

Overcoming Modern Confusion

Consistency and Choice

ADOLFO CRITTO

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OVERCOMING MODERN CONFUSION

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Adolfo Critto

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1. The consistency model, and contemporary confusion

Confusion and the Consistency Model. Explicit and systematic use. Publications, media, communications; magic short-cuts for self-improvement; quality of decisions, social norms and life; new name for highest human capacity; overcoming pathological inertias; integration; hidden body of the iceberg; critical consistency analysis.

Contemporary confusion leads societies and citizens to a certain perplexity, passivity and even complacency in the face of serious problems and frauds which affect fulfillment and quality of life.

The consistency model, presented in this book, answers this challenge and provides tools for overcoming such confusion. It aims to encourage social scientists, philosophers and the general public to identify and apply the consistency model, in an explicit, conscious, deliberate, systematic manner, up to ultimate implications.

Libraries, bookstores, the media and all interaction and communication among people, produce confused, repetitive, overlapping, contradictory messages, which need analysis and integration. This book intends to contribute to this purpose.

The book brings together the model of consistency, built with dimensions developed over several decades of intensive work in empirical and theoretical research and experience, making explicit, systematizing and organizing implicit dimensions, relations and systems.

The book does not intend to provide readers with simplistic, easy, ready-made prescriptions or recipes and shortcuts, to magically solve problems and bring easy success, but rather invites them to make the same arduous efforts as the author to arrive at the attitudes, methods, integrations and insights involved in the model, which requires giving oneself completely, humbly and patiently, advancing in endless processes of responsibility, effort and sacrifice.

All human advances derive from the application of consistency. This book was written in the hope that making explicit how people apply genuine and spurious consistency in their various decisions, behaviors and social norms, will help them enhance the quality of their decisions and social norms (habits), thus contributing to fulfillment and quality of life. In this way every person can and should progressively move the frontiers, reducing the space occupied by inconsistency, evil and lies.

To highlight the importance of consistency, the book proposes this term as a new name for the highest human faculties, since these are the capacities of integrating variety by unity in mind, will, feelings and free behavior. This is what differentiates humans from other beings. Consistency was found as the term to refer more closely to integration of variety by unity, bringing all parts of reality together, and guiding towards fulfillment, goodness and truth, excluding contradiction.

By applying consistency in an explicit and systematic fashion it may be possible to overcome the inertia which allowed societies to live under inconsistent pathologies over centuries or millenia and which led individuals, families and groups to take for granted that no better solutions were possible for them.

Random adhesion to prescriptions of *self-improvement*, as if they were magic sticks and manipulations, only lead to new contradictions and frustrations, anxiety and emptiness, hanging from nothing. Manipulations of *mental power* (or, a few decades ago *how to make friends*) miss the point of what human beings need and deeply long for. This book aims to contribute to self-improvement through consistency, giving oneself with self-mastery, effort and sacrifice.

All individuals search for consistent explanations that overcome contradictions. However, if they stay in partial integrations, taking them as if they were final, they are applying consistency spuriously. e.g. failing to realize that others deserve as much love and respect as themselves, and that they cannot genuinely love themselves without equally loving others.

The consistency model invites us not to cease in the integrative effort before arriving at the ultimate root of unity and the whole system of reality (made by unity), inserting everything in this.

Balanced integration of variety by unity (not money, pleasure, consumerism, etc.) genuinely satisfies human needs; solves human problems; and prevents damages deriving from inertia of unquestioned models and social norms (habits). Integration requires critical consistency analysis detecting, combining and reinforcing consistent components while counteracting inconsistent ones –in others and in themselves– continually improving and readjusting thoughts, desires, feelings and behaviors.

Consistency helps to pay attention to the hidden aspects of the *iceberg* of reality and its implications, allowing better understanding, predictions and control. Even unveiling a tiny sample of dimensions and relations helps.

The book places emphasis on the following facts:

2. Lack of awareness of crucial facts: consistency, unity

Genuine and spurious consistency; consequences; happiness; social exercise; free conscious contribution; invisible threads; anticipating the future.

People are continually choosing, striving for reality, truth, goodness, fulfillment and happiness, which come together as inseparable.

They can behave in this way thanks to their capacity for consistency, that is, the capacity for integrating variety by unity, which makes possible science, ethics, culture, arts, society, law, politics, economics, institutions and all human advances.

Integrative unity is the only firm reference point, external to variety and reality, and supporting them and itself, as the Archimedean lever. It is the categorical imperative avoiding contradiction in the search for truth and goodness.

Faith in underlying integrative unity motivates people to build knowledge, science, ethics, love and all human advances.

Unity inexorably leads to integration of reality, fulfilling it as a harmonious all-encompassing system, where each being has its place. The human idea of reality or existence involves the idea that all beings are part of such an all-encompassing system. Even if people know only a tiny portion of reality, they implicitly know, and can love, serve and enjoy the whole of reality (and all beings within it) by knowing of the system of existence, exempt of contradiction, based in unity.

Reality is different and external to unity, which is its source. Uniformity rigidly attempts to replace unity, suffocating variety. Unity is known through reality, deriving from it. It has no parts to be integrated, but is the source of all integration.

Consistency is subjective –as human capacity– and objective, –as existence or reality truth, goodness and worth, made of the integration of variety by unity–. Consistency is thus the basis for the adjustment between subjective and objective worlds.

The great challenge for human beings is that of genuinely exercising their capacity for consistency. This involves siding with unity, reality, truth and goodness; spurious exercise instead involves siding against them, serving fragments such as ego, caprices, impulses, fashions and material panaceas, such as money, power, pleasure and prestige; and attempting to replace unity and reality with them; trying to cheat unity, reality and themselves, instead of employing such means to serve human fulfillment.

All individuals are born both with the capacity for consistency and with the capacity for using it against itself (spurious consistency). All human assets (even education, love, religion, etc.) may be genuinely served through consistency, or spoiled and destroyed through spurious consistency.

Spurious consistency invites failure and frustration, while genuine consistency freely and consciously contributes to the inexorable fulfillment of the harmony of reality, thus leading to deep fulfillment and happiness. Reading the lessons (rewards and punishments) of inexorable reality helps people to guide and correct their behavior, preventing failures and frustrations.

Happiness derives from adhering to consistency, giving oneself to unity, reality, truth and goodness, mastering impulses and other influences to this end. It is achieved when not deliberately sought as a separate, egoistic goal. It derives from realizing the inexorable triumph of unity and reality, to which one first adheres, in the indivisible experience of siding with them with mind, will, feelings and action. Otherwise come destruction and self-destruction, in the shape of crime, genocide, wars, drugs, mental illness, suicide, emotional insecurity, feelings of emptiness and loneliness, etc.

The exercise of consistency not only integrates all dimensions of human behavior (mind, will, feelings, action). Consistency is also socially exercised, sharing with others, thus building social norms, culture and society, and all human advances.

All beings contribute to fulfillment of reality through blind submission to “survival of the fittest”, mechanically compelled by immediate influences. Human beings go beyond, taking into

consideration the whole picture of reality, based in unity, and freely and consciously contributing to it.

The capacity for consistency allows people to unveil invisible threads they take for granted, made up of social habits (norms) built by them, others, and their ancestors. They include real informal norms and structures stronger than formal ones. The ultimate invisible root is in unity, which can be inferred from all that is visible. The 'invisible hand' of the market is only a marginal component of this invisible realm.

3. How consistency is exercised

Innate intuition. Widened self. Loving beings, without neglect and privileges; deserving; integration of millions of conflicting messages; critical consistency analysis; pollution by accumulation of information; meaning and integration; foundations of reality, truth and goodness; mastery, sacrifice, effort, humility, positive approach; returning to consistency

Innate intuition of unity is made explicit by referring to reality as an integrated system in which fragments belong, are compatible, harmonious and not contradictory among themselves. This being the reality of all fragments or beings, all of them deserve balanced respect and love, without privileging or neglecting any. This involves widening the self beyond the prison of ego, self-interest, caprices and impulses. It leads to loving others as oneself, according to this deserving.

Millions of confused and conflicting messages received from others and themselves need to be integrated in an all-encompassing framework, approaching reality. Critical judgment through consistency analysis identifies, combines and reinforces consistent components and counteracts the opposite, applying consistency criterion in an explicit and systematic fashion. It determines to what extent social norms (habits) derive from genuine or spurious consistency. It makes it possible to continually improve (in terms of consistency, contributing to fulfillment) the all-encompassing framework; social norms, decisions and behaviors; quality of life and human fulfillment. Thus helping people find their way in the midst of thick rains of scattered and contradictory messages, with the compass provided by consistency.

Critical consistent judgment thus allows us to know what to read, listen and see, and how to do it and interpret it, beyond fashion and conventions. Anthropocentric relativism refuses support from the firm

rock of unity, where people belong. This makes books on shelves and other accumulation of information (from the media, computers, Internet, etc.) become pollution and intoxicating noises, making people prisoners of the immediate. If subject to critical consistent analysis, messages are critically analyzed and acquire meaning and worth by insertion in the framework of reality, humbly recognizing limits.

Progressively bringing together the puzzle of reality to fit the hidden design of integration of reality by unity, statements of reality, truth and goodness are founded. Unity functions as the only foundation, to which even skeptics vainly resort when rejecting contradictions to their statements.

Mastery of fragments (ego, caprices, impulses, fashions, social norms) to serve unity and fulfillment of persons and beings, requires restless effort and sacrifice, beyond the prison of immediate gratifications. Hardships, failures and frustrations serve as warnings and reminders for correcting deviations.

Humility, recognizing one's own limitations and high dignity; a positive approach, trusting in unity, reality and oneself, with positive self-image and self-esteem, beyond psychological barriers and self-fulfilling prophecies; and permanent readiness to return to consistency after deviations, are crucial components of the exercise of genuine consistency.

4. Advancing through genuine consistency

Links of links; validity; dimensions and concrete facts; exceptions; combining opposites; ends and means; quality of decisions, social norms and life; awareness, communication, organization.

Searching for connecting links (dimensions, relations, systems) and links of links (up to the system of systems, which is reality presided by unity) leads to knowledge, science and truth. Tests of validity are tests of consistency; infinite concrete facts which a dimension can hold, and infinite dimensions which characterize a concrete fact, meet in links of consistency. Advances are made only in consistency, using the very anomalies and exceptions to resolve themselves by inserting them in a wider system; and qualifying conclusions, combining rigor and flexibility, the general and the specific, quantitative and qualitative, simplicity and complexity, and typical configurations, since consistency requires respect for all aspects of reality.

Ultimate ends (spiritual, family, human, interpersonal) need to be served by effective means (economic, political, scientific, technological), overcoming improvisation through adhesion to ends and serving them with professionalism, information, organization, method, discipline, and planning. Quality of decisions and social norms (with the “second nature” of strength of habit), which explains human advances, derives from consistency, and leads to quality of life and human fulfillment.

Genuine consistency leads people to awareness, communication, sound networking and organization for jointly favouring common good and justice and defending themselves against organizations of spurious consistency.

5. How spurious consistency is applied

Usurping the place of unity; absolute power of tyrant fragments; desperate career; means taken as ends; disqualifying and mocking virtue; assuming universal egoism; lofty terms to name the opposite; declarativism; sleeping on laurels; perverse syndromes; complacency and complicity; relativism; pendularism; formalism; simplism; insecurity relative to final ends and means; self-image and self-esteem; improvisation; tyrannic assets; using consistency against consistency, and institutions against common good; the industries of death.

Often people try to usurp the place of unity, by trying to achieve absolute power over other people or possessions (pleasure, money, prestige, etc.); considering them as absolute, and becoming their prisoners. However, they cannot be satiated with fragments, and fall into desperate careers trying to compensate failure with higher doses or speed (of money, drugs, pleasure, power, violence, etc.).

When means (money, food, sex, power, pleasure, etc.) are taken as ends, quality of life is confused with possession of means. Capitalism, Marxism and other extremisms and theories converge in this deviation, denigrating virtue as hypocritical, and considering that every motivation derives from egoism, sex, relations of production, etc..

Lofty terms are used to name the opposite: e.g. use and exploitation of others on behalf of self-gratification is called love; letting their children be cheated, abused and enslaved by peddlers of drugs and other perversions is called freedom. Declarativism –stating principles and not serving them– is practised everywhere. After emotional adhesion to principles people often tend to sleep on their laurels.

Perverse syndromes (Midas, poor-rich man, sorcerer’s apprentice, etc.), complacency and complicity, lead people to trust in fragments

and deviations, replacing genuinely consistent judgments and critical questioning of modern myths, panaceas, fashions and social norms. Pendularism (shifting from one unrealistic extreme to the other); formalism (privileging bureaucratic procedures and routines, as final ends or façades to pursue lower interests); simplism (neglecting dimensions of reality, e.g. with misplaced permissiveness or strictness); deviate from genuine consistency.

Emotional and spiritual insecurity, including anguish, anxiety, discouragement, negativism, derive from departing from genuine consistency and becoming prisoners of the immediate and contradiction.

Insecurity in ultimate ends, and in economic and social means derives from departure from consistency, especially neglecting ultimate values, and improvisation. Low self-image and self-esteem, stimulated by the attitude of parents, teachers and the media, lead to self-fulfilling prophecy. Assumed assets (money, pleasure, etc.) become tyrants.

Spurious consistency uses consistency against itself, through confusion, disqualifying virtue and punishing sound social seeds. Institutions such as law, government, judges, police, media, created to serve the common good are used for the opposite. Corruption of the best leads to the worst. Citizens become accomplices when they tolerate lies, fraud and confusion, and especially the industry of death, which corrupts and enslaves the weakest members of society (especially children) through trafficking drug and other kinds of corruption and perversion, and mafias dominating public and private leaders.

6. Future work and publications.

Quotations.

This book is intended to be the first of a series on the consistency model. Future ones will contain analysis of various aspects and dimensions of the consistency model, and application of it to various realms of life, including e.g. personal advancement, business, politics, social development and others.

The Fundación para la Calidad de Decisiones y de Vida (Foundation for Quality of Decisions and Life) will also invite scholars and students around the world to present manuscripts with new developments, criticisms and applications of the consistency model in different realms, and will sponsor the publication of those considered as best contributions.

The book departs from the conventional publications which the public is prepared for. It is hoped that it will stimulate responses, criticisms and contributions bringing a debate and further developments in the field.

An immense integrative task remains to be done. Insertion of contributions from all times –a huge wealth of scattered publications, messages, information, dimensions, relations, theories, interpretations– in an all-encompassing framework approaching reality, beyond comfortable conventions, will be the leading idea of such developments.

The present introductory summary may help communication with the reader.

The book includes quotations from outstanding publications of all times, showing how the book's argument relates to others' contributions. Comments on quotations in end notes are not generally included. The reader will notice that often the quotation departs from the book's position, and often only partially coincides with it.~

CHAPTER ONE

UNITY IN VARIETY

A. The Principle of Consistency¹

1. Discovering unity in variety; relating to unity through variety

a. The human capacity for consistency, the principle of consistency and connecting links; genuine and spurious consistency

Human beings are surrounded by a wide array of diverse, changing phenomena. When we first notice them, these phenomena appear to be unrelated and unconnected to each other. However, to notice them is to find connections among them; this is the only way to really know them.² Received stimuli lead to knowledge when individuals actively connect or integrate them with each other, thereby giving them meaning and interpreting them. Phenomena and stimuli are systematically interconnected as a consequence of their connection to unity, the underlying basis of reality which integrates every aspect of existence (all the components of reality). This is what I call the principle of consistency, in its cognitive aspect.³ The principle of consistency is inherent in reality and forms the basis of individuals' capacity to discover, adhere to and serve unity underlying variety in an unrestricted fashion, with all their

strength. It identifies and classifies uniformities and differences; it organizes them in relations and systems within an all-encompassing system supported in unity.⁴ Such a process of incorporation provides meaning to each fragment, object, fact or experience, incorporating it into the realm of human understanding. Understanding and meaning therefore derive from human beings' capacity for consistency.

As used here, consistency refers to the complementary coexistence of various components of reality or existence. Indeed, everything that exists, exists because it is part of a unique, integrated, all-encompassing system which we call existence. Such a system is based in unity and therefore does not admit contradiction. It overcomes contradictions by inserting them into a wider framework which is characterized by coexistence, compatibility and agreement, conditions which are inherent for the system and which ensure its harmonious functioning. Nonexistence, on the other hand, refers to anything which is not inserted into the system of existence and is not identified by the harmonious interrelation of all its parts.

I refer to unity in order to describe the factor which links parts together and makes them part of a single, overarching system, which is reality or existence. The capacity of consistency, which is also called reason, is the capacity for making judgments of coexistence based on the recognition that things exist when they coexist. (It is also the capacity of adhering and contributing to consistency). Interpretations are preferable to the extent that they conform to coexistence and eschew contradiction. For this reason, a judgment of reality or existence is a judgment of consistency (or unity in variety).

Consistency is unrestricted or genuine when it does not stop at partial integrations arbitrarily detached from reality but aims to consider all aspects and implications, up to the ultimate, without privileging any over the rest. Consistency is spurious when it seeks to serve partial realities which vainly strive to replace and contradict the all-encompassing system of reality and unity which integrates it. The exercise of spurious consistency leads people's thoughts, wishes, feelings and action away from reality, truth and goodness; this, in turn, leads to failure, destruction and frustration.

Human freedom enables individuals to choose consistency or to rebel against existence and against unity, which is its basis. Sigmund Freud refers to this tendency as the "destructive" or "death instinct". This involves replacing a consistent focus on the whole of reality with a narrow fixation on a mere fragment, for instance when individuals fix their attention on satisfying sexual appetites rather than seeing the broader

importance of loving and serving others and oneself according to each person's position in reality.⁵

Human beings strive to solve the unknown because they are endowed with the capacity for consistency, which allows them to discover unity by finding the links connecting various facts. Human advances are achieved in this manner: human progress moves backward when people fail to exercise genuine consistency, that is, when they concentrate on fragments rather than the whole, failing to systematically consider all links, including ultimate implications.⁶

Human beings are endowed by nature with the basic awareness that the stimuli which they receive (from their external or internal, introspective experience) belong to a system of parts integrated by unity which we call reality or existence. The capacity for gradually discovering this implicit system allows individuals to convey meaning to their experiences (external or internal) in an endless, gradual and progressive process.⁷ Individuals build their conception of reality by using dimensions, relations, systems, theories, criteria and methods derived from applying unity to variety. All of these tools are rough approximations which are in constant need of improvement. Yet despite their limitations, such approximations help build links to reality and unveil the traits of the individuals who build such interpretations by freely exercising their reason or capacity for consistency. Individuals paint their common experiences with a variety of colors, depending on variations and changes in reality, the intellectual tools employed and the manner in which they freely exercise their capacity for consistency.⁸

Heterogeneous phenomena can be traced back to common roots because they belong to a single, integrated system of reality, which I call existence.⁹ Contradiction implies a failure to integrate phenomena into this system; everything that exists can and should be integrated into reality, which is the system that integrates all systems and overcomes all contradictions. The challenge of knowledge is to advance in consistency, overcome contradictions and progressively uncover more and more of reality. The challenge which confronts human will, decision and action is to adhere and contribute to such integration.

Something is said to be real and true when it is consistent with all other available information, existing or merely conceivable. This involves assuming one's own ignorance and recognizing the capacity and need to endlessly incorporate new information. Information not yet available can be inferred from that which is available, on the basis of the crucial, initial knowledge that everything is founded in unity, which integrates everything into the great system of existence, outside of which nothing exists.

The capacity for consistency is like a spark which allows individuals to relate (in knowledge, will, feeling and action) to unity which underlies all variety and contribute to it. This occurs on a spiritual level as well as a physical level. In this way, human beings are able to relate to reality and unity similarly to the way unity does, serving higher values of being, fulfillment, truth and goodness.¹⁰

Variety does not exist without unity, for unity integrates variety into existence. Through its integrative force, unity gives life to all existing beings. It is the root of causality. In order to know, understand and accept variety, it is necessary to learn how it is integrated into a structure, system or organization which gives it life and meaning. Variety functions as raw material for reality integrated by unity; as such, variety does not precede integration but first assumes meaning when it is integrated. Existence can therefore only be understood by employing one's capacity for consistency to discover the system of causal-functional integration. Unity is the basis and meaning of existence and of everything that exists, including all variety.

The system underlying variety is gradually discovered by detecting the unifying connections among common aspects and regularities which may be organized into dimensions, relations and systems.

Individuals' most valuable capacity is that of relating to reality from the perspective of unity, that is, of knowledge, will, feeling and free action. I have chosen to refer to this capacity, traditionally called reason, as the capacity for consistency in order to emphasize its defining feature of relating to variety from the perspective of unity, thereby arriving at judgments of coexistence and concordance (when properly exercised). In this way, underlying unity provides purpose and meaning to the entire variety of objects which comprise reality.

Consistent relations among persons are marked by respect, love, service and deep satisfaction with being and its fulfillment (in the whole of reality and in each person and being) which is given through truth and goodness.

b. Unrestricted consistency

The capacity for consistency is designed to satisfy the need of relating to reality from the perspective of unity. As such, the genuine exercise of the capacity for consistency leads to fulfillment, since it involves the proper use of higher human capacities (mind, will, feeling and free decision and action) centered in existence, truth and goodness.¹¹ Spiritual satisfaction –happiness– and well-being are part of human fulfillment and derive from adhering and contributing to being, truth and goodness,

that is, from fully exercising human beings' highest capacities (reason or consistency).

The capacity for consistency aims at discovering underlying dimensions, relations and systems.¹² It links every fact, dimension and piece of information with the rest of reality in an all-encompassing framework, thereby facilitating advances in knowledge, scientific method, freedom and efficacy. Such a process is implicit in every statement or interpretation, since these tend to express harmony and compatibility with reality, which is tacitly understood as an interrelated whole.¹³

People remain free to exercise genuine consistency or not. To the extent that they employ genuine consistency, they advance toward truth and goodness; this leads toward the complete fulfillment of individuals' capacities and therefore toward the complete fulfillment of these individuals. The choice whether to exercise genuine consistency or not influences the type of explanatory system of reality which people build and the ends and means they select.

Consistency allows individuals to discover a giant and harmonious system in which stability and change complement and reinforce each other. This overarching system also harmonizes homogeneity and heterogeneity, simplicity and complexity thanks to the integrating strength of unity. Discovering and developing complexity and heterogeneity on the basis of simplicity and homogeneity involves a deep respect for all aspects of reality and a determination to place each where it belongs, relating each aspect to all the rest.¹⁴ Unity systematically combines all aspects (dimensions), realms, perspectives, systems and sub-systems of reality.¹⁵ In order to advance toward the perfect integration achieved by unity, people need to constantly improve the adjustment among parts of reality. They are aided in this by their capacity for consistency, which is offended by the slightest contradiction and prompts people to want and act to correct it. Even when individuals are not responsible for particular contradictory results, they may be inspired to adjust their thoughts, feelings, desires and actions so as to remove contradictions, following their vocation. In this sense, people may be prompted to try and get rid of dirt or disorder by placing objects where they belong.¹⁶

By using methods derived from consistency to discover implications, individuals serve reality; they find their proper place within reality and thereby fulfill themselves and become happy.¹⁷ The implications described here go beyond partial utilitarian outlooks and practices.¹⁸ People need to consider the full implications of their actions when they

make major decisions which have ramifications for the fulfillment of others, themselves and reality. People also need to learn to foresee and prevent the destructive implications of contradictions which arise through the spurious exercise of consistency (which replaces unity with fragments) and which lead to imbalances, excesses, loss of freedom, ignorance, error and weakness. Unrestricted consistency, on the other hand, strives to respect the “consistency,” “coexistence” and “compatibility” of the whole system of reality.¹⁹ It seeks to overcome biases by making values—which are part of reality—explicit.²⁰

Even if individuals do not replace the whole of reality with a fragment, their approach may be spurious and fictitious if they do not devote themselves completely to unity and reality. Genuine consistency requires them to use all their strength, in theory and practice, to ensure that no fragment is privileged above others and that all aspects are placed where they belong.

c. Unity in external and internal (mental) reality; integration; causality and adaptation

All intellectual activity consists of finding and developing connections among the messages received from variety which are contained within the system of existence. When we find a relationship between two or more objects (or within the object itself), a union is established between them. This allows us to say that one is a sign of the other. It is thus possible to infer the presence of one on the basis of the presence of others. In this way the consistency capacity develops systems and meanings beyond immediate material connections; these are at the root of languages, which are distinctive of human beings.²¹

All scientific thoughts or theories are based on the assumption that if all aspects of reality could be analyzed, one would find that they are all interdependent and adjusted to each other within the system of reality.²² This is the system of unity in variety, which not only presides over external, objective reality but over mental or spiritual reality as well. Unity in variety links individuals with both physical and spiritual realities (including knowledge, desires, feelings and actions) based on the way in which unity relates to them.

This involves respecting individuals as whole beings, appreciating their vocations and worth, understanding them, adhering to them and contributing to their fulfillment within the order of existence, that is within the order of truth and goodness.

In order to remember, it is necessary to insert memories into a meaningful framework, using consistency and sensibility.²³ Remembering not only helps to bring the past into the present, but also helps people to steadily

build knowledge and adjust their desires, aims, feelings and actions, making them into personal habits and social norms.

Sensibility by itself does not allow people to comprehend external and internal stimuli; it can only incorporate, process, interpret and understand stimuli by relating them to a wider framework through the exercise of consistency. It contributes to fulfillment when inspired by genuine consistency. Thus sensibility and memory are part of the integrative process of relations, networks, structures and systems involved in the exercise of consistency.

References to systematic causality and functionality in social science theory in fact refer to consistency (unity in variety), as observed in the adjustment, harmonization, coexistence and compatibility among various parts of reality.

The spiritual dimension transcends time and stems from the free exercise of consistency, thus contributing to the fulfillment of reality and individuals (when genuine) or to the opposite (when spurious). In this way, consistency influences change and stability through the continuous transformation and creation of new beings. Permanence and survival, as well as change in beings and in their traits, all depend upon conditions which affect the different aspects of reality in various ways and combinations. Causality may be observed in the evolutionary processes of "survival of the fittest".

All beings are an integral part of their environment and have attributes allowing them to exist in it and influence it. All beings belong to a system of reciprocal interaction within the overall system of reality and its sub-systems, in a process of reciprocal adaptation and adjustment.²⁴ The global system is nourished by the contributions of its parts and make these possible.

The different parts of reality penetrate and condition each other through causality, such that in order to know and understand them, individuals must strive to clarify the causal links and changing relations among them.²⁵ The answers which individuals ascertain change over time; taken together, these transitory solutions contribute to the complete system of reality which transcends time. It is precisely in such a system that beings find their complete fulfillment.

By integrating knowledge and methods from the humanities and empirical sciences, richness, precision (accuracy), control and rigor may be combined and findings may be inserted into the framework of the whole of reality. Such an interdisciplinary approach allows all aspects of reality and their reciprocal relationships to be considered and adjusted to reality. This enriches findings and facilitates theoretical and methodological advances.²⁶

Genuine consistency provides individuals with wings to fly in the direction of unity and reality, respecting all aspects of reality.²⁷ Consistency is exercised by individuals as well as socially, through the process of “social norming”, according to which individuals freely create and renew culture and society on a daily basis. The exercise of genuine consistency is never perfect, however, and spurious or partial consistency always has a certain degree of influence. As a result, individuals, groups and societies are at least partially bound to fragments and partial goals which take the place of reality and unity.

Beings deserve respect in accordance with the fact that they are all mutually dependent on one another, yet at the same time, individuals bear special obligations toward those who depend on them. This means that individuals who are responsible for the satisfaction of other people’s needs have a special obligation toward these people, which leads to special responsibilities toward oneself and to one’s family, friends, neighbors, colleagues, contemporaries, etc. This should be done in a harmonious and balanced fashion, without privileging certain aspects or beings at the cost of the rest since this hurts others and even damages the true interests of the privileged fragments since these are misplaced by being privileged. If individuals do not relate to themselves and to others in accordance with the proper position of each within the global system of reality, if individuals fail to respect the relationships which bind them together and deviate into egotism, destructiveness and shallowness, they damage the rest of reality in its spiritual, cultural and material dimensions.

2. Some cognitive implications of the consistency principle

a. Faith in reality and unity; existence, truth and goodness; consistency as criterion of truth

Scientific research strives to understand reality through the rigorous application of consistency.²⁸ Similarly, scholars continually adjust their conception of reality and search for the harmony which underlies the data available to themselves and to others. Without faith in and adherence to underlying unity, no progress would be possible in knowledge, science and ethics, since these are all predicated on the assumption that reality is governed by unity, which integrates all existing beings and makes them into interdependent components. The challenge of knowledge and science is to find integrative unity and the harmony which derives from

it; to this end, criteria and methods derived from consistency must be employed. The process of finding integrative links is a limited, gradual and progressive one which can be improved by the scientific method –grounded in consistency– and with data and information contributed by others and by ourselves.

When we speak about reality, existence and truth, as when we speak about goodness, righteousness and virtue, we speak about the integration of variety by unity, which is the sole source of value for knowledge, science, ethics and freedom. Even cynics and skeptics inadvertently acknowledge reality and consistency, insofar as their contention that reality is only a fiction claims to be real and consistent. In this way, they unconsciously accept the concept of universal existence and truth corresponding to it; they vehemently reject statements contradicting their “universal” truth and consider them false.²⁹

The principle of consistency stimulates people to engage in efforts to discover links, uniformities and laws which bind aspects and beings which otherwise appear unconnected to each other.³⁰ This is done through various means, including systematic searches, tests of compatibility and falsifiability, the progressive classification of propositions as consistent or contradictory and the establishment of links between ideas and empirical observations, that is, between the conceptual and empirical worlds.³¹ Faith in unity is thus the impetus which pushes individuals toward the adventure of knowledge and science, ethics and virtue. This motivates people to learn and investigate, examining the links which connect the various aspects of reality: dimensions, relations and systems.

Individuals intuitively know a basic fact –i.e. that the basis of all existence, being, truth and goodness is unity integrating variety; this knowledge is inherent to human beings’ basic capacity for consistency (reason) which only functions in relation to unity in variety, since unity encompasses and explains everything. The capacity for consistency tells people that everything is consistent with this basic fact as well as all other information which they come across (through systematic efforts to interpret external and internal stimuli). It teaches them that existence, truth and goodness, indeed everything that is genuine and valid, has the strength to overcome contradiction if it is inserted into the realm of reality integrated by unity.³² Consistency is used as a criterion of truth. For instance, if I say that I am leaning to one side because I have a five-ton elephant in my pocket, no one will believe me because the statement contradicts what is known about the strength of individuals, the size of elephants and the resistance of pockets.

Human beings start to function as such when they start to exercise their capacity for consistency, even if they are not aware of this.³³ This is implicit in the etymology of the term intelligence, which is the capacity to link objects together. Human beings start to search for and discover links before they understand what linking means. They also apply links of unity in variety when they choose desirable ends and means in their feelings and actions. The exercise of individuals' consistency capacity is imperfect, both in terms of human beings' capabilities and the effort they actually devote to unrestricted consistency.

b. Revealing implications; consistency as basis for communication and language

The original intuition of unity encourages individuals to reveal and develop implications, using their capacity for consistency to see how parts are inserted into the whole and how they are connected to each other.³⁴ The intuition of unity teaches people to place each part or aspect of reality (internal or external) where it belongs and to discover, through experience, common sense and science, how individual parts may be classified into dimensions, relations and systems.³⁵ Unity offers a common thread which integrates all parts and aspects of reality.

The capacity for consistency allows people to communicate with others; it enables them to build languages and translate from one into another, using universal codes which reflect common dimensions, categories and relations (all based in consistency), whether applied to concrete or abstract reality. This allows people to communicate and discuss with each other, sharing and building social norms on the basis of personal and shared knowledge and experiences. Consistency and language also permit people to share inferences about what is yet unknown, on the basis of the initial comprehension of unity which integrates everything in existence. Stimuli and messages are interpreted on the basis of this intuition of unity.

Consistency is the source of what Aristotle called social instinct.³⁶ Indeed, the capacity for consistency is shared by all individuals, who exercise this capacity jointly in order to deal with common problems and needs; together, they choose and build shared solutions which I call social norms.³⁷ Individuals can see that social norms are essential roads for satisfying needs, solving problems and contributing to human fulfillment. Consequently, they act jointly and support each other in their efforts. This is possible because individuals recognize that everyone has similar needs and problems; they also recognize that everyone uses his or her capacity for consistency in order to find and implement means for

satisfying and solving these needs and problems. In this process, individuals interact with others and with themselves.

Thanks to individuals' ability to relate to unity in variety (i.e., their capacity for consistency which offers a bridge to reality, truth, fulfillment and goodness), individuals can know reality, including individuals in it. They can adhere to reality, expressing their respect and love in their desires and feelings. Furthermore, they can freely contribute to the fulfillment of reality. Individuals do this jointly, recognizing that everyone has a role to play in the work of the whole.

The insertion of individuals into society is but one aspect of their insertion into reality. As Aristotle observed, human beings are not sufficient as individuals but must be incorporated into society; similarly, human beings cannot exist without relating to all things and to reality as a whole. This is a reciprocal, systematic relationship which reflects unity in variety.

Language is a vehicle for consistency, a means for sharing and communicating with oneself and with others in order to elaborate the relation to unity in variety.³⁸ Behavior, which is a form of language, has meaning for actors and observers. Explicit language (as in the case of deliberate signs, such as words) seeks to specifically transmit certain meanings. By assuming a shared, common meaning to language and behavior, individuals are able to communicate, share and contribute to the collective task of reason. This, in turn, allows them to find, adhere to and serve the goal of integrating variety by unity, using means to serve ends and applying consistency.

Various societies and social groups build alternative classificatory and explanatory systems which give origin to different cultures, value systems, languages, religions and systems of social norms. For this scope, they use their collective capacity for consistency, which enables them to discover and build integrative systems with available components. Societies and groups may do this in an unrestricted fashion, that is, considering all implications, even the most long-range, or they may do this in a spurious fashion, replacing reality by a fragment which has been capriciously separated from the rest of reality.

The common use of consistency allows people to translate from one language into another and to discuss the value of judgments, propositions and interpretations. Languages are made of social norms and serve as channels for organizing, using, storing, sharing and transmitting information (in dimensions, categories, relations and systems).

Through the use of language, people are able to explore the various implications of alternative paths according to the different experiences and applications of consistency of different individuals and groups. Even

if the experiences of each person, group or society are limited, the value of each derives from its partial adjustment to unity in variety, which is "Mr. Everyman's natural logic".³⁹ In this way, all languages and cultures help bring people closer to comprehending reality, shedding light on the whole in various ways and degrees. The only exception to this occurs when people allow themselves to be guided by spurious consistency, placing fragments above reality as a whole.

Since the capacity for consistency is shared, language and other social norms adopt classifications and relations which are employed in the search for common solutions to human questions, goals, needs and problems. Through the shared capacity for consistency, people from different cultures and societies may consider and discuss alternative solutions with each other (and this intercultural dialogue may even occur among cultures which are far removed from each other in time and space). Critical analysis (which is grounded in consistency) allows people and societies to improve the solutions they have chosen. At the same time, however, if individuals or societies apply their capacity for consistency in a spurious, restricted fashion, if they choose to serve fragments instead of reality as a whole and thereby deviate from unity, they use spurious against genuine consistency. This squanders their opportunity to freely serve reality and consistency and goes against truth, goodness and human fulfillment.

The common basis of consistency facilitates communication –with others and with oneself– thus enabling people to build, evaluate, give, receive and share meanings with the aid of dimensions, relations and systems. This occurs through a continuous intra- and interpersonal dialogue which forms the basis of social norming, that is, the building and modification of social norms, decisions and behaviors.

All codes of thought and language strive to express and reflect meanings derived from people's interpretation of reality. These codes are integrated by dimensions, relations and systems and serve as the basis for messages which manifest what reality is and what it should be. When these codes are shared and regularly repeated, they are called social norms. Social norms permit individuals to relate to and interpret reality; they help people set goals and choose means for achieving them. They also help people implement their chosen means.

Language serves as an instrument through which people apply their capacity for consistency. As such, language permits people to build knowledge, make decisions and take actions; this occurs at the individual and collective levels and may follow the path of either genuine or spurious consistency in an endless process of building and modifying social norms

(social norming) and culture.⁴⁰ Languages and codes may be translated thanks to unity, which is the common factor underlying them all and presiding over all integration and interpretations, thus facilitating communication and intercultural debate.⁴¹

Human beings cannot think without signs. Signs connect objects together and link them to the rest of reality, bestowing them with meaning and value as a result of their connection to unity. Objects are built on unity and are intrinsically, inseparably linked with the whole of reality which derives from and is bound together by unity. Consequently, it is vital to consider all the implications of an object and insert it where it belongs within the wider framework of reality. All objects must be respected and none may be privileged on the road that serves existence, truth and goodness. Because of their mutual relations, objects are signs of each other, conceptually and empirically. In the case of conceptual indicators, dimensions may be inferred from each other. In the second case dimensions may be inferred from empirical observations, such as occurs in the language one listens to, reads or hears.⁴² All such relations are manifestations of unity in variety (consistency), which connects all parts of reality together.

c. Scientific criteria and methods, evaluated in terms of consistency made explicit; the infinitude of the concrete and the conceptual; the puzzle of reality; exception

The scientific method allows people to improve the adjustment between actual reality and their representation of it. It improves people's interpretation and understanding of reality and helps them to clarify the networks of connections which join the parts of reality and link them all with underlying unity. The scientific method includes empirical observations which are theoretically planned, interpreted and integrated.⁴³ Theoretical elaboration and empirical research represent complementary tools for knowing reality by integrating variety by unity. Consistency motivates researchers to integrate scattered bits of information as well as theoretical and empirical knowledge into the immense picture of reality. Without an effort to integrate findings into the wider whole, even the most impressive collection of factual data, elaborated with the help of computers, and even the most ambitious theories will not bring researchers closer to truth and reality, but will move them away from it.⁴⁴

Unrestricted consistency requires that the scientific method should include the thorough and systematic consideration and analysis of all implications and possibilities. It also requires scientific researchers to

systematically subject their findings to discussion and debate and not to privilege certain conclusions.⁴⁵ The full implications of scientific findings must continually be elaborated, without restrictions; new dimensions, relations and systems must constantly be developed and incorporated into increasingly integrated networks which correct and complement one another.

The scientific method guides researchers in their search for strategic observations which they may use to help them find alternative explanations and hypotheses about the dimensions, relations and systems which underlie the variety of objects and information. The scientific method systematically applies the capacity for consistency in order to know what is and what ethically and technically ought to be; it helps people to detect the laws governing reality in order that they may better adhere to them.

The scientific method subjects alternative explanations to analysis and testing so that researchers may determine which explanations are most consistent with available information and which do the best job of illuminating, analyzing and interpreting this information. Scientific methods and techniques are valuable to the extent that they employ consistency in order to get closer to reality and truth. This means that theory must be enriched and controlled by the observation of facts and vice versa. In this way, more of the underlying structure of reality to which all parts belong may be revealed and researchers can increase their understanding of how variety is integrated on the basis of unity.⁴⁶ By making the consistency criterion explicit, the scientific method acquires a rational basis from which to derive techniques and strategies, and this helps guard against error and confusion.⁴⁷

Any human advancement derives from finding, adhering to and serving reality, thereby contributing to the fulfillment of reality and individuals by integrating variety by unity and taking sides with consistency and reality. From the beginning of properly human behavior, individuals practice this action. They continue to practice it and, in doing so, progressively improve their ability to discover, adhere and contribute to reality and consistency, in a continuously renewed effort. Their improvement will be greater to the extent that they make the criterion of consistency explicit and apply it systematically and rigorously. In this way, individuals are able to gain the greatest understanding of how to insert themselves as well as other individuals and beings into the framework of reality, through unity.

As people discover a larger proportion of the general dimensions, relations and systems which underlie reality, they are able to explain a

larger part of it. This is complemented by systematic analysis of a wide spectrum of concrete observations, thus advancing in the application of consistency. Theoretical advance implies getting closer to unity, explaining more of reality with fewer dimensions and relations and more general systems.⁴⁸ In this way, the extensive aspects and complexities of reality are explained by theories based on simple ideas and premises.⁴⁹ This allows people to free themselves from the prison of micro-perspectives which privilege fragments rather than focusing on unity and the whole of reality. People can move toward considering the whole picture of reality, recognizing the proper place of each aspect and being and avoiding unbalanced attachment to fragments, such as unmastered impulses. This involves subjecting "infinite variation" to the "balance of nature."⁵⁰ This is an alternative way of referring to what I call consistency, which integrates all variety through underlying unity. It is not as important to discover a larger quantity of cases as to discover greater levels of generality, since these general findings represent critical supports for explaining reality as a whole. This frees people from becoming excessively attached to or dependent upon fragments; people can advance toward the liberating perspective made possible by the recognition that unity integrates everything. In this way, it is possible to understand how special cases fit into wider realms and into the whole of reality.

Unity is the bridge connecting the infinite world of concrete possibilities that may be contained in a dimension with the infinite number of dimensions required to define any concrete case.⁵¹ Unity links all dimensions, relations and systems together in the great system of reality. The task of understanding this complex system, relating everything to everything, is a never-ending, boundless one; advances are possible if people strive to respect all beings and aspects, searching for the proper place of each through an ongoing effort to incrementally reveal the axis of unity. Since everything is interconnected, we continually need to consider all available thoughts and information; each new idea and interpretation must be inserted into the whole in a delicate application of unity in variety (consistency). In other words, we must pay attention to the whole picture at the same time as we strive to readjust all its parts through their relationship with the whole.⁵² We build this picture of the whole by integrating and modifying our own ideas with the contributions of others through free decision-making and social norming.

Compared to the immense task of understanding the whole of reality, human beings can only advance through small steps, using approximations and plausible statements of relations which hold under certain conditions. Our understanding of reality is further complicated

by the fact that when one relationship is exhausted, the opposite relationship holds (curvilinearity); yet by bearing this in mind, people can improve the quality of their decision making. Scientists have the important mission of establishing the conditions and degree to which a certain proposition or principle applies and when its opposite holds true; in this way, they can help people to improve decisions and policies.⁵³

The dimensions, relations and systems which people are able to clarify by searching for unity in variety are few, as compared to the immensity of reality. However, even though human beings' understanding of reality remains limited, they can make significant strides in understanding more and more of the whole. The human capacity for consistency, together with the initial idea of unity (which assumes that every being is a part of a single system of existence or reality), enable people to identify dimensions, relations and systems and thereby advance incrementally toward ever greater knowledge of the whole.

People can determine the degree to which a certain proposition holds true and the conditions under which it is valid. The quality and relevance of dimensions, relations and systems are evaluated by assessing how well they adjust to available information and concrete cases as well as existing knowledge about dimensions, relations and systems. Information and cases are interpreted on the basis of dimensions, relations and systems, and these are accepted on the basis of available information and concrete cases, in a process of reciprocal adjustment guided by consistency. Information and concrete cases may be used to help people advance toward greater levels of generality, approaching the system of systems which is reality; this occurs through the discovery and application of dimensions, relations and systems, which in turn allow people to predict and understand information and concrete cases.

People's knowledge of reality advances when they relate concrete cases to conceptual forms, constructions or structures (dimensions, relations and systems). This permits them to think in increasing levels of generality, proceeding in the direction of unity, which is the vertex of existence. Abstract concepts and concrete cases may each be used to challenge and refute existing concepts and cases, enabling people to evaluate and correct theoretical and methodological instruments.

We use models of reality in order to predict the future and explain the past; we organize and interpret past and present information using the compass provided by the capacity for consistency. Reality resembles a puzzle whose pieces are the components of reality. Human beings are responsible for fitting the pieces of the puzzle together using consistency

as their guide. Indeed, consistency is the only plan capable of integrating them all; only consistency allows people to understand how parts relate to each other and to the unique, overarching system of existence or reality. By looking toward the idea of unity in variety (consistency), people can “breathe the spark of life” into otherwise “dead,” chaotic, detached parts.⁵⁴ This allows people to insert each concrete case into its appropriate place within the context of reality, thereby endowing it with existence, life and meaning.

Even if we will never be able to arrive at a complete integration of variety by unity (in our thoughts, convictions, feelings and actions), we can steadily advance in that direction by developing theories and generalizations which help to improve our understanding of insufficiently explained facts and by making new observations which help to guide and correct theories. Exceptions are useful in the search for more comprehensive theories, which come closer to approximating – although never completely representing the great system of reality in which unity integrates everything. “Negative examples” motivate people to search for more comprehensive theories capable of transforming exceptions into positive applications. They also prompt people to see and explain parts of reality which had previously been overlooked.⁵⁵ This is not possible if people’s focus is deliberately limited to a fragment, as occurs when people accept extreme ideologies guided by uncontrolled impulses or when they succumb to a mob mentality. In these cases, people unwittingly limit their own freedom by adopting “immediate generalizations” (false connections of unity in variety symptomatic of spurious consistency) without going through a balanced, systematic and intense effort to insert them into the larger framework where they belong.⁵⁶ They unilaterally focus on a narrow component and exaggerate its importance rather than respecting all aspects of reality in a balanced fashion. In doing so, they attach greater importance to fragments than to the unity which integrates them, often resorting to rituals or statistical devices in a vain effort to conceal the weakness of their approach.⁵⁷ Approaches are only valid which focus on dimensions, relations and systems inserted into the realm of global reality in a balanced manner, through systematic and rigorous work.

Knowledge, conviction, feeling and action are different aspects of an individual’s behavior. They may conform to the individual’s task of embracing reality, that is, unity in variety (which includes being, truth, goodness and fulfillment) or they may reflect the opposite (privileging fragments, such as ego and unmastered impulses) and a concomitant loss of freedom.

d. Consistency and quantification; the value of exceptions in overcoming contradiction; eschewing privileged fragments and focusing on the central axis of unity; partial steps; unity as reference point

Consistency does not privilege certain types of information, ideas, hypotheses or theories, nor any fragment of reality.⁵⁸ Consistency also proscribes overreliance on quantification, since if quantification is considered a panacea and ascribed magical powers, quantitative information will be misplaced.⁵⁹ Quantitative and statistical measurements need to specify the limitations derived from assuming non-existent conditions (e.g. the presumed non-existence of alternative dimensions and the assumption of homogeneity). While consistency requires the use of such measurements since they provide potentially valuable information, it also requires people to recognize the limitations of quantitative measurements and to prepare and complement quantitative work with qualitative work. People should also realize that quantitative information is a special application of qualitative knowledge. Without a definition of dimensions and categories through the use of qualitative analysis, quantitative measurements may be precise but empty and will not be related to objective reality. This gives a false and harmful sensation of security and achievement.

Consistency subjects ideas and information to challenge and debate, refusing to shield or privilege any over the rest. Each new piece of information will either contradict or reinforce previously accepted conclusions about relations among the different parts of reality. Contradictions which emerge will eventually be overcome by finding and integrating new information which enriches and completes our picture of the whole. Indeed, people's capacity for consistency causes them to feel irritated and frustrated by contradictions; this motivates people to search for new information and theories which explain the roots of contradiction and thus provide a means to overcome it by integrating previously contradictory elements into the larger, harmonious system of reality. As such, apparent contradictions are not obstacles but stimuli which provoke people into searching for ways to explain and overcome exceptions, thereby creating new models to explain what could not be explained before.⁶⁰ This leads scientists to submit their theories to criticism and reciprocal control in an effort to abide by what Robert K. Merton calls the structural imperatives of scientific research: universalism, organized skepticism, disinterestedness and communism.⁶¹

The quality of scientific attitudes and statements can partly be inferred from the researcher's explicit recognition of the limitations of plausibility.⁶² This helps researchers overcome contradictions and insert

their findings in the wider framework of reality; when they do this, they can help individuals shape their frame of reference in a balanced manner.

Even if human advances are limited and small, they are the necessary bridge for the steps which follow. Through the accumulation of such advances, knowledge is expanded and people learn to improve the quality of their convictions, feelings, decisions and actions, contributing to their own fulfillment as well as that of others and reality. This is an ongoing process which, as Max Weber describes, is repeated “ad infinitum” through personal and collective efforts.⁶³ This is the process I refer to when speaking of the progressive clarification and building of dimensions, relations and systems. Unlike Max Weber, however, who contends that every scientific advance will inevitably be surpassed and outdated, I argue that each advance retains its value and remains important by virtue of the fact that it is definitively incorporated as an essential link in the chain of scientific progress. It is this incorporation that provides the basis for future steps, so that earlier advances serve as bricks in the building of science and knowledge rather than serving as mere “gratifications” or simple educational tools. By recognizing that human beings are all capable of helping to construct the great building of reality, the power of consistency becomes apparent, as does the humble awareness of each person’s importance and dignity.

Even the best scientific advances cannot erase the huge gap between human beings’ understanding of reality and the perfect insertion of each concrete observation into the structure of reality. This abyss is only very partially bridged by theology, metaphysics, logic, science, theory, research and observation, all of which are developed on the basis of our intuition of the unity (consistency) which supports all variety.⁶⁴ Individuals need to humbly recognize that there are transcendent principles and values which guide their lives and that reality contains mysteries which they will never completely solve. To the extent that individuals recognize the existence of something greater than they are, they can increase their knowledge (theology). By developing abstract principles and instruments (philosophy and theory) and by developing procedures of systematic observation (positive science), they can further ensure that their thoughts and actions conform to consistency. The full use of scientific and non-scientific information leads to stronger, more consistent conclusions, so long as people remain cognizant of the limitations which separate them from complete comprehension of all the integrative links of unity in variety. People must also engage in a constant effort to overcome deficiencies and contradictions, searching, for instance, for the conditions under which certain propositions are true

or false.⁶⁵ In doing so, they will be forced to recognize the fallacy of pretensions to absolute precision.⁶⁶

Values which respect the structure of consistency do not privilege any aspect nor admit any biases. They respect each being and aspect according to its integration (and relations) with others, according to the vital and dynamic force of unity in variety. Consistent values freely contribute to the fulfillment of individuals and reality, through truth and goodness. Values are always imperfect, but they can be improved by looking toward unity in variety.⁶⁷

Unity is the only reference point we have and the only source of meaning for the infinite parts of reality. The task of searching for the unity connecting and combining the immense variety of parts is never-ending, since human beings can never completely discover unity. Nonetheless, individuals are compelled to connect each new piece of information with preexisting information, as well as with the immense range of potential information which may be inferred through consistency. In this way, people can see what is possible, that is, what is compatible with the information about reality which they already have. Unity is the only reference point which does not privilege any part of variety, since it connects all of them; indeed, unity is the basis for all parts of reality, since each part only exists thanks to its relations with other parts, which are made possible by unity. Unity has no limits and does not depend on any fragment since it is superior to all parts. Since fragments require unity in order to exist, they cannot possibly possess the transcendent force of unity.

When individuals refer everything to the central axis of unity in variety, they are able to improve their theoretical conception of reality and create a more consistent, representative model of it. They must always consider the whole and link any new information to it, using conceptual links in the form of dimensions, relations and systems. Advancement occurs when people relate every proposition and piece of information to other available information, respecting all the aspects of reality in a balanced way and focusing on the central axis of unity in variety.⁶⁸

Unity in variety is the axis and basis of being. While nonrational beings blindly devote themselves to unity as a result of natural (causal) laws, human beings are free to choose whether to devote themselves to unity in variety. To the extent that they do, they serve being, truth and goodness, contributing not only to the fulfillment of others and of reality, but to their own fulfillment and complete happiness.

e. Predictions and evaluation, decision-making quality, fulfillment and social policy; progressive advancement through consistent approach

Quality decision making is guided by the idea of consistency and leads to fulfillment by encouraging people to insert all aspects and beings into the framework of reality; it also encourages people to consider infinite dimensions and relations. In this way, people learn to distinguish what is important, relevant and safe.

The idea of unity is human beings' main asset, which gives them the potential for explaining all possible observations and connections. By employing the consistency criterion, they can predict general and specific events, using insights from the natural and social sciences. Predictions can be used to guide decisions and actions in order to contribute to the fulfillment of individuals and reality. They allow people to evaluate decisions, actions and policies after the fact as well as to evaluate alternative choices and actions beforehand so that better alternatives are chosen. This is the task of social policy. This analysis also considers the interaction and integration among physical, social and spiritual dimensions.

We can only know a minimal portion of reality and the dimensions, relations and systems within it. However, because we possess an initial basic knowledge of unity in variety, we can use this to guide us in our progressive analysis of reality leading toward increased knowledge. We can use our knowledge of unity in variety in order to guide our convictions, feelings, decisions and actions. Strategic findings help us to see and accept reality as it is and to pursue a harmonious relation between ourselves and the rest of reality, thereby contributing to the fulfillment of others and ourselves according to our mission and function in life; we find fulfillment by inserting ourselves in the global harmony of reality, based on unity.

Scientific methods, systematic theory and common sense are important instruments in this task. They facilitate the insertion of each being and aspect in reality in accordance with its relationship to the rest, which can be called its place within the system of reality. Part of this relationship is the contribution which each person, being and reality itself makes toward the fulfillment of the whole. Fulfillment entails the realization of being, truth and goodness, which are the ways in which reality fulfills itself in each being, contributing to the fulfillment of the rest. This allows people to develop a system of ethics capable of ensuring that decision making, actions and social norms will contribute to the

fulfillment of individuals and reality. Although individuals cannot know the infinite alternatives contained within reality, the idea of unity in variety allows them to progressively discover how beings contribute to the deep, balanced and harmonious fulfillment of themselves and others.

To provide an illustration, although medical knowledge is quite limited, it nonetheless enables doctors and medical scientists to increase life expectancy and improve people's quality of life. In the same way, even though knowledge relating to the science of human fulfillment is very limited, it is nonetheless sufficient to allow people to discern courses of action and decision making which conform to truth and goodness and which therefore contribute to the fulfillment of others and themselves. In both cases, realism requires people to humbly recognize the limitations of their knowledge and keep searching for ways to improve it.

Thanks to the idea of unity in variety, individuals can find their way –distinguishing what is relevant and important– in the midst of a world of very limited knowledge, where dimensions, relations and systems are only very partially identified and understood. In order to ensure that people choose appropriate paths, they must respect consistency and the principles derived from it. They must consider all the implications of their thoughts and actions, including also the most remote ones; they must strive for balance, depth, truth and goodness in their actions and decisions. They must give themselves to others, respecting and loving all beings and, consequently, contributing to their fulfillment. People must also search for integrative unity below the surface, looking beyond immediate and superficial considerations. They must strive to integrate all things into the wider framework of the whole. To do so, they must use their talents and personal influence in accordance with the laws of reality. In this way, they can feel completely safe and pleased with the manner in which everyone and everything is integrated into reality. By giving themselves to consistency instead of resisting it, individuals optimize their contribution to the fulfillment of themselves, others and reality.

