have. There is conformity to the stereotyped images of what is good behaviour in a particular society instead of real thinking by the individual concerned on the nature of right course of action. The young man’s decision whether to steal or not is motivated by his conception of what others would say about his action.

Stage Four : Orientation toward Authority and Maintaining the Social Order (“Law and Order” morality). Moral behaviour is obeying the laws, respecting authority, and maintaining the social order. Laws are accepted as fixed and unchanging and the social order is taken as worth maintaining for its own sake. “The basic orientation is a faith in existing authority, in fixed rules, and in the maintenance of social order at any price.”⁹ People are expected to obey laws and rules without questioning even when these become worthless. The young man may obey the rules, even ignoring the right values of life.

Stage Five : Social Contract Orientation. Moral judgment at this post-conventional level is defined in terms of general principles agreed on by the whole society. Moral behaviour is motivated by a concern for the welfare of the larger community. Since the purpose of law is to preserve human rights, unjust laws are to be changed following rational deliberations, keeping in mind social utility. It is assumed that a consensus can be reached regarding the laws to be formulated as part of a social contract. The constitution of a country can be taken as an example because it is a contract of the people as a whole aiming at the common good.

Stage Six : Universal Ethical Principles Orientation. Morality at the highest principled stage is viewed as decision of the conscience. It is based on self-chosen, abstract, ethical principles rather than the self-interest of one person. These principles include justice, equality and respect for the worth and dignity of all people. Unjust laws may be broken, because morality is grounded not in legality, but in ethical principles. Martin Luther King challenged unjust laws that discriminated against the blacks and denied them their rights as human beings.

9. R. Muuss, *Op. Cit.*, p. 44.

His respect for law is evident from the fact that he accepted imprisonment as punishment for the laws that he violated. That resulted in the formulation of better civil rights laws which guaranteed human dignity to every one, irrespective of colour or race. The young man in our example may steal the medicine to save the life of his wife, but will also accept the punishment, even imprisonment. By this action he shows the society that the right to life takes precedence over the right to make a profit.

Evaluation of Kohlberg's Theory. Kohlberg's theory of moral development received general acceptance, especially, on the early part of this decade in the situation created by the Vietnam War protests and also because of the novelty of the approach and the scientific aura surrounding the whole empirical approach. Kohlberg himself and his disciples have conducted surveys in different parts of the world and they claim that statistics confirm the stages as conceived by him, though Kohlberg himself has revised and modified the description of the stages. But a great deal of criticism has been voiced about the method of procedure of Kohlberg even on the empirical and scientific level, especially on the selective character of the surveys and the close relation set up between the stages of development envisioned and the experimental educational programmes set up in correspondence with them.

First of all, the surveys and experiments so far conducted are not considered exhaustive enough to prove conclusively that the moral stages are universally valid and that there are no cases in which people leapfrog some of the stages. Secondly, though the behaviour of children and their responses to moral issues have been studied in different parts of the world, are not those surveys by their very nature slanted in favour of a pattern set up as a model on account of the questions proposed and the responses expected in reference to a pre-established scale? The behaviour of children brought up and trained in Western culture is taken as the norm for judging children of all countries. Responses to particular issues and questions are definitely conditioned by the respondent's cultural background. The same moral values get different behavioural expressions in different cultures. No wonder, then, that only a small percentage especially outside the Western culture attain the fifth and sixth levels of Kohlberg's scale. This is pointed out as an example of the unconscious cultural bias of the West which judges everyone else according to its own culturally conditioned standards.

A more serious criticism is that Kohlberg's scheme is part of an educational programme that comes very close to indoctrination of certain values which the educator regards as the best for his students. In this critical view Kohlberg's experiments with the moral stages of development conducted in practical educational programmes in some schools have the nature of a hidden curriculum, in which the teachers fix in their minds what the appropriate responses to problems from students should be and then slowly lead the students towards them. Even without any positive suggestion from the teachers, their very presence can influence children to give the answers that gain the approval of teachers. The question of indoctrination arises precisely because the answers are not based on any previously clarified principles. This was the serious defect of the value systems inculcated by totalitarian systems.

