

## MORALITY: IN THE SUPERSTRUCTURE?

According to the materialist conception of history in its Marxian version, morality, religion, science, art, and ideology are components of the "spiritual superstructure" of society. However, it is admitted that, once created, each such component can break away from its roots and lead an independent life for a while. It is also admitted that it can react back upon the material infrastructure, i.e. the economy.

On the systemic view of society (Vol. 4, Ch. 5) there is no such thing as an infrastructure-superstructure division. Instead, every society can be conceived of as being composed of four material subsystems: the biological, economic, cultural, and political. Every one of these subsystems is composed of real people and their means of production (e.g. livestock and machines) and social

intercourse (e.g. weapons and telephones). In this view there is no room for  
morality as a separate "sphere" in the superstructure: there are only/moral agents  
who now observe, now break, the moral codes that they have inherited or invented.  
Hence there is no reaction of morality upon social (in particular economic) life.  
All there is, is the concrete fact that an individual, or group of individuals, is  
now inspired to, now prevented from, observing or breaking such codes in the course  
of doing a spot of economic, cultural or political work.