This is the basis for enhancing the quality of decisions, social norms, planning, organization and action. It involves exercising people's capacity for consistency in an optimal manner, clarifying ultimate ends as well as efficacious means for achieving them. The laws of reality are discovered through successive approximations, constantly discovering and building dimensions, relations and systems which offer better, although inevitably imperfect, descriptions of reality.⁶⁹ People systematically discover the crucial points supporting the structure of reality through the principle of consistency and its derived criteria; they also do so by using scientific methods, theories and common sense to build dimensions, relations and systems grounded in consistency.

f. Exceptions and contradictions; potential and actual knowledge; openness, serendipity

The discovery of inconsistencies is crucial for the advance of knowledge and science, since it indicates the weak points to be reinforced through the discovery of invisible, integrative links (dimensions, relations and systems). Apparent inconsistencies may be overcome by incorporating them into explanatory systems which had not been previously considered. This transforms the anomalous into something normal and enriches understanding.⁷⁰ Due to the interrelated nature of reality, the discovery of these solutions has very wide implications, allowing people to comprehend endless aspects and concrete facts by viewing them in a new light. The knowledge that all variety is integrated by unity opens people's eyes to the fact that anomalies, exceptions and contradictions may be inserted into a wider framework. This makes it possible to increase people's knowledge of new aspects and to slowly but steadily increase general knowledge.⁷¹

Unity manifests itself to human beings through the structure of links which people's capacity for consistency (or reason) allows them to discover. The capacity for consistency allows people to know that there are infinite links, so that individuals intuitively realize that there is an infinite realm of knowledge they do not know. At the same time, however, individuals can gradually discover more and more of these links by systematically searching for them, thus giving a purpose to their struggle for inevitably imperfect knowledge. Armed with the knowledge that everything is based on unity which integrates variety, individuals can exercise their capacity for consistency in order to pass from virtual to actual and specific knowledge; they can interpret the stimuli they receive from their internal and external senses by integrating fragments and links into the all-encompassing framework of reality.

This requires people to be open and alert, constantly vigilant for new links and new ways of incorporating them into dimensions, relations and systems. Advancement occurs when people strive to discover, clarify and confirm new links, adding these to the store of integrated information which they already possess. By respecting unity in variety, people remain open to all aspects and relations of reality, as in the case of serendipity, which discovers connections which were not specifically sought or expected.⁷² This is facilitated by a willingness to search for new connecting links and to prepare and connect these to the store of previous knowledge.

Advances in present and specific knowledge allow people to visualize various roads and to accept or reject the plausibility of each based on its

consistency with existing knowledge. Existing knowledge is enriched through the continuous integration of new realms, thus widening the field of developed knowledge. Although individuals can never attain complete knowledge of the infinite links which exist, their direct connection to unity, made possible by their capacity for consistency, allows them to advance in that direction. This is what enables them to distinguish what is real –i.e., what forms part of the system of reality– from what is not real. It also gives rise to individuals' responsibility to shape every behavior (including thoughts, convictions, feelings and actions) in accordance with unity in variety, adhering to it and thus serving truth, goodness and the fulfillment of individuals and reality. Consistency prevents people from limiting themselves to existing information and known connections, prompting them instead to search tirelessly for ways to enhance, enrich and control knowledge.

g. Magic and myths, both primitive and modern; critical consistency analysis

Magic and myths represent an inconsistent attempt to make up for gaps in knowledge. In fact, patient, systematic and continuous efforts to apply scientific methods, theory, philosophy, science and experience are needed to explain mysterious or misunderstood phenomena. Short-cuts, including simplifications and explanations based on magic and myths, only create a fictitious sense of advancement. Such spurious short-cuts avoid the effort, sacrifice and humility required to engage in the systematic study of reality, based on the rigorous application of unrestricted consistency which is incompatible with biased and simplistic approaches. Spurious consistency relies on false premises (such as belief in magic or oversimplifications) to draw inferences about consistency, even though such inferences are weakened by their arbitrary bases.

Genuine consistency, on the other hand, is based on a sound connection to unity in variety and allows reliable inferences which lead to advances in all disciplines, sciences and technologies. These advances, in turn, help people increase their knowledge and improve their decision making and behavior. The application of genuine consistency is possible in all societies, even primitive ones typically associated with the belief in magic and myths. All human societies may develop genuine, systematic methods for integrating knowledge by finding connecting links.⁷³

Myths are born as integrative hypotheses which respond to the need to make decisions in the midst of uncertainty. At the same time, however,

myths unilaterally privilege certain aspects. Once these aspects are placed in their proper perspective, they become useful components of advances in actual, concrete knowledge; they cease to be the basis for myths and become part of the explanatory system of reality based on virtual knowledge of consistency. In order to overcome their spurious character, myths must therefore be subjected to critical analysis so that they may be adjusted to concrete knowledge of reality. Knowledge advances thanks to the integration of new information with existing and potential knowledge, implicit in the intuition of consistency.⁷⁴

Both primitive and contemporary societies cling to myths as a spurious, facile means of acquiring security, avoiding ambiguity and relieving anxiety. Individuals reinforce the myths held by one another, in complacent complicity. This is clearly demonstrated in the case of reliance on the exaggerated benefits of materialism, consumerism, hedonism, wealth, fashion, competition, power, domination or violence, despite the destructive effects which these often have. The tendency to rely on magic and myths is greater in societies where there is greater confusion. In these societies, the overwhelming desire to reduce the unknown and unexplained tempts people to avoid the patient and systematic struggle to consider the wider framework and causes them to forego efforts to find pragmatic and efficient solutions, as required by consistency.⁷⁵

3. Consistency and human fulfillment

a. Fulfillment, ethics, reality, truth and consistency; integrated human behavior; ultimate foundations

Human fulfillment and the fulfillment of reality derive from adjustment to ethical laws which integrate variety by unity. Fulfillment occurs naturally but it is also promoted by individual free will, that is, when people choose to follow the path of being, truth (including logic) and goodness. Genuine ethics conform to reality and consistency (which builds reality); spurious ethics, on the other hand, focuses narrowly on certain fragments, thus failing to respect and love each aspect and being in accordance with its proper place within the framework of reality.

Knowledge, will, free choice, action and happiness are integrated by and grounded in unity, which motivates people to strive for being, truth and goodness. By following the guidance of unity, people may arrive at value judgments which do not privilege any particular aspect or being

since they respect the integration of all by unity. Knowledge of ourselves and of the system to which we belong shows us what our true meaning and purpose in life is, illuminating our duty to give ourselves to reality and unity, follow ethical laws and freely contribute to being, truth and goodness so as to help attain the fulfillment of ourselves, others and reality. In order to do this, individuals must work together with others, embracing reality (which is the integration of variety by unity) with all their being, including their thoughts, convictions, feelings and actions. This differentiates human beings from other beings whose behavior is guided by the laws of necessity rather than by the free exercise of consistency; only human beings are able to detect and interpret the laws written in reality, which function as a sort of language of integration of variety by unity.⁷⁶

Laws are norms or roads to be followed for the fulfillment of beings, in truth and goodness. Laws derive from the unity which integrates variety and, as such, conform to the dictates of consistency. They are imposed on non-rational beings and proposed to rational beings who are endowed with free choice and whose capacity for consistency allows them to discover the laws of reality. This unique endowment requires human beings to humbly recognize their insertion into the framework of reality which integrates all beings, instead of mistakenly placing themselves at the center of reality, usurping the place of integrative unity and thus violating the laws of reality and abusing the capacity for consistency which enables human beings to relate to reality. This implies recognizing both “logical” and “non-logical” conduct and analyzing the sources of both in order to reinforce the former.⁷⁷

When individuals focus on a particular fragment and fail to acknowledge its proper place within the framework of reality –in other words, when individuals fail to give proper respect to all aspects of reality– they succumb to unmastered impulses and fail to demonstrate proper loyalty to reality, others and themselves. In such cases, individuals fail to show proper respect and love for others and themselves. The foundation of ethics rests on the principle that reality and all the beings it comprises deserve respect, love and complete devotion. Ethical behavior requires individuals to freely work for the fulfillment of reality and all its parts by behaving in accordance with the integration of variety by unity. As free beings, human beings are able to distinguish ethical laws and behavior by exercising their capacity for consistency and choosing to adhere to reality and its integration of variety by unity. Indeed, individuals have a duty to exercise consistency in accordance with their influence as part of the social family.⁷⁸ When individuals

distort ethical laws by reducing them to utilitarianism, they betray their responsibility by exercising spurious consistency, limiting consistency to certain immediate consequences and gratifications which are arbitrarily chosen and confusing ethical justification with what they “want and prefer.”⁷⁹

Consistency opens human eyes to what is and what ought to be. It shows people the way to contribute to the fulfillment of reality—including the fulfillment of individuals and other beings within reality—through the integration of variety by unity. The capacity for consistency not only enables people to gradually uncover the truth about reality, it bestows upon them the mission, responsibility and duty to do so, encouraging them to exercise their proper role within the interdependent system of reality. Happiness derives from contemplating the fulfillment of reality and all its parts; it also derives from freely contributing to this fulfillment, thus carrying out one’s own mission in life, and from sharing with others the joy of the complete and perfect fulfillment of reality through the integration of variety by unity.

Individuals’ cognitive, volitional, behavioral and emotional attributes—all of which are interrelated—allow them to recognize the integration of variety by unity, adhere to it and devote themselves to it. Individuals are thus able to contribute to the fulfillment of individuals and reality by practicing self-mastery and discipline. Actions inspired by consistency arise out of an awareness of the benefits which each part of reality contributes to itself, to others and to the whole; consistent actions also involve a willingness to love each part of reality and a genuine desire to work for and enjoy its fulfillment. Consistency and genuine ethics require people to accept what is and what ought to be and to adhere to and serve these. Truth and science help illuminate ethical laws to guide people’s decisions and actions.

Knowledge, will and behavior lead to feelings of satisfaction and happiness when they produce a positive feeling toward reality and encourage people to adhere to it (part of accepting the invitation of consistency). Truth, goodness, effective fulfillment and happiness are all interrelated, inseparable consequences of embracing reality and employing consistency as the ultimate basis for one’s behavior. With genuine consistency, science serves ethics and ethics serve science, and both enhance the quality of decision making and behavior (which in turn serves both science and ethics). All of these, moreover, promote happiness, and vice versa.

The ability to freely embrace reality and unity is the special prerogative of human beings, allowing people not only to understand

the world around them (science) but also to make judgments of worth (ethics).⁸⁰ Because people are able to find the “ultimate principles of their choices,” they may improve their decision making by distinguishing what is better from what is worse.⁸¹ Consistency, as the basic law of reality which integrates variety by unity, provides these “ultimate principles”; it illuminates the basis of decisions and gives a solid foundation to all our knowledge of what is and what ought to be. Value judgments are a necessary component of taking a position with respect to reality (and unity in variety); as such, they form an integral part of the interrelated system of science and ethics and are critical for achieving consistent behavior and happiness. If value judgments are guided by genuine consistency, they will promote rather than impede progress since they will not privilege any fragment but will respect each being and aspect in accordance with its proper place within the whole.

b. Contributing to fulfillment through ethical behavior.

Striving to emulate unity in terms of integrating variety in one’s thoughts, convictions, feelings and actions demonstrates respect for oneself, others and reality as a whole. It reflects an effort to live up to one’s responsibility, thus bestowing one’s behavior with objective moral authority (rather than subjective ethical relativism). Ethical relativism fragments reality, separating what is from what ought to be, ignoring that both reflect the laws of reality or the “will” of unity in variety.⁸² The laws of reality encompass ethics and existence; the law of ethics refers to the fulfillment of being, that is the harmonious fulfillment of reality and of individuals within it, through the integration of variety by unity. Human beings obey the laws of existence and ethics—both of which share a common origin in unity in variety—by freely embracing reality and pursuing truth and goodness, thereby fostering knowledge, love, fulfillment and joy.

Moral skepticism provides a spurious foundation since it challenges reality and its laws of existence and ethics. Ethical law, which describes moral solutions and responses, does not derive from subjective caprice but from the objective integration of variety by unity.⁸³ If variety were not integrated by unity, nothing in life (including life itself) would be worthwhile, since unity provides the absolute basis for everything; similarly, happiness would be impossible, since happiness stems from experiencing the complete fulfillment of what can be considered supremely worthy, and this is solely determined by unity. Happiness does not derive from building castles in the sand.

Ethical law requires people to be loyal to themselves and to the whole of reality to which they belong; ethical behavior requires people to freely and consciously contribute to the fulfillment of reality (which entails their own fulfillment). Behavior which promotes such fulfillment may be described as good or correct; behavior which impedes such fulfillment is bad or incorrect. Consequently, truth and goodness result from contributing to the fulfillment of reality. Truth and goodness also constitute transcendent principles which individuals and societies strive to achieve in their social norms. The influence which social norms exercise over individuals, organizations and government stems from the moral power they possess.

The moral authority of social norms derives from their conformity to objective principles derived from consistency which govern the system of reality to which individuals belong.⁸⁴ When social norms, networks and systems conform to such objective principles, their ethical quality is enhanced. Such principles encourage people to find and respect the proper place of each being within the whole, thereby contributing to the fulfillment of each being by balancing what it receives with what it contributes to other beings and receives from them.⁸⁵

A balanced approach respects all the needs and dimensions of human beings and reality.⁸⁶ Such an approach contributes to the integral fulfillment of the whole and of each person within it, treating individuals and beings as they deserve to be treated, according to their integration by unity.⁸⁷

To behave ethically is to act in the way unity does when it integrates variety: it fulfills reality. Indeed, ethical law calls upon people to acknowledge the supremacy of reality and give themselves to it with will, love, decision and action; true happiness and enjoyment derive from doing so. Ethical behavior requires people to dedicate themselves to consistency, that is, to devote themselves completely toward respecting and affirming the work of reality, which is the integration of variety by unity. This includes respecting all beings – especially human beings – and all aspects of reality, and contributing to their fulfillment. In this way, when individuals conform to ethical laws, they look to unity as a positive role model and strive to emulate the higher qualities which unity provides: wisdom, love, powerful action and satisfaction. Unity, by integrating all of variety, provides the basis for all existence. To the extent that human beings adhere to unity and contribute to its task in their thoughts, will, actions and feelings, they fulfill their own reality and follow ethical law.

c. Mastering impulses and other means.

Ethical law, which is derived from consistency, requires people to devote all their energies and resources to serving reality and fulfillment in goodness and truth. In order to do so, people must learn to master their impulses and to ensure that their decisions and social norms, as well as their means, resources and influence, conform to consistency.⁸⁸ Deviation from genuine consistency represents the misuse of human freedom and results in a loss of fulfillment, in what we refer to as the sorcerer's apprentice syndrome (in which people unwittingly unleash powers which they cannot control). In order to avoid this, people must learn to subject everything to consistency. They must practice self-mastery so that they use their power of free choice to contribute to fulfillment; they must learn to make voluntary sacrifices for their own good as well as for the benefit of others and the whole, according to the dictates of consistency.⁸⁹

Unmastered impulses are obstacles; when mastered, however, they contribute to the fulfillment of reality and individuals. Their negative effects can therefore be transformed into assets.⁹⁰ This is impossible if people succumb to the impulse to focus on a narrow fragment which, removed from its appropriate context, fails to respect the harmony of reality. Such impulses often contain an unhealthy element of aggression, as, for example, in the case of solidarity against a common enemy; without tolerance, prudence and understanding, people can easily fall prey to overreactions, hatred, prejudices and stereotypes.⁹¹ Similarly, the impulse to punish a disobedient son or student, or to punish oneself, can become unduly aggressive and lead to conflict rather than joint efforts to find mutually desirable solutions.

Whereas some impulses – such as those related to the survival of the fittest – are governed by inexorable physical and biological laws, other impulses are subject to reflection and analysis by rational beings. The capacity for consistency clarifies the manner in which each being and impulse should be integrated into the system of reality. It does this by defining both worthwhile ends and efficacious means to achieve them; together, these enable individuals to contribute to the fulfillment of the whole and of each being, starting with individuals themselves and those under their most direct influence.⁹²

Consistency builds a frame of reference which allows people to evaluate how to best adjust each situation in accordance with reality, goodness and truth; it teaches people how to refrain from privileging fragments, especially ego and impulses. In this way, people can work for rather than against the supreme goal of fulfilling reality as a whole,

including all the beings which form part of it. This is applied in Kant's categorical imperative.⁹³

If individuals do not exercise unrestricted consistency, they remain vulnerable to the attraction of narrow and contradictory fragments, including power, prestige, pleasure, money, drugs, violence, hatred, ego, etc. These cause confusion and frustration and lead to unexpected results, as depicted in the sorcerer's apprentice syndrome.⁹⁴ Such undesirable results serve as a warning to individuals, encouraging them to adjust to the system of reality, which inexorably fulfills itself. In order to overcome confusion and frustration, individuals must learn to treat each being and aspect according to its proper place within the integrated whole of reality, acknowledging, among other things, the complex interrelationships which exist among all beings and aspects. People must learn to avoid unilateral and excessive behaviors which transform them into prisoners of fragments. They must look beyond myths and panaceas in order to find effective tools for freedom and fulfillment. They must step back from fashionable or prevailing tendencies to glorify the advantages of certain theories or inventions—such as the machine—and consider whether and how these actually promote freedom and fulfillment.⁹⁵

4. Consistency in ends and means

a. Pressures to neglect ends and means, in the United States and Argentina; consequences, desperation chains and prosperity.

There is a common belief that people can neglect certain aspects of reality without necessarily causing any undesirable consequences, that people can pay attention only to the short term, instead of analyzing long-term implications from a wider perspective. Underlying this belief is a basic disorientation which treats partial and immediate considerations as if they represented complete, permanent truths. A balanced vision, on the other hand, embraces all beings and aspects, treating these as assets which can be shared and jointly used to realize humanity's mission of contributing to the harmonious fulfillment of the whole and each being within it. If this balanced approach is not applied, contradictions and failures will soon appear; these function as warnings from reality and are available to all those who are open to heeding them. Such warnings alert people to the error involved in believing that success can be achieved without taking all of reality into account and ignoring unity in variety, which is the common, underlying basis of reality. As such, contradictions

and failures show people that the laws of reality cannot be violated without triggering negative consequences.

The negative consequences of partial approaches and the warning function they have can be illustrated by analyzing dominant social norms in the United States and Argentina. In Argentina, neglect of economic and political efficacy led to economic and political failures and insecurity. Argentines have too often expected that political and economic problems can be solved by luck, messianic leaders or idealistic models; they have resorted too frequently to improvisation and failed to appreciate the importance of professionalism, information, organization and discipline. Sometimes, they short-sightedly expected to achieve rapid, facile and automatic benefits by destroying the existing system, without considering the need for balanced change.⁹⁶ Respectful consideration was not given to all aspects of reality. The need for rigorous organization was overlooked and efficacious means were not sought, even though desirable ends were chosen. Dominant social norms encouraged Argentines to avoid assuming responsibility for results and not to trust in others nor in their predictable actions.

In the United States, the underestimation of spiritual, family, interpersonal and emotional dimensions has resulted in emotional, family, interpersonal and spiritual failure and insecurity. In this particular manifestation of inconsistency, goals related to spiritual, emotional, interpersonal and family dimensions are subordinated to material achievements, in the futile assumption that money can automatically solve all other problems. As a result, Americans have often squandered the opportunity to work for the integrated and balanced development and fulfillment of individuals and society; they have tended to abandon the austerity which led to greatness, giving in instead to a fascination with money, pleasure and consumption.⁹⁷

Societies which surrender to hedonism and consumerism instead of practicing austerity and restraint usually succumb to weakness and decay.⁹⁸ They lose control over their environment, leading to self-destruction and failure. Although strategies are developed to obscure these negative results, such strategies are simply a way of sticking one's head in the sand and closing one's eyes to reality; as convincing as these strategies may be, they merely postpone the inevitable confrontation with reality, which is the starting point for therapy. These strategies employ spurious consistency, using it to distort genuine consistency, thus deterring people from heeding the warnings of reality which are revealed in failures. By reinforcing the tendency toward avoidance, personal and collective harm is deepened; people set themselves up for more serious

and deeper frustrations, which are designed to startle them out of their harmful illusions. If people continue to ignore the warnings of reality, the damage will continue to increase. This can set a desperate chain in motion whereby people attempt to compensate for failures and frustrations by resorting to increasing types and degrees of inconsistency (such as turning to drugs, money, power, prestige or pleasure).

When material prosperity is unilaterally idealized as an ultimate end, it becomes impossible to achieve a balanced insertion of individuals into reality. Without such a balanced insertion, people are enslaved to immediate considerations which toss them back and forth according to the changeable winds of the moment. People are left vulnerable to short-sighted stimuli –impulses, fashions, impressions, etc.– which create a disorderly, contradictory and irresponsible sense of insatiability. The idealization of material goals exacerbates desires when its satisfaction is not absolute –as it cannot be– leading to feelings of emptiness.⁹⁹

This is illustrated in the story of the Little Prince by Saint D'Exupery. In the story, a pilot draws a picture of a sheep for a child, yet the child continues crying until the pilot draws a picture of a box with holes and tells the child that the sheep is inside. This story shows what occurs when people idealize a partial and fragmentary desire; when their desire is met, they discover that it does not provide the absolute satisfaction which was expected, and an attempt is made to compensate for this unexpected let-down with other, equally fragmentary desires. This is the type of suffering which comes with prosperity. Such suffering serves as a warning, urging the prosperous individual or society to embrace the whole of reality, instead of concentrating on narrow, partial impulses.

In order to avoid such frustrations and suffering, people and societies must cultivate social norms which are inspired by genuine consistency. Consistent social norms provide systems of solutions which subordinate impulses, fashions and fragments to their proper place within the framework of reality. In the context of Argentina and the United States, this means that people must learn to set goals that prioritize spiritual, interpersonal, family and emotional dimensions and to recognize the importance of economic, political and technological efficacy, striving for an appropriate balance between desirable ends and effective means.

b. Giving oneself to others and to reality; rejecting economic panaceas; absolute power and waste; disappointment

People's true mission is to love and serve others and themselves; when people do this, they contribute to the fulfillment of reality as a system of harmonious coexistence among beings governed by the integration of

variety in unity. When people use and abuse others and themselves in order to satisfy narrow impulses, they become prisoners of these impulses and encounter frustration. Any satisfaction which they feel is bound to be fictitious and shallow and will be followed by deep frustration. Genuine, lasting satisfaction derives from witnessing the fulfillment of the system of reality, including the fulfillment of others and oneself through the insertion of each individual into his or her proper place within reality.

Due to the natural limits on individuals' influence and abilities, they need to adjust their mission of loving and serving others according to their position within reality; individuals consequently have the greatest responsibility toward those who are most dependent on them. This includes individuals' families, friends, followers, colleagues, neighbors, etc., as well as the individuals themselves (indeed, individuals bear the greatest responsibility toward themselves). Dependency and influence are greatest where people are closest in time and space, although there are also other dimensions of reciprocal dependency and influence. People's thoughts, convictions, decisions and actions are focused on concrete situations and beings, and individuals' mission to give themselves to others depends upon how much a particular situation or person needs these individuals' assistance and the influence which such assistance can have within the interdependent system of reality.

When people realize their mission of giving to others, they help contribute to the fulfillment of reality and its parts, especially to the fulfillment of others who need and deserve their assistance. When people distort their mission, giving to others in order to obtain something in exchange, they fail to serve reality. Such conditional giving does not promote harmony, but serves other, capricious targets, such as impulses. Conditional love differs sharply from genuine love, which is unconditional and contributes to the harmonious fulfillment and happiness of all people, including those who give and those who receive.

True satisfaction is not achieved by vainly striving for absolute power over possessions and pleasures; these offer minimal enjoyment at best and pale in comparison with the satisfaction made possible by unity integrating all variety. Besides, the notion of absolute power is an illusion, since it is as elusive as air. Attempts to gain absolute control over things to which absolute value is ascribed therefore represent an effort to cheat reality by placing one's own ego at the center of reality. Individuals vainly strive to acquire such power that the possible destruction of part of their possessions does not affect them; in doing so, the rich and powerful act as if they had the right to destroy possessions and mistreat individuals, including themselves, forgetting their mission and function in life.¹⁰⁰

Dominant social norms often sustain such misguided aspirations among individuals, and individuals often reinforce each other in their delusions. This can lead to complacency and self-satisfaction as individuals turn to spurious consistency in a short-sighted attempt to avoid facing reality. Yet when individuals submit to the destructive tyranny of fragments and impulses, they inevitably encounter disappointment since they can never acquire enough to satisfy themselves. Their unilateral fixation on narrow goals impedes a balanced consideration of the spiritual, interpersonal, family and emotional dimensions of truly satisfying ends.

There is no “invisible hand” which can produce human and social advancement through the self-interested pursuit of wealth, power and egotism.¹⁰¹ Such advancement derives from working for the benefit of all individuals and the system of reality to which they belong. This involves professionalism, in order to use economic, political, scientific, technological means effectively, as well as a determination not to treat such means as ends in themselves but to dedicate them to the higher end of the common good.¹⁰² In this way, people can avoid the “iron cage” of dependence on material goods.¹⁰³

c. Drawbacks of privileging some aspects of reality while neglecting others; young people to live on their own; endless renewal of consistency

Even in societies where social norms favor unilateral and unbalanced approaches—such as an emphasis on material rather than spiritual, family and interpersonal goals—individuals may follow their capacity for consistency and recover balance. For example, in the United States, notwithstanding the dominant emphasis on self-interest, there is a strong tendency toward genuine concern for others and their benefit, and not just “for the pleasure of giving.” Yet there is a strong countervailing tendency which imposes strong pressures on individuals to eschew deep commitments to their family and to treat relationships with others as mere exchange relations (where giving is conditioned on receiving). For example, young adults in the United States are pressured to move out of their parents’ home and live by themselves at a relatively early age, presumably in order to better prepare themselves for competing in an aggressive society. However, this reduces young people’s experience of sharing, giving and trusting in others within the context of family conviviality; as a result, they may receive fewer lessons on how to master themselves for the benefit of others and sharing with them, and tend to

pay less attention to spiritual and moral principles. This can stimulate egotism, excessive self-reliance, isolation and emotional distance from others.¹⁰⁴

Although further studies are required to verify these conclusions, it nonetheless appears that the vital impetus to engage in cooperation and team work is harmed by the social pressure on young adults to live on their own at a young age. It also appears that such premature independence increases the risks of corruption by drugs, alcohol, sexual promiscuity, AIDS or violence. Indeed, young people may lose the firm point of reference and emotional, moral and spiritual support provided by the family at a tender stage of their lives when they are especially vulnerable and therefore particularly in need of special support. They may be deprived of a vigorous system of spiritual, moral, family and interpersonal values capable of helping them advance and preventing self-destructive trends. Without such a system of values, they may not learn how to enrich their lives by adopting habits of living with others harmoniously and sharing with them in depth. Young people may be pushed toward adopting unilateral approaches which justify hardships in order to prepare people for economic and professional competition; while it is important to teach young people the value of sacrifice and hardship, they need to learn that these should be used to promote sharing, solidarity and generosity toward family members and others. Strong, prolonged family bonds encourage children to adopt higher spiritual and moral values, thus preparing them for a higher quality of life. They learn to avoid unilateral, material ambitions and master competitive egotistic impulses.

These practices derive from the false assumption that material and economic success should be people's top priority, and that everything else is secondary. They provide a dramatic example of the negative consequences of privileging some aspects of reality while neglecting others, especially those which are most crucial for fulfillment.

d. Copying materially successful models without critical analysis; functional combinations

When individuals and societies hastily copy models taken from the economically developed countries of the First World, they run the risk of copying the negative aspects of these models and ignoring other, positive aspects. More specifically, they may be quick to imitate the consumerism, oversimplification and self-gratification derived from material advances and avoid the austerity, discipline and self-mastery

which made these advances possible. Furthermore, they may underestimate the importance of their own spiritual, family, interpersonal and cultural values. They may adopt the worst components of both models –the improvisation of their own models and the materialism of the First World– in a simplistic and unbalanced fashion. This process is sometimes called “modernization” and is often viewed by leaders and citizens in Third World countries as a desirable transition along the road toward a higher quality of life, even at the cost of a deterioration in the traditional quality of life. Indeed, various Third World leaders have accepted the destruction of traditional harmony and quality of life in the vain hope that modernization would create a new, superior kind. In addition to this misguided hope, most modernizing countries will not even achieve the increase in economic income and consumption which they search for and expect. Even in the First World, individuals who have achieved a significant level of material success find that they are not satisfied, leading to an insatiable and frustrating spiral of misguided attempts to find happiness through the accumulation of yet more wealth and possessions; in fact, this results in the devastating loss of spiritual, interpersonal, family and cultural values, leading in extreme cases to suicide.¹⁰⁵

The superficial appeal of First World models emphasizes material benefits but fails to consider that these are valuable only if they are used to serve the higher goal of contributing to the fulfillment of individuals and reality, in truth and goodness. Truly worthwhile ends and values center around spiritual, family and interpersonal life, according to the systemic interdependence which defines reality. The critical issue is learning how to identify and distinguish between positive and negative aspects in alternative models of society, and learning how to synthesize the positive aspects of both endogenous and exogenous models.¹⁰⁶

Often individuals who criticize First World societies are trapped by the same social norms and behaviors they attack, employing a simplistic and non-discriminating approach. Since every culture and every human behavior is in a continuous state of flux as personal and social norms are continually being recreated, it is essential to subject behavior and norms to constant analysis and evaluation. The sound components of each social and cultural model should be made to complement and condition each other as parts of a system. Only in this way is it possible to find functional combinations which actually contribute to the fulfillment of individuals and reality. In order to improve these combinations, it is vital to consider their reciprocal relations, compatibility and joint effects, in continuous complex transitions.¹⁰⁷ Adopting a model without analyzing its components and their effects is tantamount to swallowing a fish without taking out the bones.¹⁰⁸

B. Discovering and Serving Consistency

1. The process of discovery

a. The search for connections; the chain of being; underlying unity; causality; consciousness and freedom

Guided by unrestricted consistency, individuals gradually improve their ability to explicate the infinite implicit connections which comprise the chain of being, that is, the system of reality and causality. Human beings' thoughts, convictions, feelings and actions are inseparably related to this system, thus allowing them to progressively improve their ability to relate to unity in variety, although they can never completely comprehend it.

Individuals work to find the links connecting components of reality to each other. This search is motivated by the intrinsic belief that everything that exists can be known and that everything with which we come into contact is integrated by unity, making a single system with the rest of existence or reality. This integrative unity was traditionally called God, the basis of the idea of the "Great Chain of Being" which laid the foundation for Western thought and science.¹⁰⁹ Consistency allows human beings to connect the seemingly unconnected pieces of the puzzle of reality, discovering the wider system to which they belong. Within this system, individual peculiarities appear as specific applications of integrative unity, which serves as the axis or center of gravity, allowing "infinite variation" within a balanced, all-encompassing whole. By incorporating the idea of the integration of variety by unity, the mind can interpret and integrate messages.¹¹⁰ People can make the invisible connections among various parts of reality explicit, clarifying and specifying their implications. Since underlying causes and connections – the invisible threads integrating variety – are never visible, they need to be inferred from previously "hidden" findings; this is made possible by the capacity for consistency. By making the implicit explicit, people gradually uncover hidden findings; this allows people to test previous knowledge against new experiences and information, so long as they carefully organize their analysis in terms of the search for integrative unity and do not set limits.¹¹¹

Integrative unity manifests itself in truth and goodness; it links beings and supports them, providing the source of their existence and the means for them to find fulfillment. Unity integrates the system of reality by creating the complex and structured interrelationships among parts of reality. Indeed, unity may be thought of as the cause of existence which manifests itself in a progressive and successive manner in countless beings over time. Thus existence manifests itself as a chain of influences which uses previous actions and influences to transform each being and constantly shape it anew (as well as to produce new beings). While there is a certain degree of continuity, permanence and stability in the identity and profile of beings, they are also subject to constant change due to the reciprocal dependency of beings and their environment (including others). The causal strength of unity leads to different kinds of influences which, over time, produce both stability and change. By searching for and emulating unity integrating variety, individuals are able to freely affect stability and change, contributing to the fulfillment of the system of reality and individuals within it. The concepts of stability, change, process, sequence, dynamics, energy, effectiveness and action help people to better understand causal relationships and further their perception of the underlying network connecting all variety. Comprehension of this causal network enhances human freedom by encouraging people to join the self-fulfilling process of reality.¹¹²

Modern science allows individuals to make more accurate predictions than in the past, for example in the fields of meteorology, astronomy and medicine, even though the risk of error continues. As people apply the consistency criterion to observed reality, they develop propositions about the relations among dimensions or parts of reality and seek to discover how different fragments fit into the total system of reality. The links of unity integrating variety may be referred to as laws, since they govern objective reality and determine the way in which individuals relate to it. On a cognitive level, individuals relate to reality by increasing their knowledge of connections and connections of connections; on a volitional and affective level, individuals do so by taking this knowledge into account in their desires, feelings and actions and working for the fulfillment of beings in truth and goodness.¹¹³ The laws of reality are laws of consistency.¹¹⁴

Memory links various moments of time together, allowing the past to continue into the present and the future; it does this by integrating simultaneous or successive components of variety into a system. By using their memory and applying their capacity for consistency (or reason), individuals come to see themselves as part of a unique system, integrated

by consistency, which transcends time. This integrative vision informs their actions, including their thoughts (knowledge), desires and feelings, both conscious and unconscious. Advances are achieved and preserved when people become conscious of the connections which consistency proposes, that is, when they process unconscious, sensory data and make them explicit. Through the highly powerful connection with unity, which provides the foundation for all life and constitutes the axis of rational life, people can gradually discover connections and relationships within the immense framework of reality. The consistency criterion offers a sort of compass whose needle always points to unity, guaranteeing advances in the right direction, albeit imperfect and gradual.

Human freedom is strengthened when people make the unconscious connections which are inherited through social norms and re-created and modified by each person explicit. The invisible links of social norms which have been elaborated by millions of individuals over millions of years are detected through social interaction and brought first to the unconscious, then to the conscious level. Such social norms govern an invisible system which we could call the “social unconscious”.¹¹⁵ At the unconscious level, the search for consistency prompts people to connect elements together, although not with the degree of freedom possible when they do so consciously. Consistency therefore operates at the unconscious level, although it does so in an attenuated fashion indicative of a pre-conscience; this is a precursory and preparatory task which protects people from problems they are not yet able to face at the conscious level.

Unconscious elements continually jump to the conscious level through what we experience as intuitions, creativity and imagination, channels of continuity in the integrated realm that includes the unconscious and conscious. The critical difference is that at the conscious level, the critical selection of the capacity for consistency is more fully applied. In the idealized realm of the eternal conscience (which some religions describe as the state of the conscience after death), the level of consciousness is even fuller and is free of contradiction, ignorance, error and confusion. Yet even at the conscious level, the specification of psychological influences and social norms allows people to optimize their freedom and increase their ability to contribute to fulfillment. Even though human attention can only integrate a small portion of reality (with the rest absorbed at a pre-conscious level), the implicit and explicit awareness of underlying unity enables people to apply consistency and therefore to consciously or unconsciously discover the basis of the single, integrated system of reality.

When individuals exercise their freedom, they may convert unconscious components –such as complexes– into conscious components. Depending on whether they do this in a manner which serves consistency and integrates all aspects into their appropriate position, they either support or hinder fulfillment. In the first case, the free exercise of the capacity for consistency allows individuals to discover and adhere to goodness and truth amidst the infinite puzzle of reality; it also allows individuals to transmit and share such findings and advances. Variety stimulates the human desire to discover integrative unity, as the flower attracts the bee with its hidden nectar. This provides the means for individuals to work for fulfillment.

The wonder that can be read in the eyes of a baby or child shows that he is experiencing the miracle of the miracles: existence, which signifies the integration of the infinite fragments of reality into a unique system. As the child grows, he gradually discovers new and varied manifestations of the miracle of life in the physical world, in his body, in his inner life and in others. These are mysteries which human beings accept, since they derive from the principle of consistency, the acceptance of which is the basis for any properly human functioning and which makes human intelligence, will and freedom possible. Individuals are able to function thanks to their innate awareness that variety is supported in underlying unity that integrates and explains everything. This relationship to unity underlying variety permits people to adhere to unity in their convictions, feelings, decisions and actions from the beginning of their existence. This, in turn, makes knowledge, virtue and efficacy possible. Individuals start to function as such when they start to search for unity in variety, to adhere to it, and to act according to it. Unity in variety is as vital for proper human functioning as oxygen is for physical life; unity is the unique reference point and firm foundation for human life, as suggested by the links (and links of links) to which the term intelligence refers.¹¹⁶ Existence and consistency have a common basis: the unchangeable unity integrating variety.

As they grow, individuals not only follow the road of fulfillment through consistency but are also attracted by the temptation of immediate, unmastered impulses and influences. Since these are not critically evaluated, they serve contradiction and inconsistency. As a result, as individuals grow and change, they do not apply consistency with perfection but rather demonstrate a continuous tension between adhering to it and resisting it.¹¹⁷ In the latter, they misuse consistency to challenge the system to which they and other beings belong.¹¹⁸

b. Firm reference point to solve the puzzle of variety; pyramid of links; radar

The puzzle of variety is progressively solved through the continuous search for integrative unity, the firm and absolute reference point which provides the master plan for solving the puzzle. The puzzle is progressively solved when individuals open themselves toward the global system of reality to which they belong and insert themselves into it. Consistency is a basic criterion which, when rigorously applied, links previous and future information; through the application of unrestricted consistency, the different aspects of variety may be inserted into the integrative pyramid of reality, with unity at the pinnacle. By aiming for the pinnacle of integrative unity, people may advance toward (although never reach) perfection, inferring implications and meaning by using fragments as raw material.¹¹⁹

The existence of a firm and absolute point of reference – unity – provides individuals with an innate strength and a plan for solving the puzzle of reality. By searching for unity, individuals learn how to connect the various pieces of reality to each other and adjust them to the master plan supported by unity. Without such a reference point, existence would have no meaning and knowledge would be impossible; there would be no values, ends or means, no light for the mind, fire for the heart or efficacy for action. With unity, however, individuals are granted free passage along the road to fulfillment, as realized by the proper insertion and integration of individuals and aspects of reality into the system to which they belong –the system integrated by unity–. Therefore unity is the basic criterion of reality, truth, goodness and desirability.

Through their ability to discover unity integrating all variety, human beings can recognize truth. This requires serious and rigorous effort, with continuous controls for eliminating contradictions and enhancing plausibility. All existing information must be used and people must always search for ways to further enrich it. Inferences must be subjected to tight scrutiny and control so that the connections and implications among apparently disparate phenomena are found. This allows people to infer aspects, relationships and solutions which were not previously imagined. Previous information is not rejected, but is processed and enriched to serve as the foundation for new findings. The mind acts as a tireless radar for discovering such connections.

With an open mind and constant effort, people are able to discover new connections. They acquire a heightened sensitivity to all kinds of implications and use these to constantly modify and improve the all-encompassing framework for interpreting any fragment or new

information. This leads to critical evaluation, as previous advances are integrated and made compatible, enabling people to move toward the ideal of perfection which provides a powerful, if distant, beacon. Knowledge advances when people learn more about the system which integrates the fragments with which they come into contact; knowledge therefore entails the insertion of things into their proper context within the whole.¹²⁰ This is done through unrestricted consistency, which is based on the innate understanding that every fragment of variety is integrated into a total system which we call reality or existence.

People search for the best strategies for detecting the pyramid of links (dimensions, classifications, relations, configurations, systems, structures and simultaneous connections) that structures the system of reality and creates harmonious networks of coexistence.¹²¹ By discovering these integrative networks, people improve their understanding of reality.¹²² Various stimuli and data serve as the raw material which people use to apply their capacity for consistency (reason) and build integrative networks. This allows people to ascribe meanings to data and fragments and to derive implications from them, enriching and adjusting the integrative structure.¹²³ This process is always imperfect and constantly needs to be adjusted so that it more closely reflects the all-encompassing system presided over by unity integrating variety, the only factor which does not need further perfection (it is the basis of perfection) and only has to be discovered, adhered to, respected and loved.

c. Universal and concrete infinities; measurement

In order to know and understand reality in a balanced manner it is necessary to consider two boundless realms: dimensions and concrete cases. A dimension can hold an unlimited number of cases; at the same time, in order to completely define a concrete case, an unlimited number of dimensions are needed. Human beings cannot possibly delineate all concrete cases or all dimensions. They can only know them implicitly through their capacity for consistency which allows them to know that any datum, fragment or case is a part of a whole – reality – into which it is integrated by endless links. This knowledge guides them in the search for cases, dimensions, relations and systems. Human beings are inspired by consistency to search for these links, gradually building upon the explication of a small sample of possible or real concrete cases and a small sample of the dimensions and relations reflected by these cases. In this way, the human capacity for consistency builds a bridge linking the unlimited world of concrete data and cases with the infinite number of dimensions and relations needed to explain any concrete fact or case.

The concrete is understood by applying the abstract; the abstract is understood by considering the concrete.¹²⁴ People therefore need to work to build categories, dimensions and relations in order to explain known facts and to predict or infer the unknown. At the same time, they must study the behavior of concrete facts in order to infer dimensions, relations and systems. In both cases, the conclusion that inferences correspond to reality derives from the application of the consistency criterion, which allows people to distinguish concepts and cases that fit as parts of the integration of variety by unity and therefore are part of reality or existence.

The more people progress in clarifying and specifying abstract concepts and concrete cases, the more they realize how much they do not know, especially compared to their intuitive awareness of the all-encompassing system of reality. People may make significant advances but they are limited to explaining a very restricted portion of the abstract concepts and concrete cases which exist.

The “art of measurement” allows people to insert each part of reality into the system of reality (variety integrated by unity).¹²⁵ This avoids the distortions which arise when people consider cases or concepts from a partial or limited perspective that exaggerates immediate concerns and privileges or misplaces certain aspects rather than focusing on the systemic whole. The genuine “art of measurement” inserts and adjusts each fragment within the global system of reality, acknowledging that the true meaning and proper functioning of each part depend on its relationship to other parts and to the whole. Measurement allows people to relate things to each other as they are in reality, considering all connections—to the extent possible—and to move beyond “impressions” derived from unmastered impulses and unanalyzed influences. The limited advances which people make along these lines are marked by each individual’s personal style.

2. Serving unity underlying variety

a. Meaning, merit, being, truth, goodness, fulfillment

All objects and aspects of reality are connected to each other as harmonious parts of the system of reality created by the integration of variety by unity. The meaning of each being or fragment is given by its relations to the rest; consequently, to understand a particular being or fragment, it is necessary to understand its relationships with others and with the whole. By observing cases and interpreting them on the basis

of known concepts and relations, people may accept or reject the plausibility or relevance of concepts, relations and systems which they use to relate to reality and its parts. Unrestricted consistency allows people to strive to consider all aspects of reality in this systemic confrontation. It involves searching for all possible alternative explanations without privileging any and using the integration of variety by unity as the only basis for analysis. Spurious consistency, on the other hand, privileges fragments and caters to unmastered impulses and influences which are not evaluated in relation to the whole.

Fragments which are not inserted into the system of reality seem aimless, lost, confused, meaningless, undifferentiated and insignificant in terms of their ability to contribute to the fulfillment of individuals and reality. The capacity for consistency allows people to find the shape of reality, which is the integration of variety by unity. Within this context, it allows people to discover the values of fulfillment, truth and goodness and to adhere to them in all their behavior (including will, feeling, action and knowledge). In this way, individuals are able to find their place in reality according to their proper role, deciding and acting consistently with reality. They can freely contribute to the fulfillment of reality and individuals in goodness and truth in all their physical, psychological, cultural, social, intellectual, scientific, technological, artistic, economic and political activities. These provide impressive demonstrations of the effects of consistency. When unrestricted consistency is replaced by spurious consistency, these positive results are spoiled and individuals are imprisoned by unmastered impulses and unanalyzed influences. The latter should be taken as raw material to be processed so that they promote the harmony of reality, leading to fruitful lives and deep and enduring happiness.

b. Free choice between genuine or spurious consistency; unity's design

Human beings freely choose between genuine and spurious consistency. Their choice is reflected in their thoughts, goals, values, convictions, feelings and actions, which either contribute to the fulfillment and happiness of others and themselves or to the opposite. This is the most basic and important choice confronting individuals, insofar as it shapes all the rest of their decisions. The influences which affect individuals (impulses, social norms and fashions) constitute the raw material which people can freely use to shape their behavior. If they choose spurious consistency, they become slaves of such impulses and

influences. However, if they choose genuine consistency, they will be able to channel these impulses and influences in the direction of respecting and adhering to reality as a total system, including all beings and aspects within it.¹²⁶

Infinite roads are available for individuals to choose from. If they follow the guide of unrestricted consistency, their choice will be made among roads which lead to human fulfillment, goodness and truth. Although these roads may differ in style, they are equally good; all of them serve as a fountain of fresh water for the thirsty and a banquet for the hungry. If, on the other hand, individuals follow the lead of spurious consistency, they will choose among various roads of self-destruction. Human freedom permits individuals to make unique creations out of the endless possibilities and roads open to them; these roads may be illuminated by genuine consistency or obscured by spurious consistency, depending on the nature of individuals' choices.

Although different individuals arrive at their choices through different means and according to their own particular circumstances, the light of genuinely consistent choices offers a common, unparalleled basis for cooperation and communication. This permits various individuals to exercise different vocations and missions, so that each person contributes to the whole in a different way, weaving some of the infinite threads of reality into a distinctive pattern in the endless tapestry of reality. If individuals choose to respect the overall design which unity draws within this great tapestry, they obey the law of reality to which they –and all individuals– belong. In doing so, individuals obey the law of fulfillment of beings in truth and goodness.

The fact that unity integrates variety underlies all free choice. Individuals can choose to respect this integration, exercising genuine consistency, or to reject it in the spurious exercise of consistency. Any attempt to replace or defy unity transforms individuals into slaves and victims of their own rebellion and misplacement. Individuals who strive to place every fragment into its proper place within the total system of reality and who consider the full implications of each aspect and behavior are able to advance toward freedom, fulfillment, truth and goodness.

c. Dedication to unity and consistency; dedication of artists and athletes; human advances

When individuals dedicate themselves completely to unity integrating reality (which they do when they exercise genuine consistency), they are able to participate in the creative miracle of human fulfillment. The deepest and most genuine fulfillment and joy which human beings can

experience derives from seeing and adhering to the framework of reality governed by the integration of variety by unity. This permits individuals to fly on the wings of consistency and climb the summits of the system of reality, with humility and reverence.

Individuals' dedication to consistency and fulfillment and their mastery of impulses, energies and resources have allowed humanity to build societies, cultures and civilizations which have made significant advances over the course of millions of years. In the process, human beings have discovered the meaning of disperse elements and learned how they are integrated in an immensely rich and complex system; they have also learned how to respect this integration in their convictions, feelings and actions. All the different kinds of human achievements attained in various cultures share a common feature: they are all the result of dedication to the harmony of unity integrating reality and the integration of the raw material of variety. Regression, waste, confusion and destruction, on the other hand, are the result of individuals' failure to dedicate themselves to unity. Each person and society experiences both advances and reversals. Hardships function as inducements to reorient oneself toward unity and dedicate oneself more completely to it; they encourage people to deliberately cultivate discipline, effort and austerity in order to overcome obstacles.

Orchestra directors and musicians provide an example of the benefits to be acquired through self-mastery. Their facial expressions – which often seem to reflect begging, passion and pain – show how the body and spirit of the artist are completely devoted to the creative task of paying homage to beauty. Whereas artists recognize their own weakness and insignificance, subordinating their own ego to the greater glory of their art, other individuals demonstrate an exaggerated sense of self. These individuals are devoted to the exaltation of their own ego and adopt studied gestures of intelligence, self-importance, self-confidence, shallowness and vanity. In order to improve their performance, athletes need to focus their thoughts and movement to produce a harmonious blend of speed, strength, coordination and dexterity. Similarly, scientists and responsible professionals must concentrate on their task, dedicating and subordinating themselves to it.

Truly great musical compositions represent a unique choice from among the infinite possible combinations of notes, themes, sequences and rhythms, in which the composer synchronizes what needs to be synchronized and separates what needs to be separated. Each sound, movement, tone and musician is arranged so as to contribute to the beauty of the overall work, integrating variety so as to give it both softness and

vigor. The vigor referred to here does not imply violence, roughness or hastiness but intense devotion, which may range from the “agitato” to the “pianissimo” while seeking to serve the integration of variety by unity from the depth of the spirit. Mozart, for example, was able to achieve a particularly high level of beauty and brilliance in his compositions which integrated variety by unity with an extraordinary level of precision and effort. As a result, his symphonies produce the common fulfillment of composer, director, musicians and audience, all of whom share in their dedication to the music.

Efforts by artists, athletes, scientists, professionals and others are wasted if they are not guided by unrestricted consistency: people need to dedicate their energies and talents toward serving the system of reality and all human beings within it, instead of serving inconsistent fragments, impulses and passions. Successful individuals need to resist the temptation to let their success go to their heads; they should not allow themselves to feel omnipotent or to forget that everything they have accomplished should be dedicated to the benefit of all. If people allow themselves to become giddy with success, then they will fail to apply genuine consistency and their achievements (whether in the arts, sciences, professional lives, athletics, etc.) will have destructive rather than constructive implications. If individuals become intoxicated with success, they are prone to forget their own limitations and lose sight of their proper roles according to the laws deriving from unity integrating variety. Confusion derives from losing sight of the axis of support of reality and leads people to desperately strive for substitutes such as prestige, money, power, drugs, violence, sexual promiscuity, hedonism, and other escape routes. When accomplishments in the arts, sports, science, business, etc. are not placed at the service of reality and individuals, they lose their overall effectiveness. The only solution lies in giving oneself completely and exercising unrestricted consistency on behalf of the fulfillment of reality and individuals, in truth and goodness, placing all other achievements at the service of this goal, without privileging any fragment, such as ego, impulses, fashions and pleasures.

Complete self-dedication to the search for the underlying meanings of reality is like a marvelous spiritual dance; as people move to the rhythm of this dance, they tighten all the fibers of their being, in a sign of the complete commitment of their thoughts, convictions, feelings and actions. They break the chains which cause them to lower their goals and commitments and they free themselves of the impulses which privilege intolerance, confusion, hatred, egocentrism, envy, vanity, shallowness and hedonism.

Every human being, whether artist, scientist, athlete, saint, entrepreneur, professional or whatever else, can work for the fulfillment of individuals and reality. The key lies in using human freedom in a constructive manner and letting the capacity for consistency fulfill its mission. Instead of submitting to unmastered impulses and unanalyzed influences, people must dedicate themselves completely to the fulfillment of reality and all its parts, serving truth and goodness, which are the expression of the integration of variety by unity. Individuals experience true happiness by contemplating and working for the fulfillment of reality and beloved individuals with unrestricted consistency. The highest expression and realization of human freedom therefore comes from subordinating lower impulses and influences to higher, transcendent considerations, subordinating force to reason, matter to spirit.

d. Respect for all aspects of reality

In order to display a properly profound respect for all aspects of reality, people need to consider reality as a systemic, balanced whole comprised of interdependent parts. These parts are integrated by unity, whose energy, vigor, warmth and perfection can partially be imagined by contemplating human advances in truth, goodness and love (although only in a very limited manner).

3. The emergence of the human capacity for consistency

a. Progressive unfolding

The human capacity for consistency gives individuals an innate awareness of the integration of all variety by unity, which forms the basic law of existence. On the basis of this consciousness and the progressive unfolding of consistency, people can gradually accumulate partial explications of reality, expanding their knowledge by clarifying what had previously been implicit.

The law of existence stipulates that variety is integrated by unity, so that everyone and everything are part of reality. As free individuals, human beings are able to recognize reality, adhere to it and contribute to its integrated fulfillment, in their convictions, feelings and actions. The capacity for consistency allows human beings to interpret each aspect and being (which people perceive through their external and internal senses) as a message from reality. Individuals work in order to discover

and understand the connections among beings and aspects of reality over time (past, present, and future) and beyond time, in the transcendent realm called eternity.

The seed of consistency starts to germinate in every person from infancy, in a spark which implicitly contains all the future thoughts, knowledge, desires, feelings, decisions and actions an individual may have. It allows individuals to progressively acquire an awareness of reality, including themselves and others, through the discovery of connecting links and the insertion of each into the system of reality (which is where roles, meaning, duties and merit originate). This is an arduous, never-ending task in which individuals' cumulative efforts to explain reality nonetheless can only clarify microscopic portions of the actual system of reality.

Through their awareness that everything that exists is integrated by unity, people possess an implicit knowledge of all reality; this knowledge is bestowed upon individuals from the moment when their capacity for consistency begins to function, i.e., from infancy, when it would appear that they do not know anything. Equipped with this notion of integrative unity, individuals can better understand each component of variety, since it is integration through unity that is the source of all existence and meaning. The actual contacts, stimuli and messages individuals receive from reality through their external and internal senses allow people to infer other aspects of reality—including long-term, ultimate implications. This is only possible because people have an innate awareness that everything is integrated by unity, and it is this which allows them to extrapolate what is being observed to what has not yet been observed. In this way the capacity for consistency allows individuals to know reality, adhere to it with conviction and feeling, and contribute to it with self-dedication, decision and action.

b. Individuals' self-image and image of reality; mutual reinforcement processes (consistent or inconsistent); unity of behavior (internal, external and social); unity as first reference group

Through faith and confidence in themselves and in reality, individuals demonstrate respect for unity and overcome timidity. They are not constrained by a sense of powerlessness and insecurity, which can easily become a self-fulfilling prophecy, restricting individuals to fragments instead of liberating them in the limitless expanse of the system of reality.

Relationships linking beings together through integrative unity are called causal. They allow individuals to influence themselves and others.

deciding and acting on the basis of knowledge and adhesion to reality and unity. Individuals' influence over themselves and their environment varies according to the images they have of themselves and of reality. If individuals use their capacity for consistency in a proper manner, they are able to reach valid conclusions about what is valuable or worthy by considering the harmony of reality and their dignified roles within it. If people do not exercise genuine consistency, they develop mistaken images of reality and of themselves, making decisions and engaging in behavior which is misguided and which hinders their own and other people's fulfillment. Realistic and balanced images are based on trust in integrative unity and in the firm place of each person within the system of reality. This allows each person to use his or her talents with confidence and thus contribute to the fulfillment of reality and all individuals within it. People's knowledge, convictions, feelings and action emulate integrative unity by respecting all aspects and parts of reality and freely contributing to their fulfillment.

Only a realistic and balanced vision generates trust in reality and oneself and provides the basis for constructive, firm and stable action. Contradiction, conflict, destruction, failure and frustration result when people adopt a perspective which distorts reality by replacing the central axis of unity. When this occurs, people become insecure because they lose their only reliable basis of support. They often turn to various panaceas (such as the modern myths of money, pleasure, science, technology, etc.), succumb to assorted complexes (which reveal the lack of a firm grip on reality), or set the mechanisms of self-fulfilling prophecies in motion.¹²⁷ All of these results show what happens when people act consistently with a distorted image of reality and of themselves. When, on the other hand, people hold realistic images of themselves and reality, that is, when they respect unity, they are able to freely and efficaciously contribute to the fulfillment of themselves and others.