Social Learning Theory and Imitation

By way of reaction to the various psychological schools that propose different theories, the Social Learning Theory has emerged fairly recently as an eclectic school of thought combining concepts and methodology from a variety of psychological sources. The systematic development of a theory of social learning begins in the 1940's with the writings of Miller and Dollard.¹⁰ Psychoanalytic constructs, like the identification and ego strength, are investigated within the methodological approach of the experimentalist. "Social learning theory has been described as the translation of psychoanalytic constructs into behaviouristic terminology."¹¹ It assumes that behaviour is primarily determined within a social context and hence studies the relationship between environmental and social changes as antecedents, and the behavioural changes that occur in the person as consequences rather than as a function of age.¹²

Social learning theorists express their view of morality through the related concepts of imitation, identification and modelling. Children have a strong tendency to imitate adults. An infant imitates the parent not only in uttering the first words but also in many other things. By the age of about three a child can behave as if it were the father or the mother. In his utterance "I am daddy" the child identifies

10. Miller, N. E. and J. Dollard, *Social Learning and Imitation* (Yale University Press, 1941).

11. Rolf E. Muuss, "The Implications of Social Learning Theory for an Understanding of Adolescent Development," *Adolescence*, Vol. XI, No. 41, Spring 1979, p. 62.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 67.

himself with the father by partaking in the feeling dimension and acting as if he were the father. Thus, during pre-school years, the acts of imitation gradually develop into an identification process. "Identification is a process in which people respond to the feelings, attitudes, and actions of others by adopting them as their own."¹³ Identification requires certain cognitive capacities that are not needed for imitation. The former occurs primarily in the context of a close, ongoing relationship between two people, whereas imitation can take place as a result of brief, relatively unimportant, and even impersonal observations of others.¹⁴ The people selected for identification are called the models who will determine the nature of moral behaviour in the child. Research shows that modelling in children is fostered by warmth and power. Parents provide better models if they are conceived by children as affectionate and powerful.

We agree that the selection of a model is very crucial in the cultivation of moral behaviour. Though social learning theorists succeed in explaining the process of modelling, they do not help in providing the guidelines for selecting a suitable model. It can be done only when we consider the question of what ought to be needed in life. Ultimate questions related to the purpose and meaning of life are to be given due importance in finding a suitable model to be followed. Social learning theorists as well as behaviourists do not want to deal with metaphysical problems as they are considered vague and unrelated to life. The objectivity related to science is emphasized to the extent that they have to neglect all metaphysical issues. Hence social learning theory fails to provide the necessary idealism for youth as also to demonstrate the value of love and sacrifice in life.

Value of Scientific Approaches to the Moral Problem

As we have already noted, these different scientific approaches to moral values gained popularity in the modern world, especially in the period of the Vietnam War, when the whole world especially the youth, seemed to revolt against the apparent lack of any respect for moral values in an adult generation that tolerated the infliction of a cruel war on a defenceless nation. The psychologists with their scientific authority brought home to the consciousness of all that no one could maintain the integrity of life without paying attention to moral values.

13. David Elkind and Irving Weiner, *Development of the Child* (John Wiley and Sons, 1978), p. 276.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 227.

The Psychologists accomplished also the promethean task of bringing down moral values to the level of ordinary experience : there is no area of human experience that is entirely amoral or value free. This is an appropriate reaction to the Empiricists, Rationalists and Deontologists of the last century who managed to remove morality away from the field of everyday ordinary experience of man. They had created a split between the inner and the outer, the spiritual and the material worlds of experience and banished values into the inner recesses of human existence, where they were only a matter of feeling and intuition, removed from any possibility of objective recognition. For the Empiricists there was only the world of experience and experimentation that mattered, and values had no place in them. Rationalists created an inner independent world of reasoning, metaphysics and values with no relation to or dependence on the outer world. Deontologists like Emmanuel Kant, who declared the objective world unknowable in itself, constituted the moral values into a world of categorical imperatives valid in itself by the simple title of "*deon*" or duty. By way of reaction to this dualism, American Pragmatists like George Mead and John Dewey very nearly eliminated "values" when they tried to reduce all morals to practical activity : Value is what worked and hence moral values had to be searched by trial and error and discovered by action : The great achievement of the recent scientific development is that it goes beyond even this pragmatic attitude and recognizes moral values as an integral dimension of every field of human experience, and thus bridged the long-standing gap between life and moral values. They have made it plain that no area of human life can be treated as amoral. As C. G. Jung, summarizing his clinical experience, once stated that whether religious and moral values are objectively valid or not, a majority of people who get mentally sick do so through loss of those values, and they do not get well unless they regain them.