People's thoughts, actions and circumstances all reinforce one another through social norming processes. Individuals influence and are influenced by the total system of reality to which they belong. Their influence over themselves and their immediate environment is especially strong, as is the influence of individuals' immediate environment over them. Individuals act based on the image they have of themselves, others and reality, as well as their vision of the alternatives from which they can choose. When individuals' self-image includes the conscious awareness of their capacity to know truth and contribute to goodness by following the laws of reality (as governed by unity), their actions and decisions will follow accordingly. If individuals deny their capacity for

consistency or misuse it, their actions will reveal this instead; they may choose to believe they cannot escape the attraction of impulses, temptations or other influences, – or that they are intrinsically and fatally destined to evil. Unfortunately, prevailing social norms and the mass media often stimulate such attitudes. This is part of the basic choice to reject reality and unity, as manifested in the refusal to patiently struggle to control impulses and overcome obstacles. This also reflects a fundamental mistrust of reality and oneself, as well as a paralyzing timidity in the face of forces which violate the harmony of reality.

When people adopt a positive attitude toward reality, rising above fragments to embrace unity in their thoughts, convictions, feelings and actions, they demonstrate what may be referred to as faith. Faith implies a realistic approach, inserting each fragment where it belongs within the system of reality. It engenders social norms which state that individuals not only possess the capacity for consistency, but usually wish to exercise it genuinely; these norms, in turn, inspire individuals to actually exercise genuine consistency, embracing reality as integrated by unity. By defining such behavior as possible, desirable and frequent, social norms encourage individuals to deeply trust in reality and in the inexorable triumph of unity in variety, reality and themselves.

Multiple processes of reciprocal reinforcement occur, including the complementary interaction between individuals' awareness of unity and their conscious decision to dedicate themselves to unity (as well as the malignant interaction between individuals' denial of unity and the decision to reject it). When people choose to embrace reality, they also choose to know it, adhere to it and work for it; they take sides with reality and consistency and define truth and goodness not on the basis of arbitrary fragments but reality as a whole. Their definition of what is possible and desirable shapes their behavior, since they are inclined to do something that appears natural or unavoidable. Similarly, when individuals define something as impossible, they will not attempt it. Based on individuals' definition of themselves and reality, their decisions and actions will either embrace reality and consistency or reject these. Reciprocal reinforcement therefore also occurs between individuals' beliefs (including their thoughts, convictions and feelings) and their actions. Their images, attitudes, decisions and actions all tend to be either consistent or inconsistent. These mutual reinforcement processes occur at individual, group and societal levels, forming vicious or virtuous circles.

Genuine consistency encourages individuals to do their best to consider the net effect and ultimate implications of an action, assessing

whether the action is desirable in terms of the system of reality and whether it respects all dimensions and relations. Such an approach permits people to better contribute to the fulfillment of all individuals and of reality, treating everyone and everything as it deserves. It teaches people to give themselves with sacrifice and joy. In contrast, if people evaluate actions in terms of their partial or short-term effects, they are likely to cater to impulses, immediate influences and egoistic interests which offer instant gratification and the empty promise of sparing the need for sacrifice. This tends to enclose individuals in a small artificial world which intends to replace reality, compelling them to act accordingly.

Knowledge, will, feeling and action are inseparable aspects of individual behavior; as such, they all tend to conform to either genuine or spurious consistency. These aspects reinforce each other in virtuous or vicious circles –culminating in fulfillment or destruction– and are reflected in individuals' images of reality and of themselves. At the same time, however, no person is completely consistent or inconsistent, but makes certain advances –giving him or herself with effort and sacrifice –as well as certain reversals– submitting to impulses and influences without mastering and evaluating them with consistency. Through early warnings from reality (in the form of failures and hardships), individuals may improve their application of genuine consistency.

Individuals influence and are influenced by others in one direction or the other; individuals tend to see others as their mirrors and reference groups. Through their examples and words, they either encourage others to acknowledge and apply their capacity for consistency or to do the opposite, portraying individuals as prisoners of fragments. Through their example, individuals encourage others to adopt attitudes of respect and love toward others or the opposite. Thus individuals' images of themselves and of reality are shared and become collective images –social norms. The positive or negative effect of social norms depends upon their underlying motivation. If individuals believe that other people's behaviors and messages are guided by impulses and fragments, the social norms to which these behaviors give rise will have a negative effect; if they are guided by consistency, social norms will have a positive effect.

Certain types of images and social norms may be reinforced through messages from the media, business world or interaction with others; indeed, these messages may acquire a special emotional impact. However, human freedom means that individuals can independently choose to accept, modify or reverse such influences.

All individuals have the capacity to communicate directly with unity which integrates variety. In fact, unity serves as individuals' primary "reference group" and mirror, offering examples through the system of reality derived from unity. Individuals may choose to follow the model of unity by giving themselves completely to unity, personally and socially, in a virtuous circle of thoughts, convictions, feelings and actions that works for the benefit of all individuals and reality as a whole.

When individuals privilege impulses and fragments (such as vanity, money, pleasure, etc.), they attempt to replace reality, truth and goodness and set a vicious circle in motion instead.

C. Unity

1. Contact with unity

Human beings approach unity by exercising consistency and working for human fulfillment. They have contact with unity when they respect the law written in beings, which does not admit contradictions, limits or exclusions.

Unity, as referred to here, is the force which integrates reality and serves as the foundation for the union of all beings and aspects into a single, all-encompassing system.

Unity does not admit limits, since it explains and supports everything; it represents an inalterable axis in which all variety and change converge. Human beings experience reality (including themselves and others) through their contact with integrative unity, as symbolized in the meeting of the outstretched fingers of man and God in Michelangelo's painting in the Sistine Chapel. Integrative unity is the basis for all beings and aspects of reality.

The will of unity is written as the law of beings, according to which all beings deserve respect, love and support. Unity stipulates that all beings should be fulfilled, without privileges or exclusions.

Unity dictates compatibility and agreement, both of which are essential for life. Unity does not depend on any fragment, or on any peculiarity of any society or culture. It is a universal idea. It is the basis for all variety and transcends all variety as well. It is the closest idea that we have to what we call God.

2. Existence, reality and unity

Everything that is and that might be can only be thought of thanks to unity (it is real or possible in terms of unity, which makes existence), which provides the basis for all things, actual and potential. Unity is the ultimate, exclusive source and support of any possibility and of any event. It is impossible to conceive of reality or existence without unity, since unity is the root of all causality. There is nothing which transcends unity, since unity transcends and precedes everything else. Everything that exists does so thanks to the links and conditions made possible by unity, which eliminates any and all contradictions. Unity is the basis of existence, space and time. Without integrative unity, there would be no reality and no idea of reality. Unity makes reality possible by establishing connections among its parts. As such, unity is the origin and foundation of each being and the totality of beings.

3. The self-fulfilling power of integrative unity; survival of the fittest; laws; warnings, restoration and punishment

Integrative unity fulfills itself in two ways. First of all, through causality in accordance with laws written in reality such as the survival of the fittest. Secondly, through free human contribution to fulfillment, according to the ultimate functionality of human beings. The realization of reality, as derived from integrative unity, is inexorable. It brings free beings to their proper place within the framework of reality using rewards and punishments, purification, repentance and pardon. Reality as a whole always acts consistently, and there is nothing outside it. It invites everyone to join the will of integrative unity, working together for its fulfillment and cooperating instead of competing for survival.

As people discover the connections among parts of reality, they discover the inexorable causal forces which enable reality to fulfill itself. The expression "survival of the fittest" refers to the causal potential of those beings and aspects which are "fittest" and thus most likely to survive. Fitness is a complex causal source, conditioned by the links between the individual and his or her environment, which allows for desirable ("fit") traits to be passed along from one generation to the next. In this way, the survival of a species depends on the preservation of positive traits and the removal of harmful ones; species persevere by fulfilling the law of reality, written in the causal potentialities of beings, which allows for the continuation of beings and contributes to the

harmony of the whole in which they participate. Even contradiction and death are designed to contribute to the fulfillment of this harmony.¹²⁸

The fitness of living beings is reflected in the fact of their birth and in their survival, both of which are dependent upon a proper insertion into the causal-functional system of reality. Even those who die serve the chain and system of reality and life. On the spiritual level, fitness is reflected in the exercise of unrestricted consistency, which allows individuals to relate to reality in the way integrative unity does. Spiritual fitness is not a matter of competing to survive, as in the biological realm, but of cooperating in order to contribute to the fulfillment of all.¹²⁹ Those who fail to do so are put in their place by punishments from reality, which serve as a mechanism for stimulating self-correction in favor of fulfillment.¹³⁰

The capacity for consistency provides individuals with the opportunity to discover (in part) how unity integrates variety; they also learn how to adhere to unity and contribute to its fulfillment. This we can call the ultimate functionality of human and social behaviors.¹³¹ This ultimate functionality is not limited to the purposes of individuals, nor to the effects for a specific system or subsystem, but refers to the contribution of human and social behaviors toward the harmonious fulfillment of reality as an integrated system, including individuals and other beings within it.¹³² If individuals fail to freely contribute to reality, they are punished, and their punishment serves as a warning and an invitation to rectify their behavior and make the contribution which they are denying. Even if individuals fail to heed this warning, the integration of variety by unity will be fulfilled and all those in the way of such fulfillment will be punished. As a result, even when inconsistent actions prevail, reality will ultimately achieve consistent fulfillment.¹³³ Reality always acts consistently, and for this reason individuals who freely choose to depart from consistency are punished so as to help restore them to the proper path through repentance and rectification, purification and pardon. When individuals freely choose to contribute to fulfillment through consistency, they are rewarded by the sight of the triumph and fulfillment of reality, including their own fulfillment and that of those who they most love. This contribution implies individuals' awareness of their capacity to discover consistency and to adhere and contribute to it.

Nothing exists outside reality, which fulfills itself inexorably through the laws of reality which govern systemic causality. Individuals are able to comprehend this fact through their perception of the basic idea of consistency which teaches them that everything is part of a single system integrated by unity. Individuals can also come to know the laws of reality thanks to their capacity for consistency. At the same time, however,

individuals can only gain a very limited sense of the infinite links which underlie the integration of reality.

Reality's power to fulfill itself derives from unity, which constitutes the source of reality and of its laws, governing its integration. It is integrative unity which explains reality, not luck or other factors outside the tight system of reality; the self-fulfilling quality of the system of reality and all its parts is a result of unity, not of partial fragments. Nature does not do anything in vain. Everything has its place in the system of reality. Therefore, the roads to be followed by beings, whether free or not, are not arbitrary but are clearly established by the laws written in their beings—laws which work for the fulfillment of the ends of unity integrating variety—. This unity is sometimes personified as mother nature, which gives life to beings according to a complete and coherent plan, rather than luck or chance.¹³⁴ Reality can be taken as an expression of the will of integrative unity, as laws originating and governing reality. Human beings, endowed with the capacity for consistency and free choice, are invited to join unity's integrative will and action. To the extent they do so, they freely cooperate with the inexorable fulfillment of reality. The capacity for consistency is therefore exerted socially and is designed to build families, groups, societies and cultures in order to serve human fulfillment.

As unity integrates variety, it preserves only those variations which are compatible and harmonious with the whole. If individuals support this type of integration, they are able to identify with and embrace unity and reality; this, in turn, allows them to consciously and freely contribute to the fulfillment of reality and all its constituent parts. By dispensing rewards and punishments, reality lets people see whether they have taken the proper path of supporting reality and unity or not. Reality fulfills itself by achieving the fulfillment of its parts; the fulfillment of reality thus includes the fulfillment of human beings, who support reality by freely contributing to their own fulfillment and that of others.¹³⁵ If human beings refuse to do so and choose to spurn reality (and unity integrating variety) by idolizing a fragment rather than the whole, this leads to distortion, deception, failure and frustration.¹³⁶

Through a functional approach, individuals are better able to evaluate the consequences of their actions and strategies in terms of the contribution which these make to the fulfillment of reality (whether the whole system or any of its subsystems).¹³⁷ They can also discover whether their actions and approaches help fulfill individuals or whether they lead to unfulfillment.¹³⁸ Fulfillment is achieved through truth and goodness. Even if it is difficult to define the functions and dysfunctions of a society as a whole, progress in that direction is made by assessing how functional

or dysfunctional its social norms are. Individuals can improve the functionality of social norms –thus enhancing their ability to contribute to the fulfillment of individuals and reality– by applying unrestricted consistency and heeding reality’s lessons (in the form of rewards and punishments). In this way, individuals can freely and constructively discover the functional and dysfunctional components of social norms, reinforcing the former and rejecting the latter.

4. Consistency and human advancements

Human achievements derive from the exercise of genuine consistency. Human progress stems from giving oneself and adjusting one’s attitudes, decisions and behaviors to consistency. Indeed, consistency governs reality and inspires human beings to relate to reality as unity does. If human behavior is not guided by consistency, it will be ethically or technically unfit and failure will ensue as a warning from reality.¹³⁹

Given human beings’ finite capabilities and other limitations, the breakthroughs achieved by scientists, thinkers, philosophers, writers and social leaders are small when compared to the perfect integration achieved by unity and the immensity to be discovered.¹⁴⁰

Nonetheless, significant progress can be made if people choose to embrace the gifts of consistency which are available to all individuals. This is the basis of science, culture, social norms and any valuable human advancement.¹⁴¹ Consistency also shows the way to deep and stable happiness by eliciting the profound satisfaction which stems from witnessing and working for the fulfillment of the whole to which one belongs. The universal presence of consistency is reflected in the universal need for knowledge and the endless search for explanation, as well as in the desire for goodness, achievement and happiness and the rejection of all that is contradictory and inexplicable.¹⁴² Even individuals who idolize fragments, ascribing absolute traits to them which in fact only accrue to unity integrating variety, unconsciously recognize the presence of consistency insofar as they search for truth and strive to link fragments together.¹⁴³ Of course, in such cases, individuals lose sight of the unique source of supreme value –unity– and thus fail to systemically consider the full implications of their choices and behaviors.

Human freedom and fulfillment derive from discovering and adhering to consistency, and acting accordingly, relating to variety from the angle of unity. When individuals see reality through the lens of consistency, the warmth of consistency kindles their thoughts, feelings and actions,

inspiring them to treat others as they deserve to be treated and to contribute to the fulfillment of all individuals. Consistency thus becomes the guiding star which shows people how to know, love and act, encouraging them to devote themselves completely to the harmony of reality. Consistency teaches people not to privilege any particular being or fragment over the rest, that is, not to misplace anyone or anything in relation to the whole.

D. Consistency and the Categorical Imperative

1. Respect, love and service to reality, truth and goodness

The categorical imperative consists of seeing reality from the perspective of integrative unity and adhering and contributing to this reality. This is what we call unrestricted consistency, which allows people to distinguish what is real, true and good from what is not; by exercising unrestricted consistency, people learn to treat all beings as they deserve to be treated and to respect the position of each within the framework of the whole and in relation to other beings. The basic law of reality shows the way toward fulfillment of the harmonious system of reality and, within it, fulfillment of all its members and parts. All individuals deserve love and respect and share a common dignity as human beings based on their shared capacity for consistency; as such, individuals' behavior toward others should be guided by the maxim to "do unto others as you would wish they do unto you." Differences among individuals do not result from differences in their intrinsic worth but rather derive from the different positions and relations of each person. For example, individuals' responsibility is greatest toward those who most depend upon them and who most need them (themselves, their family, students, followers, etc.). This forms the basis for ethical, just and virtuous behavior.¹⁴⁴

Unrestricted consistency subordinates caprices, impulses and appetites to the law of reality; in doing so, it contributes to the fulfillment of reality and beings within it. Each human being is fulfilled and contributes to the fulfillment of others by occupying his or her proper role, that is, the role determined by the individuals' relationships with

other individuals and with reality as a whole. Social norms and values provide criteria for defining individuals' roles. These criteria need to be identified and critically evaluated in order to ensure that they are adjusted to unrestricted consistency and therefore that they are useful rather than dysfunctional.¹⁴⁵ The value and meaning of individuals and objects derive from their connections with others created through the integration of reality by unity.¹⁴⁶ This integration forms the basis of ethics and virtue. It also makes genuine, disinterested love possible.¹⁴⁷ genuine love encourages people to treat others as they deserve to be treated in recognition of the fact that unity integrating variety has deliberately awarded them life and meaning, written in their relations with other beings.¹⁴⁸

2. The meaning of meaning

The meaning of any stimulus, object, fact or piece of information derives from its relation to the rest of reality.¹⁴⁹ In order to discover this meaning, individuals need to apply the criterion of consistency, questioning, correcting and enriching their own cultural assumptions, respecting other people's (and other cultures') efforts to apply consistency and considering alternative points of view. Ideologists sometimes tend to view social norms and customs from a rigid, unilateral perspective, arguing that they are entirely good (and therefore should be universally adopted) or entirely bad (and therefore should be abandoned).¹⁵⁰ As a result, unilateralism tends to produce frequent fluctuations between the extremes of euphoria and discouragement. This can be corrected if people analyze the meaning of the various aspects of reality in a careful, thorough and balanced manner. Meaning is built and shared in social norms as a result of human collective activity which establishes connections among various parts and aspects of reality, culminating in efforts to achieve a deeper, more complete and balanced understanding of all implications. Individuals use these collective meanings and interpretations, which form the essential components of social norms and relations, to act creatively, guided by their capacity for consistency.¹⁵¹ To the extent that the shared meanings which form the foundation for social norms approximate unity integrating variety, they will benefit from their connection to the ultimate source of the meaning (from which all partial meanings and interpretations derive). If social norms are disconnected from unity, they misguide people and lead to spurious consistency.

3. Humility and dignity of human beings

By virtue of their capacity for consistency, human beings possess a natural dignity.¹⁵² At the same time, individuals also have a special mission and responsibility to humbly recognize their own insignificance in comparison to integrative unity, upon which they rely for their very existence and for the benefits of fulfillment, truth and goodness.¹⁵³ Humility and dignity go hand in hand, thanks to the special but subordinate role of human beings within the integrated system of reality. By achieving a careful balance between the two, human beings are able to adopt a more realistic, functional approach.

4. The integration of variety within the order of reality created by unity

a. Free choice and the order of reality

The order of reality is the whole of relations derived from the integration of variety by unity. Within this order, the meaning of each being and aspect derives from their relations to the rest. As such, it is the integrated order created by unity which gives existence, value, merit and meaning to all variety, including each and every individual. Through their capacity for consistency, human beings are able to discover the order of reality and to consciously and freely decide to support it. Human beings therefore have the opportunity to adjust their decisions and actions so they strictly subordinate impulses, energies and influences to the all-encompassing order of reality. In doing so, people are able to work for their own fulfillment and that of others within the order of reality.

b. Advances and regression

Human beings advance by defining desirable objectives and choosing means to achieve them. When they do this with energy and discipline, acting jointly through social norms guided by consistency, they can contribute to their own and other people's fulfillment; they can improve the truth of their knowledge and the desirability of their actions in all realms –spiritual, physical, family, interpersonal, social, cultural, political, economic, scientific, etc. On the other hand, when people fail to adhere to the order of reality, replacing it with caprice, impulses or

ego, they are neither able to define objectives which promote truth and goodness nor to choose efficacious means. As a result, they lose control over physical and spiritual realms.

c. Solutions from the perspective of unity

The integrated order governed by unity is what conveys meaning and purpose to each component of reality. It provides for the fulfillment of individuals and other beings, determining their *raison d'être* and the means to realize it. For human beings, meaning is transmitted through shared and regularly repeated decisions and behaviors, which we call social norms.

Social norms provide constructive solutions to problems and helpful responses to situations to the extent that they are adjusted to consistency, which subordinates everything to the ultimate reference of integrative unity and thereby overcomes apparent contradictions and disjunctures. Deviant social norms, on the other hand, condone immediate gratification and tempt people to yield to impulses and narrow influences, thus leading to error and destruction. Deviant social norms fail to teach people to engage in the necessary effort and sacrifice in order to consider the total system of reality, with all its implications, in a balanced, unbiased manner.

d. The categorical imperative

The categorical imperative requires people to consider all aspects, relations and implications without privileging any, in accordance with the dictates of unrestricted consistency. This involves recognizing the supremacy of unity, which is the only legitimate source of being, truth and goodness; attempts to idolize a fragment are illegitimate and subvert all values.

The categorical imperative requires people to look at things from the perspective of the whole system of reality and to consider the proper role of each part within it. This means considering the relationships which link every part to the rest as a function of unity which integrates all variety. Knowledge of this framework and conformity of decisions and actions with consistency are inseparable aspects of desirable human behavior. Advances are reached by discovering plausible connections among elements and identifying contradictions to be overcome; advances also require the correct insertion of elements into the framework of reality. If individuals do not act in this way, they become prisoners of

illusions, that is, of spurious, partial truths; they allow themselves to be ruled by arbitrary caprices, aggravating problems instead of solving them, thus contributing to destruction and unfulfillment. If, on the other hand, individuals adjust their behavior to unrestricted consistency, they obey a single law, which does not privilege anyone or anything.¹⁵⁴ This prevents them from disrupting the balance of relations governing reality.¹⁵⁵

The categorical imperative deriving from the capacity for consistency teaches people that they must consider the full consequences and implications of their decisions, actions and behavior and that they must act accordingly, that is, with consistency. Among other things, this means that people must display a maximum respect for other beings, valuing their existence as integral parts of an all-encompassing whole. The cognitive aspect of the capacity for consistency requires people to discover the integration of variety by unity; the volitional, emotional and action aspects of the capacity for consistency require people to adhere to the integration of variety by unity and contribute to fulfillment, giving themselves fully to this end, with all available strength and means.

The categorical imperative applies unrestricted consistency insofar as it considers all the implications of actions and decisions, including the most long-term, ultimate implications. It conforms further to the dictates of unrestricted consistency because it demands respect for everyone and everything, eschewing both privilege and neglect.

The categorical imperative strives for the optimum compatibility of goodness and fulfillment of all beings, including the whole and particular beings. As such, efforts to follow the categorical imperative involve people in the never-ending task of discovering unity and adhering and contributing to it with all their being.

The alternative to following the categorical imperative is dedicating one's thoughts, desires, feelings and actions to the pursuit of a narrow fragment. In such cases, fragments are treated as absolute and ultimate ends, thus usurping the proper place of unity (which integrates variety and provides the underlying foundation for reality). When this occurs, the beneficial effects of exercising the capacity for consistency are erased and failure and frustration ensue, causing harm to oneself and others.

By following the categorical imperative, people can avoid such negative outcomes or, if adopted after the fact, can correct their mistakes by repenting and avoiding new deviations in the future. In either case, people need to humbly recognize their own weakness and exercise self-mastery in order to avoid recidivism.

e. Transcending time and space in wide approach

Human beings have a limited awareness of the depth of the time dimension in which they are immersed. This often causes them to limit their attention to immediate concerns, instead of considering the depth of the past and the future and the wider, eternal realm in which time is inserted. Such a narrow focus makes people into prisoners of the present. A realistic vision of consistency, on the other hand, allows them to see that all moments or fragments of time only exist as a part of a unique system, so that the present is no more important than the future or the past. In the same way, specific physical space and the dimensions and aspects of material or immaterial reality only exist as parts of the unique, integrative system of reality.

People do not realize that the time span of a human life, compared with the whole of time, is so miniscule as to be smaller than an atom compared with a galaxy. However, on the basis of this infinitesimal instant, it is possible to infer the immensity of time and the infinitude of eternity, as well as the measureless vastness of other dimensions and spaces which converge in all-encompassing unity.

In this way, the human capacity for consistency allows people to infer the whole of reality by learning how each part or aspect is integrated into it. This is the basis of the categorical imperative, which compels people to look for reality, truth and goodness by exercising their capacity for consistency in a genuine manner.

f. Responsibility toward other human beings

The mutual dependence which exists among individuals and other beings is an indication that unity requires all beings to complement each other in order to achieve the fulfillment of all and of the entire system of reality to which they belong.

This is the foundation of ethics and virtue. Ethical, virtuous behavior requires respect for all beings, including acknowledgement of their distinct role within the system of reality and the determination to support and contribute to their fulfillment.

Ethical, virtuous behavior also demands that people devote themselves and the talent, means and influence at their disposal toward realizing the purpose and mission of each being (including themselves) within the overarching system of reality.¹⁵⁶

E. Risks of Deviating from Consistency

There is a danger of complacency (with oneself and with others) which causes people to ignore problems and postpone finding solutions to them. Wealth and power often lead to short-sightedness and complacency with one's own successes, blinding people to the constant need for correction and improvement. Powerful and successful individuals may reinforce one another in their self-complacency in order to create appearances of consistency, thereby making it easier for them to ignore contradictions (at least in the short term and partially, since the reminder of the "voice of conscience" or capacity for consistency is always present). In such cases, individuals replace consistency with materialism, consumerism, and hedonism, which leads to destructive consequences through violence, mental illness, emotional insecurity, drug addiction, sexual promiscuity, suicide, and the decline of family, spiritual and interpersonal values. Such negative models often attract poorer and less successful individuals and societies who adopt—through anticipatory socialization—these contradictions; the result is a deterioration of their quality of life, just as with the rich and successful.

Consistency prompts people to evaluate effects in terms of their implications for the total system of reality, including medium- and long-term effects. When individuals or societies fail to practice consistency and ignore reality, they become blind to the negative consequences that will result. Thirty-five years ago, Soviet rulers stated that the truth of their doctrines was demonstrated by their economic, political and military successes. However, a few decades later, the system collapsed, suggesting a failure to consider the long-term effects of communist rule (moreover, negative effects in terms of human fulfillment should have been noted from the very beginning). Something similar is occurring in capitalist societies, where people have been blinded by material success and have lost sight of the importance of spiritual, emotional, family and interpersonal quality of life. Success, even at the individual level, is a source of confusion which easily goes to people's heads, preventing them from seeing what is truly important and blinding them to the risks and harm derived from not considering the profound, long-term effects of their behavior.

Spurious consistency replaces integrative unity with a fragment; as such, it employs a distorted form of consistency which works against genuine or unrestricted consistency. Spurious consistency leads to destruction and frustration of oneself and others.

F. Relationism and Relativism

1. Consistency relating all beings among themselves; absoluteness of relativism

Unrestricted consistency refers to the fact that everything is connected with everything in an all-encompassing system of reciprocal dependence (overcoming all contradictions) according to the integration of variety by unity. Human beings can perceive some of the links in this system of reality by exercising their capacity for consistency which allows them to discover how unity integrates variety. The capacity for consistency also teaches people to support and embrace the system of reality governed by unity and to contribute to its fulfillment in their thoughts, convictions, feelings, decisions and actions. In this way, individuals can adjust their subjective world to the objective world of reality (to which they belong).

While the capacity for consistency gives human beings the possibility of understanding any of the infinite relations existing among parts of reality, actual human knowledge is limited and partial; human knowledge of reality is only slowly and gradually expanded and will never be complete. At the same time, knowledge is spurious or incorrect if it does not correspond to objective reality. Contrary to the assumptions of subjectivism and relativism, reality does not depend on human subjectivity. On the other hand, if human subjectivity is adjusted to consistency, its findings will coincide with reality. On this basis, knowledge, decisions and actions can be evaluated objectively and improved. As human subjectivity is adjusted to the objective integration of variety by unity, it comes closer to achieving truth and goodness.

The principle of consistency –which refers to the fact of the integration of variety by unity– is the only principle which enjoys absolute validity and is completely congruous with itself.¹⁵⁷ The truth of other principles and criteria depends on their relationship to consistency. As such, consistency is the ultimate basis of knowledge, science, ethics and meaning; it also provides the basis for the concurrence of subjective and objective knowledge. Denials of consistency are inherently contradictory, since they represent an effort to claim that it is consistent (with the rest of reality) that consistency does not exist – or that it is true that truth does not exist. In doing so, such claims implicitly recognize an all-encompassing order of consistency and truth which is free of contradiction. They spuriously assert that the only truth is that there is no truth and that the only thing consistent with the rest of reality is that there is no consistency.

Relativism makes the most radical and absolute possible statement by claiming that objective reality does not exist. This, like the claims above, is a spurious statement because it is self-contradicting: by claiming that nothing exists, it implies that the only fact is that there are no facts. If nothing exists, there is no basis for making any claims; there is no basis for science or knowledge either. The truth or factuality of a statement can only be properly evaluated if people recognize and respect all components of reality and the connections which link them, without privileges or exclusions. If people arbitrarily and capriciously reject the reality of which they are part, they consciously or unconsciously make fun of reality and play with it. This means placing ego and caprice above everything else, seeking to escape from the integrated system of reality to which one belongs and on which one depends and stands.

Consistency provides the point of reference which allows people to distinguish what is true from what is false, what is factual from what is not. Consistency inspires people to work to overcome contradictions and to discover the connections among parts of reality by providing them with the basic knowledge that everyone and everything is integrated by unity. Consistency allows people to build knowledge, culture and progress by transforming their everyday contacts with reality into contributions to the integrated fulfillment of the whole.¹⁵⁸ People do this by connecting realms and aspects which otherwise appear separate and disjointed.¹⁵⁹ Sensory experiences provide additional raw material which individuals can interpret through their capacity for consistency, placing them into an integrated framework which unites body and mind, the physical and the biological, with the spiritual dimension.

The capacity for consistency allows human beings to know their limitations by making them aware of the unlimited complexity of dimensions, relations and systems through which unity integrates variety. Set against this complexity, advances in human knowledge, attention and interpretation are bound to be limited; indeed, advances are only possible through statements of plausibility and are restricted to specific aspects of the vast system of reality.¹⁶⁰ The only thing that individuals can know with absolute certainty is the fact that all parts and aspects belong to a single system of existence, integrated by unity. This knowledge provides the firm basis for all advances in human knowledge, through statements of plausibility which slowly but steadily increase in scope and validity. In this way, human beings emulate integrative unity, although in a limited and gradual fashion. Although individuals are only fragments of the system of reality, they can use their capacity for consistency to know, wish, feel, decide and act in accordance with the perspective of integrative unity, thus contributing to reality. Through this

innate capability, human beings are able to relate to integrative unity, although they also need to devote their entire lives to the ongoing effort of gradually discovering how integrative unity manifests itself in the variety of reality as well as learning how to adhere and contribute to the fulfillment of this integrated reality.

According to a “relationist” rather than a relativist perspective, we can conclude that objective reality exists and that it is possible to gradually increase our knowledge of this reality by following the guidance of integrative unity and consistency. Together with that knowledge, advancement occurs when we adhere to reality and its constituent parts in our desires and feelings and contribute to their fulfillment in our decisions and actions.

The meaning of a fact or object can only be understood if it is analyzed in terms of its relationship to the rest of reality and inserted in its proper context. This is also the way in which signs, symbols, words and expressions should be interpreted; here, too, it is crucial to consider the contexts to which both speaker and listener refer, as well as the contexts with which they are connected.¹⁶¹ In order to improve intra- and inter-personal communication, as well as to advance in knowledge and science, it is essential to specify the conditions and assumptions attached to a given statement and to substruct the implicit typologies which are used in the dimensions or concepts employed, explicating sub-dimensions and nuances. The more is known about the relationships which connect something with other objects and aspects of reality, the better our understanding of it; we also achieve a deeper understanding of something to the extent that we learn how to properly insert it in the global system of reality, which is comprised of networks of connections and ultimately governed by unity which integrates all of reality.¹⁶²

Societies improve their knowledge of reality and are better able to relate to it to the extent that they adopt this approach. Their intentions and actions will be more productive to the extent that the criteria of truth and the procedures used to evaluate it are adjusted to unrestricted consistency.¹⁶³

2. Relationism, not relativism, stimulates progress

Human advances (in development, building, respect, love and cooperation) are made possible by faith in the existence of reality, truth and goodness, as well as adherence and self-dedication to these. If reality is ignored, despised or rejected, there is no motivational basis for giving oneself to constructive ends; individuals are not inspired to work for such

ends and are not encouraged to resist the tyranny of impulses and other attractions. If people accept the description of reality as a “war of every man against every man,” they will harbor confrontational rather than consistent attitudes; this, in turn, hinders the achievement of constructive results by individuals, groups, society and humanity as a whole.¹⁶⁴

Individuals –at least to some degree– respect and obey the transcendent principles and laws derived from unity.¹⁶⁵ They accept the fact that individuals have rights and duties due to their relations with others and that such rights and duties are legitimate and desirable because they contribute to the fulfillment of reality and individuals within it. Individuals therefore know (although they may choose to ignore this knowledge) that they do not have absolute rights over other people or objects. The value which a person or object has is not determined by an isolated individual, but by the system of reality and unity integrating it.¹⁶⁶ The ethical system derived from consistency allows individuals to determine true value by assessing how something relates to reality; consistency then requires individuals to act accordingly, treating others in an appropriate fashion. This involves respecting all aspects of reality, that is, considering everything in terms of its relations to the rest of reality, as derived from the integration of variety by unity.¹⁶⁷

“Relationism” calls attention to the infinite relations derived from the integration of variety by unity. As such, it stimulates people to explore these relations and connections in order to progressively solve the mysteries of reality. It also teaches people to respect the relations they discover (especially between individuals and the system of reality) and to work for their fulfillment. Relationism inspires people to discover and apply the laws of truth, goodness, causality and efficacy which are derived from the integration of variety by unity. Furthermore, it teaches individuals to cultivate humility, prudence and realism, acknowledging that each advance and each finding must be tested for limits and conditions which affect its validity, considering that human knowledge is confined to a small sample of existing information, dimensions and relations.

Relationism is based on the realization that the system of reality and the integration of variety by unity can be discovered through the exercise of human beings’ natural reason or capacity for consistency. This capacity makes people aware of the vast system to be discovered and encourages them to discover, adhere and contribute to it. Relationism also acknowledges that advances in knowledge of the system of reality are gradual and modest. It recognizes that findings more closely approximate objective reality when they are achieved through more systematic effort.

Finally, relationism admits that statements are true only under certain conditions and, when these conditions change, the validity of the statement is affected in curvilinear or more complex relationships.

“Relativism,” on the other hand, does not promote human advances since it completely and uncompromisingly denies reality, objectivity and existing connections among parts of reality. Instead it legitimizes submitting oneself to the tyranny of impulses. Relativism denies the need to overcome contradictions through consistency, even though only consistency can overcome the apparent chaos of reality.¹⁶⁸ Relationism, in contrast, encourages people to search for the integration of variety by unity and to respect all aspects and relations of the all-encompassing system of reality. The need to avoid privileging or neglecting certain aspects or relations also means that individuals must humbly recognize their own legitimate and dignified place within the whole system of relations of reality. This gives individuals confidence in their ability to exercise consistency and to discern, in the midst of the unfathomable immensity of dimensions, relations and systems, the basic structure derived from unity. As a result, individuals are able to discover a series of structures which are critical for understanding reality. They can also improve their understanding of the position of human beings within these structures and distinguish means for improving and enhancing decisions, behaviors, social norms and systems. By using the criteria of reality, truth and goodness, consistency provides the unique basis for any and all rational, spiritual and emotional activity.

Individuals’ awareness of consistency stimulates them to engage in a never-ending effort to uncover and understand the relations and relations of relations which exist among beings, aspects and parts of reality. Awareness of consistency also incites an invincible desire to adhere to unity and to the beings discovered through it. It convinces human beings to contribute to the fulfillment of reality and all its parts.

3. Moral relativism

Human beings’ capacity for consistency allows individuals to discover not only what is true but also what is good, legitimate, valuable and ethical; similarly, it allows people to discern what deserves to be disapproved, rejected and punished. Consistency teaches people that the ethical value of an action does not depend on individuals’ approval but on the extent to which an action conforms to the integration of variety by unity. It is this standard which the capacity for consistency uses for distinguishing between what is good and bad. In accordance with this,

individuals approve or disapprove of something because they believe it objectively deserves approval or condemnation.¹⁶⁹ The objective criteria for ethical or moral judgments derive from the consistency criterion. This is what allows individuals to make judgments about what is good, just, desirable, valid and legitimate and prompts feelings of indignation or admiration.

The fact that reality, truth and goodness exist and that individuals can adhere and contribute to them makes life worth living. By adjusting to consistency and to the values of truth and goodness, individuals can achieve true satisfaction and happiness. Consistency, which allows people to relate to reality and all its constituent parts and to treat them as they deserve to be treated, permits people to work seriously and effectively toward advancing truth and goodness.~

CHAPTER TWO

COGNITIVE IMPLICATIONS OF CONSISTENCY

A. Cognitive Consistency

1. Discovering consistency through a systematic approach

a. Discovering links and structures; simplicity and complexity

Human knowledge begins when individuals start to connect various parts of reality together. Indeed, the capacity of knowing is identical to the capacity of connecting things which are known, that is, connecting the various parts of reality which are ultimately built and integrated by unity. As a result, knowledge of unity is the most basic and primary knowledge, since it makes all other knowledge possible; knowledge is created when people discover the underlying links which connect the data, messages, stimuli and information they receive from their contact with reality. To discover links to unity, people must discover the valid connections and relations linking the parts of reality themselves in an interconnected system of variety integrated by unity.

By discovering links, individuals are able to understand the depth of unity in variety. This understanding begins with the first exercise of human conscience, connecting human beings with unity through the deep, spiritual sense provided by their capacity for consistency and with the physical world through their senses (which provide data to be analyzed and interpreted by the consistency capacity). The task of knowledge lies in discovering more and more of the interconnections that characterize reality. Through consistency, unity integrates the infinite elements of reality, establishing complex connections within variety. The task awaiting individuals is to discover the underlying structures which provide being, order and meaning to reality. In this way, individuals can find consistency amidst seeming incoherence; they can also reconcile underlying complexity and simplicity, as well as underlying heterogeneity and homogeneity, in a single system.¹

Things which appear on the surface to be simple are actually quite complex; at the same time, under such complexity, there is a deep simplicity, converging in unity, which integrates the whole system of reality. Complexity articulates variety and expresses the different stages of development of a phenomenon. Simplicity integrates these different stages –and different phenomena– into an overarching system which is ultimately linked to unity. Simplicity reinforces complexity by connecting it with unity; in this way, simplicity provides an essential basis for complexity. At the same time, simplicity presumes complexity, since complexity specifies and explicates what is implicit in simplicity and it is what simplicity simplifies.²

Because of the interdependence between simplicity and complexity, it is important to recognize that the processes of simplification are complex and need to be clarified. For instance, the characterization of social reality in terms of bipolar relations belies the actual complexity of these relations. In order to more accurately describe reality, it is therefore necessary to supplement simple typologies with additional dimensions, categories and relations through the process of substruction.³ Substruction, in turn, determines the procedures through which dimensions, categories and relations are simplified and which types are omitted.⁴ Both simplicity and complexity are discovered through human beings' capacity for integrating variety by unity.

b. Language and cognitive integration

The relationship between complexity and simplicity can be illustrated by language. Each word implies a kind of simplification insofar as it

affirms the collection of countless cases and dimensions into a common “class” (dimension, category, criterion or type); at the same time, each word entails complexity as well insofar as it “classifies” countless numbers of concrete objects. Words give a name or code to each dimension, relation or type; this name serves as a symbolic representation and reminder. As such, language fulfills part of the task implied by the consistency capacity by helping individuals find the order underlying reality, despite the diffuse nature and chaotic, unconnected appearance of variety. By ascribing names to the links which are found, it is easier to preserve them and integrate them with other advances, culminating in their insertion into the global system of reality. Language thus accompanies and facilitates the full use of the instruments of cognitive integration: dimensions, relations and systems; it enables people to make cumulative advances, steadily approaching the system of reality and inserting themselves into it, even though they can only gain an explicit understanding of a minimal proportion of it.

c. Transcending disciplines and fashions through an integrative approach

The human mind, guided by its ability to integrate variety, emulates unity and thus builds an integrated body of knowledge. Even as human beings develop diverse sciences and disciplines, they build parts of a single system which, if properly acknowledged, avoids the unilateral exaltation of particular disciplines and scientific fashions. This, in turn, helps people to humbly consider all aspects of reality and to use concepts and methods which cut across disciplines.⁵ At various stages of history, human beings have tended to emphasize certain aspects of reality –religious, legal, cultural, material, militaristic, etc.– over others. Advancement takes place to the extent that such “fashions” are replaced by an integrative approach which better reflects the wider frame of reality.

d. Unveiling the hidden, reducing contradiction; avoiding ostrich’s short cuts

Without consistency, reality would be obscured, as if by a nebula, in which everything appears blurry and confused. Without consistency, variety would not be organized and differentiated by unity, which allows people to ascertain the structure underlying existence. In short, without consistency, there would be no unity integrating variety.

The perception of uncertainty or ambiguity stimulates people to search for links capable of clarifying and reconciling information by

connecting various parts of reality into a harmonious framework. In this way, people are able to advance by gradually overcoming ambiguity. At the same time, however, in the face of cognitive dissonance or ambiguity, individuals are often tempted to avoid the effort of systematically searching for underlying unity, which integrates everything. They are tempted to seek short-cuts in the form of absolute and unfounded statements and generalizations, even though doing so constitutes a denial of reality, tantamount to an ostrich hiding its head in the sand. Such a spurious attempt to avoid dissonance and contradiction causes people to neglect important sources of information and to cling to previous positions, thereby privileging fragments.⁶

Ambiguity cannot be overcome if individuals succumb to irritation or discouragement, nor if they embrace simplistic or magical solutions; to the extent they cling to a fragment rather than the whole, they may avoid a certain amount of effort and inconvenience, but they cannot permanently avoid annoyance and suffering because their capacity for consistency and mission (the "voice of conscience") calls upon them to exercise unrestricted, not spurious, consistency.⁷ Indeed, their capacity for consistency ensures that individuals will continue to experience discomfort (and will not find satisfaction or relief) until they fulfill their mission to identify and clarify the implications of simplicity amidst complexity (unity in variety), linking subjective and objective realities.

So central is human beings' capacity and need for consistency that real suffering occurs when there is a contradiction between individuals' wishes and their perception of reality. This contradiction (if not faced with consistent responses) gives rise to frustrations, suicides, wars, and all types of destructions and escapist pursuits (through money, drugs, perversions, etc.). Such suffering and negative consequences may result from mistaken information and a distorted perception of reality. Since individuals want and need to understand reality, when they cannot explain it, they suffer.⁸

e. Dimensions, relations and systems; social norms and language

When individuals trust in reality and believe that its laws have self-fulfilling strength, they devote themselves to discovering these laws.⁹ In order to do this, they build dimensions, relations and systems which reveal some of the connections among various parts of reality; by gradually accumulating their findings, people are able to gain an improved, though imperfect, understanding of unity integrating variety.¹⁰ These dimensions, relations and systems cut across disciplines and are built cooperatively as social norms (shared, regularly repeated behaviors)

which allow people to preserve and communicate their findings.¹¹ In this way, social norms are both the result of the exercise of consistency as well as an instrument to be used in the construction of knowledge.

Language is made of systems of social norms which contribute to each individual's ability to discover the dimensions, relations and systems which connect things together and provide meaning to information, thereby allowing people to evaluate new experiences and proposals. Language is acquired through interaction, shared experiences, communication and education, all of which are shaped by social norms in an evolutionary process. This allows individuals to relate to others and themselves, enabling them to analyze alternative explanations of reality and to orient their will, decisions and actions accordingly.¹²

Consistency allows people to identify similarities and differences through the search for integrative unity, which incorporates all fragments or parts into the integrated whole of existence.¹³ This is made possible through the structures of relations, especially relations of causality and systemic relations, which are detected and elaborated by cultures and languages. Language helps people to build, use and store connections and structures of relations among parts of reality;¹⁴ it allows individuals to connect with the total system of reality through unrestricted consistency.¹⁵ Through systematic, uncompromising effort, individuals can discover the connections and structures of unity underlying reality, although their efforts are destined to be imperfect and much remains outside their reach and control.¹⁶

f. Balancing general and specific; combining specific data and systematic theory

The integration of variety by unity includes all levels, from the most general to the most specific, since every component of reality, however general or specific it may be, only exists when integrated by unity. The example of unity, which integrates everything, demonstrates the importance of covering as much as possible, but without neglecting any specific component, regardless of how insignificant it may appear. In order to link the two extremes, as well as all components, human beings search for connections which serve as instruments for integration.¹⁷ People also use complex networks which link isolated facts together and bestow them with general, theoretical meaning.¹⁸ Connections show how specific facts can be inserted into wider dimensions, relations and systems, often allowing interpretations which differ from previous expectations.¹⁹ When people focus on discovering connections and designing systematic theory to explain reality, they use increasingly more

general criteria in order to create differentiated categories. In this manner, similarities and differences are made to complement each other, linking the simple with the complex and the general with the particular.²⁰

g. Scientific method, theory, and consistency; inserting facts and fragments in reality; specifying limitations.

Theory and method are both necessary for accurate studies of reality. Theoretical elaboration helps people define what to search for and how to search for it and also clarifies the most appropriate methods for verifying information by contrasting it with observable empirical reality. Scientific methods, in turn, further the advancement of theory. The experimental method, for example, helps to develop, control and verify implications; reduction and substruction allow people to organize information and knowledge into dimensions and typologies. By using classificatory criteria (dimensions), relations and systems in the design and analysis of research, people may improve their knowledge and understanding of unity and the ways in which it integrates variety. Individuals begin by taking any piece of information and using it to make inferences about connections; by employing the consistency criterion, people can progressively incorporate more and more information and, in doing so, enrich, verify and improve their knowledge. They can increasingly refine their knowledge and techniques in order to achieve the most systematic elaboration of dimensions, relations and systems possible. They can also select and perform strategic observations for controlling, verifying and extending previously elaborated inferences and conclusions.²¹

In this way, knowledge and scientific methods are based on the consistency criterion. As a result, both knowledge and scientific methods need to be guided by what Robert K. Merton calls “organized skepticism,” that is, by the decision to avoid privileging certain aspects or relations over others.²² Research areas need to be selected that promise richer inferences and more rigorous confrontations; “paradigms” need to be chosen that can serve as guides for richer and safer advances. In addition, researchers must use the findings and advances of their colleagues and predecessors in order to maximize richness and control.

Facts lack significance in themselves. They need to be interpreted on the basis of their connections—in terms of consistency—with other facts and information. All human thought, from history to poetry, seeks to establish connections of consistency.²³ The scientific method seeks to adjust these connections as systematically and rigorously as possible, reconciling observations of concrete facts with theoretical generalizations

and with each other. This allows people to faithfully interpret the language of facts, whose meaning can only be deciphered by looking at their integration by unity and their relations with each other, as written in the laws of reality and human thought.²⁴ Fragments only have meaning when consistency relates them among themselves; to understand a fragment, it is therefore necessary to consider its relations with other fragments, its context, relations between the contexts of different fragments, and relations between systems and their parts. People's knowledge of all these relations can be systematically controlled and adjusted by introducing and incorporating additional observations and information.²⁵

The first messages which individuals receive through their senses are endowed with significance once individuals relate them to each other and strive to discover the invisible networks or structures which integrate parts of reality thus relating them to unity. The discovery and construction of these networks over time is what makes the history of human knowledge and determines human beings' relation to reality.

Propositions and conclusions are evaluated by applying consistency, by specifying the conditions under which they are valid and the level and degree of their plausibility or probability, as well as the circumstances under which the underlying relationships begin to reverse themselves. Through such specifications, propositions and conclusions may be adjusted to reality as a whole. In this way, individuals can adopt and share ideas which avoid unilateral excesses or fictions and which respect all aspects of reality, without privileging or neglecting any. Ideas which have been evaluated on the basis of consistency do not include conclusions beyond what can be consistently inferred from available information, and the foundations of such conclusions are specified, as well as their limitations and risks of error.

Reality is influenced by infinite dimensions and relations, of which human beings know only very few (and their knowledge of these is quite limited). Recognizing such limitations is an essential part of the scientific method. At the same time, however, the links proposed in the form of hypotheses are highly convincing and stimulating for those who perceive the existence of underlying relationships, inferring them from the exercise of consistency. Such individuals are driven to constantly search for new data (through experiments and other means) in order to test and clarify the hypotheses deriving from their inferences.²⁶ Theories and hypotheses are an asset to be submitted to tests of consistency (such as falsifiability); through such tests, individuals challenge existing knowledge and strive to enrich, correct and improve it, all the while

recognizing their limitations.²⁷ For this reason, it is imperative to recognize and specify the limitations of one's research –to oneself and to others– so that its conclusions may be better evaluated and greater advances may be made.²⁸

h. Specifying conditions under which a relation is valid; contradictory proverbs; applicability of principles

The complex relationships structuring the whole of reality and supported by unity constitute a perfectly harmonized, unitary system. Within this system, relations, associations or correlations among two or more variables or dimensions are conditioned by all aspects of reality. Under certain conditions, this leads to a curvilinear relationship, and under different conditions, to opposite relations. This leads to the seeming paradox that the same variables may, under different circumstances, lead to different outcomes; this may also be seen in the many pairs of proverbs which seem to be contradictory but are actually both true: e.g. “the early bird catches the worm” yet “haste makes waste” (“al que madruga Dios lo ayuda” and “no por madrugar se amanece más temprano”).

All of this suggests the importance of balance and the related need to avoid unilateral excesses. Almost all principles have some validity and applicability under certain conditions, and not under others; the sole exception is the principle of consistency, which constitutes the basis for all valid principles and which respects all aspects of reality without privileging any.²⁹ Reality is made of a balance of factors which join together to form a harmonious order. Excesses, extremes and absolute statements derive from ascribing undue prominence to isolated fragments and thereby defying the system of reality. Each aspect of reality is conditioned by the rest; together, they form a magnificent woven tapestry, in which each being or part has its position within typical configurations made possible by the whole of conditions.³⁰

Social scientists, especially those who are expected to clarify political decisions, need to explain when particular principles are valid and when opposing principles apply; they need to further specify the conditions under which each principle holds true and its degree of validity. In order to do this, social scientists must analyze underlying dimensions, relations, systems, combinations, configurations and typologies inserting them in the all-encompassing framework of reality. It is not enough to state that two contradictory principles are plausible; it is necessary to specify the conditions under which each one is valid and the extent or degree of its applicability, in order to improve the quality of

understanding, decisions and actions. At the same time, it is important to remember that, as useful as these specifications are, people are still limited to relatively small advances; although people can make significant progress, their knowledge about the richness of the dimensions, relations and systems which comprise reality remains finite. Therefore, any assertion must be accompanied by appropriate qualifications.

Contrary to these precautions, individuals and societies are prone to cling to various panaceas that claim to possess absolute truth. One such fiction is the claim that human well-being and an enhanced quality of life will automatically result from perfectly free competition.³¹ The problem with this is that there is no such thing as perfectly free competition since there are imperfections in any market, to one degree or another. Any attempt to characterize objects and individuals using absolute, unrestricted categories is fraught with error. In addition, a narrow approach which idealizes free competition and thus fails to acknowledge the importance of other dimensions (spiritual, interpersonal, family, etc.) leads to failures and frustrations, as analyzed in the last chapter of this book.

i. The role of anomalies

The advance of science is stimulated by the appearance of unexpected and unexplained phenomena, that is, phenomena which seem abnormal against the framework of existing knowledge.³² Indeed, the appearance of anomalies prompts people to apply consistency in order to determine how these apparent exceptions or abnormalities may be incorporated into wider integrative systems so that they become "normal."³³ Anomalies therefore encourage people to search for new theoretical developments and innovations which help to explain the abnormal.³⁴

j. The value of advancing step by step

Consistency implies an ongoing process, which is repeated ad infinitum, according to which each advance is incorporated as a link in the chain of cognitive and scientific progress. Advances therefore serve as building blocks and are integral to the continued construction of knowledge, even when they are surpassed by new advances.³⁵ This process is a collective task which builds on other people's contributions and contributes in turn to the work of others. This is done without complete awareness of what one gives and receives, whether these contributions are small or revolutionary.³⁶

2. Necessary attitudes and approaches

a. Universalism, organized skepticism, disinterestedness and recognition of common scientific heritage

In order to exercise genuine consistency, people must adopt certain attitudes and approaches, four of which may be briefly summarized here.³⁷ Universalism requires people to base their assertions on impersonal, preestablished criteria in order to avoid privileging fragments. Organized skepticism calls upon people to subject unverified and unquestioned fragments to rigorous scrutiny rather than embracing them unconditionally. Disinterestedness prevents people from clinging to spurious interests and attachments that deviate from reality, truth and goodness. Finally, people need to recognize scientific property as a common inheritance; this means that people must be aware that all advances in knowledge and science are achieved through the shared exercise of consistency and, as such, result from a single shared task, in which all individuals give and receive in a continual process of sharing and communicating.³⁸

b. Introspection and observation

Unrestricted consistency requires people to use all sources of information and orientation in order to gradually increase their knowledge of the total system of reality. Introspection allows individuals to perceive their consistency capacity and the dimensions of their inner life (knowledge, images, ideas, will, feelings, motives, decisions) through which this capacity is exercised, whether in a genuine or a spurious fashion. Introspection also allows people to understand other individuals, based on the assumption that other people share the same internal processes that one perceives in oneself. Any observed human behavior (in a test, interview, or in natural situations) is assumed to be influenced by introspection and is interpreted as such.³⁹ Thus individuals extrapolate to others what they observe or imagine in themselves, and extrapolate to themselves what they observe or imagine in others. In this way, individuals build, transmit and modify social norms.

Closely related to this is the interaction between self-image and one's image of others which is also affected by the image which one imagines (rightly or wrongly) that others have of oneself, as in an endless series of mirrors facing each other. Social research is based upon the introspective findings of researchers and their image of the introspective findings of others, as inferred from their symbolic (verbal, written or other) and non-symbolic behaviors, which are assumed to reflect internal

processes. Therefore the explicit and systematic use of introspection contributes to knowledge of the system of reality and genuine application of the consistency criterion.

Consistency is exercised by observing, analyzing and integrating observations of external and internal phenomena which are perceived as relevant to existing knowledge about reality. By connecting these phenomena, researchers perform an integrative analysis which we call theory.⁴⁰ In doing so, they employ various strategies for analyzing information from various angles.⁴¹

c. Innovation, flexibility, effort, mastery and humility

People can better understand variety and change when they cultivate innovation and flexibility, since this facilitates the search for unity underlying variety. Innovation and flexibility help people to recognize and serve stable, permanent values within changing contexts and to respect all the continually changing aspects of reality.⁴² People's perceptions of facts change due to changes in the facts themselves and due to changes in the information which people have as well as the manner in which facts are applied and interpreted. As a result, people must continually design new scenarios, striving to link facts to the firm basis of unity with its variety of implications over time. This involves constant alertness to changes and an ability to critically analyze connections and assumptions; it also means that previous beliefs and findings cannot be privileged or allowed to restrict people's analysis of reality.

People must also devote tireless effort and sacrifice to properly understand variety and change. They can only advance if they display humility and patience, rejecting easy short-cuts and facing up to the difficulties and complexities of reality. If they fail to do so, they will not be able to master their impulses and opportunities. They will be tempted to rest on their laurels or to engage in a short-sighted search for immediate gratification. They will run the risk of replacing reality by fragments and thereby falling under the sway of absolute statements and unfounded generalizations. When individuals behave this way, they effectively treat themselves as if they were supreme judges who could order reality better than unity does. This is incompatible with genuine consistency, which requires people to humbly and creatively contribute to reality, respecting the integration of variety by unity and the laws deriving from it. People must respect their own limits and acknowledge their need for contributions from other people, as well as the need for carefully and critically respecting and listening to others.⁴³ Human progress is a collective and cooperative endeavor distinguished by respect for all aspects of reality.

d. Integrating disciplines; combining theory and method

To improve their understanding of reality, people must strive to integrate knowledge, cutting across methods and disciplines and combining general theories with the observation of specific cases and precise measurements. Knowledge is advanced when research is conducted with control, rigor and precision, and when findings are inserted into the wider realm.⁴⁴ Theological, metaphysical, ethical and scientific approaches can and should complement each other, thereby demonstrating respect for all aspects of reality.⁴⁵ The tendency to privilege certain areas and dimensions obstructs the road toward truth and fulfillment.

Transcendent principles (including first and foremost the principle of consistency) are necessary to connect the enormous wealth of fragments and observations with unity. These principles allow people to combine theory and method in a holistic approach which generates suppositions and implications and tests them through observations of concrete cases.⁴⁶ This involves searching for simple but not simplistic explanations which can be verified through consistency controls. Facts must be linked to a broad network of aspects and implications, including long-term, ultimate implications. This requires people to use all available information, both qualitative and quantitative, in an effort to link all aspects together with basic, common threads.⁴⁷

e. The importance of avoiding anomie as well as exaggerated obedience to social norms

Groups, institutions and societies tend to bestow a halo of legitimacy and even sacredness on their norms. While this is important to reinforce obedience to norms and avoid the danger of anomie, i.e., confusion over value systems, it is vital not to take this too far.⁴⁸ Both anomie and exaggerated obedience harm social life by privileging fragments and partial visions. Even when social norms and institutions are good, exaggerated subordination to them causes people to lose sight of reality and truth and results in a destructive sclerosis. When social norms are blindly accepted and not submitted to critical analysis, people tend to engage in oversimplification and complacency, thereby impeding innovation and improvement. No norm or principle should receive absolute obedience—except for unity, since it is impossible to overstate or exaggerate support for unity—. The system of reality, as governed by the overarching force of unity, is the only thing which merits human beings' complete allegiance.

f. Using research and publishing to improve knowledge and decision-making; avoiding excesses

The compulsion to publish (as symbolized in the “publish or perish” ritual which characterizes modern academia) reflects an inconsistent approach to knowledge.

When researchers publish in order to satisfy narrow ends such as job security, prestige, money, etc., readers are overwhelmed by a mass of material which may easily confuse, tire and discourage them rather than clarify and guide them. Excessive publishing also makes it more difficult to detect the common insights and themes which connect issues and reflect the integrative force of unity. This may be overcome by using the consistency criterion to select materials so that every work is linked to the whole of reality and every publication contributes to a better understanding of reality and sound decision-making.

The same standard should also be used to help people decide whether to speak out on a given issue or not and what to say; this would ensure that people’s statements contribute something (more valuable than that of remaining silent or of saying something else) beneficial in terms of listener’s realities.

B. Appropriate Insertion in the Wider Realm

1. Inserting findings in the wider realm

a. Unfolding and controlling implications in terms of reality’s framework

When individuals reduce their frame of reference to a fragment, their efforts to increase knowledge are prematurely interrupted. They fail to integrate their efforts with those of others and with the advances of authors, theorists and society in general; when this occurs, their ability to contribute to collective advances in the discovery of reality integrated by unity is curtailed.

If, on the other hand, individuals apply genuine consistency, their decisions and actions will be grounded in the broad, all-encompassing framework of reality and will respect all parts and aspects of it. In order

for this to occur, individuals must use all available information in a constant effort to derive implications and to rigorously test and verify their validity. In this way, people can discover the wider realms where contradictions are solved and cease to be contradictory; they can advance in terms of depth, system and balance. Information, observations, intuitions, ideas and hypotheses will only yield fruit if they are inserted into a total, systemic framework which strives for consistency and rejects contradiction by seeking to discover and emulate the integration of variety by unity, which is reality. Such an approach increases knowledge, understanding and meaning and enhances free and efficacious prediction and action.

Consistency allows people to unfold the myriad inferences and implications which link the components of reality together; it also encourages and allows people to submit their tentative conclusions to rigorous control.

Partial consistencies may be valuable to the extent that they are integrated by unrestricted consistency which refrains from privileging or neglecting any aspect, fragment or implication; it is therefore essential to acknowledge the proper, subordinate role of partial consistencies and their relation to the rest of reality. When this is done, people can increase the number of their discoveries without sacrificing quality.

b. Importance of depth, system, balance, sacrifice and perspective

In order to achieve the proper respect and support for reality and unity (which integrates the components of reality), people need to advance in depth, system and balance so as to prevent any undue attachment to fragments, appetites, impulses or possessions. Cemeteries bear witness to the extreme brevity of human beings' lives and the insignificance of pleasure, power, money and prestige; indeed, the assets and attributes which individuals possess cannot accompany them, and individuals leave this world after only a few decades (if that) and are wholly forgotten after a short time. In a few thousand years, even our civilizations may be forgotten.

Against this background, the concerns which currently affect individuals, their euphoria and despairs, as well as their superiority and inferiority complexes, seem trivial.

Individuals who are sick or disabled –physically, mentally, economically or socially– as well as those who suffer from deficiencies and insecurities teach us to recognize the value of what we have. This allows us to look at things –including our proper role in life– from a

wider and more realistic perspective. By recognizing our own good fortune, we also learn the value of sacrifice, hardship and dedication to others in a kind of altruism which rises above narrow considerations of personal pleasure or possessions. Heroic and virtuous actions reflect the genuine exercise of consistency and, given their conformity with the principles underlying reality, contribute to our own fulfillment as well as that of others.

Faced with the temptation to satisfy an immediate impulse or interest, individuals should consider how this decision will appear in twenty, thirty or even one hundred years. This may affect their decision and encourage them to act in a way which allows them to relate to themselves, to others and to reality in a genuinely consistent manner. Equipped with such a broad, long-term perspective, individuals will be inclined to make choices which reflect and support integrative unity. This prevents them from investing their time, energy, will and affections in fragments isolated from the whole to which they belong. Individuals will be able to remain serene in the midst of problems and difficulties, recognizing that in the greater scheme of things, these problems are generally trivial; this will prevent them from needlessly punishing themselves and others and reducing their (own) quality of life. These issues will be further analyzed in the next chapter.

c. Identifying key factors and looking at the broad context

Knowledge and science advance by determining which factors are crucial for building the system of thought which best conforms to the system of reality. This is done by inserting components into an increasingly broad framework bound together by integrative unity, much as physicians strive to uncover the wider context of their patient's symptoms and all the potential effects of the medicine they prescribe.

In this way, the physicians (and, by extension, individuals) learn to pay attention to crucial factors which can profoundly affect the outcome of their diagnosis and prescribed therapy. This is an endless task, because what remains unknown is always much greater than what is known. The great key and crucial factor is unity integrating variety; everything else follows from this.

C. Considering Every Aspect and Piece of Information

1. Consistency and the scientific method

a. Consistent frameworks and the integration of information into dimensions, relations and systems

Consistent frameworks produce and verify scientific knowledge. They integrate dimensions, relations and systems within the total system of reality, using reduction and substruction as well as indicators, inferences and confrontations. The scientific method searches for consistent and therefore reliable and universal explanations.⁴⁹

Consistency requires scientists to define the goals of their research and to specify how they fit into the existing system of knowledge. It also requires scientists to identify the theoretical framework which forms their frame of reference and their subjective frame of reference, along with its biases. Scientists are called upon to order their thoughts and observations in a systematic manner, searching for the structures underlying reality, culminating in the all-encompassing structure created by unity. Scientists are required to elaborate dimensions, relations and systems, thus building frameworks capable of integrating each concrete case and each piece of information; by creating frameworks adjusted to reality, scientists can perform strategic observations selected on the basis of their potential for enriching and verifying theoretical frameworks and their specific components.

People build their framework of knowledge by applying an integrative approach, organizing and harmonizing their conclusions by finding links, structures and systems. Such an approach allows people to distinguish what is central from what is peripheral and to test existing knowledge by confronting it with new information and inferences. All this is done by applying the criterion of consistency and seeking to overcome contradiction. In order to do this, researchers must define what it is that they want to explain and the procedures and methods for doing so, including indicators, observations and methods of elaboration, interpretation and analysis.

Dimensions are classificatory criteria allowing people to see concrete objects as cases that fit into categories which can include an infinite

number of cases or examples. The simultaneous classification of objects into different dimensions allows people to better understand the relations among dimensions, which are part of more complex dimensions. In this way, people can infer the existence of regular relations and systems and construct generalizations and laws to explain the integration of dimensions and relations with each other. When added together, partial systems comprise the building blocks of the all-encompassing system of reality which is based on the integration of all variety by unity.

In order to better consolidate their observations in a total system, people need to unfold dimensions into sub-dimensions and build typologies combining dimensions through the process of reduction; these typologies need to be identified through the process of substruction. In this way, people can clarify the dimensions used and assumed in language and in social norms; they can evaluate the strategic relevance of various dimensions, relations and systems in terms of their contribution to the integration of the total system. Furthermore, people can learn how to insert any object or observation, in an endless process of integration. Indicators should be selected on this basis to facilitate new and fruitful inferences and confrontations.

b. Inserting empirical research

By elaborating a framework of dimensions, relations and systems aimed at replicating the comprehensiveness of the total system of reality, people are able to link all components and information together and to insert new observations into this framework.

Empirical research contributes to this goal by defining what is to be explained and what types of observations (samples, cases) may help with the investigation.

Empirical research should also provide information about how these observations will be made, e.g. through direct or indirect observations, analysis of documents and records, field studies, controlled experiments, etc. It should delineate the approaches to be applied –exploratory, descriptive or explicative, theoretical or applied, quantitative or qualitative– and examine the effect of time: historical context, trends, panels, or simply cutting across time.

Finally, empirical research should indicate how information will be processed (eg. in codes, tables, graphs, correlations, models), how it will be interpreted and how alternative explanations will be considered. In this way, an integrated process of research can help people to find the systemic connections among components of reality.

c. Increasing the richness and validity of scientific findings through consistency

Scientific research aims to answer whether our image of the components of reality, including the dimensions, relations and systems we use to classify them, is consistent with available information. It also inquires how this image can be improved and how our inferences and confrontations can be optimized on the basis of the information to which we have access directly or through others, enriched through an actively open flexible mind, as a radar. These questions revolve around the crucial issue of increasing the richness and validity of scientific findings. The solution is offered by the consistency capacity, which allows people to know that every component of reality is integrated by unity into a great, all-encompassing system. This capacity is not only exercised by the use of what we have described as the scientific method but also by the use of common sense.

d. Methodological strategies; making explicit subjective factors; theory-research relations

By employing various methodological strategies and clarifying concepts, people may expand and improve their understanding of the total system of reality. This entails elaborating and correcting dimensions and categories, for example, by determining whether they are exhaustive, mutually exclusive or articulated. Other methodological strategies include time control, the elaboration of matrices and models, specification of research procedures to facilitate control by other researchers, academic cooperation and team work, the search for strategic observations for deciding among alternative hypotheses, specification of limits, etc.

The frames of reference which researchers use represent crucial assets for advances in knowledge and science. It is essential to evaluate their underlying motives and values, especially the extent to which they adhere to consistency and reality. To this end, it is crucial that such subjective factors be made explicit so their foundations and influences may be critically analyzed. This, in turn, enables people to optimize their frames of reference in terms of consistency, increasing the richness of inferences and better adjusting them to reality.

Individuals integrate their observations into conceptual interpretations, which prompt people to search for, find, guide and interpret new observations. The integration of observations allows people to develop new interpretations, in an ongoing process. In this way, theory

and observation reinforce each other in an endless spiral. Researchers and scientists build theoretical frames of reference in order to structure and guide their observations, while their observations influence and enrich the initial frame of reference in a dynamic process of mutual feedback.

e. Means for improving people's representation of reality

Consistency prompts people to improve their understanding of reality by various means. First, it stimulates people to look beyond immediate data, information and observations in an attempt to discover broader connections with the rest of reality. Second, it allows people to systematically infer the network of implications which seem to conform most closely to the total system of reality; this type of evaluation is made possible by confronting conclusions with reality (e.g. testing theories by strategic observations) in order to distinguish valid from invalid inferences. Third, consistency teaches people that advances are achieved by successive approximations as inferences are gradually improved thanks to confrontations with reality. Fourth, it encourages people to look at exceptions and anomalies as opportunities for finding a wider realm capable of integrating and explaining these seeming contradictions and serving as the basis for transforming contradiction into consistency. Fifth, consistency teaches people how to develop and apply techniques of observation, elaboration, analysis and confrontation to minimize errors and maximize the richness of their framework and its adjustment to the whole of reality.

Sixth, consistency stimulates critical (consistent) analysis and the balanced incorporation of every piece of information, including individuals' own contributions and those of others. Seventh, it leads people to consider all aspects and relations of reality, without privileging or neglecting any. Eighth, it teaches people to combine the richness of flexibility and creativity with the strict control of rigor to achieve an optimally balanced consideration of integrative links. Ninth, it calls upon people to combine qualitative and quantitative information and analysis to optimize both. Tenth, it encourages people to engage in interdisciplinary research, thus allowing them to transcend artificial divisions and advance toward the total, all-encompassing system of reality. Eleventh, consistency prompts people to identify and explain the limitations of conclusions which are only plausible and provisional. Twelfth, it requires people to design tests of refutability to test alternative explanations and to verify each new information and inference in terms

of an overarching, consistent framework. Finally, consistency compels people to combine new and old, general and special, simple and complex, stability and change.

2. Quantitative and statistical analysis

a. Quantitative study as an element of qualitative analysis

Quantitative analysis helps people to discover general trends and relations, but it does so in a biased fashion, identifying trends through a process of abstraction which does not do justice to the enormous richness of elements and always only pays attention to partial aspects, being blind to insertion in the whole.⁵⁰ It is important to complement quantitative studies with qualitative analysis so that people can build variables, categories and premises taken for granted in mathematical reasoning. Qualitative analysis also allows people to consider aspects that quantitative studies neglect. Unrestricted consistency requires people to consider all information, not only quantitative data, in order to optimize their knowledge of the components and internal connections of reality. Quantification is only one of many ways of analyzing qualitative material, and it is only legitimate when it is integrated into a more general, qualitative and integrative analysis of consistency which looks at the total system of reality. Most information does not fit into mathematical models, which actually include much less information than they exclude.

b. The quantitative panacea

Quantitative models are sometimes taken as panaceas and treated as sources of absolute truth and definitive answers. Computers and statistics are exalted, glorifying quantification and numbers. Quantification is sometimes given a false reputation of authority, precision and certainty which can produce misleading results.⁵¹ Exaggerated reliance on quantitative models also demonstrates an underlying contempt for reality.⁵² Computers do not create ideas or wisdom, but only process information which needs to be controlled and interpreted; such information should be the result of previous planning on the basis of creative human ideas. When people vainly attempt to replace human creativity with the “mechanical intelligence” of computers, they lose a sense of meaning and perspective by departing from consistency which only supports itself in unity (source of intelligence and honesty).⁵³

The tendency to treat quantitative models as panaceas reflects a pendular shift away from an exaggerated reliance on qualitative models

in the past. Both trends reveal an excessive approach and an unfounded sense of self-sufficiency. Unrestricted consistency requires people to consider all kinds of information, both qualitative and quantitative.⁵⁴

Even though many researchers overestimate its importance, quantification has valuable functions for the identification of links of unity in variety. As argued above, however, quantification must be complemented by qualitative analysis.⁵⁵ Researchers must recognize that quantitative data is only useful to the extent that it is inserted into a broader, qualitative framework; analyses of compatibility and systemic relations are essential prerequisites to numerical studies and are crucial to basic advances in knowledge and science.⁵⁶ If quantification is adopted as a unilateral approach, it conveys a false idea of precision, certainty and security which is contrary to scientific advancement.⁵⁷ This causes people to avoid the effort, creativity and continuity required by consistency. Quantification is misleading if it is treated as a panacea or magic wand.⁵⁸ Computers and statistics must not be idealized, since it is imperative to specify the limits of quantitative inferences.⁵⁹ When numbers are treated as fashion symbols, their misuse produces results which are contrary to knowledge, truth and science.⁶⁰ Exclusively quantitative models fail to provide analyses with a sense of their broader meaning and connection to reality.⁶¹ This produces confusing results, since quantitative information offers only partial insights into reality.⁶² Indeed, quantitative models and approaches such as game theory exclude more information than they include. Although these models and approaches are commonly adopted for scientific research, they are only useful to the extent that they consider the larger picture—the “great game” which is reality—.⁶³ Researchers and scientists cannot hope to properly analyze and evaluate fragments and information if they exaggerate the importance of statistical models or if they mistakenly believe that these models reflect reality with precision.⁶⁴

c. Quantitative analysis and the discovery of partial unities

Quantitative analysis provides information on partial unities, although these are not complete and comprehensive as is unity integrating variety. Researchers who employ quantification often tend to presume that the information which they collect represents a complete, entire whole, equivalent to integrative unity. However, individuals cannot possibly collect enough information to be equivalent to the all-encompassing unity which integrates variety. People discover partial unities by detecting relations among various aspects of reality, a task which is only minimally advanced by quantification.

Partial unities only exist as such as a consequence of their integration into the all-encompassing framework of reality deriving from integrative unity. Therefore, knowledge of such unities derives from knowledge of the relations and reciprocal dependency among components of reality. Such knowledge is attained through systemic and qualitative analysis, of which quantification is merely one aspect. As such, the fiction which underlies the misuse of quantification is based on the assumption that each case is a complete whole. In fact, reality is the only genuine, complete whole since it is derived from the integration of variety by unity. Knowledge of reality may progressively be increased through qualitative and quantitative instruments. Any attempt to ignore this whole and to idealize partial unities leads individuals away from truth and reality.

d. Limits and usefulness of quantification

People's knowledge of fragments (connections or objects) is at first primitive, as people mistakenly assume that these fragments are complete and that they are not limited in time, space and other variables. However, they are able to see (thanks to their capacity for consistency) that fragments only exist as elements of a larger, all-encompassing reality. When taken in this context, fragments allow people to draw conclusions about how different parts of reality are related, establishing compatibilities and coexistence, which is the object of knowledge, thought and science. When mishandled, knowledge of fragments –as provided, for example, by quantification– creates a false sense of completeness, security and stability. This causes people to forget to humbly acknowledge the limitations on their understanding of the complexity of reality.

Quantification is an incomplete but very important way of handling qualitative material. Quantitative analysis therefore needs to be complemented by qualitative analysis, in a balanced whole. Quantification helps people organize and use information and knowledge by helping them classify objects and relate them among themselves. Classifications derive from non quantitative analysis. Quantification helps people to increase their understanding of reality and search for solutions, especially in the physical area, where dimensions are more precisely measurable and divisible into equal intervals, thus allowing people to make predictions and act with precision.

In psychology and the social sciences as well, quantification when properly used allows people to make increasingly accurate predictions and engage in increasingly efficacious behavior. At the same time,

however, quantitative analysis only reveals isolated aspects and excludes significant information; quantitative analysis cannot capture the richness of dimensions which characterize an object, nor can it appreciate the diversity among objects (since all objects are treated as equal, which they are not).

Quantitative analysis allows people to detect trends within large amounts of data, and qualitative analysis allows people to discover the larger meaning of these trends by inserting them into the system of reality.⁶⁵ Statistics and calculus are made of abstractions, and in order to be useful, they need to be preceded and guided by creative ideas and thoughts.⁶⁶ These, in turn, must be guided by unrestricted consistency.⁶⁷ When this is done, people will be able to clarify the implications, risks and limitations of their research.⁶⁸ They will use all kinds of information, whether quantifiable or not.⁶⁹ They will interpret their findings with openness and wisdom, as required by consistency (with “a head which already understands and knows”).⁷⁰ They will advance through successive approximations which combine qualitative and quantitative knowledge. They will pay attention to aspects and relations which were previously omitted from consideration, and they will proceed with caution, self-criticism and humility. No component, qualitative or quantitative, should be neglected. This reflects the wisdom which allows people to improve knowledge and decision-making and serve human fulfillment.⁷¹

3. Imagination, verification, richness and rigor, integration.

Imagination prompts people to search for new connections and implications which may prove to be strategic and crucial elements of a consistent understanding of reality. Imagination needs to be supplemented by systematic and rigorous verification; together, imagination and verification can produce significant advances in science, technology, arts and culture and can improve the quality of decisions, human behavior and life. In addition, a deep, balanced and realistic approach is needed to ensure that decision making and problem solving (with respect to family matters, politics, the economy, etc.) will respect the integrated whole of knowledge and reality. This means, for example, that technical and scientific information needs to be supplemented by

the more general insights deriving from philosophy and the humanities. In higher education, professional programs need to be adjusted so that the technical and practical methods taught are placed within a deep, comprehensive framework which draws attention to the importance of understanding and serving spiritual, ethical, family and human ends.

Scientists, leaders and citizens are all obligated to work tirelessly to increase the richness and rigor of their knowledge in an effort to approach the total system of reality. As they do so, people are able to improve their decisions and actions so they contribute more fully to human fulfillment.~

CHAPTER THREE

CONSISTENCY, HUMAN FULFILLMENT AND REALITY

A. Choosing Consistency

1. Consistency and fulfillment

a. Unrestricted and spurious consistency, rewards and punishments, and the inexorable fulfillment of reality

Consistency allows individuals to use their means and energies to contribute to the fulfillment of individuals (including others and themselves) and reality. In order to advance, individuals must apply unrestricted consistency, respecting all the aspects and relations which reality encompasses and the positions resulting from these relations. People must neither privilege nor neglect any aspects or relations, but rather treat everyone and everything according to its intrinsic merits, in a balanced fashion, within the all-encompassing, systemic framework of reality. This entails much more than partial consistencies which favor

partial, unbalanced ends, such as material success.¹ Partial, spurious consistency replaces the total system of reality by fragments (impulses, possessions, attachments). It contradicts the true harmony of the system of reality and therefore leads to chaos, failure, frustration and destruction.

If individuals freely choose unrestricted consistency and therefore the criteria deriving from it (truth, goodness, etc.), they will contribute to the fulfillment of themselves, others and reality. The decision to apply unrestricted consistency signifies a determination to adhere to reality and to respect unity, which integrates all the parts of reality into a balanced, cohesive system; by choosing unrestricted consistency, people agree to look for and respect all aspects of reality as well as all implications, including the most long-range. Consistency must be recognized as the only firm reference point for one's thoughts, wishes, feelings and actions. This leads to a willingness to give oneself completely, without limits in scope or time.²

When individuals display love and respect for integrative unity and when they are determined to adhere to it and contribute to its fulfillment, they acquire the basis for respecting and contributing to the fulfillment of themselves and others. They learn how to master impulses and sacrifice narrow ambitions and egoistic gratifications. They derive satisfaction from witnessing the fulfillment of people (themselves as well as others) and reality as a whole and from knowing that they helped produce this desirable outcome. Given the inexorable, self-fulfilling power of unity integrating variety, human beings who support this process are rewarded.

Although human beings cannot apply perfect consistency (or inconsistency), they are endowed with the capacity for consistency (otherwise known as reason) which gives them a mission and vocation to support unity. To do this, people must constantly strive to better distinguish sound aspects and relations which respect the underlying order of reality; these must be reinforced, while unsound aspects and relations are counteracted. By respecting, loving and adhering to reality, people serve unrestricted consistency and promote existence, truth, goodness and other values which lead to the fulfillment of individuals and reality.

Spurious consistency focuses on fragments, caprices and impulses instead of the system of reality and its order. In doing so, spurious consistency betrays genuine consistency by deifying partial ends (pleasure, money, prestige, power, etc.) in a futile attempt to find personal fulfillment. In fact, only genuine consistency provides a sound basis for achieving desirable outcomes for oneself and others. The system of

reality, which inexorably fulfills itself, punishes those who rebel against it through spurious consistency; rebelling against reality is as futile as “fighting against windmills.” Thus reality acts as a patient teacher, reminding individuals that they must adhere to the system of reality if they are to achieve anything and inviting them to correct their behavior accordingly.

As rational creatures, human beings are free to choose either genuine or spurious consistency. Reality cannot compel individuals to choose genuine consistency, but it does reward sound choices and punish unsound ones. In this way, reality encourages people to reinforce the former and reject the latter. A crucial function of time is to give individuals opportunities for learning and correction, thereby enabling them to advance. Even if sometimes evil seems to triumph, in the long run the system of reality will ensure that everything is placed in its appropriate position. Human beings contribute to the triumph of consistency, whether by freely choosing to practice and support genuine consistency or by choosing spurious consistency and inciting punishment. In the latter case, reality punishes deviant behavior and brings things back to their proper place through rectification and rehabilitation.

Each and every living being fulfills itself by accomplishing its mission of relating to the whole system of reality. Human beings—thanks to their capacity for consistency—are able to identify themselves, consciously and freely, with the system of reality and integrative unity which creates and governs it. Toward this end, human beings jointly and regularly decide and act, generating social norms and systems which either adjust to genuine, unrestricted consistency or to spurious consistency. Depending on their choice, people either contribute to their own fulfillment and the fulfillment of others and reality as a whole—or to unfulfillment—.

b. Human development and fulfillment

Human development and fulfillment derive from the practice of unrestricted consistency. This statement departs from conventional theories of development that describe development either as an erratic or a linear process and that posit that the processes governing human development are universal (such that the roads which led to success for some will also do so for others), definitive and irreversible. In fact, human development most often occurs in an endless process of gradual advances. There are no universal panaceas; indeed, misplaced faith in the purported cure-all of exogenous models has damaged many societies, groups and individuals. When existing norms and models are exaggeratedly painted

as backward and undesirable (instead of identifying and distinguish sound from unsound aspects), corruption is strengthened and sound elements are destroyed. Instead of indiscriminate praise or condemnation, people need to engage in constructive criticism based on consistency.

It is crucial for people to distinguish between the positive and negative aspects of their own models and those of others. This prevents people from believing in panaceas and blindly copying the superficial successes of others; people learn to combine positive elements and counteract negative aspects instead. They can see the limitations as well as the value of power, money, prestige and pleasure, treating these as means rather than final ends or sources of human happiness. Human development and fulfillment derive from the exercise of consistency, that is, from dedicating oneself to the task of discovering reality, searching for truth and contributing to goodness; in other words, to the fulfillment of individuals (others and oneself) and reality. This is achieved through decisions, actions and social norms and systems adjusted to genuine consistency. It involves the appropriate insertion of all beings, objects and behaviors in the framework of reality, respecting all aspects and relations, as well as the positions deriving from these.

c. Fulfillment, satisfaction and peace, personal commitment

Individuals find fulfillment by devoting themselves entirely to serving the order of reality of which they are part. This includes dedicating themselves to the cause of truth and working for the benefit and fulfillment of all beings; it entails recognizing the inherent goodness in each being and helping each to realize its proper role within reality, as determined by its relations with all other beings. Genuine love for oneself and for others derives from respecting the proper role of each person within the larger framework of reality, which provides meaning and value to all its members and parts. Fulfillment derives from focusing individuals' entire being and energy on consistent ends, instead of dispersing their energies and surrendering to the attraction of contradictory fragments and impulses.

When individuals abandon consistency, their actions become confused, erratic and aimless, and they lose their meaning. As a result, people experience anxiety, insecurity, enslavement and deep suffering. Their possessions and achievements lose their value and usefulness because they are not freely and consciously inserted in the system of total reality. Only such an insertion allows people to share with others, according to the relations of consistency which govern the total system

of reality. Efforts to cling to one's possessions or accomplishments in the vain hope of finding satisfaction and peace are doomed to fail, since true satisfaction and inner peace are only possible when individuals devote themselves to consistency, reality, truth and goodness. If individuals concern themselves with immediate gain instead of adopting a broader, long-term perspective in accordance with unrestricted consistency, they will not find peace but will suffer anxiety and frustration.

Even when individuals display efficacy, if their efforts are undertaken on behalf of fragments and not the whole of reality, they will lead to frustration. Individuals need to know the absolute (which is unity) and to adhere and contribute to it. This is possible when people choose to follow the road of truth, goodness and fulfillment by exercising unrestricted consistency. Contradictions are rejected as a result of the preeminence of the absolute (unity). This requires self-mastery, sacrifice and personal commitment and is incompatible with hasty, disorderly or impulsive behavior.

2. Adherence to reality rather than egoism

a. Self-interest and human motivation: the contemporary debate

1) Tendency to consider self-interest, impulse and immediate gratification as the basis of human motivation

There is a notable tendency in contemporary societies to insist that human motivation is exclusively motivated by self-interest.³ According to this claim, giving is motivated by the desire to receive something in return and, as such, is subject to calculations which seek to balance what one gives with what one hopes to receive.⁴ Human interests are reduced to self-interest and personal "advantage".⁵ This theory also alleges that egotistic, self-serving behavior magically serves the common good,⁶ in the economic realm as well as in other fields of human activity.⁷ Such an assumption is the basis of the model of economic exchange, which assumes that the egotistic impetus to give as little as possible in order to get as much as possible applies to economic relations as well as to social interactions, including love, friendship and other personal relations.⁸ The result is to underestimate and discourage such relations.⁹ In this scheme, giving is reduced to a process of exchange and the search for reciprocity.

The consistency-based model presented in this book holds that all individuals and all beings should be acknowledged as integral parts of reality which deserve to be treated with truth and genuine love. As a result, people are called upon to give themselves to others fully and selflessly, in accordance with unity which integrates all variety and gives life and meaning to all things.

People are responsible for working for the benefit of their family, friends and other individuals, giving to them selflessly in order to serve the higher goal of the harmonious fulfillment of reality and individuals within it. At the same time, individuals should look upon the gifts they receive from others without skepticism, recognizing the true value of giving and awarding the giver with the respect which he or she deserves.¹⁰ Giving for the sake of others and evaluating individuals according to their capacity to do likewise is the basis for true friendship, love and cooperation –all of which are necessary for human progress and fulfillment–.

There is no reason to love oneself more than others. Other people are just as deserving of love and help as we are, so that attaching selfish limits or conditions to one's relations with others is wrong. Moreover, selfishness also involves denying to oneself deserved love, since the best for oneself is loving and giving to others and oneself. It is important not to fall into the "Cain syndrome," according to which people only give away things which are unimportant to them. The true purpose of giving is to give something which has meaning and value, i. e. to give oneself. Meaning and value, in turn, derive from serving the true interests of others and oneself and treating them with the love they deserve.¹¹ This contradicts the tendency of some to reduce value to material or monetary terms, according to which money is seen as a cure-all capable of solving all problems. This misguided view of human beings as 'homo oeconomicus' fails to acknowledge that money only has value and meaning when it is placed at the service of individuals.¹²

The proposition (called the "law of effect" by Edward L. Thorndike) that all human behavior is primarily motivated by the desire to maximize personal gratification is contradicted by the consistency model.¹³ The latter maintains that individuals first adopt ends, targets and values to which they adhere, and that satisfaction derives from fulfilling these.¹⁴ To strive for satisfaction for satisfaction's sake is a limited, shallow goal which departs from realism and adherence to truth and goodness. It ignores the value and deep satisfaction of meaningful sacrifice through the mastery of impulses; this is the only source of deep happiness and genuine pleasure.

Devoting oneself to the simplistic, superficial pursuit of hedonism results in the improper insertion of things in reality and a corresponding loss of balance and harmony.

Letting oneself be carried away by immediate and partial impulses and failing to consider how things are interrelated in the system of reality based on unity is tantamount to a renunciation of one's basic capacity for consistency. Not only is this contrary to consistency, it leads to failure and frustration, since reality inexorably acts to fulfill itself. When people succumb to the appeal of money, possessions, power, prestige or physical or psychological pleasures, they ignore the need to seek balance by inserting everything into the total system of reality. As a result, their misguided actions increasingly lead to self-destructive consequences.

2) Transcendent principles; ethics, self-mastery and sacrifice

The only and ultimate reference point for the human capacity for consistency is the system of reality integrated by unity. Consistency allows people to relate to reality not through some mechanical or immediate connection, but through knowledge, love and voluntary dedication to the fulfillment of reality, guided by the higher values of being, truth and goodness as well as morals, virtue and excellence. By subordinating every fragment to the service of humanity and the system of reality and by exercising self-mastery, dedication and personal sacrifice, human beings are able to advance. Even though an emphasis on immediate concerns, personal gratification and idleness leads to decay, contemporary fashions encourage people to give in to pleasure and consumerism and to avoid dedication, self-mastery, effort and sacrifice.

Popular norms encourage individuals and societies to adopt materialistic values which are presumed to be responsible for the material success of rich countries and individuals in a process of anticipatory socialization.¹⁵

3) The economic exchange model based on the presumption of exclusively self-interested human motivation

To explain "individual action" and "systemic behavior," James Coleman develops a theoretical model which emphasizes the influence of "pure self-interest".¹⁶ He states that individuals' primary motivation and the source of their rational behavior lies in the "maximization of

utility".¹⁷ Coleman assumes that people are neither altruistic nor disinterested and that they do not share a normative system, although he does not take this to mean that people always disregard norms and act out of purely selfish interests.¹⁸

He adds that the role which self-interest plays in his own theory is close to that envisioned by Helvetius who affirmed that "as the physical world is ruled by the laws of movement, so is the moral universe ruled by the laws of interest."¹⁹

Coleman explains that social systems derive from the fact that "actors are not fully in control of the activities that can satisfy their interests, but find some of those activities partially or wholly under the control of others." Because of this, they engage in transactions with others, using "the resources they control that have little interest for them to realize the interest that lies in resources controlled by other actors." He adds: "This structure, together with the fact that actors are purposive, each having the goal of maximizing the realization of their interest, gives the interdependence of systemic character to their actions."²⁰

Coleman compares sociological models to systems described by economic theory.²¹ He uses concepts such as "transactions" and "deals" to refer to actions and relations in social and political systems and equates them to "the functioning of an economic market through a system of tentative contracts".²² According to Coleman's model, facts are valuable if they are of interest to powerful actors and actors are powerful if they control valuable facts.²³ As he writes, "the difference between a person's interest in a resource and the value of that resource is merely the difference between the utility a good holds for a person and the market value, or price, of the good."²⁴

Coleman's economic exchange model is guided by spurious consistency, which assumes that individuals can only depend on themselves; this causes people to attach value to false ideals which they vainly pursue throughout their lives.

Coleman's theory fails to consider that individuals can be interested in objective reality, truth and goodness thanks to their capacity for consistency, which allows them to appreciate the harmonious integration of all reality.

As such, it is a sad and pessimistic vision of human beings which lacks a firm foundation on which to support itself. In actual fact, people can know, love, build and enjoy to the extent that they search for what is objectively real instead of deceiving themselves with false pleasures that they create out of petty caprices, impulses and ego. These cannot serve as a sound basis for human fulfillment and happiness.

4) Applications and criticisms of the economic exchange model

To illustrate how the economic exchange model applies to non-economic situations, Coleman analyzes the behavior of students and teachers in terms of the resources controlled by students (e. g. their willingness to do their homework and attend classes) and teachers (e. g. grades). Coleman argues that “a common rate of exchange develops between student effort and grades” based on the time available to students and the discretion which teachers have in assigning grades.²⁵ He describes the power of students as the time which they did not give, plus the grades they received; the power of the teacher is the time students gave plus the grades the teacher did not give.²⁶ In short, there is an exchange of time and effort (on the part of the students) for grades (from the teacher).²⁷ This leads to “rates of exchange,” considered more favorable for the teacher when the teacher gets a better combination of homework done and attendance for a given grade, so that the “monopoly rate favoring the teacher” surpasses the “competitive market rate.”²⁸

This picture seems to reflect a futile fight for domination among antagonistic individuals, forgetting that the substantive goal of education is to promote the fulfillment of students, their families and society. Yet another goal of education can and should be the fulfillment of teachers’ personal and professional vocation, as part of their harmonious insertion within society and reality. The theoretical model based on “self-interest” fails to consider the objective interest which both students and teachers have in contributing to the fulfillment of reality by exercising their capacity for consistency. This model fails to consider individuals’ genuine desire to work for the benefit of others as well as themselves. The time students spend on doing homework and attending classes may be a product of their real desire to learn and grow –and to help others do the same; similarly, teachers may use grades to stimulate such effort out of a sincere concern for the educational growth of their students–. This goes far beyond the reciprocal exchange of effort and grades between students and teachers, insofar as it considers the possibilities and responsibilities both roles are expected to contribute to their own fulfillment and that of others.

The social norms shared by students and teachers include a variety of motives and ends deriving from genuine consistency; as such, they recognize objective reality, adhere to it (in their choices and feelings) and work for its fulfillment (by seeking truth and goodness). If social norms are inspired by spurious consistency, they yield to impulses, egoism and caprice; they cause individuals to focus on narrow, immediate

interests and neglect the all-encompassing framework of reality given by integrative unity. When educational interaction is depicted as a struggle between the egotistic interests of students and teachers, the assumption is made that social norms and actions are based on spurious consistency and unmastered impulses. In fact, although spurious consistency exerts a certain amount of influence, genuine consistency does as well. Indeed, human advancement would not be possible without genuine consistency.

To the important degree that behaviors and social norms are not motivated by egotistic interests of power and domination, the economic exchange model proves to be an inadequate explanation. Respect and love for others, deriving from genuine consistency, stimulate cooperative behaviors which are not motivated by the desire to dominate or exploit others. Students' behavior is not only the result of efforts to get good grades, and teachers do not assign grades simply in order to get students to spend time on homework. Education involves more than a competition or exchange of resources according to "relative prices"; it represents a joint task with common goals based on shared social norms which allow human advancement. This view helps to explain crucial aspects of behavior which cannot be accounted for under the economic exchange model.

The model based on genuine consistency which foresees mutually beneficial interaction and cooperation does not interpret human interaction as a zero-sum game, where one person has to lose in order that another may gain. On the contrary, actions which attempt to acquire personal advantage at someone else's expense are bound to result in a loss for both parties.

The model based on genuine consistency posits that influences among individuals may be mutually beneficial, leading to the good of the whole which is far richer than the benefit derived from advancing isolated or antagonistic parts. This is the basic goal of human interaction, social norms and systems. These are not instruments for obtaining exclusive individual advantages but for enriching all members and thus contributing to the fulfillment of reality based on unity. Complementary, consistent interaction is achieved through organization and control, which reinforce the degree to which individuals work together to produce the benefit of the whole as well as each person.

In the example of interactions between students and teachers, homework, attendance and grades should not be seen as ends in themselves but rather as instruments to be used to promote joint goals. These goals include the benefit of both parties, solidarity, love, emotional support, trust, devotion, effort, sacrifice, time, etc. Both students and teachers have the responsibility of jointly contributing to the fulfillment

of others as well as themselves, both within and outside the classroom. Their goal should not be to obtain something in exchange for their efforts but simply to devote their efforts toward common goals; they should focus more on giving than on receiving and should never use or exploit anyone.

Satisfaction is only one of the consequences of the unique and indivisible act of recognizing what is real, good and true and adhering and contributing to reality, goodness and truth. The resources individuals possess should not be interpreted in narrow terms of relative "power" (as Coleman does), but should be seen as tools for contributing to the joint task of promoting the good of all. These resources do not oppose but reinforce each other. They are parts or aspects of the fulfillment of reality, including the fulfillment of the broader societies in which all of us participate. If teachers—and even students—are more interested in receiving than in giving, the educational process is frustrated, limiting participants to a mean and infertile interaction in which spiritual, social, family, emotional, cultural and related needs are not met. In order to meet these needs, individuals must carefully search for ways to serve and love others, thereby pursuing the truth—without contradictions, without privileges and consistent with their contribution to the fulfillment of reality—.

Within the economic exchange model based on spurious consistency, the motivation behind interpersonal relations such as dating is reduced to the same egotistic desire to obtain something of equal or greater value in return for one's affections. To the extent that this is true, it is impossible to achieve true love, solidarity and cooperation; mistrust, failure and frustration are the unintended results. Instead of contributing to the mutual support and benefit of those involved, this type of relationship turns into a confrontation of forces in which each party seeks to obtain something at the cost of the other. According to Coleman, "the person with less interest in the other will get his or her way concerning events about which their interests are opposed." He adds that the "less the interest in the resources controlled by the other," the greater the power "to dictate the outcome of new events affecting both parties."²⁹

In fact, the power to control other individuals, if not used for their benefit, does not emancipate people but actually enslaves them; people become hostages to their impulses, which dominate them and deprive them of their freedom. To the extent that people strive to dominate and use one another, their relation lacks the basis for becoming valuable, legitimate and fulfilling. When people use others for their own gratification, they do not exercise genuine consistency and love, since these require people to sincerely work for the benefit of others. When people seek to achieve personal happiness at the expense of others, satisfaction becomes an elusive goal. Suffering and frustration are the

unintended but unavoidable results, even though a facade of fleeting pleasure may temporarily hide the negative consequences and blind people to the need to correct their errors.³⁰ Love and the desire to give to others for their own sake fortunately are more frequent and widespread than Coleman's model suggests.

In a comparative survey of the values of university students in Spain, Argentina and the United States, each of the national samples indicated that they respected the value of genuine love and concern for others, attaching a high value to unselfish giving; they also expressed a feeling of moral obligation toward others.³¹ The economic exchange model cannot explain this universal tendency to practice self-discipline instead of indulging caprices and impulses.

The consistency model, on the other hand, can account for such attitudes and behavior by drawing attention to individuals' ability and need to consider the whole without privileging or excluding aspects or fragments. Consistency is what encourages people to consider the whole in their wishes, feelings, decisions and actions, recognizing and loving themselves as small but dignified members of the immense system. As a result, people are prompted to build and practice social norms which pursue the fulfillment of all individuals, since all deserve to love and be loved, without privileges or exclusions.

For Coleman, the value of a person or object derives from the satisfaction it can provide. The model forwarded in this book, in contrast, posits that satisfaction derives from value, that is, that a person or object does not provide satisfaction unless it is valuable and this value is determined in accordance with objective criteria, including compliance with reality and fulfillment as well as adherence to truth and goodness. These are not criteria derived from satisfaction but sources of satisfaction, which is a complementary component. Therefore it is misguided to attempt to predict human behaviors as a function of expected satisfaction. It is necessary to see satisfaction as a function of objective conditions (of reality, truth and goodness) which predict both human behavior and the extent to which it produces real satisfaction.

Indeed, behavior guided by spurious consistency leads to ephemeral satisfaction. Only when people behave in such a way as to respect that which is objectively valuable will their behavior lead to deep and stable satisfaction and happiness. Theories which describe "self-interest" as the primary motivation behind human behavior obscure the most interesting and important part of the story; they fail to consider the contrasting effects which behavior will have depending whether it is grounded in genuine or spurious consistency. Theories and models which

focus exclusively on self-interest cannot explain behavior which consciously considers the objective value of people and objects and strives to respect this. Such theories and models therefore need to be inserted into a wider model of motivation and behavior.

5) The struggle for pleasure, "enlightened self-interest" and "successful" models

In some classical descriptions of the American way of life, a pragmatic emphasis is reported, according to which Americans aspire to be as free as possible from commitments to ideas or principles which could be obstacles to their utilitarian struggle for self-gratification. At the same time, however, these descriptions note that Americans are willing to sacrifice immediate gratification for the sake of future satisfaction, and that they try to maximize personal gratification by allowing other people to do the same, according to the adage "live and let live."

Yet as we have argued earlier in this work, the search for personal gratification (whether immediate or deferred) leads to the breakdown of family and interpersonal relations, alienation and various forms of self-destruction, including drug abuse and violence. All advances in personal and social fulfillment and all progress toward deep, stable satisfaction and happiness are only possible to the extent that individuals master their impulses and look beyond self-interest. Theories which emphasize and condone self-gratification mislead people and direct them away from the proper path of giving themselves unselfishly to others and to spiritual values.

Young people suffer as a consequence of the social pressure to pursue narrow pleasures. They are discouraged from engaging in the effort and sacrifice necessary to contribute to the true benefit of others and themselves. They are dissuaded from giving themselves unselfishly to others, and as a result, they surrender their opportunity to find deep and stable happiness.

Unfortunately, young people are easily led to believe that love means using others for one's own pleasure, instead of giving oneself wholly and unselfishly to another and working for his or her benefit. The failure to recognize that other people are just as deserving as oneself leads to loneliness, emotional insecurity and isolation. It also triggers a desperate attempt to overcome personal unhappiness by engaging in short-sighted, destructive behavior (such as overindulging in drugs, sex, violence, vanity, consumerism, success, etc.).

This brings deep suffering, which can actually produce positive consequences insofar as it stimulates young people to reconsider their behavior and search for alternative paths which are guided by consistency and thus conducive to truth, goodness and fulfillment. Having learned a hard lesson, individuals can fight against the spurious social norms which seduce people to pursue narrow pleasures. They are able to recognize the deceptive messages propagated in the media and in commerce, politics, science and technology which cultivate superfluous and perverse needs while obscuring real and deep needs. They are thus able to recognize the paradox that material success, when pursued as an end in itself, decreases human fulfillment and quality of life and produces such dysfunctional outcomes as loneliness, mental illness, suicide, drug and other addictions, family breakdown, violence, child abuse, etc.

The significance of the kinds of success and pleasure which are derived from "enlightened self-interest" pale in comparison to the immensity of time, eternity and the whole of reality of which human beings are part. Spurious consistency tries to disguise this fact and pretends that goals and behavior based on self-interest enjoy the timelessness of genuine consistency. For instance, spurious consistency advocates a false kind of love which ignores the duty of giving oneself unconditionally to the other; as a result, when one or both of the parties involved in a relationship (such as marriage) discovers that he or she can derive greater gratification from another relationship, that person is encouraged to abandon the existing relationship. Enlightened self-interest thus encourages fidelity, but insofar as it maximizes gratification. It does not acknowledge the value and duty of unconditional commitment, nor does it recognize the duty and responsibility to be consistent with one's promises and declarations. It breaks down social relations and reduces people to isolated, opposed interests. As such, it prevents people from pursuing the higher goals which reflect sound interests and which are compatible with the good of all. By pursuing higher goals, people may learn to cooperate and truly love one another; they may learn how to reject egoism and to stop using and exploiting others (and themselves), with all the destructive consequences that brings.

The tendency to glorify enlightened self-interest not only occurs in the United States but also, in varying degrees, in other societies. Many of these imitators seem to be dazzled by the material success of the United States and, more generally, the First World. This book warns against the tendency on the part of First and Third World countries to uncritically adopt these models. It argues that behavior motivated by self-interest and

based on the assumption that anything that brings pleasure and gratification is good will lead to failure and unhappiness.³² In fact, pleasure and gratification need to be subordinated to consistency in order to produce real happiness. Self-interest is never enlightened, it is only illuminated by a false light. The true light appears when one treats other people's interests with the same respect as one's own. All interests can and should be made compatible with the whole of reality, which ensures that everyone and everything deserves love and goodness. If behavior is not oriented in this way, it will only lead to deep dissatisfaction and cruel frustration.

b. Genuine love for oneself and others

1) Respect for reality

Respect for reality is the source of genuine love for others and for oneself, as required by consistency. The primary focus of individuals should be toward reality. By employing their capacity for consistency, individuals are motivated to know, love and contribute to reality. They discover that they are part of reality, just as all other beings are, and that this gives them value. As parts of reality, individuals deserve to be loved, but because reality also encompasses all other people, individuals must love others, working for their benefit and fulfillment. When conditioned upon respect for reality and unity, self-interest and love for oneself become genuine and sound. Love for others and for oneself are applications of the guiding principle that everything encompassed by unity –that is, everything that exists– deserves to be loved. First comes respect for reality, then love for others and oneself.

Respect for reality requires, rather than forbids, a special love for oneself and for those people close to oneself. Indeed, individuals have special responsibilities toward those who depend on them and whom they depend upon, such as family, friends, etc. This kind of special love is quite different from love that is guided by unmastered impulses, hedonism, selfishness or the desire for self-gratification, even at the expense of others. The latter kind of love displays a profound disrespect for reality and cannot be justified as genuine love. All individuals have the responsibility of loving all human beings, since each and every person is a part of reality and is linked to the rest by integrative unity. The human capacity for consistency teaches people to appreciate and respect truth and reality and, in doing so, teaches people how to treat others with the love and compassion they deserve.

2) Inserting oneself within reality

Human beings function as sources of inspiration for one another by sharing habits of thought, will, feeling and action. These shared habits become social norms transmitted through interaction, communication and creative decisions. People build their self-image and physical and spiritual sensibility on the basis of the social norms they hold and others close to them hold. By sharing social norms, people learn to appreciate the value, dignity and worth of others and themselves. This leads them to rejoice in other people's happiness and fulfillment and to share sufferings and problems. This occurs with greater intensity when it affects individuals themselves or others close to them. As a result, people are motivated to forego the gratifications offered by impulses in order to contribute to the greater fulfillment of others and themselves. They are prompted to dedicate themselves completely to this end, striving and sacrificing in order to read and heed the messages received from reality (rewards and punishments).

People begin the process of inserting themselves within reality by perceiving reality as an all-encompassing framework in which each and every part is integrated and connected by unity. Simultaneously, individuals are called upon to adhere to reality and to use consistency as their central criterion for assessing and evaluating alternative decisions and actions. By referring to the overarching framework of reality, people discover themselves and learn how to insert and evaluate themselves, building an appropriate sense of self.

The self is the being for whom we bear the greatest responsibility. It is also the self which freely exercises this responsibility. By sharing ourselves with others, we help other people and other people help us in a reciprocal process of adopting the traits of others by sharing regularly repeated behaviors, which I call social norms.

Each person tends to behave as others do, since we know that we act as part of a whole, group or system, and we desire this. We contribute to groups which have a dynamic reality of their own and which build and give life. We build the self together with others, in a shared task which is performed by exercising people's capacity for consistency. We cooperate in this task through communication and interaction.

Our capacity for consistency teaches us that the self is an object, just as other people and things are;³³ all belong to reality, which integrates all objects and beings through unity. This allows people to recognize truth and to insert themselves into their proper place within the system of reality.

In this way individuals know, identify, define and characterize themselves and others in a joint, shared and interdependent process. Our relationship with ourselves is certainly more direct and stronger than our relationship with others, but both types of relations are relations with knowable beings, who deserve to be loved and whose true interests should be promoted. We act together with others in knowing, loving, feeling and doing. Through this joint action, we influence others and others influence us in terms of the orientation toward consistency, encouraging genuine consistency and contributing to fulfillment or promoting the opposite.

An individual's self is the point of his or her insertion into the system of reality. At the moment and to the extent that individuals disconnect themselves from this system, giving autonomy to impulses and fragments which fail to respect the system to which they belong, people lose the opportunity to freely contribute to the fulfillment of the system, of others, and of themselves. By attempting to rely on themselves, they are left without a firm foundation. Not only do they lose this vital source of support, they continue to depend on reality despite their efforts to pretend otherwise.

3) Freely identifying with the "widened self" and "interest", and the perspective of unity

A decision is free to the extent that it considers how various alternatives conform to the wider system of reality, which is the standard for determining validity and goodness. Such a perspective reveals that concern for others and for moral laws and principles, rather than being a weakness (as the model of economic exchange contends) is actually a strength. By exercising their capacity for consistency, the individuals who form part of reality are able to know and love unity (which integrates and gives meaning to all beings) and are able to decide and act accordingly.³⁴

Love and goodness are attributes of reality which stem from integrative unity and should be extended to all beings, by virtue of their integration within reality. This requires people to desire and contribute to the welfare of others and to feel other people's pain and suffering as their own. It calls on people to see, feel, desire and act from the perspective of unity which integrates and underlies everything. This, in turn, means that individuals must not focus narrowly on themselves but must look more broadly at the system of reality and unity founding it.

These function as the “widened self,” the appropriate source of reference for individuals adopting the perspective of integrative unity and taking its side, making its cause their own.³⁵

Individuals’ self-interest and motivation is not limited to satisfying their ego and impulses. The free exercise of the capacity for consistency prompts people to embrace the whole of reality and to base their motives, decisions and actions on the decision to adhere to reality by respecting and loving all beings within it and contributing to their fulfillment. Through this “widened interest,” people are prompted to think and feel from the perspective of others.³⁶ Moreover, they are inspired to think and feel from the perspective of all-encompassing unity. They adjust their feelings and desires so that they correspond to the global system of reality, sharing the interests and concerns of other individuals and escaping the narrow prison of egoism.³⁷

Individuals freely express their concern for truth and goodness by choosing to take sides with the very deep and stable force of consistency, rising above egoism and narrow, selfish interests and working for the interests of others and the common good.³⁸ This involves recognizing that other beings deserve to be respected, loved and benefitted as much as any individual does, since all beings form part of reality and are integrated into this harmonious system through unity. This recognition is the product of unrestricted consistency, which encourages individuals to synthesize all the integrations they perform in various realms in an effort to emulate integrative unity.³⁹ Unity places each being in relation to the rest and produces an orientation toward reality as a whole.

Unity provides a context for the deepest part of oneself, starting with being itself. It leads people to internalize the external world and externalize their internal world, integrating each in the search for truth, goodness and virtue. This integrative task takes away any time, energy or inclination to imagine or think in egotistic terms or in terms of personal gain. Indeed, when people do engage in inconsistencies, they suffer deep discomfort.⁴⁰ This reminds individuals the need to master their impulses and appetites in order to serve higher principles and norms, contributing to the balanced fulfillment of others, themselves and reality as a whole.

4) The value of self-interest and competitiveness

Self-interest and competitiveness are valuable only if they are subordinated to higher values. When competitive behavior is constructively organized and guided by consistency and spiritual and

moral values, then it can have a beneficial effect and contribute to human fulfillment. In order to be sound, self-interested behavior must also be guided by consistency and consider its implications for the whole of reality.

5) Adherence to reality, fulfillment and happiness; inseparable aspects

People exhibit various degrees of self-interest and interest in reality over time, just as different individuals display different tendencies toward one or the other. All individuals, however, are called upon to adhere to reality by striving to see, feel, love and act from the perspective of unity, which integrates all beings into reality. Such a perspective neither privileges nor neglects certain parts. It does not attach undue importance to the self but rather considers how the self fits with others and the rest of reality. In order to discover which behaviors are truly disinterested and which are egoistic, people cannot simply rely on their own personal, uncontrolled interpretation of facts or on the false attribution of scientific value based on quantitative data.⁴¹ Conjectures and interpretations must be inserted into the system of reality through rigorous controls. Behavior which seems to be good may not be, if it is not motivated by adherence to reality, which includes love for others as well as oneself.

Individuals derive satisfaction from good behavior only to the extent that their actions are motivated by good ends.⁴² Individuals cannot derive genuine satisfaction from a good act unless it is motivated by the desire to serve goodness for its own sake. Happiness is an aspect of the act of knowing, enjoying, adhering and dedicating oneself to reality. This involves devoting oneself with respect and love to reality, truth and goodness, according to the ethics of consistency. Happiness does not occur outside this exercise of consistency. When individuals pursue happiness as an end in itself and separate the pursuit of happiness from its proper foundation in the exercise of consistency, they arbitrarily separate one aspect from the whole where it belongs.