Danger of Reductionism

On the other hand, the discussion of moral values by the scientists raises several philosophical questions regarding the adequacy of the scientific method for dealing with the moral issue, as well as the validity and binding force of values discovered through scientific methods.

First of all, the psychologist, while recognizing the moral dimension as something integral to the human psyche, tends to imply that it is *only* a psychological phenomenon, and nothing beyond the individual human psyche. Freud took a purely relativist stand on morality

in keeping with the prevailing trend of his times, as if moral values were purely subjective conceptions of the individual mind, and for that matter, of the sick mind with which Freud was mostly concerned. Several psychologists challenged this restriction of moral values to the individual psyche and tried to bring out their universal and abstract nature. All the same, they were like the *animus, anima*, other archetypes, and other psychological and sociological categories, purely irrational and even unconscious mechanisms, studied and universalized by the scientist.

Kohlberg goes a step further in this respect and shows that moral values arise at the level of the rational activity of man, as an outcome of the intellectual development of man. Kohlberg's valuable contribution to our understanding of morality lies in his presentation of the last two stages. He believes that many adults reach only the fourth stage and for these people moral decisions grow out of their assessment of other peoples' approval as well as their adherence to the prevailing laws and customs. Only one-third of the people move toward stage five and only ten per cent reach stage six going beyond the "law and order" morality. This insistence on the rational level as the field of moral values appealed not only to the intellectuals, who favour the cognitive and scientific approach, but also to the general public that looks for new moral values to meet the need of our times. Moral judgment at the highest stage is based on justice, equality, human dignity and qualities recognized only in the rational perspective. As Richard Peters comments, "The crown of Kohlberg's moral system is the principle of justice."¹⁵ It is to be pointed out that one who follows a rational approach usually prefers the principle of justice, as seen in Kohlberg. But, Reinhold Niebuhr differentiates rational ethics from religious ethics. "A rational ethic aims at justice, and a religious ethic makes love the ideal."¹⁶ A rational ethic seeks to bring the needs of others into equal consideration with those of the self while the religious ethic gives priority to the needs of the neighbour. Hence, there are strengths and weaknesses in the rational approach.

One of the merits of the rational approach to morality is that it makes the teaching of values in our schools possible by reducing its controversial nature. The rational basis seeks the laws of logic and

-
15. Richard Peters, "The Place of Kohlberg's Theory in Moral Education," *Journal of Moral Education*, Vol. 7, No. 3, May 1978, p. 150.
 16. Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (Charles Scribner's Son, 1932), p. 57.

relevant facts while discussing a moral dilemma. Hence a teacher of moral education has to insist on rational thinking.¹⁷ Kohlberg disagreed with the traditional teaching of the "bag of virtues" that included honesty, service, self-control, etc., by preaching about the advantages of these virtues. In its place he advocated an understanding of justice which is achieved when moral dilemmas have been presented and discussed.

One major weakness of the rational approach is that it neglects love. To Tillich the ultimate moral principle is love which includes justice, but transcends it.¹⁸ As indicated above, Niebuhr also gives preference to the ideal of love that is central in religious ethics. R. S. Peters strongly criticizes Kohlberg on the ground that his system does not deal with the affective aspects of development.

The Specific Approach to Moral Value

But the crucial issue here is the method of approach to value : Is the so-called scientific method, the method of the empirical sciences that tabulate and tally their objective data and search for invariable combinations and transformations among them, adequate to discover moral values ? Jung's contention that from a psychological point of view moral and religious values were integral to the life of normal people raises the further question of what is normalcy and how it may be determined. This question is not resolved by putting some rational items like justice, dignity, equality, or even affective elements like love and concern in the basket of scientific data. Even with regard to Kohlberg's 5th and 6th stages of moral development one can ask the question why they are regarded as superior to others: Why is making a decision according to one's personal conviction and deliberately formed philosophy morally superior to acting out of fear of punishment or desire of satisfying one's needs or getting the approval of others or out of blind conformity to the established order ? Why is the productive type of personality in Eric Fromm's system closer to the authentic nature of man than other types like the hoarding and marketing characters ? Or why, again, is loving somebody or anybody superior to minding one's business and pursuing one's own personal interests ?