Happiness derives from pursuing high ends, considering the intrinsic worth of values and trusting in their satisfaction. It does not derive from pursuing happiness as an end. "Arts were invented, sciences cultivated, laws ordered and societies modeled" not for the attainment of happiness, as David Hume contends, but rather in order to serve reality, truth and goodness.⁴³ Human arts, sciences and other creations are valuable insofar as they are made to serve integrative unity, which is the basis of reality, thus enabling them to promote human fulfillment and contribute to the

genuine happiness of each person within it. Happiness is a feeling of achievement which occurs when individuals contribute to and witness the fulfillment of reality, truth and goodness to which they adhere. It is an aspect of consistent behavior. Happiness is one more aspect of the unique human capacity for consistency and the consequence of the other behaviors deriving from this capacity. Thus free adherence to consistency is linked to happiness.⁴⁴

The consistency model contrasts with the position forwarded by Benedict de Spinoza that "in no case do we strive for, wish for, long for, or desire anything, because we deem it to be good, but on the other hand we deem a thing to be good, because we strive for it, wish for it, long for it, or desire it."⁴⁵ Human beings have the capacity to evaluate reality, thanks to their ability to recognize that everything is integrated by unity. When human beings realize this ability, they are naturally motivated to adhere to reality. This brings them the type of genuine satisfaction which derives from witnessing and contributing to the fulfillment of reality.

Adherence to reality and joy at the fulfillment of reality are inseparable aspects of the same unique act and are harmoniously integrated within this act. The satisfaction deriving from the fulfillment of something other than reality is bound to be ephemeral. In the case of physical appetites, the cause of desire and satisfaction is in the organic mechanisms generating pain and pleasure according to the fulfillment or unfulfillment of vital functions. The object of knowledge and free human decision and the foundation for true satisfaction and happiness lie in the free exercise of human beings' capacity for consistency. This is the capacity of relating to variety in the way in which integrative unity does, in one's thoughts, desires, feelings and actions. Spurious motivation occurs when people fail to adhere to reality by privileging a mere fragment and ignoring other aspects; in doing so, people give in to impulses and to immediate gratification, spurning unity in the process. They close their eyes to unity and reality, failing to respect all aspects and relations of reality. Fragments are treated as if they embodied all the meaning and value of the whole, that is, they are treated as if they could replace unity which in fact integrates all beings. This prevents individuals from freely choosing decisions and actions which contribute to the fulfillment of individuals and reality.

6) The proper place of impulses and self-interest

Self-interest derives, as does interest for others, from the application of individuals' capacity for consistency and is shaped by individuals'

decision to freely adhere to reality and integrative unity –or not–. To the extent that an individual's behavior derives from spurious consistency, that individual has mistakenly chosen self-interest as the ultimate end. To the extent that an individual's behavior derives from genuine consistency, the individual has correctly chosen to use self-interest to serve others as well as him or herself. In the latter case, individuals are not motivated to engage in sound behavior in order to reap better rewards for themselves (eg. giving something valuable to someone else in order to obtain something more valuable in return), but do so because of the intrinsic value of the sound behavior (e.g. giving to others for their benefit). This is the *raison d'être* of individuals and of objects under their control.⁴⁶ This book posits that interests derive from values, which can derive from genuine or spurious consistency. The latter can lead to all types of negative consequences.⁴⁷

Unrestricted consistency leads toward sound interests and values, showing people how to place the self in proper perspective. It induces people to serve others as well as themselves by considering reality as a whole. Spurious consistency, on the other hand, gives false prominence to ego and impulses, treating them as ends, authorities and judges, with all kinds of arbitrary privileges. The type of motivations deriving from spurious consistency correspond to those predicted by the model of economic exchange which is based on the presumption of narrow self-interest. But human beings are also motivated by considerations of justice, honesty, truth and equity, which derive from the exercise of genuine consistency. In fact, this latter type of motivation inspires practically all individuals –in various degrees–, leading them to contribute to human fulfillment and an improved quality of life.

Individuals are primarily responsible for contributing to their own fulfillment and that of others. But self-interest at the expense of others is self-interest which does not assume responsibility for reality. It is spurious and even harms the self. This causes people to fail to cooperate with others; it also leads to self-destruction, as individuals fail to adopt a proper perspective toward their possessions or acquisitions, refusing to see their role within the wider system to which they belong. When this occurs, individuals' actions contradict –rather than complement– each other, and their pursuit of self-interest fails to harmonize with the interests of others and the whole.⁴⁸ Some authors contend that the “passion for gain” is the key to human progress, arguing that egoism can be made to magically serve the common good, even if it is not harmoniously inserted into the reality where it belongs.⁴⁹ In fact it is passion for truth, goodness, justice and ethics, that is, consistency, that leads to human advancement.

Paradoxically, individuals' self-interest is better served when people devote themselves to serving the common good. The only genuine and legitimate form of self-interest strives to respect the individual's insertion into the whole of reality rather than vainly striving to rise above it. This gives significance to sacrifices for the sake of others and oneself.

7) Sound reciprocity

Sound reciprocity causes people to be grateful for what they have received and to help those who have helped them. Sound reciprocity does not seek to revenge wrongs, since this type of reciprocity not only results in harm for the offenders but also for the offended. Sound reciprocity is directed toward unity and reality, from which individuals receive everything and to which they all belong. Even those who harm others are always welcome to join reality and rehabilitate themselves. Reality fulfills itself through the fulfillment of all its beings. Reciprocity toward reality therefore requires individuals to help others, even those who harm or hate them. Punishments for these offenders should be aimed at educating them and encouraging them to mend their ways in order to avoid negative consequences for themselves (as well as others). In this way, aggressiveness is met with love and forgiveness. Sound reciprocity therefore differs significantly from narrow self-interest, which agrees to give favors in order to receive favors in return.⁵⁰ Instead, sound reciprocity gives without expecting anything in return and gives to those who cannot reciprocate (e.g. to the mentally ill, the poor, the old, etc.). Individuals already receive everything they need from unity and reality, so that compensation from others is superfluous. Every person is invited to freely contribute to the harmonious fulfillment of reality and of all individuals and beings within it, in a joint task. The greater benefit to individuals is their exercise of genuine consistency, which is stimulated by learning from the lessons of reality, from its sufferings and joys. This excludes both aggressive, angry punishment and complacent softness.

d. Disinterestedness, sacrifice, humility

1) Unconditional love, human fulfillment, shared happiness

Consistency leads people to give priority to spiritual, interpersonal and family values, encouraging them to place these values above materialism and egoism. Consistency inspires people to act for the benefit of others as well as themselves based on the recognition that all people

are equally deserving. As a result, people are motivated to identify with the needs and goals of others, contributing to their fulfillment, and treating other people with respect and love through constructive communication and cooperation. Individuals learn to place themselves in other people's positions, thereby fostering respect and love for others as well as themselves.⁵¹

The modern emphasis on material and economic factors, on the other hand, prompts people to neglect consistency and spiritual values and discourages them from giving themselves unconditionally to others (and even to themselves). When material and economic factors are inflated into primary goals, people fail to give without expecting anything in exchange; their actions are motivated by the desire to gratify impulses, caprices and ego.

Strong interpersonal relations are considered to be detrimental since they distract individuals from devoting all their energies and resources toward material goals, so that there is a trend to prefer "weak ties" among individuals rather than "strong ties" to close friends in the belief that this will favor economic achievements.⁵² Consistency, in contrast, requires people to respect reality and all individuals within it, treating each according to his or her merits and working for the welfare of all. Consistency prompts people to share their joys and sorrows.⁵³ It also requires unconditional, genuine love.⁵⁴ This is a free action and the source of ethical law. It produces respect and love for oneself and for others in addition to the awareness that all people are valuable and necessary for human fulfillment.

The only way to truly serve one's genuine self-interest and achieve true fulfillment and happiness is to concern oneself with reality and, consequently, with all human beings. Individuals must avoid the trap of egoism and resist impulses and caprices, and they must learn not to condition charitable actions upon expectations of reciprocity and personal gratification. Individuals must not consider themselves the center of the world but must come to see themselves as highly dignified parts of reality who deserve love just as other individuals do. Genuine love is genuinely interested in others (and in oneself), identifying with them, sharing with them, and giving oneself for their benefit without consideration of personal satisfaction.⁵⁵ Genuine love works on behalf of the welfare, fulfillment and "fitness" of others and oneself, in a mutual process of reciprocal reinforcement.⁵⁶ Contributing to the fulfillment of others is an essential component of one's own fulfillment, just as other people contribute to one's own fulfillment as part of their own fulfillment. Actually, this shared process of mutual support for the fulfillment of one

another occurs as the product of a joint effort to exercise genuine consistency, unconditional giving and genuine love.

In non-rational beings, physical laws, instinct and impulses contribute to the fitness of the whole and of each being. In human beings, the capacity for consistency allows individuals to contribute to their own fulfillment in both physical and spiritual or moral dimensions. Human beings need to interact with others. When human beings strive to discover the deep meaning underneath these interactions, they are inclined to dedicate themselves to reality and to treat all individuals (including themselves) according to their dignity and merits, according to the position of each being within the whole of reality, as dictated by its relation to the rest and to unity presiding over everything. Self-interest is legitimate when it is part of a general interest for others and for reality. This –not egoism or dependence on impulses– is what produces fulfillment, on physical, biological, psychological, cultural, social and spiritual levels. Self-interest, impulses and social influences are legitimate only when they are compatible with the fulfillment of all people and reality as a whole, with which individuals identify themselves. If self-interest is allowed to degenerate into egoism, impulses are not mastered and influences become caprices, they divert people from the proper task of loving others, reality and themselves. People must learn to look at themselves and others from the perspective of integrative unity, as parts of a common system based on unity, which provides everyone and everything with existence, legitimacy, worth and meaning.

Happiness refers to the state of satisfaction which occurs when individuals use their capacity for consistency to recognize the harmonious system of beings and contribute toward its fulfillment by adhering to reality. True happiness can only be found through such an experience. Searching for happiness through other means inevitably leads to frustration. This occurs, for example, when people seek fleeting satisfaction through hedonistic and impulsive behaviors instead of engaging in the necessary and thoughtful sacrifices required in order to contribute to the fulfillment of reality and all its parts, as required by consistency.

2) Subordinating impulses, self-interest, competition and the struggle for excellence to consistency

Consistency does not completely reject self-interest, appetites or impulses. It does, however, demand that individuals do not accept these complacently but rather use them in such a way as to contribute to the

fulfillment of others as well as themselves. Similarly, competition and the struggle for excellence can be made compatible with consistency so long as these motivations do not encourage an unhealthy desire to surpass others, but rather help people to better contribute to the fulfillment of others and themselves. Consistent competition stimulates everybody to engage in efforts to advance in excellence, quality and reliability and, as such, strengthens family ties and ethical and spiritual values. It builds sound networks with other individuals who are receptive to sound messages, thereby building sound reference groups which may serve as models for replacing unsound or confusing messages.

3) Giving oneself completely and unconditionally

Love, friendship, joy, peace, piety, virtue and morality are genuine to the extent that they derive from giving oneself completely and unconditionally, practicing unrestricted consistency and adhering to unity, reality and beings. They are not genuine if they are part of a struggle for personal gain and are used to satisfy narrow, selfish appetites and impulses (such as the desire for pleasure, power, money, prestige, etc.). If these values are guided by spurious consistency, they will neglect the wider context and seek to replace integrative unity with ego and caprices.

Non-rational creatures, including plants and animals, blindly follow instincts and natural laws, even to the point of sacrificing their lives for the sake of themselves and others. Thus organic death serves as part of a natural cycle which allows for the continuity of the species, in a continuous chain of existence. Human beings may engage in similar behavior, but their actions are the result of conscious and free decisions due to the human capacity for consistency. This allows people to recognize the greater purpose of communicating with and giving to others as a consequence of integrative unity, which provides the basis for the value, dignity and worth of each being, including each human being. It leads them to die in order to give life (see below B.2 K).

4) Concentrated efforts on behalf of consistent goals

Top artists, scientists, athletes and other individuals who excel in their fields tend to concentrate intensely on their tasks, dedicating themselves completely to their work and expending considerable effort and sacrifice for the sake of beauty, truth and progress. This is reflected, for example, in the facial expressions of pianists or orchestra conductors as they

concentrate on their music and visually demonstrate the supplication, passion, pain and devotion which they bring to their art. This also applies to scientists, businessmen, saints and heroes, whose concentration on the task at hand reveals admirable focus.

This contrasts with the preoccupation of vain, superficial individuals to appear beautiful, intelligent or powerful. When individuals are not focused on tasks which serve greater purposes by contributing to the fulfillment of reality and humanity, their use of consistency is bound to be spurious and to lead to widespread failure. Their talents and efforts will be wasted as they succumb to excesses of vanity, pride, hedonism, drug abuse, sexual promiscuity or violence.

5) Genuine love and adherence to unity; vs. manipulation and exploitation

Genuine love for oneself and others derives from adhering to unity, which integrates all beings and bestows value and dignity on all of them. Adherence to unity leads people to love others and themselves in accordance with the proper place assigned to each being by integrative unity.

Failure to adhere to unity, on the other hand, prevents people from loving themselves and others in a genuine, appropriate manner. By searching for the all-encompassing system of reality which awards a unique and valuable role to each and every being, human beings learn how to judge whether behaviors (beliefs, desires, feelings, decisions and actions) are appropriate from the perspective of integrative unity – consistency – rather than allowing impulses and short-term considerations to determine their behavior.

The image of love as commonly portrayed in the media and propagated by social norms stresses domination and exploitation of individuals for the sake of gratifying ego and sexual appetites. Love is misconstrued as manipulation of others, which is the opposite of genuine love, since the latter requires people to give themselves to others out of genuine concern for their benefit and to respect the dignity and worth of every living creature.

The worth of human beings is especially important to recognize and is based on the shared ability to relate to integrative unity through the human capacity for consistency. Individuals bear greatest responsibility toward themselves and toward those who most depend upon them, such as their family, relatives, colleagues, cohorts, etc. This greater responsibility derives from the fact that individuals' decisions and actions

are more strongly influenced by and have a greater impact (whether for good or bad) on those closest to them. For this reason, nature has developed in people a special sensibility which motivates them to fulfill their responsibilities and devote themselves to others.

Sacrifice, and even death, are means for contributing to others. Each being flourishes and decays in the chain of life, receiving life from the past and giving life to the future. In the physical realm, giving oneself implies transformation without permanent identity; on the spiritual level, it involves adding without losing one's identity. If individuals do not contribute freely, reality finds roads to compensate for this. Reality as a whole will inevitably prevail, although certain individuals may lose the opportunity to freely contribute to its fulfillment. Time, however, creates opportunities for repentance and pardon and erases bitterness and resentment (toward others or oneself).

3. Positive attitude toward reality and oneself

a. Respect for the environment, sorcerer's apprentice; lessons of reality.

Respect for the environment includes an effort to respect all aspects and relations within reality and to reinforce the underlying harmony of nature instead of disturbing it. Respect for the environment requires knowledge of and respect for the laws which unity impresses upon variety. Individuals are sometimes bewildered by the power they believe they have and try to manipulate their own bodies, feelings, thoughts and desires, as well as their environment (physical, biological, social, cultural, etc.). In doing so, they display a lack of respect for the laws of reality or nature, which are derived from integrative unity. They easily fall into the trap of the sorcerer's apprentice, conjuring up forces which they cannot control and therefore obtaining results contrary to their real needs, fulfillment and aspirations. In short, people become prisoners of the forces they unleash and think they can control. Reality punishes them, but these hard lessons represent an opportunity for people to recognize and correct their errors. If people fail to recognize and correct the cause of their misfortune, they only aggravate the situation. By merely treating the symptoms, individuals fail to respect the wisdom of reality, which manages infinite aspects and relations across time and space; they try to find a substitute for reality, but in the end waste their opportunities and resources, leading to failures and frustrations.

b. Self-image and one's image of reality, system and causality

Insofar as the mind is the "eye" of the spirit, individuals' actions are generally guided by their thoughts, which contain images of themselves and of reality. Individuals develop images and conceptions of reality and of their positions in it which are linked to the system of components integrated by unity through interdependent, causal links or relations. Individuals' decisions, actions and the influences which they causally produce in reality are conditioned by such images.⁵⁷

Thoughts (self-images and images of reality) influence decisions, behaviors, social norms and the environment and are, in turn, influenced by them in an ongoing, reciprocal process. Actions reinforce thoughts, and both actions and thoughts reinforce (and are reinforced by) the environment. This reciprocal process is sustained by free decision-making and by the exercise of consistency (genuine or spurious), which affects the process of social norming, i. e., the creation and modification of regularly shared and repeated behaviors known as social norms.

Decisions, images and behaviors reinforce each other. Decisions which are characterized by genuine consistency lead to consistent images, which then reinforce consistent decision-making. Human beings' ability to freely decide allows them to adopt true and functional images –or the opposite– depending on individuals' ultimate choice for or against genuine consistency. This choice is an indivisible act which includes cognitive, volitional, emotional and behavioral aspects.

This systemic process has many implications. First, individuals wield causal influence over themselves and over their more immediate environment. They wield more indirect influence over people and events which are somewhat more removed from them and therefore less dependent. Simultaneously, individuals are themselves subject to external influences. Both types of influences –those exercised and those experienced– may be critically analyzed in order to optimize them.

Second, individuals increase their freedom and efficacy and improve their contribution to fulfillment by exercising genuine consistency. This requires people to adjust their self-image as well as their image of others and of the relations which exist among living beings so that these conform more closely to reality. Consistency allows people to distinguish what is possible, desirable and proper from what is not, and it also enables people to choose to adhere to the former rather than the latter.

Third, the exercise of unrestricted consistency teaches people to believe in themselves and in their own capacity for consistency, that is, in their freedom to choose to exercise this capacity in an unrestricted fashion. The exercise of unrestricted consistency also teaches people to

recognize the systemic, inter-related quality of reality and its invincible capacity for self-fulfillment. The exercise of unrestricted consistency therefore permits people to contribute to their own fulfillment and that of others and reality. If people fail to believe in themselves and in reality, they are unable to place their thoughts and actions in the proper perspective and mistakenly place their trust in fragments instead of the whole of reality. In this case, people succumb to the attraction of impulses and ephemeral concerns. They avoid the effort of considering all aspects and relations of reality and fail to consider the long-term, ultimate implications of alternative ideas and actions. Their distorted vision of reality brings them failure and frustration.

Fourth, faith in reality and unity and, consequently, in oneself is a proper, realistic perspective which allows people to rise above ephemeral concerns and impulses. Such a perspective prevents people from giving undue attention to partial considerations. Faith in reality and oneself is supported by sound social norms which encourage individuals to trust in the inexorable self-fulfilling capacity of reality and which inspire them to believe in their own genuine and free capacity for consistency. Sound social norms teach people to trust in their decision to exercise genuine consistency and provide a realistic vision of the personal resources they have available to do so; sound norms furthermore teach people how to use their resources in a genuinely consistent manner. If, on the other hand, individuals do not have faith in reality or themselves and if the social norms they use and share reinforce such a negative perspective, this leads to failure. In this case, people narrow their perception of what is real and desirable to fragments, impulses or caprices arbitrarily chosen and divorced from reality.

Fifth, cognitive, volitional, affective and behavioral components act jointly, so that an individual's thoughts, desires, emotions and actions all tend to either embrace reality and unity or reject them. The nature of individuals' influence over others and themselves varies accordingly, exerting a constructive influence when reality and unity are embraced and a destructive influence when they are rejected.

Sixth, people's image of themselves and their environment defines for them what is possible. If they believe they are unable to do something or that the environment prevents them from doing something, they will not attempt to do it. Impossibility in the mind turns into impossibility in action. If individuals believe that it is impossible to free themselves from the influence of impulses, they will permit their impulses to control them. This reveals a lack of faith in reality and in unity integrating it, as well as a lack of trust in oneself, so that individuals do not focus on

the whole of reality but on narrow fragments instead. In order to counteract the attraction of impulses, individuals must turn to genuine consistency, which allows them to subordinate impulses to the wider system of reality, according to the integration of variety by unity.

People's perception of what is desirable and proper is also defined on the basis of their images of themselves and reality. If they think that something has favorable effects in terms of fulfillment (for individuals and reality), they consider it to be desirable and proper. When people possess consistent images of themselves and reality, they realize that the net effect of an action or choice derives from the whole chain of implications—short-term, long-term and ultimate—which the action or choice has on all individuals, beings and reality. Such a realization allows people to recognize relations deriving from integrative unity and compatible with the underlying harmony among all living beings.

Seventh, the choice for genuine or spurious consistency is always imperfect. As a result, people constantly need to renew their commitment to consistency in an ongoing process of effort and sacrifice in order to increase the degree of genuine consistency which characterizes their choices and behaviors. This involves increasingly focusing on integrative unity and liberating oneself from the prison of immediate concerns, fragments and impulses. By doing so, people may better consider all aspects and relations of reality, analyzing them up to their ultimate implications, and respecting and benefitting all beings. Suffering and hardship play a positive role in this mission of human fulfillment.

Eighth, the genuine or spurious exercise of consistency is not an activity of isolated individuals, but a cooperative, joint endeavor with others. To this end, individuals build and share social norms and systems through communication (including behavior, example and symbolic expression) and interaction. Each individual's self-image partially overlaps with the self-images of others and becomes part of society's collective self-image. Such self-images may predispose people to either dominate or be dominated by impulses, to serve reality integrated by unity or to remain fixated on fragments. To the extent that individuals are oriented toward reality and consistency, they see themselves as integrative parts of living and real groups, with which they interact.

Ninth, the cooperative nature of the exercise of consistency means that individuals need to critically analyze social models, reference groups, social norms and other people's influences in order to adopt, reinforce, improve and combine those which are guided by genuine consistency and reject those which are not. This applies, for instance, to the media and to commercial, political or ideological advertising; in these instances, it is

important not to misrepresent spurious behaviors as normal, natural, legitimate or desirable. Behaviors which imply subordination to hedonistic, materialistic, violent or perverse impulses should not be glorified, nor should they be condoned through complacency or complicity.

Similarly, self-mastery, virtue, self-sacrifice and righteousness should be praised rather than ridiculed. It is also necessary to critically analyze the influence which individuals have over others through their behaviors, examples and messages, in order that these behaviors may increasingly reflect genuine consistency.

Individuals are not only responsible for their own behavior but also for the behavior of others whom they influence.

c. Looking for and applying positive aspects; faith in consistency

The capacity for consistency allows people to find the positive aspects of any fragment or impulse, treating it as raw material that can be shaped to contribute to the fulfillment of all individuals and reality. Even the putrid carcass of an animal may contribute to life by fertilizing the soil for the purest flower. This does not mean, however, that something good magically arises out of destruction, but that the application of consistency allows people to transform something seemingly bad into something good. People must not only strive to find positive aspects in individuals and situations; they must also seek to relate to others and their environment with an invariably positive attitude based on respect, love and service and must identify themselves with reality and with everything positive.

By doing so, people can insert each fragment into its appropriate place in reality. Trusting that all that happens is allowed by unity to serve fulfillment of reality in goodness and truth; motivates people to apply genuine consistency identifying the positive function of each fragment, being or event; and supporting and reinforcing it, as a part of the harmonious symphony or reality.

It is also necessary for people to be alert to negative aspects and search for the point of balance in reality.⁵⁸ In this way, problems can be solved in a balanced fashion. Individuals' ability or inability to achieve such solutions depends upon their vision of themselves and of the world, since these images have self-fulfilling powers and create mental scenarios which lay the basis for decisions and behaviors.⁵⁹ Such visions determine whether individuals feel confident or limited. Faith in consistency (which entails faith in unity integrating everything) allows people to trust in reality and in themselves and to rise above immediate concerns, fragments and impulses.

d. Faith in oneself and in the triumph of reality

Individuals behave consistently with their self-image, not attempting what they consider to be impossible in order to avoid the costs of assumed failures, in a circle in which images, behaviors, social norms and environment reinforce each other.⁶⁰

If free decisions are inspired by genuine consistency and guided by social norms which encourage a positive self-image and visualize the triumph of reality, the circle turns virtuous and decisions produce outcomes which contribute to human fulfillment. This involves the awareness that human fulfillment does not depend on luck or accidents, but on the capacity for self-fulfillment by reality, to which people can freely contribute.⁶¹

Social scientists, leaders and other influential individuals bear a special responsibility to help others –through their words and example– to become aware of their capacity and influence, encouraging them to look at reality and obstacles from a genuinely consistent perspective which avoids excesses.⁶²

Faith in reality and in oneself is the most realistic attitude which individuals can adopt, since the final triumph of reality is the most certain fact in which they can believe. Faith in reality and in oneself allows people to avoid defeatist and conspiratorial assumptions and stimulates them to search for the positive in individuals and objects. In this way, individuals can help others achieve their maximum fruitfulness and fecundity, stimulating constructive behavior which advances the common good, justice and solidarity.

Without faith in reality and in oneself, individuals are vulnerable to simplistic explanations which avoid the true challenge of explaining facts.⁶³ They let themselves become prisoners of self-complacent impulses, and they seek to justify their conformist behavior in a spurious, unethical manner by arguing that they are not responsible for their own behavior because they are not free. Impulses then come to control people, instead of people controlling impulses. In such an event, people neglect the fundamental role of the capacity for consistency. They replace love, family, ethics and altruism with hatred, domination, exploitation, destruction and death, killing and destroying rather than sacrificing for the greater good. They contend that social, moral, religious and sexual life is governed by unmastered impulses rather than consistency.⁶⁴

Even when it seems easier to let oneself be driven by self-complacent impulses, this is a false, short-sighted approach which leads to negative outcomes, while the positive and constructive approach of controlling one's impulses is the only realistic approach capable of producing fulfillment. It is important for individuals to be aware of their capacity

for consistency so that they may overcome psychological ceilings and learn how to tame their impulses.⁶⁵ Impulses should be treated as raw material –like marble in the hands of a sculptor– which may be used to build masterpieces which reflect truth, goodness and beauty. In this way, something crude and base can be used to produce something vital and valuable. If individuals refuse to give in to the disorder of unmastered impulses, they can identify themselves with consistency and reality and learn to use all their resources (including their impulses) to promote truth, goodness and beauty. If persons believe that they are consistent, they will tend to act as such.

Impulses thus provide opportunities for subjecting oneself to the harmony of reality so long as they are made to promote human fulfillment and the fulfillment of reality through the application of consistency (leading to mastery of them).

e. Dangers in oversimplifying and generalizing

Generalizing is harmful only when it is done without systematically considering all aspects, relations and implications, so that some aspects are privileged over others. This may take the form, for example, of the so-called Matthew effect which “consists in the accruing of greater increments of recognition for particular contributions to scientists of considerable repute and the withholding of such recognition from scientists who have not yet made their mark.”⁶⁶

Generalization is reasonable only as a means of orientation, that is, when it is used to establish the probability that certain judgments may be valid. At the same time, it is vital to remember that generalization does not provide certain truth but only plausibility and that other factors need to be taken into account in order to arrive at a true judgment.

This involves actively searching for cases which do not follow the norm, i.e. exceptions to general expectations. The generalizations contained in individuals’ self-images and in their images of reality function as self-fulfilling prophecies.⁶⁷ The images contained in these generalizations may or may not fit reality (through consistency) and thus may promote the fulfillment of individuals and reality, or do the opposite.

Likewise, individuals who believe in the indirect benefits of violent change tend to avoid the use of reason or consistency, which would require them to systematically analyze what is likely to arise out of the destruction and the means, consequences and implications of violence.⁶⁸ Instead, people tend to voluntarily believe that by destroying the old, the way will be cleared for the magical fulfillment of their wishes; they place their faith in the regenerative power of destructive impulse or passions, without consistently and realistically considering the conditions for success.⁶⁹

f. Dignity of cooperating without replacing unity; with humility and sacrifice

Consistency leads to realistic humility and respect for oneself, others and the contributions of both. It admits only one firm reference point, on which everything is based: the unity which integrates reality. According to this, the road to fulfillment entails dedicating oneself to reality, to others and to oneself rather than to impulses and caprices. This requires an obedient and humble attitude, one which affirms the dignity of being able to freely cooperate with the fulfillment of reality but which does not attempt to displace or replace unity as the firm basis of consistency, which builds reality as a total system. This means that the value of any fragment, including any individual, must neither be overestimated nor underestimated.

The value of each individual and every part of reality derives from their relation to other fragments, as established by unity integrating reality. This provides the foundation for a positive and realistic image of oneself and reality, which includes the recognition of human freedom as well as human beings' dependence on the laws of reality. By recognizing the true source of value, people are able to avoid becoming obsessed with material achievements; they can learn to decide and behave in a consistent manner which promotes the principles of truth and goodness. They can take the raw material of impulses, for example, and model them according to the dictates of consistency. While this involves sacrifice, it yields important fruits not only in terms of fulfillment (one's own and that of others), but in terms of happiness as well.

g. Perspective, wisdom, peace, avoiding euphoria and despair

If individuals orient themselves toward the whole of reality, they will recognize the desirability and dignity of their particular role. This allows them to place their problems, limitations and difficulties in proper perspective, looking at them from the perspective of unity which integrates them into reality which gives them hope and trust.

The perspective of unity allows people to understand that the problems which seem to overwhelm them are actually insignificant and will be overcome by reality and therefore do not merit anxiety or stress. The perspective of unity allows people to see problems as opportunities to advance rather than as grounds for despair. All things, assets and possessions need to be considered from this perspective, so that unrealistic expectations may be avoided, along with their tendency to produce harmful fluctuations between euphoria and despair.

The proper perspective brings wisdom and peace, allowing people to enjoy what reality offers and allowing them to increase the depth, firmness, continuity and strength of their actions and convictions. This lets people improve the quality of their decision making by encouraging them to consider realistic alternatives and implications. It allows people to see humiliations and difficulties as opportunities to recognize their limitations and to work in order to overcome them. It fosters humility, flexibility and tolerance, teaching people to avoid vanity and rebelliousness against the laws of reality, especially ethical ones.

The perspective of unity thus prompts people to dedicate themselves completely to helping promote the fulfillment of reality and all its parts, encouraging them to fully employ all their resources and energies toward this end.

4. Respect for reality

a. Respect and love for oneself, others and reality

All human beings possess the capacity to relate to other living beings from the perspective of integrative unity, which permeates their thoughts, convictions, feelings and actions, all of which are inseparable aspects of the free exercise of consistency. By virtue of their position within the integrated whole of reality, all individuals deserve fulfillment, benefits and rights in accordance with their mission. By empathizing and sharing with others, people can learn to act jointly, sharing their knowledge, convictions, feelings and actions and contributing jointly to the fulfillment of all individuals and of reality. Toward this end, they open themselves to others and communicate, interact and cooperate with them. They listen with genuine interest to others (and themselves) and place themselves in other people's shoes, empathizing with them.

If people would learn to communicate and share better, they could prevent many social evils by adopting and disseminating sound social norms and systems. Social norms and systems are sound or genuinely consistent when they are based on respect for reality and for all individuals. Respect for others and self-respect are part of a broader respect for integrative unity, which provides everyone and everything with its proper place within the whole of reality. Unrestricted consistency leads people to respect everyone and to humbly consider all aspects and relations, cultivating truth and goodness and contributing to the fulfillment of all individuals.

Individuals deserve respect as integral parts of reality, as derived from integrative unity. Respect for unity and reality are the only solid basis for respecting and understanding oneself and others. Destructive actions, such as crimes, wars and violence against others and oneself, derive from lack of respect and reflect defiance against reality. This causes people to view others as threats and to act accordingly, with mistrust, resentment and hostility. Such individual attitudes have a tendency to spread to the family, workplace, neighborhoods, organizations and societies, creating vicious circles.

Respect for others and for oneself, on the other hand, spreads understanding and love and promotes harmony with reality. As such, it helps to prevent sadness and discouragement and deters the type of vicious circles which are set in motion by individuals' desperate and futile attempts to find fulfillment through vanity, materialism, ambition, hedonism, drugs, violence, envy, hatred or arrogance.

Respect for others and for oneself is inseparable from genuine love, insofar as both imply an unselfish concern for the well-being of others and a willingness to work for their benefit and fulfillment.

Respect for others leads to genuine love and inspires people to hope and work for the benefit of others.

Respect for others and genuine love are incompatible with possessiveness, domination, exploitation, envy, jealousy, tension and conflicts.

b. Dignity of consistency

The highest human dignity derives from the capacity of freely contributing to reality by recognizing and supporting the integration of variety by unity.

The capacity for consistency enables people to relate to others and to reality from the perspective of unity and to tailor their knowledge, convictions, feelings and actions accordingly.

This capacity is found in all human beings, even those who are mentally ill and even when physical, psychological or social obstacles limit its exercise.

The capacity for consistency makes it possible for people to free themselves from a narrow focus on fragments; it enables them to relate to the whole of reality through their appreciation of integrative unity.

The capacity for consistency leads individuals to deeply respect others and themselves, as well as other living beings.

5. Adhering to consistency

a. Not interfering with the call of consistency

If individuals do not interfere with the call which they receive through their capacity for consistency, they advance in those qualities which are manifestations of this capacity: goodness and truth, commitment to the fulfillment of all individuals and to the system of reality to which they belong, and deep happiness. The latter serves as a reward for fulfilling the law of our being, as well as a sign of the correctness of our behavior. The happiness obtained by exercising genuine consistency far surpasses the ephemeral pleasure offered by impulses. Consistency thus allows people to develop and adopt social norms (ethical, philosophical, scientific, technical, religious, etc.) which encourage them to use their capacities, impulses and influences as raw material for the service of human fulfillment.

b. Continual liberating inspiration of integrative unity

Integrative unity is the permanent axis of mind and heart for those who wish to adhere to it by following genuine consistency. Consistency gives meaning to life in all its myriad facets and situations. It acts to liberate people from the prison of impulses and fragments and from immediate and superficial concerns which attempt to replace integrative unity.

6. Exercising one's influence with freedom and responsibility

a. Causality time and human influence.

Unity integrates variety in an all-encompassing network of related, interdependent parts which determine and condition each other reciprocally over time. Individuals observe regularities in facts and in their sequences. This allows them to decide and act in accordance with unrestricted consistency so that they use their ability to influence people (others and themselves) and events in order to serve the purposes of human fulfillment and the fulfillment of reality. This enables people to improve the quality of their decisions, actions and lives. If people let their impulses control them and apply spurious consistency, the opposite results ensue.

Time allows people to link parts of reality along a continuum of past, present and future. It makes it possible for them to predict and control the future and to act more wisely in the present by taking lessons from the past. Time is one of the dimensions which allows people to connect parts of reality together in an order which includes both stability and change, forces which complement each other and interact in systemic fashion. Unity integrates the most remote past with the most distant future, inserting every fragment in an infinitely wide realm. Time is based on unity, which represents eternity and, as such, transcends time. Outside the realm of time, nothing remains unfulfilled, since everything is realized and fulfilled by unity. Outside the realm of time, there is no movement, stability or change; every possible movement and causal connection is realized and supported by integrative unity in the single moment of eternity.

The interdependent relations among parts of the system of reality are causal relations, which reflect the links of unity in variety. These links form the threads of marvelous tapestries which individuals help construct by exerting their influences, on the basis of their understanding of reality. The function of time is to provide human beings with the opportunity and challenge of consciously and freely contributing to the fulfillment of reality and the beings who are a part of it, in goodness and truth. In the physical realm, reality produces such results through natural laws which are blindly obeyed by non-rational beings.

b. Physical space and the responsibility for one's immediate context as well as for distant people and things

Physical space adds the material dimension to time. It, too, allows people to discover integrative unity by starting from the place where one is located. Although human beings occupy an infinitesimally small point in time and space, they are connected through unity to the unlimited range of time and space. Through their capacity for consistency, people can relate to this infinite realm of space as unity does, in knowledge, will, feeling and action. Reciprocal influences across time and space are especially evident and intensive within a person's immediate context and become increasingly weak and indirect as distance (in terms of time and space) increases. The greater the physical distance and the further away in time, the more a person's capacity for understanding, predicting, controlling and influencing decreases. Although people can increase their ability to know and influence the immensity of time and space, their ability to specifically control connections is circumscribed by the

limitations of human attention and strengths. As beings located in an extremely limited, indeed microscopic point in time and space, human beings are clearly dependent on the system of reality (integrated by unity) to which they belong. They are subject to the reciprocal influences and systemic causal relations which are characterized by fluctuations in time and space, all of which are part of the integration of variety by unity and the harmony of reality.

By providing individuals with a connection to unity, the capacity for consistency opens up the whole system of reality to human beings, even though their capacity to discover underlying links is extremely limited (as compared to the immense complexity of reality) and even though they can only advance gradually, with modest but important steps, over the endless course of time. Through their capacity for consistency, people are able to draw connections between their immediate context and the wider framework of reality. Certainly, people are better able to fully appreciate the connections within their immediate context and they have a tendency to overlook connections which are far away in time or space, but their capacity for consistency compensates for this by linking the immediate with the remote through integrative unity.

The greater connection with closer objects allows greater reciprocal knowledge and influence and consequently increases individuals' responsibility to use their freedom so as to contribute to the fulfillment of those individuals who most depend upon them and upon whom they depend the most. The organization of reality in concentric systems thus allows individuals to fulfill their mission in reality by helping to ensure harmony within their immediate context. At the same time, however, remote influences are significant and that fact places an important responsibility on individuals to behave consistently. Imagine that the decision made long ago by a primitive ancestor whether to work or rest, build or destroy, cooperate or fight could significantly affect the timing and manner of subsequent human development, such as the invention of automobiles or television (See Morgan, Lewis Henry (1877)1964, *Ancient Society*, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Univ. Press).

In fact, the choices and behaviors adopted by individuals at certain moments of time and in particular contexts have broad influences on the evolution of culture, values, ethics and personal and social life through the legacy of social norms.

Whether present generations contaminate or preserve their physical, social, cultural and ethical environments will clearly have a strong influence on future generations. This is a source of individuals' great responsibility.

c. Human freedom, decision making and consistency

Individuals contribute to the fulfillment of reality –and within it, to the fulfillment of individuals– by choosing among infinite alternatives, in a free, creative activity. The creative process of decision making shapes knowledge and science, beauty and art, human development and quality of life. These will be influenced in a sound manner to the extent that decision making is inspired by unrestricted consistency, which situates individuals' efforts within the framework of reality and orients them toward serving the fulfillment of individuals and reality. If decision making is characterized by spurious consistency, advances will be hindered and efforts will be wasted and will become self-defeating.

d. Freedom and submission to reality and unity

Paradoxically, human freedom derives from submission to unity and its laws. Freedom is lost when human beings defy reality, unity and their laws, replacing them with impulses and fragments. Adherence to reality inspires people to use all their energies and resources in order to contribute to fulfillment, overcoming obstacles and using them as raw material for advancement. Relaxing efforts and resting on one's achievements reduces individuals' ability to contribute and hence reduces their freedom.

e. Free adaptation to reality, natural laws and causality

The process of adaptation, which integrates various parts of reality, takes millions of years to produce various physical and organic configurations and various species and varieties.⁷⁰ When individuals freely adapt to reality, they choose to contribute to the fulfillment of individuals and reality, discovering the hidden links and roads in reality and respecting them. This is the path of building, freely supporting life and preserving it. It entails creating and fulfilling reciprocal adaptations.⁷¹ The mutual compatibility among various parts of reality is supported by free human participation. Variations in nature give place to new combinations, and human intervention supports those variations and combinations which are aimed at contributing to the fulfillment of reality and individuals, to the extent that it is inspired by genuine consistency.

Systems can be considered to have adapted from former systems or former stages, with their components transformed. The system or stage which emerges or survives depends on its compatibility with nature, through physical and organic laws, instincts, conditioned reflexes, etc.⁷²

It also depends on the free intervention of human beings, thanks to their capacity for consistency. Consistency leads to adaptations of compatibility and causality through the application of the laws of reality, with or without the free participation and intervention of human beings.

f. Using each person's quota of influence; reading reality's messages, pleasure and pain

If individuals observe that their actions lead to failure, they may infer that there is something wrong and try to correct it. If their actions produce positive results that promote fulfillment, they may infer that they are on the right road. Both inferences are interpretations of the messages from reality, made possible through the capacity for consistency, which allows people to better understand and contribute to the fulfillment of individuals and reality.

By improving their knowledge and understanding of reality, people can dedicate their efforts and labors toward benefitting all individuals – others and themselves– and reality as a whole. If, on the other hand, their efforts are characterized by spurious rather than genuine consistency, they are likely to do harm to others and themselves, in both their personal or in their social and public lives.⁷³

Individuals are not only responsible for themselves and society, but also for future generations, starting with their own children, who develop life-long dispositions and habits, including sound or unsound social norms and models, under the influence of their family.⁷⁴

Moreover, individuals are crucial models for themselves. Pain and satisfaction, when analyzed from the perspective of genuine consistency which considers the whole system of reality, serve as educational messages from reality and function as guides to the proper exercise of responsibility. Pain and satisfaction mainly derive from our own behavior and help us to improve it.⁷⁵

The proper interpretation of pain and pleasure helps us to improve the quality of our decision making and stimulates us to engage in a tireless effort to build ever-better strategies for human and social development and fulfillment.

The proper interpretation of pain and pleasure thus helps us to embrace consistency and counteracts the attraction of seemingly easy short-cuts and unmastered impulses. Toward this end, individuals need to critically evaluate and constructively question their own behaviors and social norms and those of others so their weaknesses can be recognized and they can be improved.⁷⁶

B. Roads for Implementing Consistency

1. Mastery of impulses and appetites

a. Mastering impulses through consistency, opportunities; avoiding short-cuts and slavery; balance; harmony

Impulses are valuable to the extent that they serve consistency.⁷⁷ They provide people with the opportunity to practice self-discipline and self-mastery, in the same way as any problem provides an opportunity to practice solutions. For instance, a dirty house provides an opportunity to practice cleaning, just as ignorance or sickness provide opportunities to practice education and medicine. By subordinating impulses and submitting them to the higher order of unity which integrates reality, people contribute to the fulfillment of individuals and reality. The road of human advancement is paved with mastered impulses.

Impulses tempt individuals to obey them, enticing them with the promise of spurious pleasures which replace reality and defy its laws, derived from integrative unity. Consistency, on the other hand, encourages people to look beyond their narrow context and adopt a systemic approach which places impulses in proper perspective. Individuals often deceive themselves, choosing not to master impulses, and pursue immediate gratification instead. They do so because they assume that giving in to impulses offers a short-cut to satisfaction and happiness. In fact, they become prisoners of their impulses, ruled by such unhealthy motivations as envy, jealousy, avarice, greed, and lust for power, prestige or pleasure. Individuals may also become prisoners of more refined appetites, which are satisfied at the cost of sacrificing other appetites and postponing gratifications. For example, individuals may deny themselves adequate nutrition (up to the extreme of anorexia) in order to pay homage to prevailing notions of beauty and fashion. In both cases, the spurious exercise of consistency misleads and imprisons individuals.

Human fulfillment is not a question of immediate or remote returns but stems from the balanced fulfillment of all dimensions within the system of reality.⁷⁸ Creative efforts to place impulses at the service of human fulfillment include, for instance, efforts to achieve the balanced management of nutritional and environmental needs, to work for the benefit of others and to live in moderation rather than excess. Impulses must be integrated into the system of reality. If they are not, they cannot

serve the goal of contributing to the system of reality; in this case, impulses actually upset and harm individuals, interfering with their ability to contribute to the fulfillment of reality and of individuals within it. Serving reality brings the harmonious satisfaction of the needs of all individuals, preventing harms deriving from the wants of some and excesses of others.⁷⁹

b. Mastery of sexual, food and aggressive appetites; contradiction, frustration.

Sexual relations lead to procreation and responsibility for children, who need the special realm of the family to develop and fulfill themselves (they receive from parents not only biological but also social, cultural and spiritual life). Within the framework of the family, children should receive love, care and emotional support; they should learn sound models in order to share what they receive, produce or achieve, and they should learn how to face the various challenges of life. Children should also be taught how to satisfy their physical, biological, cultural, social and economic needs within a consistent, loving framework. If sexual activity does not take place as a part of the building of the family, but involves promiscuous relations, it deprives children of these essential lessons and of emotional and social support, and fosters egoism. In the latter case, genuine love is betrayed, and the impulse to engage in sexual relations is not handled in such a way as to contribute to human fulfillment but the opposite.

Modern commercial culture idealizes promiscuity, and presents domination and exploitation as love. It does not encourage people to give themselves fully and unconditionally to another or to act responsibly toward others. Yet this is central to any person's life. Although life originates in a biological process (whether through sexual relations or artificial insemination), the personal and social richness of a person's life derives from family life and from the love and support from family and friends; these are what determine a person's social norms, thoughts, knowledge, habits, values, dreams, joys, ends and achievements. It is easy to imagine how different the results would be if individuals did not receive love and were not provided with a sound foundation in ethics and virtue, based on adherence to reality and unity, with balanced respect and love for all beings, aspects and relations.

Appetites, when guided and mastered by consistency, serve life, love and human fulfillment in all its dimensions –material, social, cultural and spiritual. Sexual appetites, for example, can serve human fulfillment if both parties give themselves completely and unconditionally, contributing to the fulfillment of each other, of their children and of the

rest of society, thus responding to the deep interdependence which they freely choose. The requirement of unconditionality, which is essential for genuine love, is especially important in family relations, which constitute the most basic form of individuals' joint and social creation. Such relations provide the most benefits for the fulfillment of individuals and reality.

Sexual appetites which are not submitted to consistency lead to harmful behaviors which neglect the true emotional, spiritual and material needs of individuals and others, especially their spouses, children and other relatives. Promiscuity enslaves individuals to the tyranny of sexual impulses instead of encouraging them to consider relations with the rest of reality and to act with real love and respect for reality and for all beings within it, according to their needs and merits. Therefore promiscuity leads to destruction and frustration; it causes people to lose the opportunity to take advantage of such gifts and fully participate in the great work of reality and nature.

The satisfaction of a person's (or other animal's) basic physical needs has the function of ensuring the fulfillment and continuity of the order of life.⁸⁰ Consistency allows individuals to freely advance in that direction, with knowledge and love. If individuals do not take advantage of this opportunity, they remain stuck at the level of illusion and fiction, and their actions culminate in destruction and unfulfillment, accompanied by anxiety, frustration, irritability, aggression, confusion and lack of meaning. The capacity for consistency leads participants in sexual relations to consider their complex and delicate network of implications, including the birth of a new human being, who needs emotional security and a stable and favorable environment. The participants should also consider their mutual need to both give and receive unconditionally through genuine love, which brings meaning, security and stability to their lives. In this way, satisfaction of physical needs, including the desire for sexual relations, may be used to contribute to life and to the fulfillment of individuals and those whom they love. The resulting satisfaction is part of the harmony of reality, which they can know, love and enjoy through their capacity for consistency.

The appetite for food has meaning and functions for human fulfillment which can be appreciated by applying the capacity for consistency, thereby moving beyond the blind satisfaction of impulses. Consistency allows people to view things from a broader perspective, considering, for instance, other people's need for food, the nutritional or harmful properties of various foods (in various combinations or amounts) and food's social functions, e. g. for social intercourse and communication. If individuals' appetite for food is not placed in the proper perspective, it can be used in ways which are contrary to human fulfillment, such as the consumption

of too much or too little food, the consumption of poisonous or harmful foods, or the hoarding of food which others need.

If individuals let themselves be enslaved by their impulses, the ensuing frustration will be especially strong, causing them to engage in desperate and futile attempts to alleviate feelings of emptiness and frustration by increasing the amount or rate at which they satisfy their impulses. The capacity for consistency gives all individuals a “conscience” which does not allow them to achieve deep satisfaction outside of unity integrative of variety. By placing their faith in impulses, individuals embark on a long road of growing frustrations. This is the case with addictions to drugs, alcohol, sex, violence, food, power, money, vanity, gambling, etc. These deviations cause contradiction, disorder and destruction for individuals and those around them, with ensuing frustration and unhappiness.

The capacity for consistency elevates all impulses or appetites, such as the desire for sexual relations and food, to a level of full meaning, in which human beings freely cooperate with reality, contributing to its fulfillment by working for the fulfillment of others and dedicating their resources and energies to serving them. Individuals can either let diverse appetites dominate them, or they can choose to master their impulses by subordinating them to the goal of the fulfillment of individuals and reality. For instance, the impulse toward hostility against a common enemy can be mastered by practicing tolerance, prudence and understanding, avoiding prejudices, stereotypes, aggressions and conflicts.⁸¹ Similarly, the impulse of parents or teachers to physically punish disobedient children and students can be mastered by striving to understand, empathize and communicate with their children; parents and teachers should listen to children and explain to them that they have to be firm for the children’s benefit. This consistent strategy is more effective and more satisfying thanks to its greater success in achieving higher goals; within this framework, occasional frustrations lose significance. Obstacles should not trigger frustration or a hostile response but should be taken as an opportunity for advancement toward fulfillment and joy under the perspective of consistency. In the face of obstacles, consistency teaches people how to deal with frustration and control the tendency toward aggressiveness by opening their eyes to the whole of reality.⁸²

c. Placing fragments in their proper place; constructive sacrifices; La Pietá; dirt

A fire can produce great damage or can be channelled so as to produce great benefit and serve human fulfillment. Personal habits of self-mastery and discipline build social norms which are fundamental for human

fulfillment. If these are not cultivated, deterioration and decadence ensues. Reality's "school of hard knocks" provides a counterweight against the misleading music of success and helps prevent people from falling into the trap of hedonism, consumerism or any other response which seeks to replace the whole (and unity integrating it) with a partial fragment.

Consistency allows people to integrate fragments by creating, building and exercising genuine freedom. Within this framework, sacrifices which integrate the system of reality do not destroy but build. In this way, the pieces of marble discarded by Michelangelo as he sculpted *La Pietà* are constructive sacrifices, offered for the sake of a higher creation. Similarly, individuals sacrifice certain wants and preferences in order to strengthen their physical and spiritual health.

Dirt provides another example of the importance of putting things in their proper place.⁸³ Dirt does not need to be eliminated but merely put into its place, where it can act as fertilizer for the most pure and beautiful creations. Similarly, fragments which are out of place can be considered to be "dirt" (with its negative connotations), yet once they are put in their proper place, they can help realize the creative and productive potential of human consistency. Dirt and other fragments must be considered from a broader perspective in order to serve the whole of reality and the beings which it includes. By doing so, the position of each fragment, being, relation or aspect is treated with the respect it deserves and its relations to the rest of reality and to unity are acknowledged. If this is not done, one sinks in the abyss of unfulfillment and emptiness.

d. Contributing to fulfillment by mastering appetites

Unity ensures that there is coordination between living beings basic needs and the means available to satisfy them. Over the long expanse of time, systemic causality produces the type of organic life we observe. Appetites and impulses also influence the type of organic life that evolves. Those who obey natural laws, for example, exist and survive. For human beings, the ability to curb appetites which are potentially contradictory and unlimited enables individuals to master and guide their impulses so that these contribute to fulfillment, truth and goodness. The decision to freely and genuinely exercise the human capacity for consistency, adjusting appetites and impulses to the dictates of unity, allows individuals to modify or complement the natural course of reality. If, on the other hand, individuals allow themselves to be driven by their appetites, they will be tempted to take what does not correspond to them and will mistreat the harmonious relationships among beings and among individuals.

e. Human beings' ability to master impulses to serve consistency and human advancement

Non-rational animals are guided by instincts and blind conditioning. Their impulses are only limited by their finite energies (which sooner or later are exhausted) and by instinctive tendencies toward confrontation and cooperation. Human beings, on the other hand, can freely choose to master impulses to serve higher ends. They have the capacity to discover these ends, love them, and contribute to their realization, thereby contributing to their own fulfillment and the fulfillment of others and reality as a whole. Only human behavior is guided by considerations of ethics and morals, since only humans are capable of distinguishing existence from non-existence, truth from fiction, and goodness from evil. This allows people to build a superior spiritual and cultural order, which goes beyond impulses and immediate, material pressures, enabling people to discover meaning, adhere to it, and behave accordingly. Through their capacity for consistency, people can discover relations among beings and aspects; they can appreciate the role or position which each being occupies and help it fulfill this role by adhering and contributing to truth, goodness and the fulfillment of all beings and of reality. This is the foundation for culture, society, family, philosophy, science, method, technology, virtue, ethics and arts. These result from consistent efforts to transcend physical or immediate concerns and search for integrative unity.

f. Balanced satisfaction of appetites

For rational beings, appetites represent a message and an opportunity to respond to fragments in a way that respects integrative unity by following the laws of reality (both ethical and physical). This allows people to serve goodness and truth, at the highest possible level, and to build society, culture and all their advances. Through consistent decisions, actions and social norms, people can achieve deep satisfaction and happiness. These derive from identification with total reality, integrated by unity, and not from the mere satisfaction of immediate appetites or interests. The satisfaction that stems from exercising genuine consistency is far deeper and more stable than the gratification of impulses. As argued earlier, however, appetites and impulses are useful insofar as they function as raw material which can be shaped and given meaning and value by consistency. When appetites and impulses are controlled and satisfied in a balanced and moderate fashion, they help promote the fulfillment of reality and individuals, rather than the opposite. When people let

themselves be compulsively and obsessively driven by their appetites, they lose this opportunity. By striving for personal satisfaction and narrow self-interest, they harm themselves, other people and the rest of reality rather than benefitting them.

g. Appetites as tools for serving either genuine or spurious consistency; masters or prisoners; squandering opportunities; thirst for absolute; answers

Consistency applies to all kinds of behavior, including knowledge, convictions, feelings and actions, all of which must be adjusted to reality, as integrated by unity. This involves actively supporting and working on behalf of existence, truth and goodness. Impulses and appetites must be mastered in order to contribute to reality. Otherwise, impulses and appetites will be misused and made to serve fragments at the expense of the whole. Even fragments are thus ill served. Arrogance, vanity, hatred, jealousy, egoism and hedonism are symptoms of such a deviation.

Appetites may serve either genuine or spurious consistency. Only genuine consistency serves integrative unity, not spurious consistency. The capacity for consistency is the rewarding path which integrative unity bestows upon individuals in order that they may direct their impulses, appetites and other resources toward contributing to the fulfillment of reality and individuals, that is, toward worthy, transcendent ends.

Individuals have the freedom to decide whether to exercise genuine consistency by controlling their appetites and resources or to let themselves be controlled by their appetites and resources, thereby falling into the trap of spurious consistency, which makes them prisoners of fragments and impulses.

Spurious consistency leads to failure and frustration, although these undesirable results may prompt efforts to identify the error and correct it by exercising genuine consistency. Spurious consistency entices people to seek relief for their frustration by indulging their appetites and turning to such purported panaceas as money, power, drugs, sexual promiscuity, violence, alcohol, consumerism, etc. In fact, these pursuits only increase individuals' sense of emptiness and frustration since they offer solutions which are not grounded in reality and cannot satisfy as ultimate goals. Excessive and perverse indulgence of appetites harms individuals and others and squanders opportunities for freely contributing to reality, which will inexorably correct disorders.

Individuals must realize that only by fully and genuinely applying consistency can they truly alleviate their thirst for absolute answers and contribute to master works of human constructivity and creativity: love,

family, science, ethics, culture, education, justice and communication. Failure to follow the path of genuine consistency leads to frustration which, if properly interpreted, becomes a lesson of reality. By recognizing this, individuals can more easily resist the temptation to indulge appetites. They can begin to see the broader picture created by the system of reality, but this requires them to master and cultivate their appetites according to the laws of reality deriving from integrative unity.

2. Suffering, sacrifice and hardship

a. Needs, tensions, conflicts, problems, as opportunities for integrative exercise and constructive solutions

Conflicts and contradictions become useful when they prompt people to exercise their capacity for consistency and work to overcome them.⁸⁴ Integrative unity reconciles the seemingly contradictory aspects of reality and inexorably fulfills itself through consistency. The capacity for consistency allows people to understand, albeit in a limited way, how unity integrates and reconciles the aspects of reality; it also inspires them to adhere to unity and contribute to its work.

From this perspective, conflicts come to be seen as opportunities for this integrative exercise, transforming what otherwise appears to be contradictory and subjecting impulses to reason. Used correctly, conflicts can become productive rather than destructive; seen from the proper perspective, the seeming "cruelty" of nature is in fact genuine love.⁸⁵

Over time, tensions emerge as adjustments to the order of reality remain pending. These reveal what needs to be reconciled in order to promote the fulfillment of reality and beings within it; as such, they provide opportunities for constructive solutions.

Although the order of reality inexorably fulfills itself, maladjustments occur and tensions consequently arise when people violate the laws deriving from integrative unity. Individuals can identify these tensions through their capacity for consistency, which allows them to recognize maladjustments and to work to overcome them. Human beings thus feel dissatisfaction when confronted by maladjustments and experience satisfaction when they are overcome. This is a continuous process, since maladjustments can never be completely eliminated (although people can gradually reduce their number and importance).

Conflict and cooperation reflect both the existence of tensions and the possibility of overcoming them.⁸⁶ Through cooperation, people can arrive at solutions which reconcile and integrate elements which seem to be in

conflict. By reducing contradiction and tension, people alleviate frustration.

Human beings' mission and vocation poses the great challenge of overcoming problems – reconciling contradictions and meeting needs – through creative and constructive solutions. This calls for the exercise of genuine consistency and its application to the problems confronted by individuals.⁸⁷ Meaningful solutions are found when the shared, regularly repeated behaviors called social norms which comprise social and cultural systems correspond to the laws of reality. When social norms are guided by consistency, they lead to genuine solutions and freely contribute to the fulfillment of individuals and reality. When they are guided by spurious consistency, they lead to the opposite.

b. Lessons of reality: rewards and punishments; warnings; timely corrections; pardon; extracting good from evil; preventive critical analysis; materialism

Reality sends educational messages to individuals through punishments and rewards.⁸⁸ Even war and adversity can be taken as opportunities to build, create, give and sacrifice. Revitalization is a permanent process which is as necessary to living beings as oxygen is; it forms a part of even routinized phenomena, not only “situations of extreme stress.”⁸⁹

Despite the importance of such situations, individuals can also profit from the countless, more or less minor challenges they must face on a daily basis. Both types of stimuli provide important warnings, teaching us to work continually to prevent and overcome war and adversity. This involves sacrificing one's own life, if necessary, for the cause of truth, goodness and the fulfillment of reality and individuals; it does not, however, justify the destruction of lives and assets in order to satisfy human ambitions.⁹⁰ The punishment which follows inconsistent behavior is a result of the invincible, self-fulfilling capacity of reality, supported in unity. The destruction which individuals wreak, on the other hand, is a caprice which limits human freedom and prevents individuals from realizing their mission of contributing to the fulfillment of reality and its parts.

Pardon becomes possible when individuals stop resisting genuine consistency and freely exercise their capacity for consistency by contributing to fulfillment. This sound reaction is stimulated by the warning received from punishments and reinforcement from rewards which, interpreted through the lens of consistency, allow people to react as early as possible, preventing greater harms.⁹¹ Individuals are

responsible for contributing to the fulfillment of reality and beings, preventing their destruction. When they cannot prevent destruction, they must try to see that it leads to the greatest possible benefit; in other words, they should extract good from evil. By critically analyzing behaviors and social norms, as well as punishments and rewards, it is possible to prevent and avoid new and greater hardships.⁹² This allows people to achieve greater fulfillment and underlines the importance of performing such critical, consistent analysis as soon as possible. This allows people to freely contribute to reality and to avoid compulsive punishments. If this is not done, reality gives individuals increasingly severe blows as they lose their chance to freely contribute to fulfillment. It is therefore imperative for individuals to build an integrative framework for analyzing reality, adhering to it and contributing to it.

Delay in heeding the warnings that reality metes out to those who follow inconsistency means delay in implementing necessary corrections. Through their capacity for consistency, people are able to identify inconsistency and maladjustments (in terms of truth, goodness and fulfillment) as well as the foreseeable implications and consequences of various alternatives.

Among the consequences individuals can anticipate are the likely rewards or punishments for certain types of decisions and behavior. If individuals fail to recognize the need to correct deviations, ignoring the implications of successive blows by reality, they have to pay a high price, and they make others pay a high price as well. Deviation is in fact largely a shared behavior, as are all behaviors. The correction of a particular deviation may take years, decades, centuries and even millennia, especially when individuals and groups become closed-minded and rigid and respond only to extremely severe punishments. For instance, despite centuries of evidence of the damages caused by modern materialism, this doctrine is still accepted and is even exported to poorer countries. Communism produced damages for several decades before its errors and damages were officially recognized and the Marxist model was generally abandoned.

c. Functions of suffering

Suffering provides an opportunity to master impulses and to serve higher values, contributing to the fulfillment of individuals and reality. Suffering may be better accepted and even bring happiness if individuals remember that by giving themselves, they contribute to the fulfillment of the order of reality to which they adhere. The easy road may lead to future failures and frustrations.

d. Good use of conflicts, contradictions and impulses

Conflicts, contradictions, misfortunes and tensions are functional for human fulfillment if individuals use their capacity for consistency to overcome them, reconciling them into increasingly integrated systems. New tensions will appear, but these are simply preambles of new, fertile efforts at integration and not destructive reactions of hatred, revenge and violence.⁹³ By recognizing problems, they can be solved. As problems are successively solved, the partial solutions act as security valves which constructively alleviate tensions.⁹⁴ Conflicts and problems therefore serve fulfillment to the extent that individuals use genuine rather than spurious consistency to deal with them. Genuine consistency allows people to overcome contradictions in a gradual, realistic manner, respecting all aspects of reality and their relations, placing each impulse in its appropriate context and recognizing its relations to the rest.⁹⁵ In this way, it is possible to prevent differences and contradictions from becoming radical and unmanageable; conflicts will not lead to uncontrollable explosions derived from the pressure of passions, prejudices and antagonisms. This applies to all aspects of reality. Suffering and hardship acquire meaning when inserted into the framework of reality (e.g. applied to business), based on integrative unity.⁹⁶ Sacrifice for a noble cause does not signify a loss but a gain, and a source of ultimate happiness.⁹⁷

e. Sacrifice and progress; softness and decay

Sacrifice, abstinence and mastery of impulses are crucial instruments for human advancement and fulfillment and are necessary for respecting the relation of each being to the rest.⁹⁸ These responses require people to rise above immediate concerns and consider the long-term, ultimate implications of their behavior.⁹⁹ Their actions and decisions will gain in quality, depth and value to the extent that individuals constantly struggle to master their impulses; this allows people to build a solid foundation which cannot be easily or rapidly destroyed, even when there may be superficial damages. Self-indulgence and carelessness, on the other hand, lead to confusion, contradiction, failure and frustration, as happened in the Roman Empire.¹⁰⁰ Individuals are sorely tempted to follow routines, whether out of passivity or laziness, and to let themselves be guided by what seems to be easiest or most gratifying. In doing so, they avoid the effort and sacrifice of systematically considering the whole of reality, respecting and adhering to it, and acting accordingly. This tendency has been described in organizations and has been pejoratively labelled bureaucratic behavior (in a non-Weberian sense); this type of behavior relies on people's desire to reduce the risks derived from change, although it disregards the goals of individuals and organizations.

f. Conversion, as symbolized by Michelangelo

By sacrificing everything that does not conform to consistency, people can purify themselves through conversion. This involves renouncing any road, attraction or appetite which is not oriented toward integrative unity. It also means liberating oneself from pathological attachments to fragments and appetites which seek to replace the whole. People must reject the easy but aimless path in order to follow the difficult but fruitful one. The process of adhering or converting to reality and integrative unity must constantly be renewed (as a permanent new creation). The constantly repeated moment of conversion is symbolized in Michelangelo's fresco in the Sistine Chapel, in which God's finger touches man's finger. The highest human priority is to maximize conversion, thus contributing to fulfillment.

g. Suffering awakens and liberates from the immediate; pruning

Difficulties are steps on the road to purification, maturation, self-mastery and learning; they open individuals' eyes to reality, integrated by unity, allowing them to see beyond the immediate. From this perspective, individuals come to recognize that their current longings and concerns are insignificant and do not have any relevance when detached from the whole. When, on the other hand, people look for and find connections between their individual concerns and the wider order of reality, they find solutions, satisfaction and peace. Taken alone, passing fancies and pleasures are empty and lack value. By making sacrifices and liberating themselves from attachments to fragments and impulses, individuals can refine their relation to reality integrated by unity. They can surmount obstacles and unwanted difficulties; their sacrifices may be used to produce beneficial results, just as pruning trees enables them to yield better fruits.¹⁰¹ By dealing with difficulties in a constructive and consistent manner, individuals learn to identify and learn from their mistakes.

h. Devoting oneself to reality and unity; sacrificing attractions

Most of all, individuals influence themselves, although they also influence other individuals and objects. The highest expression of freedom lies in devoting oneself completely to reality and to integrative unity; by doing so, individuals serve themselves as well as other individuals, thus optimally using their influence to contribute to fulfillment. This involves renouncing anything which distracts people from devoting themselves to reality. Appetites, impulses, attachments and influences are accepted only if they are compatible with such self-devotion. This is the value of sacrifice, since it prevents superfluous attractions and immediate concerns from distracting individuals from

their mission of self-devotion. Attractions and short-term interests are sacrificed for the sake of higher ends, and this paves the way for individuals to find true satisfaction by devoting themselves to more worthwhile goals. People may also enjoy more immediate pleasures and attractions so long as these do not distract individuals from giving themselves with unconditional love for the benefit of their children, families and other individuals. This benefits individuals and others, allowing them to contribute to the fulfillment of all and of reality as a whole through the path of consistency. Devoting oneself to reality and unity opens the door to creativity, productivity and fulfillment and leads to the satisfaction of contemplating the fulfillment of reality and all individuals, and of contributing to this. Toward this end, individuals can and should use the circumstances and resources available to them to advance the fulfillment of reality; this extends even to impulses which tempt people to depart from consistency and follow the seemingly easy road of panaceas such as pleasure, money, power, vanity, etc. Consistency allows people to see beyond the narrow confines of these immediate attractions and to contemplate, respect and love all beings, aspects and implications of reality, thereby freeing themselves from the tyrannical control of blind impulses.

i. Meaningful sacrifice adheres to reality and unity, overcoming contradictions

Adherence to reality, integrated by unity, provides meaning to any action or sacrifice, illuminating the immediate with the spark of consistency. This allows people to see difficulties as opportunities for adjusting their behavior to serve the whole by working for the benefit of others as well as themselves. This implies respect and love for all beings and aspects of reality, according to the law of unity which integrates variety. From the framework of the whole, individuals represent only small parts; their momentary impulses and interests pale in significance. Yet at the same time, by interacting and cooperating with the whole, individuals can freely and consciously contribute to the whole. They may learn to reconcile their appetites and interests, subordinating them to the service of unity integrating reality, where all contradiction disappears.

Contradiction opposes consistency. It strives to win privileges and advantages for certain parts of reality, thus violating the underlying, reciprocal complementarity of beings –among them individuals– which is essential for their joint and harmonious fulfillment. Contradiction capriciously seeks to replace reality integrated by unity with a partial

substitute in a futile effort to hide and mislead, as in the biblical story of Cain. Genuine sacrifice is not an end in itself, or a means to please ego or vanity, but a means for serving reality and unity.

j. Sacrifice not to serve other impulses, caprice or ego; liberation from undue attachments; anorexia

The wisdom of sacrifice lies in offering everything – one's own being and everything that one has and does – to reality integrated by unity and removing anything that deviates from this, such as uncontrolled caprices, impulses and personal advantages. If an impulse is sacrificed to satisfy another, equally disorderly one, no advancement occurs.

Sacrifice without humility, without relinquishing the ego, is incomplete and spurious, and it does not liberate individuals from attachments to fragments. It may actually reinforce slavery to avarice, drugs, ambition, egoism, vanity, and even refined perversion.

The example of anorexia shows the destructive effects of sacrifices not devoted to serving reality and unity. It treats the ego, fashions and impulses as the center and ends of reality.

k. Dying to give life

Biological organisms are not ends in themselves, but rather parts of the whole of reality, integrated by unity, from which they derive meaning. Their role in this whole includes being born and dying, making other lives possible both through birth and death.

Each being is only fulfilled by integrating itself with others and giving itself to nourish others. Just as each moment has to end for another moment to begin, the death of each being leaves the seeds and food for those succeed it, nourishing the chain of life over time. When a being or fragment has fulfilled its function, it needs to make room for others; this occurs as a blind, instinctive process and –as in the case of human beings– as a conscious, free decision. In this way, all living organisms contribute to the marvelous symphony of reality.

People can devote their spirit to the service of reality without dying or losing their identity in the process. Indeed, people lose touch with their true spiritual nature when they let impulses and immediate concerns rule them instead of ensuring that these serve truth, goodness and the fulfillment of reality and beings.

Spiritual life is neither material nor physical. It is oriented toward integrative unity, which has no limits. Limits on individuals' spiritual life are determined by their relations with unity and with other beings.

People who choose not to adhere to reality and integrative unity ultimately choose to destroy their spiritual lives. They die in their futile struggle to cling to build a spurious life, instead of giving life to build genuine life. To fertilize and enrich their genuine, lasting and spiritual lives and those of others, people must sacrifice everything they have, even their lives.

1. Mastery of environment via sacrifice

Individuals' *raison d'être* centers on contributing to the fulfillment of reality, and every being within it, by promoting life, truth and goodness and recognizing the paramount role of unity, which integrates everything. To do so, individuals must master their own impulses and control the influences they wield over their human and non-human environment. Individuals must devote all their strengths and resources toward this end.¹⁰²

Through their capacity for consistency, people are able to freely and consciously complement the work of unity which integrates reality. Yet this freedom also means people can choose to interfere with this work instead of contributing to it, thereby forsaking their responsibility, mission and vocation in life.

The capacity for consistency allows people to identify the paths that promote the fulfillment of reality and of beings that are part of it. This capacity is exercised individually and also socially, in groups, through the creation, adoption, modification and application of social norms.¹⁰³

3. Transcending immediate concerns

a. Transcending the immediate in time, space and variety; towards integrative unity

To transcend immediate concerns, individuals must struggle to master their impulses and appetites, instead of submitting to them. They must resist the strong temptation to yield to the attraction of the immediate, since this prevents them from connecting everything with the whole and with unity presiding it.¹⁰⁴ Unity integrating variety is the beginning and end of any road, the point at which all implications, short-term, long-term and ultimate, converge. As such, it is the ultimate end to which every desire or appetite should be subordinated. From this perspective, short-term considerations should be transformed into a succession of steps or links leading toward integrative unity.

The decision to resist immediate temptations and short-term interests is an active rather than a passive one. It requires constant effort and sacrifice. In this respect, obstacles are transformed into assets insofar as they represent opportunities to learn self-mastery, which leads to depth and balance.

Individuals suffer from a tendency to focus on immediate considerations (in terms of time, space and other relations) unless they learn to exercise their capacity for consistency in a genuine manner. Genuine consistency opens people's eyes to see that each being and phenomenon is an application and part of reality, integrated by unity; it encourages them to desire and work for this wider system of reality.¹⁰⁵ The perspective of genuine consistency enables people to exercise their freedom properly and free themselves from the prison and inertia of impulses and immediate concerns, thus contributing to the fulfillment of reality and individuals, including others and themselves. It opens people's eyes to the spiritual dimension, the realm which provides the fullest life and deepest meaning to individuals and which also provides life to the material world. This realm emerges from the connection of individuals to integrative unity, through consistency.

If individuals relax their efforts to practice genuine consistency, they allow immediate concerns to dominate everything, and they lose the opportunity to fulfill themselves in the spiritual and material realms. They let themselves be imprisoned by blind impulses and unsound social norms and fashions; they fail to critically analyze the influence which these have over others and themselves. This occurs whenever people treat money, success, science or technology as panaceas and whenever they become obsessed with the pursuit of immediate pleasures, fashions or vanity falling in excesses.¹⁰⁶ These negative outcomes may be counteracted by identifying and illuminating the power of integrative unity, which otherwise remains hidden. This enables people to work together with others and move toward complete fulfillment by directing knowledge, convictions, feelings and actions toward serving life, truth and goodness, with respect, love and devotion. Within the context of total reality, integrated by unity, the immediate is placed where it belongs.

b. Respect and love transcend the immediate

Respect for oneself, for others and for the whole of reality requires people to subordinate all fragments, influences and impulses and to channel every energy and resource toward integrative unity. In accordance with this, love breaks through the prison of egoism, respecting and identifying with reality and other individuals. In order to achieve genuine

love and respect, individuals must break free of excessive attachment to the minuscule fragment of earthly life, adhering to truth and working for the common good. They must shape their thoughts, convictions, feelings and actions according to the call of consistency which comes from the spirit. By doing so, individuals learn to look at temporary hardships and obstacles from a balanced, long-term perspective which prevents them from feeling overwhelmed or discouraged; they also learn not to succumb to excessive self-confidence or euphoria as a consequence of their momentary success.

c. Realization that time and possessions are ephemeral

Some people act as if the present were eternal, ignoring the ephemeral nature of possessions, pleasures and achievements. They resemble individuals condemned to death, who know that they have scarce time left and therefore devote themselves to unbridled pleasures, perversion and self-destruction. To avoid this, individuals need to master appetites and impulses and transcend immediate concerns, inserting all of these into a framework which encompasses the whole of reality and which acknowledges the links –explanatory, causal, functional– that connect all fragments and aspects together.¹⁰⁷ Unity connects everything together, and the capacity for consistency allows individuals to acknowledge this fact and freely choose to behave accordingly, contributing to the integration of variety. In this way, unity and reality serve as the ultimate guide for human behavior (thoughts, desires, decisions, actions, feelings) by creating and acknowledging relations of interdependence among all fragments or parts of reality.

C. Advancing Toward Unrestricted Consistency

1. Balanced respect for all aspects

a. Balance among dimensions which contribute to human fulfillment¹⁰⁸

When individuals bow to hasty, careless and unilateral impulses, they detach themselves from reality and lose the opportunity to find and serve fulfillment. No aspect should be given unilateral or privileged attention,

although every aspect deserves to be respected and treated as an integrated part of the whole. Excesses are harmful, as shown in the disorderly growth of urbanization, bureaucracy and industrialization, and more generally demonstrate the danger of avoiding the control and discipline of consistency. By producing such excesses, individuals act as sorcerer's apprentices, whose ability to create exceeds their capacity to control their creations; this leads to individuals' loss of control over themselves and their environments, and it prevents them from working on behalf of the fulfillment of individuals and reality.¹⁰⁹

Today, a common excess is the panacea of competitiveness, which often accompanies the modern tendency toward economic and materialistic unilateralism and forms part of a more general tendency to unilaterally emphasize freedom and equality to the detriment of equity, solidarity and justice.¹¹⁰ These latter values should be integrated with economic values, prompting people to share economic benefits with those who cannot produce, such as children and the elderly, sick or disabled. In this way, people demonstrate their concern for the fulfillment of others, themselves and reality, providing an ethical, non-materialistic foundation to authority, social norms and laws.

Consistency is the ethical and legitimate foundation of economic, political, cultural, scientific and social power and authority. There is a continual tension between ethical foundations, on the one hand, and impulses, on the other, both of which influence power. When impulses are not subordinated and behavior is not focused on serving life, truth and goodness, an imbalance in human and social life results, which discourages people from dedicating themselves to proper goals and opens them up to fictions or frauds. This can be observed in the paternalism of the welfare state and socialist systems, which often harm those people whom they claim to protect. It can also be observed in cases where the free market is treated like a panacea, without concern for its inability to provide the freedom and fairness which it purports (at least, without safeguards or regulations). In both instances, a concentration on economic aspects results in neglect for the affective, ethical and spiritual needs of individuals.¹¹¹ This, in turn, encourages a harmful, pendular movement from one extreme to another, hindering people's ability to contribute in a cumulative fashion to the fulfillment of individuals and reality.¹¹² Although some calamities are worse than others, consistency shows people how to work intensively to prevent and avoid both major and minor difficulties; in the event that hardships arise, consistency teaches people how to minimize their harmful consequences and even to draw benefits from them.¹¹³

The type of qualities that help people find and exercise consistency are those which build without destroying, such as self-mastery, austerity, sacrifice and self-dedication. Balance is also essential. A proper balance must be achieved, for instance, between encouraging the type of commercial freedom which stimulates people to lend money, on the one hand, and limiting abuses and preventing unjust exploitation, on the other.¹¹⁴ Respect for contracts and property rights is beneficial when it is used to strengthen and multiply individuals' assets and thus to serve fulfillment, but it is harmful when these assets are used to gratify the impulses, caprices or egoistic interests of a select few, to the detriment of others. In this way, the use of freedom may lead to oppression, if people do not strive for a proper balance between freedom and protection, both of which are critical values.¹¹⁵ In a similar fashion, people must strive to integrate theoretical convictions with practical needs to achieve an appropriate balance between the two.¹¹⁶

The precise point of balance requires an intense and endless effort to overcome contradictions. The proper balance between strictness and permissiveness, for instance, is a difficult but important concern.¹¹⁷ Excessive permissiveness leads people to submit to their impulses and is therefore dysfunctional for human fulfillment. At the same time, excessive strictness and prohibitions are also dysfunctional and hinder human fulfillment. Examples of excessive permissiveness are tolerance of drugs and pornography, especially when they are used to corrupt children; excessive permissiveness also characterizes the general willingness to tolerate people's decision to abandon family commitments because a more gratifying relationship has been found. Examples of excessive strictness are found in social norms which require individuals to keep emotional distance from others and which inhibit unconditional love; other examples include the prevailing expectation that women should assume certain roles (whether traditional or modern) which impede their ability to contribute to the fulfillment of themselves and others.

b. Not privileging economic dimension and ego

All aspects of reality condition one another. It is therefore a mistake to privilege one factor, such as economic considerations, treating it as if it unilaterally determined the others; in fact, economic factors depend upon social decisions which apply either genuine or spurious consistency. Such decisions build social norms, interaction, communication, social systems, organization and coordination, which condition economic

activity. Moreover, economic activity is only a means for serving the higher end of the fulfillment of individuals and reality, according to the dictates of integrative unity. For this reason, people who place their faith in models stressing economic factors to the exclusion of all else are bound to encounter failure and frustration, since the models they follow do not respect all aspects of reality.¹¹⁸

In effect, they seek to replace reality with spurious ends and means and, in doing so, build Towers of Babel which may look impressive at first glance but are bound to collapse; they display a deep disrespect for the laws of nature written in reality.¹¹⁹ They also try to reduce human motivation to egoism, as does the economic exchange model, spuriously using the legitimate flag of human freedom to establish the absolute rights and powers of the individual, who is improperly crowned as supreme arbitrator of his or her own destiny.¹²⁰

By doing so, economic determinism fails to acknowledge that individuals' true motivation can and should be life, truth and goodness; it ignores human beings' ability to know, respect and contribute to the fulfillment of reality—with its principles—and of individuals and other beings within it. In fact, people can relate and adjust themselves to reality and integrative unity, thanks to their capacity for consistency. This allows them to respect the higher values which govern the system to which they belong.

Human happiness flourishes when reality and integrative unity are respected and served, rather than flaunted and replaced. Happiness is hindered by the modern tendency to reject spiritual and family values, based on the misconception that what matters is to satisfy impulses and to advance in material terms; instead of happiness, such an orientation brings great losses in terms of quality of life and fulfillment.¹²¹ It impedes spiritual, emotional and interpersonal well-being and restricts the peace, security and harmony which individuals find through family and home life.¹²²

c. Balanced approach to education, health and work

To contribute to the fulfillment of individuals, it is necessary to respect all aspects and connections contained within reality, including long-term and ultimate implications, by applying consistency. This requirement demands a balanced approach in all spheres of human activity, including e. g. the fields of education, health care and work.

In the field of education, a balanced approach entails the following:

First, all physical, psychological, social, cultural, spiritual, ethical and family needs must be considered.

Second, both theory and practice must be taught and integrated.

Third, students must be taught how to integrate themselves into reality and society, avoiding unilateral and unbalanced approaches.

Fourth, research and planning, personnel, finances, methods, programs and curricula must be systemically combined.

Fifth, efforts should be made to help students to develop and harmonize social norms which solve all their problems and needs.

Sixth, social norms should be cultivated which favor the full and balanced development and exercise of all human capabilities, improve the quality of decision making and enhance freedom and productivity.

Seventh, students' spiritual development should be encouraged by motivating them to exercise genuine consistency and to respect, love and contribute to the fulfillment of individuals and reality –in all their dimensions: physical, psychological, social, cultural, ethical and spiritual.

Eighth, students should be persuaded to practice self-mastery and to control their impulses, appetites, energies and external and internal influences.

Ninth, both formal and informal education, including mass media and reference groups, need to be oriented toward these goals.

Tenth, methods should be adapted to fit varied and changing contexts, needs, zones and circumstances; they should consider how to meet the needs of students, families, individuals and societies in the short, middle, and long-run. In practice, the educational institutions and approaches in various societies are characterized to a considerable degree by unilateralism, excesses, confusion and submission to fashions, with the harmful effects which these entail.

At the same time, however, ingredients of balanced approaches also exist which lead to favorable effects in terms of consistency and human fulfillment, which justifies efforts at educational reform.

In the field of health care, a balanced approach also requires a number of things.

First, all dimensions of the patient –physical, psychological, social, cultural, spiritual and ethical– must be considered.

Second, a proper balance must be achieved between the need of individuals and those of society.

Third, prevention, education, assistance and rehabilitation must be combined.

Fourth, health practices and procedures must be adapted to fit different individuals, contexts and circumstances.

Fifth, these practices and procedures must be reconciled with nature and the environment.

Sixth, extremes and excesses must be avoided, e. g. in medication, overprotection or underprotection.

Seventh, autonomy and self-defenses should be cultivated.

Eighth, various activities, including nutrition, physical exercise, work, social interaction, etc., should be integrated.

Ninth, sacrifice and satisfaction should be combined and harmonized. In practice, health care in various societies shows both advancement as well as limitations in terms of integration and balance.

In addition to efforts to follow the requirements described above, there is also a tendency to follow fashions, routines, rituals, and spurious interests and impulses. As a result, there are forces which both promote and limit fulfillment in the field of health care.

A balanced approach to work requires people to consider physical, psychological, social, cultural, spiritual and ethical aspects. It also requires them to reconcile different concerns related to employment, wages, working hours, organization, stability, the environment, social services, legal and technological aspects, etc. All areas of human activity require actions to be adjusted according to differences among individuals, groups, and contexts. All dimensions (physical, psychological, etc.) must be considered in order to analyze the conditions which improve the quality of decision making and enhance human fulfillment, based on consistency.

2. Consistency in means and ends, dedicated to human and social fulfillment

a. Means used for or against fulfillment; declarativism

Non-rational beings fulfill their mission in life without consciously knowing and deciding. Human beings, on the other hand, define and embrace ends, using genuine or spurious consistency. To the extent they choose genuine consistency, they efficaciously select and use means that promote fulfillment; if they choose spurious consistency, the means they employ will hinder fulfillment.¹²³ Through genuine consistency, people are able to identify desirable ends and efficacious means to attain them; their actions and choices will be marked by composure, balance, depth, maturity and prudence. Genuine consistency reinforces social norms which emphasize the convergence between desirable goals and efficacious means and affirm that there is no contradiction between contributing to the fulfillment of oneself, others and reality.¹²⁴ This is the goal that elevates human beings, connecting them with unity, which

integrates everything in reality.¹²⁵ When economic, social, cultural, political, scientific, technological and spiritual resources are directed toward serving human fulfillment, they follow genuine consistency; when they follow spurious consistency, they channel resources toward destructive, contradictory ends which bring failure and frustration. Genuine happiness and success come from serving the ultimate end of the fulfillment of all beings, including human beings and reality as a whole, and choosing efficacious means to achieve this end. Social and political scientists have a special responsibility to guide people in these aspects, emphasizing the importance of consistent behavior and clarifying desirable ends and the efficacious means to attain these.¹²⁶

When efficacious and efficient means are dedicated to advancing the fulfillment of reality, including all human beings and other living creatures, they help achieve these ends. When individuals fail to use efficacious means to serve clearly defined, deeply respected ends, they fall into the trap of spurious consistency and declarativism.¹²⁷ Individuals fulfill their mission in life (and themselves) by deriving ends and means from integrative unity, that is, by finding and applying genuinely consistent ends and means.

Toward this goal, they need to learn to master their impulses with effort and sacrifice, guiding their influences with effective means, administering and organizing them with efficacy, and taking as their inspiration the only truly worthwhile objective of the fulfillment of individuals and reality.¹²⁸ Economic, political, scientific and technological means must be placed at the service of spiritual, moral, family and interpersonal goals, that is, for the fulfillment of reality and of individuals within it. Otherwise, efficient actions serve empty goals and lead to failure and frustration as individuals fail to contemplate all the consequences and implications of their choices and behavior, from the most short-term to the ultimate, and privilege (especially immediate and material interests) or neglect certain aspects of reality.¹²⁹

b. Means and ends inserted in the system of reality

Efficiency in industrialized nations may contribute to human fulfillment and quality of life only to the extent that it is guided by genuine or unrestricted consistency, aimed at serving reality and all individuals. Efficiency must be accompanied by efforts to master and control impulses, influences, fragments and caprices, instead of letting these dominate people. Constructive ends and efficacious means are interdependent and inseparable, and both are required to ensure that decisions are properly integrated into the total system of reality.¹³⁰

D. Value, Desirability and Merit

1. Truth, desirability and unrestricted consistency

a. Validity derives from consistency

The criterion of unrestricted consistency serves as a categorical imperative which allows people to distinguish what is real, true, good, valuable, correct and desirable. It calls upon people to avoid privileging fragments, ego or impulses and uses consistency to control and mold them so that they contribute to the fulfillment of reality and individuals, liberating the latter from blind attachments to fragments and impulses.¹³¹ By neither privileging nor excluding anything, and by adhering exclusively to integrative unity, individuals can learn to respect and love others and themselves, contributing to the fulfillment of both in a common cause and shared task.

Subjectivity and arbitrariness are replaced by an all-encompassing perspective, based on integrative unity, which is impartial, unbiased and gives each part of reality its proper due, according to the dictates of integrative unity.¹³²

A right or relation is legitimate only to the extent that it contributes to the fulfillment of individuals and other beings, as well as to the fulfillment of the whole of reality.¹³³ Unity is the pure, perfect, indivisible, undivided foundation of reality and the integrative force for all its components. It does not depend on anything else, since it is the source of all balance, depth and meaning.

Thanks to unity, individuals can distinguish and evaluate reality, truth, goodness and value, applying their capacity for consistency which allows them to relate to integrative unity. Reality and the capacity for consistency are based on integrative unity, which makes it possible to reconcile them.

Attempts to replace integrative unity with invented panaceas – money, consumerism, hedonism, competitiveness, prestige and materialism – entail attaching oneself to impulses, appetites and fragments. Instead of adopting a balanced, impartial approach, certain parts or factors are privileged, and this makes it impossible to fulfill individuals' mission to devote themselves unconditionally to themselves, others and reality, treating everyone and everything as it deserves.

By arbitrarily privileging certain aspects, individuals implicitly make themselves the center of all things rather than correctly viewing themselves as a small part of the great system of reality based on integrative unity.

b. Consistency: the criterion of truth and value

Something is considered true when it is consistent –and it does not contradict– with the information available to individuals; it is considered valuable and desirable when it is consistent –and it does not contradict– with the underlying axis of value and desirability: integrative unity.

All possible points of reference –all beings and aspects– are taken into consideration, each in its proper position according to the basic, ultimate reference point of integrative unity.

To advance toward truth and goodness, it is necessary to analyze the position of each being and aspect in the whole system of reality, and to shape one's desires, feelings and actions accordingly.

This allows people to adjust their knowledge, convictions, faith, love and action so they are oriented toward integrating individuals with reality, linking objective and subjective realms, following the model of unity, which integrates everything.

This leads people to continually and critically question themselves and their environment and this, in turn, allows them to improve premises, assumptions, information, social norms, models, decisions and actions through consistency analysis.

c. Submitting impulses and fragments to the system of reality

When people blindly follow impulses and fragments, treating them as final ends, they effectively substitute their own judgment for that of integrative unity.

In doing so, they make spurious use of freedom and consistency and become prisoners of impulses and fragments. Impulses and fragments need to be integrated into a broad framework which keeps sight of the goal of contributing to the fulfillment of all individuals and all of reality.

d. Consistency: source of ethics, law, justice, authority and rights

Individuals simultaneously perceive, adhere to and serve –in an indivisible act of exercising consistency– the laws of reality and nature, which provide reality, meaning and value to their existence.

This provides them with a sense of duty, mission and vocation, which stimulates individuals to mobilize and use all their energies and resources, dedicating them to the ends dictated by and derived from integrative unity, that is, to the fulfillment of reality, others and themselves.

In this way, individuals do not fulfill themselves alone but in conjunction with others and with reality as a whole. This is done with effort and sacrifice, giving all that one has and sacrificing impulses, but also with joy, which is part of this indivisible act of dedicating oneself fully to unity.

Integrative unity understands individuals and loves them more than they understand and love themselves. This is the highest possible love. Unity's love gives people existence and provides them with all the supports they need for survival, growth and fulfillment.

Every being has a place where it belongs in the system of reality and which determines its relationship with the rest. Because of its place within reality, which is given by integrative unity, every being deserves respect, love and attention.

The order created by unity is complemented by the free decisions of each person and each group and society.

The mission of individuals is to follow the model of integrative unity. This, through reality or nature, spreads life, truth, goodness and fulfillment to all corners of reality, indicating the road to be followed by each person.

Fulfillment is achieved by following the laws of reality or nature, which determine what is, as well as ethical laws, which determine what ought to be and include the criteria of truth, goodness, virtue and love.

Individuals adhere to the laws of reality and ethical laws by making proper use of their capacity for consistency, which allows them to discover and adhere to integrative unity, by respecting and supporting each being—including themselves—and the whole of reality.

Reality fulfills itself inexorably, through the laws derived from integrative unity, which solves all contradictions in its total system, from which no being escapes. Nothing exists outside the system of reality based on integrative unity, not even ethical laws.

Thanks to their capacity for consistency, human beings are free to consciously contribute to their own fulfillment by helping promote the fulfillment of themselves, others around them, and the whole of reality. By doing so, individuals use their human faculties of knowing, desiring, feeling and doing properly (consistently).

If they do not freely decide to accept the invitation to exercise genuine consistency, they will fall captive to impulses which lead them toward contradiction, confusion, disorder and destruction.

The mystery of evil lies in individuals' possibility to reject the opportunity to freely contribute to the fulfillment of reality in life, truth and goodness.

The role of human beings within the system of reality is to contribute to the fulfillment of all individuals –including themselves– and beings within it.¹³⁴

In this way, contradictions and imbalances are overcome and people advance in unrestricted consistency, which embraces truth, goodness, equity and justice in a balanced manner, treating others as they deserve and joyfully receiving from others what one deserves.¹³⁵

Rights and authority are legitimate to the extent that they are grounded in integrative unity, and not in power, force and privileges. The fact that social norms or laws have been supported by powerful and influential individuals or by majorities, past or present, does not mean they are legitimate. Social norms and laws need to be continually examined and adjusted by each person, group, society and generation, on the basis of consistency, which gives balanced consideration to all beings, aspects and contexts.¹³⁶

Individuals, majorities and minorities, deserve to exert their influence and power to the extent that their decisions and actions are inspired by consistency, which gives them the right to fulfill themselves in all dimensions.

The authority of majority or minority rule only exists to the extent that majorities and minorities alike adjust themselves to consistency – and to the ethical rules derived from it–. This requires balanced participation by everyone, since every human being possesses the capacity for consistency and is responsible for exercising it properly.¹³⁷

As a function of their capacity for consistency, every person, society or generation has the responsibility of continually and critically evaluating social norms and laws, building upon the past and present contributions of others, selectively adopting the positive and rejecting the negative, employing the consistency criterion to create and modify social norms.¹³⁸

This involves the right of all individuals to receive education through communication, interaction and social norms which introduce them to advances in the exercise of consistency. It makes it the duty of all individuals to attain such education for themselves and provide similar education to others.

2. Human fulfillment, happiness, quality of life, development

a. Happiness through adhering to truth and goodness, giving oneself, and mastering impulses; elusive as an end.

Value does not derive from increasing personal satisfaction, but from integrating everything into the system of reality governed by unity in which each part fits together with the rest in such a way as to contribute to the fulfillment of the whole and of each part.¹³⁹ Satisfaction derives from adhering to this relation of integration and contemplating its fulfillment. Satisfaction is an integral part of the inseparable acts of discovering, adhering and contributing to the integration of reality by unity and contemplating its fulfillment. If, instead of discovering, adhering and contributing to the integration of reality by unity, individuals choose to follow partial goals or narrow, selfish impulses, they will not be able to attain true satisfaction. Any pleasure they derive will be fictitious, spurious, ephemeral, shallow, and superficial since it ignores reality and unity.

People do not make certain choices because they produce intrinsic or extrinsic satisfaction, but the opposite: people obtain satisfaction, or fail to do so, by making decisions which are adjusted to reality integrated by unity, or to a fragment or impulse. In the latter case, any pleasure experienced is short-lived and ephemeral, since fragments and impulses do not provide a reliable foundation like integrative unity does and therefore cannot prevent positive results from being erased by contradictions leading to failures and frustrations. Satisfaction derives from adhering to a value, working to achieve it and seeing it achieved. It is the consequence and not the cause of adhering to the value. It is the agreeable and positive feeling of adhering to something worthwhile, contributing to its fulfillment, and seeing it fulfilled. Deep and stable satisfaction derives from adhering to integrative unity, reality, truth and goodness, since these provide a reliable foundation for determining what is valuable. If individuals give in to ego and impulses, pursuing satisfaction as an end in itself, their actions and decisions will be fraught with contradictions and will prove frustrating.

When happiness becomes an end in itself rather than an incidental by-product which occurs when individuals adhere to reality, unity and unconditional love, it becomes elusive and frustrating. Happiness is a complementary part of wholly and consistently giving oneself. It only results when one devotes oneself unconditionally; if it is hindered by

restrictions and qualifications, it is marred by contradictions. Contradictions, which hinder happiness and bring frustration, derive from replacing reality and unity by fragments and impulses. Happiness does not result from the isolated search for happiness, but is a co-product of the decision to adhere to reality and integrative unity, that is, to being, truth and goodness. Happiness comes from contributing to the fulfillment of individuals and reality and enjoying this fulfillment. Happiness thus requires people to insert themselves into the all-encompassing system of reality, integrated by unity, and share it as full members of this system. Happiness is therefore a dimension of human fulfillment and cannot be separated from knowledge, love and complete self-dedication to being, truth and goodness, and enjoyment at the realization of these. As part of this, happiness stems from witnessing the fulfillment of others and oneself, without privileging oneself over others. Happiness is not an end but only a complement to the ends of being, truth and goodness.¹⁴⁰

Satisfaction derives from adhering to someone or something whom/which one loves and deems worthy, and it is a consequence of such adherence rather than the cause of it. Adherence to integrative unity, and therefore to reality and to all beings within it, overcomes every contradiction, and only adds and builds. Toward this end, it sacrifices appetites and impulses, and although it brings consequent suffering, it provides the foundation for the deeper satisfaction that stems from fully serving goodness, truth and being.

Satisfaction requires people to overcome their fixation on immediate gratification. It also requires them to get rid of anxieties and anguish which invalidate satisfaction due to their inherent contradictions. The depth, dimension, value and durability of satisfaction depends on the object of one's support and devotion. If people adhere to a fragment, any satisfaction they experience will be fictitious, shallow and ephemeral; if they adhere to integrative unity, the resulting satisfaction will be deep and full of meaning, serving the high mission of human beings who are endowed for that reason with the capacity for consistency, which is only satisfied by adhering to absolute, integrative unity, in being, truth and goodness.

Attempts to satisfy oneself through the consumption of material objects leads to dissatisfaction and to an obsessive and frustrating preoccupation with compensating for the failure to satisfy real spiritual, interpersonal and family needs.¹⁴¹ More of the wrong thing is never enough. Success in accumulating wealth, power and prestige is only superficial and does not provide deep and stable satisfaction. Similar fates await attempts to escape reality through drugs, violence, alcohol, sexual

promiscuity and other deviations which try to replace reality and integrative unity with partial, contradictory fragments and impulses and only lead to frustrations. Instead, if people work for the fulfillment of their spiritual dimension by adhering to truth and goodness and serving reality and all individuals, the resulting satisfaction will be deep and stable, and will bring complete fulfillment in all dimensions since it is based on integrative unity, which harmoniously incorporates all beings and aspects and which does not show contradictions.

b. Giving oneself, the source of fulfillment and happiness

Genuine consistency is exercised by adhering to being, truth and goodness and orienting cognitive, volitional, affective and behavioral aspects toward unity integrating variety. Failure to do so indicates the spurious exercise of one's capacity for consistency, adhering to fragments and impulses instead of reality and unity which integrates it. Spurious consistency adheres to partial, and therefore spurious, versions of being, truth and goodness, contradicting genuine being, truth and goodness. This, in turn, contradicts genuine or unrestricted consistency. Deep and lasting happiness is a state of spirit, which is part and consequence of the exercise of genuine consistency, embracing being, truth and goodness in a systematic manner and sharing in the fulfillment of reality. Real happiness comes from elevating one's eyes, will, heart and hands above fragments, impulses and immediate, momentary concerns.

Happiness derives from giving oneself completely, working for the benefit of others as well as oneself and enjoying the fulfillment of all. It is not an end but a consequence and part of fulfillment.¹⁴² It is a by-product of the exercise of consistency and part of the fulfillment derived from this and from contemplating the fulfillment of others and oneself, including one's own contribution to it. Individuals thus enjoy the process of contributing to and observing the fulfillment of reality, others and themselves. Happiness is inseparably linked to knowing and loving reality, unity and individuals and to dedicating oneself to achieving their fulfillment.

c. Futile attempt at absolute domination (power, possessions, money, pleasure)

The narrow world built by egoism and impulses attempts to replace the great kingdom of reality, integrated by unity. Desires, hopes and goals are enclosed in a narrow, petty and isolated framework which is empty and futile, a Tower of Babel leading to frustration. Nothing exists outside

reality and integrative unity. Whoever rebels against this fact will suffer the consequences; reality itself, based on integrative unity, will mete out appropriate punishments.¹⁴³ Happiness is only possible when individuals open themselves to reality, contemplating and respecting all its dimensions and parts.

Often individuals obsessively strive for satisfaction and fail to attain it, as occurs when people become preoccupied with accumulating material achievements, treating these as if they were ultimate ends. In such a case, individuals treat material possessions as if they could provide an absolute answer or panacea; they try to hoard as much as they can and reserve these exclusively for themselves.¹⁴⁴ They fail to realize that the acquired object continues to be a part of reality, to which individuals also belong. They ignore the fact that an appropriate relationship with individuals and objects is not attained by trying to hoard or dominate them, through greediness and voracity, and therefore cannot be achieved if individuals become preoccupied with money, power, prestige, pleasure, sex, violence or exploitation.

Individuals must learn to recognize that an appropriate relationship is achieved by submitting everything to the system of reality and to unity integrating it. They must bear in mind that objects and individuals derive their life, value and meaning from their connections to and relations with the rest of reality, via integrative unity. Even material objects are unfinished, composed of relations to be progressively discovered, as in the structure of an atom, which hides an intensive dynamic process. Efforts to achieve absolute power over people or things is an oversimplified distortion of reality and a delusion.

d. Happiness through contemplating the fulfillment of reality to which one adheres and contributes

Anyone who adheres to reality is pleased by contemplating its fulfillment. Fulfillment is the mission every person has in reality. If individuals do not fulfill this mission, they realize this and suffer by not experiencing the fulfillment of people and things they love and that deserve love.

This cannot be separated from the whole of reality, whose harmony is created by integrative unity. Attempts to separate one's own fulfillment from that of others or reality as a whole cause people to blindly and submissively follow money, success, prestige, power or pleasure, making these into substitutes for the absolute. Instead, if people fulfill their true mission in life, they notice the connections which exist between all beings and parts of reality and work for the fulfillment of all; they derive

satisfaction from freely and consciously contributing to and witnessing the inexorable fulfillment of reality. This is the source of deep and lasting happiness and peace. If people do not adhere to reality, seeing it triumph will bring only frustration.¹⁴⁵

All human beings enjoy receiving and giving what is necessary for life, growth and fulfillment. This deep joy is achieved not by deliberately striving for it, but as a complement to contemplating the fulfillment of beloved beings – reality and individuals–. This fulfillment is partly achieved through the free contribution of individuals, who give themselves wholly to others and receive equal treatment themselves from others. All individuals exert influences over themselves and over others. It is their central responsibility to ensure that these influences contribute to the fulfillment of others and themselves through the application of genuine or unrestricted consistency to their thoughts, desires, feelings and actions.

This contribution is therefore conscious and free, not blind. This is the mission, vocation and duty of each person in life. Fulfilling this mission by adhering to the whole, instead of binding oneself to fragments and impulses, is the road to fulfillment and happiness, an approximation of what in the religious realm has been called heaven. The rejection of that mission through hatred of reality and integrative unity means rejecting what is valuable and desirable: being, goodness and truth.

The capacity for consistency is the most valuable endowment individuals possess and constitutes the source of their fulfillment and happiness. It prevents people from adhering to only one part of reality, which is a frustrating and fictitious path, since no part can be separated from the rest.

e. Happiness, knowledge, adherence and action; inseparable aspects of consistent behavior

The genuine or unrestricted exercise of human beings' capacity for consistency entails knowing, loving and acting according to the path provided by integrative unity and harmoniously relating to the whole of reality. It also entails guiding one's feelings by following the lead of integrative unity; this is the path to happiness, or spiritual pleasure, which consists of identifying oneself with unity and sharing the joys of life, goodness and truth made possible by integrative unity. This allows people to enjoy events and behaviors (their own and those of other people) to the extent that these contribute to the inexorable fulfillment of reality. In the case of human behaviors, such fulfillment involves the free and conscious cooperation of individuals.

Wishing for something means that one associates joy with its achievement, since real joy stems from experiencing the fulfillment of something one desires and values. This joy is spiritual when the something desired and loved is life, goodness and truth, that is, the fulfillment of reality and individuals, supported by integrative unity and consistency.

Spiritual joy responds to consistent motives, and it stems from the satisfaction of witnessing and contributing to the advancement of all people and beings within the whole of reality. Joy derived from the contemplation of fulfillment –of reality, others and oneself– is associated with the desire for such fulfillment. There is no other road to happiness.

Any other road implies contradictions, limitations, anxieties, anguish and frustrations, all of which derive from improperly attaching one's heart, mind, will, feelings and actions to impulses and fragments rather than to the order to which one belongs, which is based on unity. Only by adhering to life, truth and goodness, without restrictions, can people achieve a proper relation to the system of reality to which every being belongs; this is the only path to complete fulfillment, which also includes happiness.

The benefit of each person depends on the benefit of the whole, based on unity. The fulfillment of each individual is simultaneously part of the fulfillment of the whole, which is shared among all its parts. Each individual contributes to fulfillment together with others, through social action, integrated in social norms, interaction, communication and social systems.

f. Happiness and self-devotion vs. satisfying impulses and accumulating material possessions

Genuine happiness is qualitatively different from the shallow pleasure which derives from satisfying narrow impulses.

True happiness derives from focusing on reality and on unity, which integrates all aspects and harmoniously satisfies all wants and needs. Nothing exists outside reality, and therefore nothing can challenge happiness based on it. Happiness derives not from obtaining something from others, but from giving oneself completely to them, as well as to oneself and to reality, according to the law of reality. This involves devoting all one's resources and energies toward the fulfillment of reality and enjoying one's personal participation in the inexorable self-fulfillment of the system of reality. It does not derive from economic success or material possessions. As such, it is not measured simply by per capita income and other indicators of material possessions, as social indicators tend to do.

g. Quality of decisions and life; social development policy; how to use and adjust resources.

Every person is part of the system of reality, contributes to it and shares in its benefits, in all dimensions: spiritual, interpersonal, family, emotional, psychological, social, cultural and physical. To the extent that individuals acknowledge and respect this fact, the quality of their decisions and actions is enhanced and their quality of life improves. In this way, individuals contribute to and enjoy the fulfillment of reality and the fulfillment of all beings, including themselves. They are able to make optimal use of their social, cultural, scientific, technological, economic and political resources, employing them effectively and devoting them to the fulfillment of reality and individuals.

Social development policy is especially concerned with these issues. It strives to clarify what human fulfillment entails and how it may be promoted by increasing the quality of decisions, actions and social norms and systems and employing the best methods and strategies.¹⁴⁶ Discussions of development and quality of life still tend to suffer from excessive focus on economic factors and on the satisfaction of egoistic interests and impulses. Prevailing analyses of development and quality of life tend to neglect crucial considerations, such as spiritual, family and emotional security, and do not give sufficient attention to the importance of solidarity, austerity and righteousness. The social sciences have not been sufficiently concerned with identifying conditions which promote decisions and social norms better suited to promoting human fulfillment and improving quality of life; they do not analyze human beings' need and ability (through what we have called the capacity for consistency) to contribute to the fulfillment of reality and individuals by adjusting their thoughts, decisions, actions, social norms, culture, science, technology, organization, and every human advancement.

h. Verification of the need for consistency

Human behavior is continually conditioned by the search for unity in variety. When this search is guided by genuine consistency and is characterized by self-sacrifice and devotion to existence, truth and goodness, people achieve deep, spiritual fulfillment and genuine happiness. When, on the other hand, the search for ultimate answers is guided by spurious consistency, individuals allow themselves to be controlled by fragments and impulses and do not look beyond short-term considerations to consider the complex ramifications and ultimate implications of their decisions and behavior. This leads to failure, frustration and self-destruction, as experienced by individuals who

succumb to materialistic overindulgence through drug addiction, sexual promiscuity, consumerism, etc.

The negative consequences of spurious consistency are manifested in mental illness, the destruction of the family, violence, war, loss of emotional security, isolation and loneliness, moral decay, lack of discipline and austerity. They are paradoxically associated with the growth of communication and information technology, since these tend to produce unintended results typical of the sorcerer's apprentice syndrome. They can also be seen in the suffering, frustrations and unhappiness of the rich and powerful, who tend to be trapped in egocentrist pursuits, focusing narrowly on these until they wake up and discover the emptiness and lack of meaning in their lives and realize that material possessions cannot produce true satisfaction. Durkheim refers to phenomena of this type when he describes anomic suicide and "insatiability."¹⁴⁷ If people attempt to solve the problem by engaging in even greater spuriousness, hoping to find happiness by increasing the amount or rate of their materialistic consumption, they set in motion a destructive chain of rising expectations which ultimately causes greater suffering since these expectations either cannot be met or, even if they can, are unable to produce genuine happiness.¹⁴⁸

i. Genuine vs. spurious needs, love, and happiness

Genuine needs refer to those objects or conditions which a being must have in order to fulfill itself within the system of reality to which it belongs. Human beings, since they are endowed with the capacity for consistency and, as part of this, with freedom, can discover what they need in order to fulfill themselves, others and reality.

This knowledge enables them to support such fulfillment as an end; it also helps them to discover the best means for contributing to it and inspires them to consciously and freely practice such means. This is the way in which individuals can learn to identify genuine needs and find the motivation to work to satisfy them.

Other needs, which seek to gratify fragments or impulses and which serve ends or goals that are determined by fashion, caprice or impulse, are spurious rather than genuine. If individuals focus on gratifying fragments or impulses, they will achieve only partial and contradictory results rather than the fulfillment of individuals and reality. Ends and means deriving from impulses, fragments or prevailing fashions fail to consider reality as a whole and unity which integrates it, as required by unrestricted consistency. The needs they identify are spurious, fictitious and perverse, and they lead individuals away from the path of freely

contributing to the fulfillment of themselves, others and reality. Such deviations cause a loss of energies, resources, time and opportunities, enslaving individuals to false needs, such as money, power, drugs, alcohol, other people's approval, etc.

Genuine needs are identified and met when individuals respect and love themselves and others, working for the benefit and fulfillment of all in a shared, mutual effort (in which individuals contribute to the benefit and fulfillment of others and let others do the same for them). The fulfillment of individuals and reality occurs within the system of reality which includes a position for each being in the whole and infinite interrelations and reciprocal influences linking beings together. Genuine needs refer to the path to be followed for fulfilling the mission of each being in the harmonious whole of reality. Human beings have the responsibility not to let themselves be blindly driven by the physical and biological processes of survival and adaptation, and they have the capability (thanks to their capacity for consistency) to discover underlying relations and implications and to support the fulfillment of beings by respecting these relations and contributing to the fulfillment of the whole. This leads people to rise above the gratification of impulses and fragments and enables them to find deep and lasting happiness.

Inconsistency leads to obstruction, disorder, chaos and destruction. Human beings harm themselves and their environment if they do not exercise their capacity for consistency appropriately.¹⁴⁹ Through the gift of life and the capacity for consistency, unity bestows an incredible love upon human beings, infinitely superior to the greatest love which parents bestow upon their children. In this framework, discouragement, desperation, sadness, anxiety and anguish lack meaning.

j. Placing moments, worries and possessions in the wider framework

Each moment and each human possession are infinitesimal points in time and space, and these dimensions –time and space– are infinitesimal points within the vastness of reality. It is pointless for people to let themselves be overwhelmed by momentary concerns, just as it is nonsensical for them to pin their hopes on passing fashions. Meaning only derives from attaching knowledge, convictions and behavior to the whole, and to unity on which it is founded. Relation to reality and unity gives proper meaning and value to individual moments in time and partial fragments. By placing each being where it belongs, individuals recognize both their subordination to reality and to integrative unity, which is what makes them worthy of any honor and gratitude, and their

dignity which stems from being able to know, decide and contribute to reality and beings and to share their benefits with genuine happiness. Integrative unity, in short, bestows dignity, value and worth on all individuals; it also gives them their capacity to recognize, desire, feel and act accordingly, and the responsibility and duty for this.

k. Quality of life, consistency and materialistic models

Individuals' quality of life depends upon several factors, including the full exercise of their capacity for consistency. Individuals' quality of life varies according to the extent to which they fulfill their mission of contributing to the fulfillment of reality and individuals, especially in the contexts where they are most influential, which include themselves, their family, and those individuals who look to them as models.