17. John Wilson *et al*, *Introduction to Moral Education*, (Penguin Books, 1967), p. 76.

18. Paul Tillich, *Morality and Beyond* (Harper Torch Books, 1963), p. 39,

The answer to these questions implied and presupposed in these so-called "scientific" theories of value are the metaphysical principles of morality exposed by Aristotle in this *Nicomachean Ethics*: Man is superior to other beings including animals by his reasoning power, and principally by the rational activity of consciously and deliberately making decisions keeping in view his ultimate and complete good: "... We state the function of man to be a certain kind of life, and this to be an activity or actions of the soul implying a rational principle, and the function of a good man to be the good and noble performance of these, in accordance with the appropriate excellence.¹⁹ Value indicates something valuable for something, *i.e.*, leading beyond itself towards something else. Moral value as the highest of values implies the total orientation of man as man to his highest good, which is both the fulfilment of his natural potentialities as well as the attainment of the total object of his noblest faculties. Such a total objective is not within the scope and perspective of any particular science like sociology or psychology, but of philosophy that can go beyond the immediate goals to the level of the absolute and transcendent.

But this does not mean that the perception of moral values has to be reserved to a special intuitive sense in the style of the Deontologists, or isolated into a world of pure theory, or worse still, declared as the unique privilege of mystics, whom others have to trust and follow. A purely theoretical system of values has been severely and convincingly criticized in recent times by Marx, Freud and Nietzsche, who attribute to it the discontent, frustration and alienation felt by great masses of humanity today. Nietzsche called it "the net of Alexandrian culture" which "proposes as its ideal the theoretical man equipped with the greatest forces of knowledge."²⁰ Gabriel Marcel strongly supported the conclusions of Nietzsche in this respect and said that the moment values are separated from existential decisions and referred to a suprasensible order, they break up and "at the same time each of them seems to lose its vitality, to be reduced to its own skeleton, that is, in short, to something which one recognizes as a mere idea."²¹

Here the fundamental point is wholeness or completeness of man's moral orientation, as Aristotle himself pointed out. Man is not a

19. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* I, ch. 7 1098a 11-15.

20. Nietzsche, *The Birth of a Tragedy*, trs. Clifton FMDiman, in *The Philosophy of Nietzsche* (New York: Modern Library, 1954) p. 1946.

21. Bergson, *Problematic Man*, trs. Brian Thompson (New York: Herder & Herder, 1962), p. 41.

pure spirit that lives in a world of pure ideas, nor a purely terrestrial being tied up in the world of art and psychological archetypes. In his moral decisions spirit and matter, universal ideas and realities of everyday existence, theory and praxis come together. His decisions are not mere mechanical applications of universal propositions, but rather actual discoveries of immutable value in the changing situations of life. Often values are actually lived and experienced before they are theoretically formulated.

Conclusion

The value of the psychological systems examined in this paper is their corrective influence on traditional value systems that are often theories taken for granted and even neglected with no actual influence on the affairs of life. Each school examined above responds to a prevailing mood in society. Freud responded to the diversity of individuals and the different roles values played in their lives, and hence the relative meaning of morality was his emphasis. Kohlberg lives at a time when people are dissatisfied with the relativistic attitude and are willing to accept a morality based on universal principles. Each school has its own focus: Freud through his study of superego as conscience enters into the realm of emotions and shows how the guilt feelings form a basis in assessing moral development. Piaget and other cognitive developmental psychologists focus on the process of thinking and make valuable contributions through their studies on developmental stages. Yet, the intellectual dimension is only one aspect of human personality while moral conduct springs from the whole human being. Social learning theorists look to a person's behaviour and study the process of imitation in moral learning. But, they have to recognize the inner core of being that underlies all moral behaviour. Thus to create an integral moral system these different schools have to correct each other and have, finally, to be transcended in a true transcendental perspective that can be provided only by philosophy and religion.