Furthermore, whether or not individuals completely balance and fulfill all aspects of their lives—spiritual, psychological, cultural, social, physical, etc.—affects their quality of life. Quality of life is associated with deep and lasting satisfaction and happiness, which derive from adhering to reality and integrative unity.

Awareness of the negative results and successive failures which derive from replacing reality and integrative unity with fragments and impulses can help individuals avoid such an approach. It also helps them avoid emptiness, addictions to disorderly impulses, mental illness and suicide.

These conditions do not derive automatically from economic and industrial advance. Treating industrialization or economic growth as panaceas causes individuals to neglect these conditions. Third and First World societies can avoid falling into this trap by critically evaluating the materialistic models which are presented to them.

l. Fulfillment in time and in eternity

In the realm of time, any fulfillment, however lasting it may be, involves change. In the realm of eternity, fulfillment is complete and includes, integrates and transcends all possible changes.

Change and stability are means for attaining fulfillment within the realm of time, but ultimate and complete fulfillment is only possible in the realm of eternity, where the concepts of change and stability have no place. Within the realm of time, the road toward complete fulfillment does not lie in binding oneself to fragments and impulses. It lies in giving oneself to reality founded in integrative unity, advancing in the integration of knowledge, will, feelings and actions, contributing to the fulfillment of individuals and reality and adjusting situations, contexts, stability and change to serve the end of fulfillment.

In the realm of eternity, gradual steps are no longer needed, since the immense richness of being is fulfilled and consummated without the need for changes or advances; stability does not play a role either, since there is no need to prevent what has been achieved from vanishing. All possibilities which deserve to be fulfilled are fulfilled, and there is no need nor space for new possibilities or additional aspirations, ends and achievements.

The energy of being within the realm of eternity is infinitely superior to any temporal energy. This absolute realm of eternity is intuitively perceived by individuals from the earliest age and improves as individuals use their higher faculties to connect themselves to integrative unity, which transcends time and space. This allows them to dream with eternity, by keeping the hope of complete fulfillment alive.

m. Peace, anxiety, desperation; the perspective of unity

The effort of adhering to integrative unity brings a calmness which anticipates the peace of eternity. Therefore it is a "soft yoke" and a "light load." Acting with maximum effort and intensity on behalf of unity not only bring calmness and peace, but the latter also reinforce the desire to serve unity. Believing in the strength of integrative unity, adhering to it, trusting in it and working for it liberates people from their fears. This, in turn, permits them to control their thoughts, desires, feelings, impulses and actions and adjust them to consistent goals. Relaxing their efforts and commitment to unity causes people to engage in unproductive activity which leads nowhere. This generates anxiety and desperation, causing people to frantically run from one reaction to another. In order to overcome this, people need to conquer their obsession with certain fragments, impulses and partial considerations, since these contradict each other (when not placed within the framework of the whole) and bring insecurity, confusion and chaos. People need to learn to place fragments, impulses and partial considerations in proper perspective and consider their relations with the rest of reality in a deep, balanced and systematic fashion; in short, people need to adopt the perspective of integrative unity and devote their full energy, means and behavior to reality, integrative unity and its laws.

The calmness and peace which derive from adhering to unity are not passive (as eternal life is not passive), since this requires individuals to devote all their energy toward the fulfillment of reality and individuals within it. The calmness and peace which characterizes consistent approaches does, however, avoid chaotic activity by teaching people to focus on the constructive direction of unity, inserting their being and

energies where they belong. This confers meaning and security on individuals, based on the firm point of reference which is unity. By adhering to unity, individuals thus avoid the feeling of uneasiness and insecurity which derives from not connecting with unity – which is the source, basis and end of all existence– and from not realizing their potential to consciously and freely contribute to the fulfillment of reality and individuals.

Anxiety and uneasiness are indicators of an improper use of consistency and reveal a lack of firm support in unity. As such, anxiety and uneasiness can constructively serve as warnings and can stimulate people to advance in applying genuine consistency. In this way, anxiety –if properly understood– delivers the bad news that individuals have adopted a mistaken approach to reality, but it simultaneously offers the good news that, having acknowledged the problem, individuals can correct it by turning to unity.

When individuals are disturbed and overwhelmed by a problem, they can reestablish peace and calmness by considering the problem from the framework of reality, supported in integrative unity. This allows them to place their troubles in proper perspective and guides them toward better decisions and actions, that is, decisions and actions which contribute to the fulfillment of others and individuals themselves.

The perspective of unity allows individuals to realize that their worries are really insignificant when viewed from the framework of the whole of reality. It allows individuals to rise above minor irritations which merely serve to confuse, distract and mislead people from genuine concerns.

The perspective of unity teaches people to overcome minor obstacles and to see, embrace, serve and enjoy what is truly worthy. It also helps them to understand their place within reality and encourages them to fulfill their mission within it as individuals and as part of a larger whole (society and reality). By adopting the perspective of unity, people learn to understand and empathize with others, whether the young or elderly, healthy or sick, powerful or defenseless, and to identify with them. It also stimulates them to contribute to the fulfillment of others and share their joys and sufferings.

This perspective allows individuals to adopt a long-range view and to consider how they will look back at the present moment from a vantage point ten or twenty years hence, or even more.

The perspective of unity also allows people to trust that contradiction and evil will be overcome and defeated, and that individuals cannot suffer any evil except the one derived from failing to exercise genuine

consistency. This helps them to maintain serenity and balance, reassuring them with the knowledge that individuals are not bad, though their ideas or behaviors sometimes may be. They are always able to genuinely exercise consistency. Individuals gain confidence by learning to be on their guard against the spurious influence of immediate concerns, which divert people's attention away from the wider, long-term framework. They gain reassurance from the knowledge that unity protects individuals from any real harm and that it provides them with continual warnings and stimuli to ensure that they will not permanently fall into the trap of exercising spurious consistency and squandering their freedom, and that unity is always available to them through their consistency capacity.

This allows people to turn what seems to be bad or evil into something good and productive; suffering and injury can be turned around and used to defeat evil in their lives by encouraging the proper exercise of consistency and freedom.

An isolated fragment is incapable of providing a firm, reliable foundation for beliefs or behavior and therefore, if used improperly, leads to insecurity, confusion and instability. If individuals do not insert their beliefs and behavior into the framework of reality through consistency, they will be unable to find meaning in their lives or answers to their questions. Efforts to insert each aspect into its proper place in reality may gradually improve over the course of various stages (and responses to crises) of life.¹⁵⁰

In contemporary society, individuals tend to lack a consistent framework into which they can insert their feelings, desires and fears; they tend to focus their desires and hopes on materialistic, self-contradictory panaceas instead, triggering a chaotic and desperate movement from one illusion to another (confused by myriads, of chaotic messages), each of which inevitably proves hollow and unsatisfactory.

The capacity for evil is insignificant compared to the capacity for goodness, as shown by reality's inexorable advance toward fulfillment based on integrative unity.

Notwithstanding the fact that prevailing social norms, models and organizations often tend to corrupt both young and old, raising questions about the apparent triumph of evil, integrative unity never loses control. In fact, unity passes on the spark of consistency to every new person born and constantly provides each person, group and society with the opportunity to exercise genuine consistency.

These seeds grow in sound networks and ultimately defeat evil in personal and social life, contributing to the fulfillment of individuals and reality.~

CHAPTER FOUR

DEVIATING FROM CONSISTENCY

A. Challenging Integrative Unity

1. Obeying fragments instead of unity

a. Seeking to replace reality

Individuals may reject their vocation of exercising genuine consistency, trying –as sorcerer’s apprentices– to usurp the absolute power of unity, as if they could control reality with absolute power. They may, for instance, idealize competition and economic, technological, scientific and political success. They may seek to replace reality with artificial substitutes and let themselves be controlled by contradictory, undisciplined impulses, instead of following unity which integrates and builds reality.

Arrogance goes against reality and its source, consistency, by attempting to base everything on ego. *It results in the isolation and detachment of individuals who are punished by being denied the benefits*

of life, truth and goodness derived from integrative unity. Arrogance leads to materialism, hedonism and savage competition. It is inconsistent, since it refuses to insert achievements in the system of reality and attempts to know, decide, act and advance without the support of genuine consistency, the only true source of human dignity and fulfillment.

b. Spurious attempts to overcome feelings of insecurity and illegitimacy

Fragments which are treated as absolute answers or panaceas reflect misguided human attempts to achieve omnipotence by building modern-day Towers of Babel which try to distract attention to avoid facing reality. To do this, they idealize pleasure, power, money and prestige. When these panaceas do not produce the expected results, people often insist upon adhering to them, merely increasing the dose (quantity, intensity or speed) of their delusion in a futile attempt to compensate for its unsatisfactory results. This is combined with lies –based on spurious consistency– which try to conceal contradictions in a frantic attempt to replace what is irreplaceable, escape the laws of reality and compete against nature.

Ephemeral, momentary successes are improperly taken as a demonstration of the value of the particular panacea adopted. This false belief is reinforced by reciprocal complicity and complacency, through unsound social norms which idealize pleasure, money, power and prestige.

c. Not respecting reality and all its implications

If people let themselves be trapped by fragments and impulses, they cheat themselves, deluding themselves into believing that they are omnipotent. They fail to recognize their own limitations and become slaves to their impulses, desperately running from one frustration to the next.

All aspects, relations and implications contained within reality deserve to be respected and placed where they belong within the system of reality supported by integrative unity, the source of all variety and basis for all life, fulfillment, goodness, truth and happiness.

Only unity allows people to understand reality, adhere to it and act consequently; this is a liberating process which allows people to fully and freely use their own capacities, contributing to their own fulfillment and that of others.¹

d. Losing freedom by yielding to impulses

Many people mistakenly believe that they exercise freedom when they reject reality and integrative unity by catering to impulses and personal interests. In fact, these contribute to fulfillment only to the extent that they are mastered, guided and cultivated.

e. Challenging consistency by denying intelligence and freedom

When people ascribe excessive importance to themselves or to their impulses, passions and ambitions, they fail to respect reality and harm themselves and others.

They fail to engage in the necessary effort to establish consistent or harmonious relations among parts of reality, and this, in turn, prevents people from respecting and contributing to others and their fulfillment. As such, it denies the quality of intelligence and free will, which connects everything to integrative unity.

When people attempt to replace consistency by the idols of ego and passions, they lose the ability to respect, love and support other people. They waste their capacity for consistency, intelligence and freedom.

f. Violation of purity

Human beings, as opposed to non-rational animals, can freely and consciously choose to adhere to reality and integrative unity. They may choose to embrace a pure approach which includes all aspects and beings.

If they attempt to displace reality and unity, they follow deviant and dysfunctional paths which obscure and violate the systematic organization of reality to which they belong. In doing so, they blur their own being, falsely giving themselves authority to arbitrarily privilege certain fragments and neglect other aspects and parts of reality.

They resort to spurious consistency, which leads to relativism and subjectivism; they embrace theories such as Marxism and Freudian psychoanalysis which seek to justify decisions to replace consistency and follow impulses by denying the value and authenticity of morals and virtue, treating these as if they were window dressings for impulses and material factors, such as the sexual impulse and relations of production.

Temporary contradictions and deviations are overcome by unity and reality, which lead to complete purity. Unity does not seek anything for itself, since it is the source of everything and creates balance among all the parts and aspects of reality.

g. Theories using consistency against consistency; death of freedom

Approaches characterized by spurious consistency assume that morality is based on privileging certain dimensions: for Marxists, morality is reduced to relations of production; for Freudians, morality is subordinated to the sublimation of sexual impulses. In both cases, no objective value is given to morality. However, the capacity for consistency continually reminds people of the existence of objective and suprahuman laws and principles. If people use their knowledge of such laws and principles to serve base impulses and fragments, they fall into the trap of spurious consistency, which is contrary to genuine consistency. In such an event, certain impulses are controlled in order to indulge other, disorderly impulses, thereby preventing balanced human fulfillment. Pseudo-consistent theories do not place moral obstacles to disorder, contradiction or the tyranny of impulses, nor do they build moral roads for human fulfillment.

If people do not exercise genuine consistency in order to master and guide impulses, ensuring that they advance the fulfillment of all individuals and reality, they become prisoners of their own impulses. Whereas mastered impulses are the corner stones of fulfillment, unmastered impulses are headstones indicating the death of human freedom. Unmastered impulses reveal a failure to humbly submit oneself to reality and the capricious redefinition of morality. By not submitting themselves to genuine consistency, which is the law of reality and the tool of integrative unity, people fall into contradictions. They turn to spurious consistency to justify and explain their actions, appealing to high principles to consecrate injustice, corruption and inefficiency. This can be observed in modern societies where, under the flag of democracy and human rights, the weakest members of society –children, the mentally ill, the elderly, unborn children, the poor and the sick– are allowed to be exploited and harmed.²

Pseudo-consistent theories are attractive insofar as they promise to save people from the effort and sacrifice required to master impulses and to give themselves completely to unity and reality. They contend that it is acceptable to yield to immediate gratifications, instead of subordinating impulses so that they freely contribute to building the marvelous construction of reality, goodness and truth. Pseudo-consistent theories make bad business, changing reality into fiction and foresaking the only true path to fulfillment and happiness. They use components of order to serve disorder, pitting consistency against consistency, resulting in increased deviation and perversion. Their vain attempts to escape reality bring failure and frustration and create a vicious circle of increased deviation and increased frustration.

h. Sacrifice to serve impulses

If people sacrifice themselves to satisfy immediate impulses or deferred gratifications, they forego the opportunity to contribute to the fulfillment of people and reality. Similarly, if they concentrate on satisfying ego, vanity, avarice or jealousy, or if they become obsessed with ambitions of power or revenge or refined forms of hedonism, they challenge reality and integrative unity.³

The goals they strive for are inferior and contain an underlying disdain for people and reality; by pursuing these goals, people waste their time building modern-day equivalents of the Tower of Babel.

Fulfillment is served by abandoning anything that deviates and distracts people from adhering to reality and humanity, since it requires people to give themselves fully and unconditionally to others and to reality as a whole.

i. Arrogance

Arrogance represents a rebellion against reality and does not bring freedom but slavery, since it renounces the need to exercise genuine consistency and fails to see unity underlying all existing beings. As a result, arrogant individuals fail to shape their desires, feelings and actions in accordance with genuine consistency.

They refuse to follow the model of integrative unity and the related values of being, truth and goodness.

They ignore and disdain the all-encompassing system of reality, overlooking and scorning the interconnectedness of all beings through integrative unity, which provides everything with meaning and existence and with which all human beings are linked in their thoughts, beliefs, feelings and actions.

By forsaking their capacity for consistency, and therefore their freedom and intelligence, people choose to blindly accept the compulsion of fragments, impulses and immediate concerns. In doing so, their actions reveal disdain for being, truth, goodness and fulfillment.

Individuals detach themselves from reality by giving themselves to fragments and partialities, without seeing that partial truths, when improperly handled, become harmful falsehoods.

Consistency and freedom elevate people above fragments and immediate concerns, teaching them how to submit their ego and impulses (and other fragments) to the cause of advancing the fulfillment of reality and people, eschewing privileges and treating each person and part as it deserves to be treated, respecting the relations among all components of reality derived from integrative unity.

j. The challenge of perversion vs. mastering impulses; unsound social norms and media; business of corrupting people

When people are primarily motivated by the desire to serve impulses and spurious personal interests, they fail to exercise their capacity for consistency properly. They exploit others and themselves and thereby frustrate their mission and vocation to freely contribute to the infallible action of reality and unity, including the fulfillment of reality and all people. They fail to resist the temptations of immediate gratification, and this impedes them from looking at broader, long-term implications which acknowledge and respect the position of each being within the whole.

At the same time, the temptation of disorderly impulses provides people with an opportunity to freely choose to submit themselves and all their assets and resources to the system of reality. These gifts are destined to serve reality and unity, as symbolized by the biblical offering of the just Abel. The temptation of impulses which invite human beings to depart from the system of reality to which they belong, encouraging them to replace consistency with ego and caprice, is symbolized by the fruit of the Tree of Science of Good and Evil. By giving in to the temptation of impulses, people lose their opportunity to exercise genuine consistency, thus violating their own being and mission in life. Temptation touches all people, but individuals respond to it in different ways, either dominating impulses and submitting them to the system of reality or being dominated by them and renouncing reality. This is the challenge of freedom.

Often social norms, theories, doctrines and the media try to justify and legitimate destructive orientations. For example, movies and television excite and gratify the public with perverse scenes of exploitation and violence, and they focus excessively on seductions, rapes, corruptions and other perversions, which depict victims who self-destructively accept being exploited and who cooperate with their abusers, with blood and passion. In this way, the media tries to play upon the morbid curiosity and impulses of the public –making the public its accomplice– and encourages people to take perverse pleasure in the damage and destruction of human beings (sadism and masochism), as in the Roman circus.

Instead of stimulating consistency, intelligence, will, freedom and love, and instead of teaching people to master impulses so as to serve truth, goodness and the fulfillment of people and reality, unsound social norms encourage the disorderly satisfaction of impulses and deviations which only exist to be mastered as raw material for goodness.

Instead of encouraging people to solve such challenges with consistency and presenting sound models that deserve to be imitated, the media presents destructive and self-destructive actions as natural, frequent, normal, attractive, desirable and legitimate. This destructive action especially takes advantage of the young, weak and defenseless, as well as those who lack the support of family social norms and reference groups, since these are important defenders against harmful influences from individuals who make a business out of corrupting others as well as themselves, in all kinds of deviations. They build thick curtains so that their victims cannot see reality, unity, truth, and goodness clearly.

Such social norms and interaction hinder fulfillment and privilege ego, impulses and fragments. In doing so, they challenge unity, reality, truth and goodness. They defy existence and place lies above truth, hatred above love, evil above goodness and death above life.

2. Denying the existence of high ideals; spurious "firm" reference point

a. Considering egoism as universal and legitimate motivation

Often people surrender to impulses instead of serving reality integrated by unity. At the same time, they sense the need for a firm reference point, and this causes them to spuriously attempt to legitimize their actions. Toward this end, they try to deny and impugn the existence of behaviors inspired by higher values, claiming that such behaviors are only facades for basic egoism and the search for personal satisfaction (instead of killing bothersome witnesses as Herod did with John the Baptist). They deny the existence of high ideals and transcendent values. They assume that people are more interested in the attraction and gratification of impulses than in loving others as well as themselves and working for the benefit of all. From this spurious perspective, something is good if it serves egoistic interest and produces pleasure; if it does not, it is bad. Yet the willingness to blindly follow impulses and the obsession with self-interest harm other people as well as individuals themselves.

Loving oneself is not egoism. Egoism implies not loving others and oneself. Love entails concern for the needs of others and oneself and for the balanced development and fulfillment of all their dimensions; as such, love requires impulses to be mastered. Instead egoism only cares for the demands of impulses and appetites.⁴

b. Considering that things are good because they are desired, and no high motives exist; voice of conscience

Individuals who consider something is good because they happen to desire it effectively renounce their capacity for consistency and submit to the tyranny of impulses.⁵ This involves applying spurious consistency, cheating oneself and others, falsely legitimizing this renunciation of higher, transcendent goals and giving oneself to lower-level impulses instead of mastering them. It turns on its head the actual fact that what is good and deserves to be loved and served is reality and fulfillment, based on integrative unity. It spurns people's capacity to discover, adhere and contribute to what is good by tempting them to search for goodness through the distorted lens of caprices and impulses. The only proper perspective derives from integrative unity, which makes reality.

Individuals who consider that something is good because they happen to desire it effectively award supreme value to self-centered and partial interests, such as economic and political factors.⁶ Individuals who focus exclusively on social relations, also fall into this trap.⁷ In all these cases, individuals strive above all to maximize their personal pleasure, sacrificing reason to passions and they devote themselves to this egotistic goal.⁸ In assuming that the things they desire are therefore good, people capriciously fail to fully consider the system of reality and all its aspects; instead, they compulsively stick to fragments, especially ego and impulses. By submitting to their impulses, people renounce their ability to freely exercise genuine consistency. They give in to impulses and let themselves be led astray, refusing to listen to the calls of higher principles and values.

Effort and sacrifice are required in order to adhere to reality and work for the fulfillment of all its constituent parts, including all people. People must defend against mutual complacency and complicity, as manifested in pseudo-consistent theories which confuse goodness with caprice, desire or impulse. If anything which is desired is good, simply because a person desires it, the concept of goodness loses its value: it does not help people to distinguish the relative quality or value of various paths or actions and does not provide a sound basis of rational motivation for choosing among them.

However, all people are endowed through their capacity for consistency with a "conscience" which enables them to discern a higher order above human caprices. Even individuals who deny this higher order appeal to higher principles in order to justify their actions and choices, contradicting themselves by using spurious consistency in order to escape from genuine consistency.⁹

Many modern individuals, groups and societies share social norms and doctrines which assume that human beings are only motivated by bad, egoistic and base incentives and goals.¹⁰ These social norms and doctrines only acknowledge the attraction of impulses and not the capacity for mastering them for the sake of higher ends. These ends are the basis of any and all human, social and cultural advancements, including those in the fields of education, health, arts, ethics, science and technology, as well as everything which contributes to the fulfillment of people and reality. Social norms and doctrines which include a pessimistic view of human nature lead people to act accordingly, discouraging them from embracing sound, positive and constructive goals, inclinations and feelings. Social norms become stimuli for evil instead of goodness, encouraging people to look to material goals (money, power, pleasure) as panaceas. Machiavelli expressed some of these pathological assumptions at the beginning of the sixteenth century.¹¹ This explains why many technological, scientific and material advancements do not lead to real human progress, since they are not dedicated to serving the fulfillment of people and reality.

The idea that only evil is possible may appease certain consciences by spuriously closing their eyes to truth and giving them an excuse for not attempting what they assume to be impossible.

However, the "voice of conscience" continually reminds people that there is a path to truth and goodness and allows them to recognize that human beings are not fatally destined to evil. Indeed, even those who deny the existence of truth, goodness and justice become irritated if somebody denies the truth or correctness of their statements.

c. Aberrations and frustration derived from efforts to escape consistency

Individuals always face contradictory but attractive temptations; they are free to embrace truth and goodness or the opposite. They gain a true sense of fulfillment when they choose the first road, since they can take comfort in accomplishing their mission in life (and the mission of every living being), which is to contribute to the fulfillment of all people and all parts of reality. The road of truth and goodness brings peace and happiness, whereas the road of temptation brings frustration, anxiety, desperation, emptiness and aggression. These negative outcomes derive from efforts to replace integrative unity, truth and goodness with fragments. They produce destructive vices, such as unhealthy competition and rivalry, which allow fragments to prevail over the system of reality

as a whole and integrative unity. This distorts reality, arbitrarily privileging ego, impulses, fashions, material factors and other fragments and ignoring other dimensions which are crucial for human fulfillment and the fulfillment of reality, such as close family ties, spiritual, emotional and interpersonal values and unconditional love.

Once integrative unity is rejected as people's firm point of reference, any aberration, cruelty or perversion can be called desirable and good and can be argued to deserve praise and admiration. Judgments lose meaning and value, degenerating into relativism and fantasy as people fail to consider the place which integrative unity gives to each being and aspect within the system of reality. The destructive, harmful results which inevitably flow from aberrations demonstrate that only integrative unity is the basis of being, truth and goodness.¹² Life, truth and goodness inexorably fulfill themselves, through the reciprocal enrichment among beings who contribute to the fulfillment of themselves and of others, integrated within the all-encompassing system of reality.

d. Spurious superiority: Improper insertion in reality

Beings can only fulfill themselves by contributing to the system of reality – outside of which no beings, goodness or truth exist – and thus properly inserting themselves in it. Their insertion is made possible by integrative unity, which creates the conditions which allow beings to exist, fulfill themselves and accomplish their ends. Nothing desirable, good or happy may derive from another source. People may insert themselves into the system of reality by exercising their capacity for consistency, which brings them closer to integrative unity and the source of fulfillment. This allows them to become part of the triumph of unity, which assigns each being and aspect its proper place within the system of reality.

Failure to adhere to the system of reality hinders human fulfillment and prevents people from being aware of their real position within the whole of reality; people cannot see their true mission and limitations and therefore become frustrated. No good can exist outside the integration of reality by unity. Individuals can freely contribute to goodness by relating to reality in the way unity relates to variety. Goodness and fulfillment derive from reciprocal support and reinforcement; contradiction and defiance of reality lead to reciprocal destruction, evil and alienation. Frustration and failure punish inconsistent deviations, just as fulfillment and happiness reward consistent behavior.

Hedonism and the obsessive search for pleasure lead to failure and frustration, which leave people feeling empty. The system of reality

inexorably fulfills itself and punishes deviations. The same result occurs when people privilege a fragment or egotistic concern, without properly inserting it into the framework of all-encompassing reality. The exercise of consistency allows people to liberate themselves from the prison of impulses and to elevate themselves by fulfilling the various dimensions of human beings. The search for excellence may be pursued in a consistent or inconsistent manner.¹³ If people strive to excel only in order to satisfy impulses, narrow targets or fragments, such as the egotistic desire for superiority or the desire for war, pleasure money, power and prestige, they neglect spiritual, interpersonal and family dimensions. When this occurs, they do not really serve excellence, since they fail to contribute to their own and other people's fulfillment: they only serve failure and frustration.

By adhering to the law of the integration of variety by unity, people learn to support and enrich their own lives as well as other people's by contributing to the fulfillment of all, treating everyone and everything according to its true merit. This derives from supporting the true nature of each being and acknowledging its relation to unity and to other beings. People worsen their own situation and harm others around them when they claim that a person, and not integrative unity, presides over the relation among beings and deserves superiority over beings. Such an assertion ignores and violates human beings' true mission and capacities, including consistency, which are shared with others and derived from integrative unity. The desire for superiority (over other persons) is incompatible with human beings' mission and opportunity for fulfillment because it violates the law of the integration of reality.¹⁴ To achieve fulfillment, people must acknowledge the humble and dignified place of each person, properly channeling the "great upward impulse" which all human beings share.¹⁵ Otherwise, when people attempt to replace unity with ego and fail to exercise their capacity for consistency, they experience failure and frustration. They sink into blind dependence on impulses and fragments and succumb to the attractions of materialism and immediate gratification.

People harm themselves when they deviate from integrative unity, since they deny the system they belong to, which is like removing the ground from under their feet. This happens when people try to exploit and dominate others, assuming that they deserve more than others or are superior to them. These actions and assumptions signal a rupture with the balance of the system of relations of reality. Fulfillment is a shared action, which is nourished by enjoying the fulfillment of reality, others and oneself; superiority only characterizes unity and not reality

or its constituent parts. Therefore, when people try to usurp the place which properly belongs to unity, preoccupying themselves with “relative deprivation” or relative satisfaction or superiority, they deprive themselves of the opportunity to find real fulfillment and happiness. By comparing themselves with others, instead of identifying with them and contributing to their fulfillment, they fail to see that others are equally worthy and must also be served if individuals themselves are to find meaning and fulfillment.¹⁶

3. Tyranny of impulses: egoism, contradictions, unsound social norms, vicious circles, career

a. Unmastered impulses, contradiction, frustration desperately and spuriously replacing absolute

When people fail to master their impulses, they close their minds, hearts and actions to truth, goodness and the joy that derives from them. At the societal level, this leads to the spread of crime, violence, drug abuse, mental illness, the breakdown of the family, conflicts and self-destruction. Only if impulses are mastered by consistency can they contribute to the fulfillment of all beings and reality, serving higher ends and values. Otherwise, they contradict reality and challenge the harmonious relations which integrative unity establishes among beings. Any satisfaction which appears to come from unmastered impulses is bound to be ephemeral, and illusory; instead of real, deep and lasting satisfaction, people find themselves tied to immediate preoccupations and partial fragments. These lead to a feeling of emptiness, in contrast to the unlimited potential for relating to the absolute of integrative unity, in goodness and truth, which is available to every person.

Paradoxically, the more people seek to satisfy unmastered impulses, the greater their dissatisfaction. This triggers a desperate attempt to reduce dissatisfaction by embracing fragments (money, drugs, pleasure, prestige, violence, perversions, etc.) in larger quantities or at a grater speed. Instead of relief, of course, this produces greater frustrations, confusion, disorder and self-destruction. Indeed, all efforts based on spurious consistency are doomed because they cannot satisfy human beings’ need and vocation for the absolute, which can only be satisfied through the road of consistency, which leads to the fulfillment of goodness and truth by respecting the depth, balance and integration of all aspects and parts of reality, as created by integrative unity, the only absolute.

b. Assumption of egoistic motives and emotional insecurity

If people believe that others are only friendly to them in order to serve personal interests, they will fail to enjoy the emotional security deriving from knowing that one is loved for him or herself, and that this love is not conditioned by egoism.

Questions about other people's motives leads individuals to believe that it is common, acceptable and even desirable to use others; giving oneself unconditionally to others, on the other hand, comes to be interpreted as a foolish gesture. Such a perspective is detrimental since it prevents people from realizing that deep and lasting happiness derives from giving oneself to others. By defining egoism as a universal and unavoidable motivation, it is transformed into something legitimate and natural. At the same time, unconditional love comes to be viewed as unrealistic and disadvantageous as opposed to egoism at the expense of others.

Negative views on human motivation, in short, cultivate unsound social norms and interaction, which in turn reinforce such negative views in a vicious circle.

c. Spurious consistency in social norms and models

Spurious consistency gives rise to social norms which ignore reality and integrative unity in order to justify yielding to impulses which contradict reality, unity, truth and goodness. These social norms fuel the illusion that unmastered impulses can provide absolute answers and consequently full satisfaction. Underlying these social norms is the assumption that people are subject to changing fashions and changing definitions of desirability and legitimacy rather than solid, stable values which derive from the global framework of reality integrated by unity.

In order to counteract such a tendency, it is helpful to draw attention to the total framework and to integrative unity –considerations which are ignored by spurious consistency–. People should also look for examples of behaviors and social norms based on genuine consistency, that is, sound and positive models which deserve to be imitated. Sound social norms and models show that it is not only possible to give without egoism, but that this is a common behavior which is vital for achieving the fulfillment and happiness of others and oneself.

It is necessary to show that giving unconditionally is the human behavior which is truly most deserving and which can even overcome obstacles created by prevailing social norms that define such behavior as impossible, hypocritical and disadvantageous.

4. Spurious self-justification

a. Interfering with the voice of conscience

In order to glorify materialism and egoism, spurious consistency hides underlying contradictions, discouraging people from choosing and analyzing their goals from the framework of total reality. Spurious consistency compulsively fixes artificial borders and thus ignores the “voice of conscience,” that is, the voice of consistency, which draws attention to the integration of everything in existence by unity. Ignoring the “voice of conscience” allows people to anesthetize themselves from the pain deriving from contradictions and thus counteracts the sound effects of drawing attention in order to overcome them. However, such anesthesia is never total, and contradiction continues to disturb people through anxiety, cross-pressures and conflicts.

b. Unsound models for self-legitimation and the media

The media often present violence, perversion, exploitation, uncontrolled ambitions and other vices as reflections of reality and implies that they are desirable and legitimate, as if all human beings were dishonest. Those behaving honestly are construed as hypocritical individuals who hide their dishonesty. Such underlying assumptions create a smoke screen which eases the pain of individuals who practice evil and falseness rather than goodness and truth and who would otherwise feel uncomfortable with the visible deficiencies of their approach. The media therefore act as an anesthetic which eliminates the stimulus for correction. They attempt to deny that there are people who are motivated by the desire for righteousness, truth and love, and whose unselfish actions reveal impartiality and disinterestedness. Virtue is discredited, as the media seek allies and accomplices for their deviant assumptions.

The unhealthy influence of the media is one of the ways through which unsound social norms, which provide fictitious legitimacy to improper behavior, are promoted, beginning with the premise that it is best to let oneself be led by one’s impulses. Many people do not do this as a part of a deliberate plan, but they nonetheless attack virtue as a means of legitimizing their own deviations, concluding that it is impossible for them (and for anybody) to be motivated by better, loftier ends. This is very harmful since people are strongly influenced by the social norms disseminated by the media, especially in movies and television, which depict and condone perverse behaviors. Observed behaviors (in reality

and in the media) are more influential than words; words are believed when they seem to be consistent with observed behaviors. Deviant images in the media tend to be contagious and lead to deviant, inconsistent behaviors in real life; this sets up a vicious circle whereby unsound social norms bias the media toward unsound images which in turn promote unsound social norms, contributing to social decay. Such vicious circles are counteracted by virtuous circles, which are supported through the dissemination of sound behaviors, social norms and models in the media and all other means of communication and interaction. Society needs to be aware of the conflicting tendencies at work and consciously choose to support virtuous circles instead of vicious ones.

c. Silencing the voice of conscience by denying virtue

Consistency is used against consistency when a system of lies is elaborated and used to legitimize deviations, stating that every human behavior is motivated by egoistic interests, sexual appetites or the desire for self-gratification, money, power, domination or prestige. Spurious consistency uses consistency to serve questionable ends rather than promoting adherence to reality, integrative unity, and humanity. By momentarily softening the voice of conscience or consistency (or interfering with it), spurious consistency enables people to temporarily avoid the healthy pain involved in discovering deviations and errors; as a result, it permits people to postpone making necessary corrections. As people close their eyes to the possibility of controlling their impulses and behaviors by submitting them to unrestricted consistency, they lose the opportunity to contribute to the fulfillment of people and reality. They describe sound behaviors in pejorative terms in order to discredit them, referring to repression, inhibition, rigidity, traditionalism, conservatism, puritanism and hypocrisy, as if these reflected lower, base motivations. Indeed, some contemporary theories contend that noble ideals are only a facade which hides common, base interests. Many people and the media enjoy denigrating virtuous people and take comfort from the false belief that genuine virtue does not exist. This allows them to give in to perverse impulses and still pretend that they are no worse than anyone else.¹⁷

d. Response of conscience to spurious consistency and guilt

The voice of conscience (consistency) shows people the contradiction involved in departing from consistency. Perceiving such contradictions gives rise to guilt feelings based on the awareness of evil and error. People need to find and focus on a firm reference point, rather than impulses;

this reference point is what should serve as the basis for choosing and analyzing appropriate ends and means.

Deviations involve using spurious consistency against consistency, manipulating premises and inferences instead of centering them in the framework of reality supported in unity.

However, even though people who exercise spurious consistency try to convince themselves of the legitimacy of deviations and contradictions, their voice of conscience constantly reminds them that deviations and contradictions are not legitimate.

Indeed, whether consciously or subconsciously, people realize the importance of a solid, firm basis. Without such a basis, they encounter suffering, frustration and unhappiness, even though they may respond inappropriately by intensifying their efforts to disqualify virtue, consistency, truth and goodness.

e. Contradiction, cheating reality and themselves

Individuals' efforts to justify narrow self-interest and denigrate virtue lead them to become slaves of their impulses, falling into excesses and seeking to justify them through spurious consistency.

They try to have their cake and eat it too, so to speak. Their actions become characterized by unilateralism and contradiction as they try to manipulate consistency on behalf of fragments and impulses instead of respecting all aspects of reality in a balanced fashion, according to unity which creates and integrates them, linking them together in an all-encompassing network of causal relations.

Such contradiction leads to failure, frustration and self-destruction, which draws attention to the futility of contradictions and the error of privileging some aspects of reality over others; at the same time, failure and frustration encourage and invite people to correct the error of their ways.¹⁸

People are encouraged to realize that individuals who try to cheat reality actually only cheat themselves, while those who do not attempt to cheat reality are freer, happier and more fulfilled. Freedom, happiness and fulfillment result from respect for all aspects of reality, as all individuals and beings support and reinforce each other.

People should consequently learn to give as well as receive as part of a harmonious, balanced relation with others and reality as a whole. They need to overcome and surmount contradictions by mastering impulses instead of letting impulses master them.¹⁹

5. Dynamics of inconsistency

a. Attraction of the immediate

Individuals are enticed by the temptation to focus on themselves and their immediate world, giving themselves over to impulses and immediate concerns, ignoring the immense whole of reality integrated by unity, to which they belong.

Unity requires effort and sacrifice to discover reality, to adhere to it and to contribute to its fulfillment. Without respecting and adhering to reality and integrative unity, it is not possible to share in their benefits or to assume one's proper place within the order of reality to which one belongs.

If people let themselves be guided by immediate concerns and impulses, they cannot exercise consistency in a genuine manner; they cannot relate to unity and reality as unity relates to them, respecting all beings and relations.

By giving in to the allure of immediate concerns and impulses, individuals fail to express necessary gratitude and loyalty for the benefits they receive. They do not learn to devote themselves to others and to the wider system of reality and they therefore are unable to contribute to their fulfillment. They fail to integrate partial and immediate concerns into the system of total reality, which can only be properly understood through the capacity for consistency, which connects fragments to integrative unity.

b. Social complicity

The atmosphere of permissiveness toward impulses and immediate gratification conveys a false sense of legitimacy based on spurious consistency, which condones hedonism, egotism, vanity and arrogance. For instance, permissive social norms teach that sex is a means of using another person in order to derive personal pleasure rather than a means for loving and giving to spouses and children.

In the same way, social norms which legitimize drug or alcohol abuse, violence, hatred, etc. are based on spurious consistency and reject the true values of reality and integrative unity.

Instead of supporting and reinforcing higher values through reciprocal praise, unsound social norms strive to legitimize contradiction, laxness and inconsistency. They build criminal and perverse complicities, as in sado-masochistic relations.

B. Implementing Deviation from Consistency

1. Treating means as ends

a. Departing from criteria deriving from consistency

The deviations from unrestricted consistency and attachment to fragments rather than unity manifest themselves in various departures from the criteria deriving from unrestricted consistency.

These criteria, which were discussed in Chapter 3, include truth, goodness, self-dedication, respect, love, depth, balance, and related criteria.

b. Treating material means as ends; the Midas effect

When people submit to the control of impulses and immediate concerns, they become obsessed with them. They also idealize material means—money, technology, computers, television, automobiles, jets, etc.—as well as the appetites which they satisfy. At the same time, people neglect spiritual ends and do not work for the fulfillment of people and reality.²⁰

In fact, they interfere with fulfillment instead of contributing to it.²¹ This leads to the “Midas effect,” since everything that people with such an approach touch is poisoned and destroyed.²² For example, drug addicts steal and kill in order to acquire drugs for poisoning and destroying themselves, thus feeding their own frustration and desperation. This also happens in the case of rich people who deprive others in order to accumulate riches, even though their wealth brings them only anxiety and makes them feel trapped and unhappy.

In this way, means become harmful instead of contributing to the end of the fulfillment of people and reality. Individuals thus caught may be liberated from their self-imposed prison through the genuine use of their capacity for consistency.

c. Damages derived from not subordinating means to deserving ends

Material success and efficiency are means which must be subordinated to the end of the fulfillment of people and reality, or they will lead to failure. Not everything that is possible, efficacious or successful is good; these things can be used to promote harmful, self-

destructive and criminal ends, if they deviate from adherence to integrative unity, reality and all people and parts within reality.²³ If pleasure, possessions, consumption, power and vanity are treated as ultimate ends, they lead to intoxication.

When fragments, impulses and immediate concerns are not placed in the proper perspective, they cannot serve the ultimate ends of human fulfillment, peace and happiness.

People must adopt a framework which focuses on reality founded in unity; otherwise, they not only harm others through their tendency toward exploitation and domination, but they also deprive themselves.

They also infect others (and themselves) by spreading dangerous models which create and condone egoistic and hedonistic aspirations.

In this way, both exploiters and exploited suffer harm and self-destruction in a vicious circle of reciprocal support for not adhering to ends which deserve respect and support, namely, reality and the unity on which it is based (source of consistency and derived principles), which constitute the true source of fulfillment for people and reality, in truth and goodness.²⁴

d. False perception of superiority of the rich and powerful

Control over scarce resources conveys a false feeling of superiority and power;²⁵ it also leads those who are dominated to accept the perceptions and values imposed by the individuals and groups who dominate them. A kind of "gold fever" for money, power, prestige and pleasure is created, with the high demand for these things taken to prove their value. This tempts people to allow their impulsive desire for these things to overcome them, leading to corruption and unfulfillment in both those who are successful and those who are not.

Paradoxically, successful people often devote their energies to achieving that which harms and destroys them. This is the case of the drug addict, who robs and even kills to obtain drugs which will kill him; it applies to the businessman who becomes more unhappy with each new cent he adds to his treasure.

In this context, hope derives from the fact that the hardships that reality metes out as punishment for such deviations may help waken people from error.

Reality's inexorable progress ensures that hardships will persist and be intensified until people correct their deviations by acknowledging the self-destructive effects of excessive or inappropriate use of means such as impulses, fragments, riches, power, drugs, etc.

e. Maladjustment of means and ends in education; key issues neglected

By focusing on the goal of contributing to the fulfillment of people and reality, educational institutions are able to develop habits and social norms which contribute to such fulfillment. However, government officials are frequently too preoccupied with materialistic ends to pay sufficient attention to ultimate ends. For instance in Argentina, debate over educational policies is often not centered around the balanced consideration of ultimate ends and the most appropriate means for achieving them. Government, teachers' unions, political parties, and other interest groups seem more interested in promoting their sectarian interests than in producing substantive reforms which could contribute to the fulfillment of students, society and reality. As a result, several vital issues are neglected, including clarification of people's needs and analysis of how education may help satisfy them. In addition, there is a common failure to clarify and distinguish the positive and negative effects of various educational alternatives as well as dangers and the means to counteract them, including conditions and means for enhancing the quality of social norms and decisions, protecting people, families and ethical norms, and helping to insert problems and decisions in the system of reality. Because of insufficient attention to ultimate ends, problems are not solved with balance, depth and self-mastery; the role of formal and informal education, interaction, reference groups and the media is not fully analyzed.

Genuine consistency is not made explicit, nor is it distinguished from spurious consistency. There is no teaching of how to critically analyze social norms and models or how to improve them by combining sound components and weeding out negative ones so that they become roads to human fulfillment and happiness.

Within the field of education, the lack of a dominant consistent orientation tends to lead people to neglect key issues (with special application to Argentina):

- First, the importance of research and teaching at the graduate level is not acknowledged, even though this plays a vital role in overcoming excessive dependency on foreign theories, methods, research, bibliography and technology.

- Second, education is not integrated with the working world, even though this is important for teaching people how to apply the lessons they learn in the classroom so as to best exercise their capacities and take care of their needs. For instance, a great many high school students who will not go on to college nonetheless prepare themselves for university study instead of preparing for the jobs which they will need to face as soon as they finish high school.

- Third, considerations of equality and equity in education –for example, increasing the access of poor people to education, instead of subsidizing the education of the rich– are generally disregarded.

- Fourth, research, planning and evaluation are not adjusted to various contexts and circumstances, so that there is no ongoing process of improvement for various regions and social sectors.

- Fifth, research, planning and evaluation typically fail to consider all human dimensions.

- Sixth, the existing educational framework does not stress the importance of individual responsibility, initiative and participation in promoting human fulfillment; instead, people receive the general message that other people or the state are responsible for promoting human fulfillment or that advances will automatically result with the passage of time, with luck or the intervention of charismatic leaders, or through various kinds of panaceas.

- Seventh, people are not taught to use their potential influence over authorities, leaders and the media wisely, even though this is critical for contributing to the common good by improving the quality of decision making and supporting and reinforcing sound social norms, seeds, networks, and organizations.

- Eighth, the existing educational framework does not use facts and examples as it should, employing them to teach people how to face and solve problems with sound social norms rather than encouraging them to rely on formulas which are detached from reality.

- Ninth, education is generally not oriented toward improving the quality of decisions and social norms, so that it misses the opportunity to promote human fulfillment and quality of life and to teach people to employ their resources and capacities optimally on behalf of themselves and their environment.

- Tenth, the educational system does not teach people to analyze the causes and consequences of social norms and models or to examine how they influence thoughts, desires and behaviors.

- Eleventh, it does not show people how to improve social norms and models by identifying and combining positive components through free decisions and “social norming” in order to contribute to human fulfillment and wield a positive influence over oneself and others.

- Twelfth, it does not teach people how to avoid being led astray by prevailing fashions and materialistic models which cause them to neglect spiritual, family and interpersonal values.

- Thirteenth, the educational system does not promote positive images of oneself and reality or encourage people to act consistently with them.

- Fourteenth, it does not encourage people to master their impulses and appetites.

- Fifteenth, it does not promote the development of positive attitudes and virtues –adhering to consistency, truth, goodness and human fulfillment–.

- Finally, the educational system does not promote the balanced and harmonious development and fulfillment of all dimensions of people and the environment.

Neglect of these issues illustrates how social norms and actions tend to deviate from nominal goals. People often do not sufficiently apply self-criticism, and they neglect what should be the primary goal of contributing to the fulfillment of students and society. Instead, they concern themselves with more personal, narrow interests.

f. Attachment to formal rather than substantive ends; bureaucracy

Even people and groups which espouse the highest ends –spiritual, cultural, religious and educational as well as those related to solidarity, health care, the environment, freedom, etc.– often tend to privilege external forms above substance, demanding acceptance without questioning, even though this may run counter to the fulfillment of people and reality. By privileging external forms above substance and blindly accepting bureaucratic practices, routines and rituals, people fail to respect reality in its complexity. They tend to treat social norms and rituals as if they were sacred, without critically analyzing them and flexibly adapting them to goals under changing and different circumstances. People tend to follow the judgments, opinions and practices of those who hold power, riches, prestige or charisma. They privilege fragments and forms instead of looking at them as instruments for serving the system of reality to which they belong and integrative unity. They do not focus on substantive ends and appropriate means for achieving them through consistency. They refuse to engage in the effort and sacrifice required to respect all aspects of reality, including their relations and changes. Instead, they try to replace integrative unity with an artificial and fictitious security spuriously based on their own power, prestige, privilege, and social norms, and they adopt superficial, formal ends which confuse what is their interest or caprice with what is best. Bureaucracies obey rituals and routines without questioning their implications, resulting in pathological paralysis, thwarting the mental openness of consistency and rejecting the kind of modifications and innovations necessary for adjusting to reality and contexts.

g. Serving lower ends with society's resources

Many government offices and non-governmental organizations are led by officials and bureaucrats who place their personal interests – and those of the groups they serve – above the goals of their organizations and the common good. They decide, act, debate and negotiate on this basis. They use their organizations to conform to prevailing fashions and accumulate prestige, riches and power. They thus serve fragments, impulses and appetites, instead of contributing to the fulfillment of people and reality. They fail to clarify and adhere to the ultimate ends of serving integrative unity, contributing to the fulfillment of people and reality and efficaciously applying means and resources to serve these ends.

2. Materialism

a. Assuming absolute power over possessions

Materialism inflates ego with the sensation of omnipotence, assuming absolute power over what people possess, consume or enjoy and treating material possessions as panaceas.²⁶ In doing so, materialism disregards the depth of being, goodness and truth which derive from integrative unity and are reflected in spiritual, family and interpersonal values and in the fulfillment of people and reality. By ignoring fundamental aspects of reality, people disregard their own being, which is part of reality and is defined by the relations governing reality. This prevents individuals from contributing to their own and other people's fulfillment and leads to severe damages and self-destruction by encouraging individuals to take on forces which they cannot control, as in the sorcerer's apprentice syndrome. For instance, where dominant social norms focus narrowly on economic factors, people are discouraged from giving themselves unconditionally to others and are taught not to enter into deep relationships based on genuine love and commitment.²⁷ In these societies, prevailing social norms foster shallow relationships based on the model of economic exchange, as reflected in the evolution of community integration.²⁸ The capacity for consistency enables people to know and adhere to the whole of reality, and denying any part of reality prevents individuals from realizing their potential to contribute to human fulfillment. This is why when people adopt materialistic goals (money, power, pleasure, impulses, prestige), they only find deep dissatisfaction and unfulfillment. They can never achieve satisfaction through these and their frustration will increase the more they achieve in the material realm.

Because of their endowment with the capacity for consistency, people have higher needs which can only be met through the absolute, solid foundation of integrative unity.²⁹

b. Material progress is neither absolute nor a panacea; invisible hand

It is wrong to believe that the invisible hand of market promotes the common good and equality through egoism and greed.³⁰ These attitudes harm those who adopt them, as well as others who suffer the consequences of behaviors based on them. Even the assumed benefit of material advancement is frustrated by systemic perversion, for instance through waste, conspicuous consumption, destruction of the environment, wars and drugs, all of which create superfluous and perverse needs and reinforce harmful behaviors through pathological social norms.

Therefore, efforts to achieve happiness and fulfillment through riches, power, success and pleasure amount to futile attempts to build personal kingdoms of absolute power, control and domination.

Only integrative unity is absolute, and the human capacity to influence reality through possessions or achievements is limited and ephemeral, as can be seen in the limits of the capacity of consumption.

The limits of nature show the need for adjusting oneself to laws which govern the harmony of the system of reality to which all people belong and which must be observed in order to achieve fulfillment and satisfaction.

When people search for absolute answers by seeking unlimited or excessive amounts of what is finite and limited, such as food, alcohol, drugs, power, money, pleasure or sex, nature punishes them with failure and frustration. This serves the educational function of drawing people's attention to the error of their ways and preventing them from going too far in their deviations and excesses.

Thus nature teaches that the need for fulfillment and happiness is not satisfied through egotistic and sensual pleasures but through consistency, which leads people to relate to reality according to integrative unity. The invisible hand of the market only takes care of one aspect or fragment of human needs.

c. Replacing the absolute with impulses and fragments; game

When people replace reality and unity with fragments or impulses, they are at least partially aware that doing so is spurious and contradictory and does not lead to fulfillment but to frustration. However, they often

attempt to compensate for their deficiencies by engaging in more of the same spurious and improper behavior, letting themselves be distracted and entertained by the very process, through the sensation of fighting, competing, advancing and winning, with the diffuse hope of ultimately achieving satisfaction. They are caught up in the excitement of competition, looking at everything as a game to be won, in a fantasy of self-sufficiency, domination and omnipotence.³¹ This functions as a smoke curtain which postpones full awareness of deficiencies and the need to correct them. In this way, people cheat themselves and each other, using fragments as indicators of the absolute, and as substitutes for it; they convince themselves of their own superiority and omnipotence and cater to the base desire for vain praise and gratification of the ego. They thus introduce disorder into material and spiritual realms.

d. Priority of material success and the “thousand-year empire”

If material achievements are not submitted to the spiritual goal of contributing to the fulfillment of people and reality, they are misleading and dangerous, as shown by the frustration which follows the seemingly irreversible success of powerful people.³² The “thousand-year empire” of Nazi Germany, which crumbled after only a few years, is a dramatic example. Material success is ephemeral; it distracts people from a balanced consideration of all aspects of reality, including both short-term and ultimate implications. There is a modern tendency in Third World societies to give priority to material and economic factors, with a corresponding emphasis on economic accumulation, industrialization, agricultural modernization, expansion of consumer demands, entrepreneurship, scientific and technological progress and integration in international markets as well as universal education and the extension of social services.³³

There is an accompanying tendency to consider material success as an indicator of human fulfillment and happiness, even though reality often indicates the opposite. Indeed, material success stimulates the neglect of spiritual dimensions related to goodness, truth and being and human factors tied to personal, family, interpersonal, emotional relations; these spiritual and human dimensions provide the true basis for fulfillment and happiness.³⁴

e. Unilateral materialism

Unilateral materialism refers to misguided attempts to find fulfillment and happiness through material riches, power, prestige and pleasure; these material goals are treated as panaceas, which means that people

refuse to see beyond the immediate and ignore the broader, spiritual dimensions of reality. Unilateral materialism attempts to spuriously replace reality and integrative unity, even though it is unity that provides a *raison d'être* for fragments and variety.

Materialism leads to insecurity, uncertainty, instability, failure, frustration and dissatisfaction; it triggers a desperate quest to achieve more, even though this inevitably fails to achieve the desired results.

Materialism also brings suffering due to its inherent contradictions, including the fact that accumulation of more possessions and material achievements leads to greater dependence rather than more freedom. This lead to feelings of emptiness, anxiety, solitude and irritation, as people try to counteract frustration by turning to and abusing drugs, alcohol, consumption, violence, passions and even suicide.³⁵

They also lose respect for themselves and others, making both the powerful and the dependent into prisoners; in doing so, they reject the harmonious insertion of people into the system of reality, as required by unrestricted consistency.³⁶

f. Treating material means as ends and frustration

When material means are treated as ends, they lead to failure and frustration.³⁷ Although money is a necessary means, if it is treated as an end, it becomes harmful.³⁸ The tendency to treat economic success as a panacea is an important cause of economic and social crises and triggers extreme, destabilizing changes in economic and social life.³⁹

Money, power, success and prestige are beneficial if they are placed in proper perspective and if they are used as part of a balanced approach for contributing to the fulfillment of people and reality. Otherwise, they corrupt both the powerful and the weak, who become accomplices and reinforce each other in a game of lust and servility which fosters exploitation and corruption.⁴⁰ If people devote their heart, energies and resources on behalf of material goals, treating them as if they were a great treasure, they only find destruction and frustration.⁴¹

Material objects serve human fulfillment if subordinated to integrative unity, which gives meaning to existence and makes the fulfillment of people and reality possible. If people strive to become absolute masters of things instead of dedicating themselves to people, reality and unity, and if they spuriously seek to derive security and satisfaction from this, they will only find failure and frustration. These undesirable outcomes, however, may encourage people to correct deviations and to sympathize consistently with reality, with themselves and with others.

g. The “poor rich man” and the example of King Midas

Individuals tend to think they can replace the laws of nature and of reality, which are reflected in family, interpersonal, spiritual and ethical values, with grotesque deformities deriving from their own will, caprices and impulses.⁴² Such insolence boomerangs, as can be observed in the failures and frustrations suffered by the rich, powerful and successful: indeed, anguish, irritation and frustration become greater the more individuals focus on (and achieve) money, power and success. Such punishments serve as warnings about the futility of efforts to replace reality, unity, and laws deriving from unity with artificial substitutes. Such observations show that economic, political and social success, when accompanied by arrogance, shallowness and overconfidence, make people prisoners instead of liberating them.

This can be illustrated by the paradox of the “poor rich man,” who is overwhelmed by his possessions, since he fails to master them by inserting them into reality where they belong. The “poor rich man” searches in vain for relief by hoarding his wealth or through excessive consumption, alcohol or drug abuse, etc. When these fail to produce satisfaction, he turns to aphrodisiacs, stimulants or other types of excesses and perversions; since he cannot increase consumption at the same pace that he increases his his possessions and wealth, this leads to desperation, which may culminate, in the worst case scenario, in mental illness and suicide.⁴³ This results in the inexorable action of powerful laws of reality, derived from unity, leading to the dramatic paradox that the more material possessions people have, the less their fulfillment, because their possessions and material wealth are not in harmony with reality. Wealthy individuals are therefore the least able to appreciate and enjoy what they have. Contrary to common beliefs, economic growth does not necessarily promote the general welfare or magically solve problems as a panacea; it often brings frustration and unhappiness, triggering feelings of relative deprivation and obsessive competitiveness as well as desperate efforts to satisfy insatiable, superfluous and perverse needs.

As in the example of King Midas, people discover that they are unable to possess things in an absolute way. Efforts to do so violate the law of integrative unity and are bound to end in failure. This results in frustration, as the genuine sources of human fulfillment are weakened, especially the spiritual, family and interpersonal aspects, solidarity and emotional stability and security.⁴⁴ The idea that individualism and egoism will magically lead to general well-being is false.⁴⁵ Individuals use and harm others only to frustrate themselves, destroying resources and causing the corruption and deterioration of their physical, social, cultural and ethical environment.⁴⁶

Materialism impregnates everything: for instance, in the field of education, more importance is given to school buildings than to developing social norms and habits which may lead to spiritual, cultural, social and ethical fulfillment and happiness.

These outcomes are sought through caprices and impulses, instead of making them possible through consistency, respecting reality, unity and derived laws. An expression of unilateralism and inefficacy in education is reflected in the lack of effort at health education and prevention, despite the fact that these are powerful tools for efficacious health policies.

The negative effects that result from a unilateral emphasis on economic concerns and material accumulation are illustrated by the experience of the fabulously wealthy Vanderbilt family and more particularly of the founder of the dynasty, Commodore Vanderbilt, who admitted that he had been obsessed with making money all his life.

Commodore Vanderbilt was admired for his material possessions. The Vanderbilts' summer home in Newport, Rhode Island, which had 250 rooms, is a monument to the inability of money, power, prestige and material success to buy personal happiness. In fact, the pursuit or accumulation of excessive material wealth harmed the Vanderbilts, just as it destroys all those who let themselves be seduced and controlled by material fragments.

The pursuit or accumulation of excessive material wealth causes insecurity, anxiety, preoccupation, irritation and unhappiness and wastes the opportunity individuals have been given to contribute to their own and other people's fulfillment, through consistency, which cultivates and develops spiritual, moral, family, interpersonal and cultural resources.⁴⁷ This demonstrates that the only sound and fulfilling relationship to means and possessions is a harmonious relationship, led by genuine consistency. Otherwise, possessions become poison. Depending on the attitude and approach people adopt toward possessions, they can be either poisonous or useful.

h. Destructive passion for gain and pleasure

In societies which exalt material and economic growth and hold it up as a panacea, the impulse of gain is privileged, encouraging people to believe that economic success will make them superior to others and will exempt them from other efforts and sacrifices required by goodness, truth and fulfillment of people and reality. They fail to realize that by behaving in this way, they retreat rather than advance.⁴⁸

The passion for gain prevents people from giving themselves unconditionally to others and to themselves (genuine love). Instead, dazzled by the allure of money, people sink into confusion and shallowness, stimulated by easy pleasures and prestige which can be bought with money. This prevents them from properly using their capacity for identifying the unifying links underlying reality and for seeing beyond the immediate; they forsake their capacity for adhering and contributing to reality and promoting their own fulfillment and that of others and of the total system of reality. In this way, the opportunity for embracing the true richness of life and existence is lost.

Life, reality, goodness, truth and value are displaced as the axis of unity is replaced by the passion for gain, that is, as a fragment or impulse is capriciously chosen as a substitute for the whole.

Fragments are privileged and integrative unity is ignored. Individuals do not identify with unity and do not relate to it and to other beings and aspects of reality as unity does; they cannot treat others (or themselves) as they deserve, in accordance with their reciprocal relationships, as created by unity.

When individuals privilege the passion for gain, they cannot enjoy the triumph of reality and integrative unity. They deny their own dignity and surrender to base impulses which exclude truth, goodness, fulfillment and happiness.

They exercise their capacity for consistency –with its interrelated dimensions of knowledge, will, freedom, affectivity and action– in a spurious manner, trying to maximize pleasure and minimize pain but actually reducing their own happiness.⁴⁹

Goodness is confused with pleasures deriving from unmastered impulses, instead of inserting these where they belong, according to the capacity for consistency.⁵⁰ People fail to share with others in truth, love and cooperation, working for the fulfillment of everyone.⁵¹

They do not realize that their own fulfillment is only served by contributing to the fulfillment of others, since both their own and other people's fulfillment are integrated parts of the same system and occur in inseparable fashion.

By concentrating narrowly on self-gratification and egotistic interests, they hamper their own and other people's fulfillment. They do not help place people where they belong in their relations with others, which would lead them to use their own influence in order to contribute to their own fulfillment and that of others, especially of those who are closest to them: children, family, students, followers, etc.

3. Prevailing myths

a. Magic short-cuts and carefree myths

Instead of investigating the complex network of reality, people cheat themselves when they invent short-cuts which avoid the effort and sacrifice of systematically considering all aspects and relations, as well as short-term, long-term and ultimate implications, as required by unrestricted consistency.⁵² When people privilege fragments and blindly surrender to impulses, they close their eyes and hearts to the requirements of reality and integrative unity. If they do not humbly acknowledge their limitations, ignorance and errors, they have to resort to fantasy and myths to replace reality, using spurious consistency to build false justifications and rationalizations.

The modern world has its own myths, including excessive faith in the power of money, technology, change, modernization, self-interest, competition and the market.⁵³ Individuals use spurious consistency in order to effectively rationalize these myths, and this prevents them from applying genuine consistency on behalf of the fulfillment of people and reality, in goodness, truth and being. Short-cuts may be useful if they are treated as alternative provisional hypotheses and subjected to critical analysis. But instead of cautiously applying this approach to less known and explored areas, using short-cuts along with a humble acknowledgment of their limitations, people often apply spurious consistency, capriciously inventing myths (proclaiming them as if they were real and absolute) and relying on mysterious forces instead of admitting their own limitations.

People act as if they were experts of the unknown; this empowers them to ignore the laws of reality deriving from unity, building instead their own law and justifying their decision to surrender to caprices and impulses. They forget the need for systematic work to reduce anxiety and obscurity on a real and firm basis.

b. Modern anthropocentric myths: e.g. pragmatism, science, technology, the market, quantification, hedonism, violence

Among modern myths, one of the most prominent is the false belief that pragmatism may serve as a supreme and ultimate value and end, through economic, political, scientific and technological advancement. According to a pragmatic perspective, human beings are the source of their own law and do not need to subordinate themselves to superior principles and values; the efficacy of their action provides its own justification. Myths of race, domination, power, violence, hedonism,

technology and quantification are special applications of this anthropocentric, egotistic orientation which attempts to replace reality and integrative unity by ego, caprices and impulses.

To fight against myths like this, it is first necessary to identify them.⁵⁴ The non-scientific foundations of science draw attention to the limits of science; by pointing this out, science can be prevented from becoming another myth. The fundamental role of the consistency criterion, which underlies all science and gives rise to criteria which guide people in the midst of variety, must be combined with an acknowledgement of the absolutely central role of integrative unity, which constitutes the only firm reference point. If the facade of science is idealized as a myth, it encourages the growth of shallow, trivial and fashionable research and knowledge.

The mere fact that scientific work is published and presented as science does not mean that it is really scientific, since it does not necessarily reflect reality and truth. If science or quantification are excessively exalted, privileging aspects of reality at the expense of the rest, they are not inserted into the global system of reality, with its philosophical basis.

Scientific criteria and great discoveries which have been found and formulated through the exercise of genuine consistency are ignored, even though they constitute the crucial foundations of science.⁵⁵ In a similar fashion, the idealization of the benefits of the free market⁵⁶ and protectionism⁵⁷ are exalted as myths and panaceas⁵⁸ without considering that the “invisible hands” are social norms which may contribute to the fulfillment of people and reality or to the opposite, depending whether people freely choose genuine or spurious consistency. Thus, for instance, overprotection or underprotection may lead to harm.

c. Competition, success, gain and pleasure as absolute ends; punishment and repentance

Treating competition and survival of the fittest as ultimate ends and striving to advance and survive at the expense of others reduces human beings to non-rational beings whose actions and survival are the inexorable result of natural laws. This overlooks human beings' capacity to freely and consciously think, feel, decide and act. The system of reality punishes people for misusing their capacity for consistency, but at the same time it opens a window of hope insofar as it helps people become aware of their mission of dedicating themselves to life, truth and goodness, through the road of genuine consistency.

Punishment opens the road to repentance, which corrects contradictions and accepts the road of mercy and pardon.

Success functions as a myth which blinds people to the need for consistency. It fosters an oversimplified, rigid approach which privileges immediate concerns, fragments and impulses, ignoring the systemic context of reality. It inflates the ego and prevents people from placing possessions and pleasures in proper perspective.

Along with this, there is a tendency to think that individuals are not responsible for broader societal concerns and that the state or elected leaders will provide magic solutions to social problems, for instance through laws, devaluations and political decisions. This discourages personal and social efforts.

The desire for acquisition and gain, when treated as an ultimate and absolute end, does not function as a "light cloak which can be thrown aside at any moment" but as an "iron cage."⁵⁹ Similarly, the desire for pleasure, when pursued as an ultimate end, confuses love with exploitation of others and oneself.

Material success and the pursuit of pleasure must be subordinated to and integrated into a balanced approach which respects the harmony of reality and human beings' mission of contributing to the balanced fulfillment of others and themselves. For this, individuals must learn to guide and control their impulses and desires instead of deifying them.⁶⁰

d. Survival and competition; free contribution to the self-fulfilling capacity of reality

The capacity for consistency allows people to know that if they do not freely adhere to the harmony of reality by orienting their knowledge, will, feelings and actions toward unity, they will suffer the punishment of self-exclusion, with consequent suffering. By not subordinating competition to consistency, that is, loving and serving people and reality, competition loses legitimacy and value and becomes a means for harming people – others and oneself – instead of contributing to their fulfillment, through freedom, rights, ethics, truth and goodness.⁶¹

The inexorable fulfillment of reality is governed by laws including the survival of the fittest. Although at first it may seem that those who survive are not necessarily the best or the fittest, superior quality wins in the long run, due to the inexorable, self-fulfilling capacity of reality. Cancerous cells, for example, are not only able to survive but to multiply and kill, but this does not signal the defeat of life and existence taken as a whole.

Human beings are also subject to natural laws of survival, although unlike non-rational beings, they are responsible for consciously and freely contributing to the fulfillment of people and reality, thus fulfilling their mission in life.⁶² If they fail to do so, their influence will be destructive rather than productive; nonetheless, like the cancerous cells, the impact of inconsistent individuals cannot prevent the ultimate survival and triumph of the system of reality, founded in integrative unity.

They will be defeated in their deviation, but this defeat is in itself an invitation to adhere to the system to which they belong, and which belongs to them. Within the harmony of this system, they are able to finally win.

4. Psychological ceilings

a. Mutual reinforcement of self-esteem and self-image; self-fulfilling prophecy, sound and unsound

Individuals and groups tend to behave according to the images they have of themselves and of reality. If they feel unable to do something, they will not attempt it. This places “psychological ceilings” on individuals, whereby the mere perception of weakness causes actual weakness.⁶³ If social norms propagate the idea that people are naturally and intrinsically dishonest, people will tend to be dishonest.

The influence of the media is quite strong in this respect and reinforces prevailing tendencies toward evil or goodness, depending whether sound or unsound social norms are deemed normal and natural. For example, by idealizing the domination and exploitation of the weak, especially women, and glorifying physical violence, the media reinforce and encourage such tendencies.

If, on the other hand, people are warned that such examples reflect unsound norms and are unusual and illegitimate, and if they are shown examples of genuine love and solidarity and taught that these are common and desirable, they are given the opportunity and impetus to expand their freedom by lifting psychological ceilings and replacing them with sound social norms.

If parents and teachers instill sound social norms in children and students, they encourage sound behaviors and help young people become happy, productive members of society. If, on the other hand, parents and teachers convey the message that their children and students are

inherently and inalterably bad, stupid and incorrigible, then young people will act accordingly, giving in to the temptation to misbehave and avoiding the frustration of attempting what they consider to be impossible.

b. Surrendering to impulses and ignoring the “voice of conscience”

All people are tempted by impulses which entice them to follow short-term, egotistic interests and ignore the call of consistency. If people believe there is no other way but to give in to their impulses, they will not work to master them and will let themselves be controlled by impulses. However, people can always choose to listen to the “voice of conscience” or consistency, which allows them to resist such temptations, even if this means defying prevailing social norms and examples set by parents, teachers, leaders and the media. The “voice of conscience” draws attention to the special dignity of every human being and to the human capacity for dominating impulses in a thorough and balanced approach which serves truth, goodness and love. Individuals who fight against unsound social norms deserve support, and the influence of others who reinforce unsound norms and practices should be counteracted. This is possible if all people work to adopt and share only sound influences, detecting and supporting them in themselves and in others. This lifts the quality of decisions and social norms, contributing to the fulfillment of others and oneself.

c. Negativism, ingratitude and challenge

Pessimism, discouragement, irritation, anger and complaints reflect an improper attitude toward reality and a failure to support reality in its totality. These negative attitudes demonstrate ingratitude toward the bounty which one receives from unity; they challenge reality and unity, building a sad and inferior personal realm which is detached from the order of reality and therefore leads to failure, frustration and the loss of opportunities to freely enjoy reality’s benefits.

d. Aggression, violence, destruction, desperation, self-blame

Spurious consistency causes people to respond to obstacles and frustrations with aggression.⁶⁴ This indicates a refusal to accept reality and sometimes a deliberate choice for destruction and contradiction. Yet spurious consistency leads to failure and frustration, and this serves as an alarm signal which encourages people to return to reality and work

for the fulfillment thereof and of all people. Even if people react with hostility to such calls, reality offers them repeated opportunities and provides them with increasingly strong incentives in the form of ever more severe punishments. Reality does this in order to bring people back to the path of building and integrating in consistency and harmony, rather than letting them flounder in contradictions; it thereby shows people how to replace hostility and mistrust with respect, love, cooperation and integration.⁶⁵

Mistrust and destruction are common deviations in both traditional and advanced industrial societies. In both cases, obstacles provide an opportunity for correcting deviations and demonstrating adherence to reality and unity and acting accordingly, freely contributing to reality and unity, with effort, sacrifice, discipline and mastery over oneself, impulses and resources. By opposing reality through inconsistency or spurious consistency, people create a pseudo-reality, replacing the laws of reality with their caprices and impulses and foregoing the humble, patient and methodical effort entailed by genuine consistency. This involves respecting all aspects, relations and implications of reality.

When people oppose reality, they engage in oversimplification and this often takes the form of exaggerated punishment of others or themselves. Exaggerated self-punishment allows individuals to placate their guilty consciences and even achieve a false sensation of superiority from the knowledge that they do not deserve such severe punishment. Another form of exaggerated punishment causes individuals to feel they are free of fault and to make others into scapegoats. In either case, individuals derive a certain degree of satisfaction from contradiction, destruction and unjust punishment.

This also occurs when individuals try to solve everything with violence as a panacea.⁶⁶ They take pathological and destructive pleasure from not respecting the requirements of consistency and not respecting people and reality, in all their aspects and relations.

5. Spurious consistency

a. Self-contradiction, measuring satisfaction by comparing oneself to others

Spurious consistency replaces reality with fragments and serves partial ends. It thinks in comparative terms of relative deprivation rather than looking at things from the perspective of the whole and integrative unity. Individuals who engage in spurious consistency measure

satisfaction and dissatisfaction by comparing themselves with others, assuming that satisfaction requires them to surpass others. The mere idea of comparing oneself with others causes people to think in terms of inferiority and superiority and in terms of prestige, power, money, success, physical strength, pleasure, attraction, etc., without considering that all individuals are part of the harmony of the whole of reality, integrated by unity.⁶⁷

The only basis for legitimate evaluation is not based on theories of relative deprivation or comparisons of one's status in relation to other people or moments (in terms of achieving the goals determined by impulses and social norms), but is a function of the integration in the system of reality. Whereas partial comparisons based on spurious consistency privilege caprices, impulses and fragments, legitimate evaluation is based on total reality and founded in unity, which provides an absolute criterion. Even when unity is rejected, it is always present and issues a firm reminder which we call "the voice of conscience" to reprimand spurious consistency. Advances based on spurious consistency ignore the integration of genuine consistency but cannot stop it; they arbitrarily interrupt it to serve caprice and contradictions, which bring dissatisfaction and uneasiness, the reminders of "conscience" or genuine consistency.

b. Prejudice and immoderation

1) Prejudice, legitimizing own deviations, against reality and truth

Prejudice searches for deficiencies in others to feel superior to them or to legitimize one's own deficiencies. It predisposes people to surrender to impulses and caprices instead of mastering them; by doing so, they avoid the effort of giving themselves to others and miss the opportunity to serve truth and goodness. This involves finding perverse joy in detecting deficiencies in others, thus rebelling against reality and genuine consistency and therefore not extending the respect and love due to others and to oneself.

2) Unmastered impulses, misplaced as ends

When people do not integrate fragments into the system of reality, they tend to pursue money, prestige, power and pleasure without balance or moderation. This remains true even when people make sacrifices on behalf of materialistic targets and impulses, giving a false impression

of consistency and balance. Saving and frugality, self-mastery and self-control do not lead to human fulfillment if they are moved by egoism, pleasure, envy or arrogance.⁶⁸ They actually hide dependence on other unmastered impulses, leading to confusion and distortion. Because of the inconsistent goals served, individuals cannot raise themselves above petty, selfish and immediate concerns and, as gravity pulls physical bodies down, fragments and impulses pull individuals down, moving them away from the spiritual light of consistency.⁶⁹

c. Declarativism

The tendency toward declarativism may be observed in the discrepancy between declared principles and real behavior. It hides inconsistency behind a facade of proclaiming high values and avoids the effort and sacrifice required to serve them. Individuals who do not bother to analyze the long-term consequences of their behavior or adjust it as closely as possible to higher values have no real intention of adhering to such values.⁷⁰ Often, individuals do not consider themselves responsible for working to achieve such a correspondence between goals and behavior.⁷¹ In these cases, people spuriously believe that it is sufficient to verbally, nominally or formally adhere to principles and moral norms and that it is not necessary to consider all the implications, including ultimate implications, which affect all beings. As a result, people fail to adjust their own behavior accordingly. Instead, they fall into contradictions by serving spurious consistency. Only unrestricted, genuine consistency devotes all energies and resources to respecting, adhering and contributing to reality and all people within it. This entails not only consistency in declared ends, but also in means used to serve them.

6. Insufficient efforts and adherence

a. Privileging fragments instead of inserting them in reality

When fragments are allowed to take the place of unity, people fail to respect all beings and aspects according to the relations linking them; they do not give proper respect to anyone or anything, not even to privileged fragments, which are separated from the source of their support. This may be seen in individuals' relations with others and with unity, which integrates all parts of reality and gives them life, value and meaning. When individuals' relations with others are marred by spurious consistency, that is, when they subordinate genuine consistency to partial

ends, they avoid reality and deny their own place in it, exhibiting laziness and shallowness. They fail to recognize the complex, interdependent relations connecting them with other people and parts of reality and giving meaning and value to all. They fail to adjust their thoughts, attitudes and behaviors accordingly, avoiding the necessary effort and sacrifice. In this way, they fail to devote themselves sufficiently to reality, unity and beings; they avoid the effort and sacrifice required for constant, critical analysis of the assumptions behind their own and other people's social norms. They tend to adopt social norms without evaluating them or distinguishing between their positive and negative elements. This leaves people feeling confused and draws a distorted picture of reality. People's desires, feelings, decisions and actions fail to contribute to human fulfillment but to the opposite. They deal with symptoms and appearances rather than real and deep problems and needs.⁷² They are furthermore prone to engage in declarativism.⁷³

b. Oversimplification; polar excesses

The tendency toward oversimplification implies a failure to respect various aspects and relations of reality, as well as the complex causal relations within it. Without such a perspective, people cannot find optimal solutions to their problems, since they do not thoroughly analyze consequences and implications. Ignorance and indifference lead to oversimplification, as in the case of social policies which tend to either overprotect or underprotect workers and citizens. Instead of analyzing how social norms, education, access, etc. are affected through the better or worse use of resources, social policies are too often evaluated according to simplistic considerations of the amount of money assigned. Other examples of simplistic approaches to social and economic policy include tendencies toward either excessive permissiveness or strictness in children's education and the exaggerated defense of economic policies advocating the free market or central control.⁷⁴ In these examples and others, policies are not evaluated in terms of their ability to contribute to human fulfillment.

The tendency toward oversimplification causes people to go from one extreme to another, instead of considering aspects and dimensions in a balanced fashion. This implies a lack of genuine concern for and adherence to reality as well as inconsistency and declarativism. Individuals adopt simplistic, easy solutions and idealize them, instead of subjecting them to necessary critical analysis. When they discover that the oversimplified approach which they adopted does not produce the desired results, they tend to embrace the opposite extreme with equal

oversimplification. This happens, for instance, when people look at issues like equality from an oversimplified point of view, promoting rigid ideas of male and female roles, without accepting the freedom to adopt different roles.⁷⁵ In a similar fashion, people are often quick to jump to oversimplified conclusions about the merits of different and competing philosophies, first believing in the inevitable triumph of communism, and with the collapse of communist regimes over the last decade, espousing the absolute superiority of capitalism.⁷⁶ In fact, both regimes have the common deficiency of being unilaterally materialistic. People tend to forget that, under certain conditions, money is harmful; without education, information, orientation and constructive attitudes, people fail to appreciate how it is acquired and how it should be used and distributed.⁷⁷

Oversimplification also prevents people from understanding that effects may boomerang, as happens when adults treat children with exaggerated strictness or permissiveness.⁷⁸ Excessive permissiveness persuades adults to tolerate corrupt influences (such as drugs or pornography) over children and youth. It creates an atmosphere which condones divorce, teaching married people that they may abandon their spouses if they find another, more gratifying relationship. The oversimplified embrace of permissiveness teaches people not to accept norms, truth or authority, since it claims that everything is relative. Leaders, citizens and authorities tolerate these contradictions instead of analyzing causes and consequences; as a result, they are unable to prevent and correct deviations. Excessive strictness, on the other hand, prevents peoples from committing themselves to others. It also encourages individuals to conform to prevailing ideas about proper roles; women may be encouraged to assume masculine roles, for example, and be discouraged from assuming a traditional feminine role, even if that is what they really prefer.⁷⁹ In this way, the oversimplified application of permissiveness and strictness can have unintended and undesirable effects. Oversimplification unilaterally emphasizes one aspect, e.g. economic or material considerations, to the exclusion of the rest, thus avoiding balance. By not practicing genuine consistency, people fail to achieve lasting solutions to their problems, for instance, abolishing slavery without abolishing racism.⁸⁰

c. Intolerance without consistent critical analysis

Insufficient adherence to reality and consistency leads people to accept prevailing habits and fashions without critical analysis; indeed, people who do not conform are punished with disapproval, intolerance,

contempt and isolation and they are denied the advantages of social life. Such rigid adherence to social norms feeds a spurious feeling of legitimacy. People feel justified in pursuing money, success, consumption, pleasure and egoism as ultimate ends; indeed, they are encouraged to feel out of place if they do not. Social norms which are blindly accepted instead of submitted to critical analysis through the exercise of consistency thus close individuals' eyes and deprive them of their freedom.

d. Divergence between practice and rhetoric; taking advantage of the weak and vulnerable

Spurious consistency leads to contradictions between what people say and do. This can be observed in society's indifference to and even complicity in the exploitation, corruption and even death of its weakest, most defenseless members despite formal declarations of support for human rights.

Children are corrupted by drugs, pornography and violence, and in extreme cases are subject to prostitution and slavery in body and spirit. Unborn children are sacrificed; the mentally ill are treated with special indifference and are denied the assistance, justice and solidarity they need and deserve, as are the elderly and other groups with special needs.⁸¹ This especially applies to people and groups who preach love and solidarity but do not practice what they preach, in what I call declarativism.

e. Overreaction, compartmentalization, non discrimination; hiding contradiction

When dysfunctional social norms and structures are accepted or tolerated without critical analysis, their weaknesses will sooner or later become too obvious to ignore; when this occurs, people often tend to swing back to the opposite extreme, seeking to demolish everything associated with previous norms and structures.

The destructive tendency toward overreaction may be likened to the actions of a surgeon who kills the patient instead of treating or removing unhealthy parts. Despite the extreme fluctuations, there is a constant pattern of not discriminating between good and bad social norms and models and an ongoing failure to subject these to critical analysis; the complexity and multitude of aspects, relations, nuances and implications which comprise reality, as well as the continuous change which characterizes it, are ignored. Inertia prevents the genuine adjustment necessary in life.

Contradiction, stimulated by excessive, unilateral adherence to fragments and correspondingly insufficient adherence to reality, unity, and beings, is fomented by a lack of critical analysis. Inconsistencies exist within people and in their thoughts, motives and goals, as well as in their social norms and systems.

Compartmentalization is a mechanism employed for attenuating the discomfort derived from inconsistency; although it lessens confrontations with reality, it does not prevent tensions, conflicts and destruction. This encourages people to try to prevent tensions and conflicts by hiding from them and refusing to face challenges.

f. Legitimizing egoism over solidarity

Consistency invites people to proclaim and practice social norms which respect the values of equality, solidarity and disinterestedness. In many contemporary societies, however, social norms tend to neglect these values, while privileging power, money, success and egoism; in doing so, they discourage people from adhering to life, truth and goodness.⁸²

Individuals may acknowledge their error and take steps to correct it, or they may create ad hoc theories which use spurious consistency to give a pseudo-legitimate rationalization for unmastered impulses.⁸³

By promulgating such theories and ideological perspectives, people try to obtain the approval or complicity of others, even though this produces contradictions, conflicts and destruction, which impedes people from working together on common tasks for the benefit of all.

g. Desire for superiority over others

The desire to advance derives from the capacity for consistency.⁸⁴ However, when people unilaterally emphasize their own advancement, excluding that of others, they go against consistency, and adhering to reality involves adhering to oneself and to others, with love and service, in an environment of harmony.⁸⁵

Furthermore such desires contradict each other, since each individual's desire for superiority functions as a perverse, socially cultivated need which is bound to lead to failure, frustration and suffering, since efforts to make oneself the center of the universe are futile.

h. New inconsistencies for escaping inconsistency

Lack of systematic analysis leads to inconsistency in people's thoughts and behavior, with respect to themselves and others. Individuals try to escape from inconsistency through new inconsistencies, in a futile

attempt to escape through unilateral, pendular excesses, instead of giving themselves completely to reality, unity and others.

i. Adoration of the immediate, losing contact with unity and reality

Spurious consistency encourages people to focus only on immediate concerns, treating these as if they were the only important thing to consider; by doing so, spurious consistency encourages a narrow focus which fails to reflect the whole of reality and which excludes integrative unity. The immediate cannot satisfy the spiritual thirst for the absolute, which is integrative unity, and which requires giving oneself completely, with effort and sacrifice.

Positive aspects deriving from consistency and reality are thus taken but separated from consistency and reality, since their relations with other aspects and beings of reality and their insertion in the whole of reality are overlooked. This predisposes people to become slaves to their caprices and impulses and to the privileges they create. They do not link the immediate with unity through relations and systems, which provide the foundation for determining value, being and meaning through reference to knowledge, love and human fulfillment. Attempts to reach deep and lasting satisfaction without sacrifice (involved in the effort of going beyond the immediate up to the ultimate) are akin to closing one's eyes and heart to reality and unity, which is the source of knowledge, love, fulfillment and happiness.

j. Using lofty names to disguise base behavior; spurious practices

Spurious consistency teaches people to replace genuine values with spurious ones, although the latter are improperly called genuine. Thus exploitation is called love, business is called friendship, pleasure is called happiness and principles are declared but not respected.

People attempt to avoid the road of reality by applying spurious consistency. For instance, some people engage in a futile effort to attain happiness through physical and mental exercises and rituals, without considering the balance of reality supported in unity; others use friendships to satisfy egoistic interests, using techniques explained in popular books; still others derive pleasure from using another person to satisfy impulses they refer to as love, even though their actions have nothing to do with genuine love, which requires people to give and give of themselves for the benefit of the beloved. When inconsistent attitudes and behavior are practiced underneath a facade of high values, failure and frustration result.

k. Failure to integrate advances

Without systematic, ongoing efforts, it is impossible to integrate the advances of individuals and others. This cannot be left to fantasies, panaceas and appeals to magic.

Without genuine consistency, the advances accumulated through history and stored in social norms and systems will not be integrated with new experiences, impulses and situations. Yet this type of integration is necessary and demands the full commitment of individuals' energies and livelihood; every decision and action must be integrated into a framework which encourages creative and constructive work.

Otherwise, the mission of improving the cultural heritage one has received will not be fulfilled, leading to failure and frustration.

l. Replacing reality and unity by caprice, fantasy and fragments

Spurious consistency discourages people from applying mental discipline, engaging in rigorous and constant effort and using scientific method and logic. Instead, people tend to indulge in jumps of fantasy, pseudo-spiritualism and esoterism; they turn to magical solutions, panaceas and myths.

All of these presume that human beings are able to replace reality and its laws. Individuals are encouraged to build a fictitious kingdom, based on inconsistency and contradiction. This leads to failure and frustration and prevents people from contributing to the fulfillment of human beings and reality. Illusions of omnipotence and denial of reality and integrative unity introduce disorder instead of genuine creativity and constructivity. This represents a challenge to reality and leads to harmful consequences.

m. Perverse pendularism crazy golfer

When people swing back and forth between opposite extremes, they cannot achieve balance, efficacy and discipline. This requires constant minor adjustments and continual corrections of deviations which bring people closer to the point of balance. When individuals embrace extreme solutions instead of balanced ones, they trigger contradictory processes which lead to failure and frustration, in what I call perverse pendularism.⁸⁶ This process tends to perpetuate and reinforce itself in vicious circles as people respond to failures resulting from following one extreme by going to the opposite one. This may be seen, for instance, in the dramatic cultural shift from strictly requiring women to fulfill traditional roles to strictly forbidding this.⁸⁷ Introducing changes in an extremist, violent and

revolutionary fashion means that people try to correct one excess by embracing excesses in the opposite direction. Such an approach is not adjusted to reality; it does not adjust efficacious means to desirable ends.

Constructive pendularism, on the other hand, leads people to advance through successive approximations, as the good golf player does, correcting the mistakes of the preceding swing with each new one—trying to hit the ball neither too short nor too far and trying not to deviate from the proper course—. This allows the golfer to take advantage of flexible adjustment, since it is not usually possible to reach the hole with the first swing.

The approach of perverse pendularism could be symbolized by a crazy golfer who violently hits the ball in order to compensate for deviations of equally violent prior swings.

Each being exists within the harmony of reality to the extent that it is one point of intersection of all the aspects and influences of reality. Therefore, the systemic drive toward the fulfillment of reality and of each being within it leads people to search for the point of balance, compensating for past mistakes and deviations through proportionate reactions which tend toward systemic stability and continuity. The less extensive the necessary correction, the closer one is to the point of balance. The capacity for consistency, which coincides with consistency as law of reality, leads people to search for systemic balance and harmony.⁸⁸ Perverse pendularism results in destructive swings from one extreme to another.⁸⁹ This leads to vicious circles of excesses and frustrations instead of steady, gradual refinement and advance.⁹⁰ Perverse pendularism reflects an unrealistic approach and sometimes even includes expectations about redemption through magical solutions. This culminates in passions of hatred and destruction, both in primitive and modern societies.⁹¹

n. New utopias and distractions

The perverse effect of pendular excesses may be seen in attempts to replace discredited utopias with new, unilateral, utopian solutions, such as materialism, which is the basis for utopias deriving from Marxism, fascism and modernization.

These ideologies encourage parents to tolerate corruption, destruction and loss of freedom for their children, instead of helping them to fulfill themselves, through examples and dialogue. Their attention is instead distracted through the general preoccupation with material, economic, political, scientific and technological advances.

7. The temptation to rest

a. Rest is harmful when it prevents self-mastery and sacrifice

Rest is sound when it actively contributes to the harmonious fulfillment of people and reality, storing energy for appropriate moments and places and contributing to balanced and healthy lives. When rest degenerates into inertia, it no longer contributes to constructive reality. Individuals need to give and use much energy, indeed all their energy, to advancing consistency through self-mastery and sacrifice. This requires a balance between work and rest. Work and rest are two aspects to be systematically balanced, as joint conditions of life and fulfillment, combining stability and change.

Rest used with responsibility contributes to balanced fulfillment. Any rest which departs from this goal is harmful. Individuals contribute to reality and life by reaching, preserving and improving achievements, striving for a healthy balance between stability and change in personal and social norms. Some stability and rest are necessary in order to learn from and apply accumulated advances. Yet at the same time it is important not to rest on one's laurels and overestimate the continued soundness of accumulated achievements. The process of social norming should be used in such a way as to evaluate, enrich and improve social norms and systems. These fluctuate between the poles of consistency and inconsistency; individuals must constantly –restlessly– strive to move norms closer to the first, in a permanent struggle.⁹²

b. Complacency and complicity

Permissive social norms perpetuate a giant fraud which encourages people to believe that complacency and approval by others gives them permission to avoid exerting themselves and to give in to impulses and inertia instead. They reject ethical norms and transcendent principles which limit the sovereignty of caprice and ego, with the cooperation of the media. The approval of others may be a positive stimulus for working and advancing, but if it tempts people to rest on their laurels, it will lead to stagnation, deterioration and retreat. In this way, conscious or unconscious complicity can lead to reciprocal reinforcement in fiction and deviation.

Such complicity is attractive because it is easier to give in to impulses than to master them; people lose the opportunity for excellence and fall into the trap of mediocrity, becoming prisoners of their impulses and possessions.⁹³ This involves short-sightedness and ignorance of the crucial dimensions of reality, failing to use one's capacity for consistency

in order to critically analyze social norms and opinions and their foundations. Such permissive norms weaken people's capacities for fighting, growing, strengthening and fulfilling themselves along the road of consistency.

c. Corrupting adulation and praising; exploitation

Flattery and demagoguery by individuals who aim to obtain something from leaders and citizens lead people toward corruption and tempt them to deviate from the straight road of consistency. Most people are all too ready to accept flattering comments. Once the inevitable failure of such deviations sets in, the corrupted are then abandoned by their adulators. Honest judgments may not be flattering, but they are more loyal and lasting.

The media often suggest that sexual conquest, exploitation of others and immediate gratification are desirable, praiseworthy and enviable. The media (and others) earn money by taking advantage of such fraud, producing a pathological, reciprocal, social reinforcement in terms of social norms. Individuals reciprocally tolerate and support dishonesty, shallowness and corruption, and condemn those who refuse to go along as kill-joys.

This causes people to lose their opportunity to fully use and genuinely exercise their capacity for consistency.

d. Using advances to serve inconsistency; arrogant waste

Only integrative unity, as embodied in the laws of reality, matters. Inconsistency is more serious when partial spurious consistencies are used to contradict genuine consistency, as in the case of people who advance in any field—science, arts, power, money, etc.—and use their advances to serve inconsistency. Corruption of the best leads to the worst, damaging not only inconsistent people but also those who are influenced by them.

Human judgment is given more importance than reality, unity and consistency, which are the true lights that should guide human beings. There is no need for any other guide or opinion besides those deriving from consistency, and human beings' capacity for consistency allows them to find this through individual and collective efforts.

The approval of others is only valid when it is based on the right use of consistency and subjected to critical evaluation in terms of consistency, the basis of natural law. Genuine advances require humility, which is the basis of security and stability. Otherwise, people waste time and effort in gratifying impulses or pleasing caprices and fashions.

e. Feeling of omnipotence

In contemporary societies, many people aim to demonstrate their omnipotence through conspicuous consumption, adulation, drugs, alcohol, sexual exploitation, etc. They try to be self-sufficient instead of admitting and respecting their subordinate role within the immense framework of reality. Feelings of omnipotence prevent people from contributing to the fulfillment of reality and the harmonious fulfillment of beings within it. Instead of acknowledging the central role of integrative unity and consistency, people pretend that the reality revolves around them. They indulge their vain desire to feel powerful, to believe they are the masters of other things, as in conspicuous consumption.⁹⁴ The sycophantic, fawning attitude of others who are equally infatuated with material success is taken as proof of one's control. Even when people sense (due to their capacity for consistency or "voice of conscience") that their pretensions of control are insincere and self-interested, they close their ears to critics, thus distorting reality.

f. Corrupting and enslaving effects of power, money and fame

Economic and material success is considered by many people and societies as the best indicator of human advancement, development and fulfillment and a high quality of life. Fascination with material success, however, causes people to neglect personal and family relations and spiritual values. Such imbalance actually entails a deterioration in terms of human fulfillment and quality of life. When strong materialistic appetites are indulged, these induce people to build a world of inconsistency based on the fiction that they are omnipotent, masters of their own fortune. Paradoxically, the more they strive to make their own destiny, the more they become slaves to their impulses, ego and caprices. Thus people ignore their fragility and apply spurious consistency in a vain attempt to demonstrate their superiority through absolute control over things and people. They are unable to achieve such control, however, and they merely end by frustrating harmonious, cooperative efforts to contribute to the fulfillment of all people. Instead of converging on common, compatible ends and means, they produce destructive conflict and confrontation. The temptation to show off one's money and power and the desire to indulge in extravagance and be flattered not only seduce powerful, famous and rich people. The expression "*power corrupts*" applies to money and fame, comfort and pleasure as well.⁹⁵ Individuals wrongly feel important when they believe they have something which is desired by others when in fact true fulfillment is only possible through genuine consistency.

g. Passive acceptance of social norms

The tendency to adopt social norms without critical analysis, treating them as if they were natural and immutable, deprives them of their dynamic, constructive and stimulating character. This also occurs when social norms are maintained by simple reason of inertia, as they assume the status of forms, routines and rituals. This prevents people from identifying the origin and consequences of social norms and considering and evaluating their spirit. Without critical analysis, social norms will not be improved by adjusting them in the light of new information, circumstances and needs. At the beginning, critical analysis is difficult, but it is crucial for people to become aware of the role, components, origins and consequences of social norms. People must also learn to evaluate the contexts, perceptions and goals which influence the functioning of social norms and provide durability and strength to dysfunctional social norms.⁹⁶

h. Theories which privilege fragments

Any deviation which privileges fragments to avoid the effort of applying consistency makes it impossible for people to completely dedicate themselves to unity. The order of integrative unity is replaced by a pseudo-order built upon people's caprices and impulses. This produces disorder rather than order and entices people to follow confusing and contradictory paths leading nowhere.

Unilateral theories do not consider the whole of reality but inflate the importance of fragments; in doing so, such theories fail to respect all the aspects, parts and relations contained within the framework of reality. Unilateral theories use spurious consistency to create biased models opposed to genuine consistency. Theories derived from psychoanalysis, for example, point to important variables and processes—such as the unconscious and its early development—but fail to consider them from the all-encompassing angle of unrestricted consistency; these theories privilege the sexual dimension, just as Marxism privileges relations of production, and Nazism privileges race.

i. Improvisation and inconsistency, ends and means

The tendency toward improvisation discourages people from adhering to consistency; it disinclines them from dedicating themselves to others for the sake of truth, goodness and being in an intense, disinterested and permanent fashion. The predilection toward improvisation is accompanied by short-sightedness, negligence and fixation on immediate

concerns; as such, it is incompatible with efforts to consider the total framework of reality, with respect for all aspects, relations and implications. It searches for easy, quick and shallow answers to life's problems; it craves immediate gratifications, avoiding the effort, sacrifice and systematic work required by consistency and necessary for a balanced consideration of all aspects, relations and complexities of reality. It leads to decisions, behaviors, social norms and social models and systems which fail to contribute to truth, goodness and the fulfillment of people and reality. Instead it searches for ad hoc solutions based on biased visions. Reality is arbitrarily reduced to the narrow spot which one occupies in a pathological cult of confusion which defies reality, unity and humanity. This lack of realism leads to failures and frustrations which function as alarm signals from reality; if people fail to wake up, they are eventually left oscillating back and forth between euphoria and depression, with carelessness and inconsistency.

Improvisation thus eludes consistency, which requires people to devote themselves completely and actively, fully using their talents and energies to discover and serve being, truth and goodness. It discourages people from adhering and contributing to reality by escaping from the prison of immediate concerns, impulses and spurious gratifications. This prison ties people's hands and blocks their talents, impeding them from advancing toward human fulfillment through consistency. They incur deep contradictions by challenging the very source and support of the fragments they privilege. When people improvise their goals, they neglect to search for ultimate ends, replacing them with arbitrary, immediate objectives, such as money, power, pleasure and prestige. When people improvise their choice of means, they fail to search for the most efficacious means available to serve the ultimate ends of contributing to the fulfillment of reality and people, in truth and goodness.

j. Shallowness, vanity, prison of the immediate; critical analysis of social norms

Preoccupation with immediate concerns and transient fashions prevents a clear vision. Suffering helps to place things in proper perspective, dismissing short-term, immediate preoccupations as insignificant and encouraging people to insert them into the wider framework of reality; this makes it possible to engage in continuous, critical renewal of social norms. Many people devote a great part of their lives to vain concerns without noticing the profound mistake this implies. They strive for the approval of others, imitating prevailing fashions and following the influence of prestigious, spurious judges. They fail to think

that fame, power, riches and pleasures are transient and soon forgotten. They forget that they belong to an order which transcends the present, to which they are connected thanks to their conscience and freedom, made possible by their capacity for consistency. This allows people to critically evaluate fragments and impulses which appear fascinating and attractive. Such critical analysis is aided by educational messages from reality, in the form of obstacles and sufferings, as well as rewards.⁹⁷ If these messages are interpreted from the vantage point of consistency, people are able to see beyond the immediate and superficial. In this way, people can escape from behind the smoke curtain of goals, hypotheses, theories and fantasies which are dominated by impulse and passion.⁹⁸

Social norms which have proved themselves to be useful in solving problems may become shallow and formal over time or in different contexts. In such cases, they neither solve problems nor satisfy needs and ends. This happens with many fashions and trends in culture, science and arts. It also occurs with concepts of modernization and originality, protection of the environment and the migration of species which have interacted with other environments for millions of years. When social norms become unquestioned conventions, accepted as universal truths, they lose sight of their origins and only see the immediate surface, for instance in bewilderment with money and pleasure. Awareness of this potential problem can help people to correct deviations. Sound social norms must be continually renewed and critically evaluated to ensure their continued agreement with changing reality.

k. Indiscriminate imitation of social norms and models

Spurious consistency discourages awareness of the complexity of social norms and models and predisposes people toward indiscriminately copying social norms and models instead of identifying and adopting the functional aspects of alternative approaches. People assume that prevailing social norms and models will lead to desirable results; however, such models are often misperceived and improperly copied, applied, adapted and combined. Besides, even when properly perceived, copied and applied, social norms and models often do not produce the positive effects expected from them. Norms, models and their effects are usually more complex than imagined. The dysfunctional aspects of prevailing models, including consumerism, magic solutions, panaceas and satisfaction of impulses, usually are more attractive and easier to copy since they offer immediate gratification. Functional aspects –e.g. austerity, discipline, method and hard work– require more effort and sacrifice.

I. Ill-informed anticipatory socialization

Millions of people throughout the world mistakenly strive to imitate the social models of countries, groups and people who have achieved material success. They do not notice that these models contain both positive and negative aspects and blindly copy them in anticipatory socialization.⁹⁹ They are unlikely to successfully integrate themselves into the group of materially advanced nations to which they aspire. Those who succeed will most likely assume an inferior position; moreover, they will soon discover that material success does not lead to human fulfillment, quality of life and happiness.

It is crucial to make these facts explicit and clarify them so that people can overcome their present confusion and improve the quality of their decisions, actions, social norms and lives.

To this end, it is important to understand which parts or aspects of social norms and models produce beneficial results and which ones have harmful effects.

Scientists, leaders and citizens are insufficiently aware of the importance of systematically researching and clarifying these aspects, nor do they devote enough effort toward this goal.

8. Anthropocentric materialism

a. False spiritualism; manipulations

False spiritualism is not humbly submitted to the higher principles of consistency –as is genuine spiritualism– but attempts to replace them through magical means and formulas.

Proselytism is confused with empty formulas, which proclaim values such as love, peace, harmony, nature, freedom and truth but fail to uphold these in practice. Verbal proclamations are used as a formal facade to cover efforts to satisfy narrow personal interests, impulses and appetites.

In fact, and despite declarations of adherence to higher values and principles, individuals indulge their own vanity by placing themselves at the center of the universe and rationalizing their decision to follow caprices and impulses. Such examples of false spiritualism interfere with the “*voice of conscience*” or consistency. They manipulate the high values which they purport to respect, using magic tools, manipulative techniques and hedonistic practices.

b. Materialistic, esoteric spiritualism

Pseudo-spiritualism, which leads to failure and frustration, strives to combine individuals' material ambitions—for money, power, prestige, pleasure—with a false cover of spiritualism. In this way, individuals hope to silence the voice of conscience or consistency, which rejects the selfish indulgence of impulses and requires spiritual depth.

Pseudo-spiritualism treats spiritual values as if they were an additional commercial object to be bought. People attempt to summon and manipulate magical forces through techniques of astrology, mental control, spiritism, etc.

These techniques are given lofty names (love, realism, pragmatism, etc.) but in fact they often seek to justify the panaceas of money, prestige, competition, pleasure, violence, physical force and success and fail to engage in rigorous, consistent analysis.

Genuine spirituality humbly works to achieve self-mastery and systematic knowledge of reality, with constant, gradual efforts aimed at giving oneself completely in disinterested love and service.

c. Hiding the head under the sand, vacuum to be filled with absolute

Resorting to drugs and materialistic means, as pseudo-spiritualist movements do, allows people to temporarily obscure the contradictions entailed in their behavior (in their thoughts, decisions and actions, both personal and social). As such, pseudo-spiritualist movements fail to properly respect and adhere to reality and to people within it. People put on blinders so they may ignore their mistakes and deviations, in a vain attempt to alleviate the pain derived from their awareness that their behavior defies reality.

This attitude may be likened to the ostrich who tries to evade its enemy by hiding its head under the sand; people who try to hide from reality are vulnerable and blind, while unity, which is the source of the laws of reality, has open eyes.

True joy and happiness derive from giving oneself to reality and unity and from contemplating its fulfillment, not from hedonism and egoism, as may be observed in the unhappiness of drug addicts, alcoholics and people devoted to self-interest, materialism and hedonism.

Indeed, individuals' capacity for consistency constantly points out the empty space which can only be satisfied with the absoluteness of unity which integrates all variety, not with fragments.

d. Empty idols, exacerbating frustration

Feelings of emptiness and loss of meaning emerge when people attempt to replace the absoluteness of unity with materialistic, pseudo-spiritualistic panaceas, including esoteric and magical practices.

These purported solutions are like statues which have mouths but do not speak, eyes but do not see, feet but do not walk; they only exacerbate people's anxiety and frustration by creating a false sense of omnipotence in them.

Yet people's capacity for consistency continually reminds them that placing their trust in misplaced fragments violates the whole and the unity on which it is based.

C. Effects of Deviating from Consistency

1. Failure, frustration and insatiability

a. Attempting to claim the absolute, stealing from reality; acquisitive impulse

Human beings cannot exert absolute or divine power over people or objects. To attempt to do so is to ignore that each person or object only exists as a part of the system of reality, integrated by unity.

Human fulfillment and full and lasting satisfaction, joy and happiness derive only from functioning in harmony with the system of reality and unity integrating it. They are part and parcel of knowing, loving and serving this system, including the beings within it and unity which governs it; fulfillment, satisfaction and happiness therefore derive from exerting one's capacity for consistency in a genuine manner, contemplating with joy the inexorable fulfillment of being, goodness and truth to which one adheres. Human fulfillment and happiness are a complementary part of adhering to reality and unity, through consistency.

The petty kingdom of egoism, which seeks to claim absolute ownership over people and things that belong only to unity, is destined to failure and frustration. If people are motivated by egoism and envy, they will experience frustration and unhappiness rather than fulfillment and joy over the triumph of reality and unity. The use of spurious

consistency and the privileging of impulses and immediate concerns are futile attempts to escape the call of conscience or consistency which reminds people of the failure associated with deviation.

Attempts to replace reality are vain and contradictory. When people attempt to confine reality to a narrow realm, they suffer frustration and emptiness. Reality, based on unity, encompasses everything that exists and is the only source of happiness; failure to identify with reality –inconsistency– is punished by reality, which serves as an alarm signal and opportunity to redress deviations.¹⁰⁰ The acquisitive impulse, which is idolized in contemporary societies, considers economic and material achievements as absolute and final ends.¹⁰¹ The acquisitive impulse assumes that people and objects can be possessed in absolute fashion by private owners. This reveals a futile attempt to evade the laws of reality based on unity and a failure to appreciate that objects continue to belong to reality as a system, regardless of human ownership. The relationship between individuals and their possessions is governed by the network of relations established by unity; the only absolute superiority is the primacy of unity above variety, that is, above all reality and existing beings. To fail to acknowledge this is to attempt to usurp the place of unity and reality. The appropriate relation with people and objects is neither to dominate nor be dominated by them, but to submit oneself and others to harmonious fulfillment in truth and goodness.

Individuals are not absolute and finished beings, but exist in relation to all other beings which coexist with them. All contribute reciprocally to the existence and fulfillment of each other, as a consequence of integrative unity, which gives life and meaning to each being in relation to others. Even physical objects are not solid, but composed of dynamic relations and governed by processes of change and stability.

b. Dysfunctional answer to suffering and conflict; messages of reality

Human suffering –beyond the purely biological level– derives from the discrepancy between what is desired and what is, as contemplated by conscience or consistency. Suffering has the function of drawing attention to problems and the need for solutions which search for meaning beyond adversity, in order to improve choices and behavior. However, if suffering is not dealt with properly, if it is greeted with irritation and frustration, the message of reality is wasted, leading to desperation and loss of meaning, suicide and self-destructive behavior.¹⁰² Similarly, if conflict is not placed in proper perspective, it leads to prejudice, hatred, war and destruction, fomenting vicious circles.

Proper responses to suffering need to look beyond the immediate and the moment, to the wide perspective of the system of reality which considers other dimensions, places, times and situations. In this context suffering becomes bearable, “*a gentle yoke and a light load*”; it is full of meaning, fertility and joy.

c. Suffering and insecurity in prosperity

Prosperity leads to delusions about the benefits of material success and encourages dysfunctional social norms which do not properly insert fragments into the system of reality. Prosperity therefore tends to make people slaves of fragments, impulses and caprice. The insatiable desire for material wealth leads to frustration, since it encourages people to treat fragments as ultimate ends and try to replace unity integrating variety. This leads people to neglect spiritual, family and interpersonal values deriving from unity, producing empty lives and leading people away from the absoluteness of being, truth and goodness. Only by adhering to this absolute can people satisfy their true vocation and aspiration of contributing to fulfillment.

Consistent social norms encourage people to master appetites and impulses, according to the systematic framework of reality and the position belonging to each person, being and decision within this framework. When social norms are skewed by a prevailing preoccupation with prosperity, people become prisoners of the immediate, fragments and impulses.¹⁰³ This brings emotional insecurity in the midst of prosperity, as wealthy societies and individuals lose respect for people –others and themselves, creating social norms which aggravate instead of solving problems–.

2. Deterioration of quality of life and self-destruction

a. Ego's futile rebellion against reality

Attempts to replace reality with ego constitute a futile rebellion which places unrealistic –and ultimately frustrating– expectations on the ego, impulses and fragments. People come to hope and expect more from money, pleasures, prestige, and consumption (of foods, alcohol, drugs, etc.) than these can give; instead of satisfaction, people only find excess, perversion and destruction. Consistency is ignored, although it is the only nourishment which appeases human thirst. Family, love, ethics and

other high values are despised, as are spiritual needs which cannot be satisfied with hedonism, sexual promiscuity, drugs, consumption, power and violence.

Individuals who believe that the satisfaction of impulses will make them masters of their destiny cheat themselves. It makes them prisoners. They attempt to replace the system which gives them existence and meaning with ego and impulses, engaging in absurd contradictions. The all-encompassing system of reality requires people to consider all points of time, all beings, all aspects and relations and all implications. Ego and impulses must be subjected to these considerations.

b. Obsession with the immediate, contradiction, loss of peace

Obsession with the immediate is associated with a loss of perspective and the consequent failure to see the all-encompassing framework of reality. Obsession with the immediate defies fragments and impulses in a harmful fashion, generating and strengthening contradictions which enslave people and produce anxiety, irritation and disgust.

c. Self-destructive mechanisms and success

1) Ephemeral success, flattery, dazzlement, solitude, failure

When individuals jointly build roads which defy reality and its laws, their complicitous behavior serves as reciprocal justification for the building of Towers of Babel. Dazzled by power, money, prestige and pleasure, as well as by ephemeral, material successes, they feel omnipotent.

People let success go to their heads and ignore the systemic, overall context of reality which actually governs all momentary or apparent successes. Successful people tend to exaggerate their successes and treat them as if they were eternal.

They are not prone to listen to others who wish to contribute to their real and deep fulfillment –instead of joining them in the narrow pursuit of success– and who will not abandon them when success vanishes. Social norms perpetuate a collective fraud, flattering shallow brilliance, reinforcing deviations and increasing the deep solitude of the successful, who are bothered and besieged by others selfishly interested in acquiring a share of successful individuals' wealth, fame or possessions.

At the same time, however, individuals' conscience or capacity for consistency gives them constant notice that such assumptions are without basis. In addition, reality warns people that their behavior and the assumptions on which it is based are false by meting out failures and

frustrations. Sooner or later, failures and frustrations will force people to wake up to their mistakes and recognize that the satisfactions they pursued were in fact ephemeral.

2) Dysfunctions of success and possessions; dependence, frustration

Success generates the insatiable and desperate desire for more, and the frustration derived from this causes people to turn to dangerous efforts to satisfy their needs through drugs, alcohol, aphrodisiacs and other means. Instead of bringing satisfaction, success –and the desire for success– make people prisoners of possessions.

Frustration increases to the extent that people notice that their achievements are incapable of satisfying their underlying need for absolute answers. Paradoxically, the accumulation of successes and possessions limits human fulfillment and freedom. It makes people dependent on possessions and preoccupied with small gains and losses.¹⁰⁴ This is an application of the expression, “the function makes the organ.”

The practice of striving for possessions, pleasures or successes tends to make people focus their attention and commitment on such narrow goals; they neglect other important goals and adopt an increasingly unilateral orientation. Individuals who devote their lives to the accumulation of money, power, prestige or pleasure are caught in a trap of their own making, as they stubbornly try to derive complete happiness from partial solutions. In fact, they only find emptiness and their lives lose meaning; they suffer failure and frustration, which are exacerbated by the perverse excesses which they stubbornly implement.

They become increasingly dependent and desperate. They lose the liberating opportunity of adhering to reality, unity, and the laws of fulfillment of being in goodness and truth –deriving from unity–. As a result, they lose the opportunity to contribute to their own fulfillment and that of others and reality, which is the only true path to deep and lasting happiness.

d. Frustration of egotism -vs. self- mastery and unity’s mastery

When people do not adhere to reality and integrative unity but rather obey ego, caprices and impulses, they encounter contradictions and frustration. This occurs because they strive to be what they are not: supreme masters of reality. This brings unhappiness and irritation, since people place absolute faith in something (or someone) which, unlike unity, is not omnipotent. Individuals may be masters of themselves and

of their impulses, thoughts, desires, emotions and actions. However, such mastery is not based on egotism but is humbly based on acceptance of and adherence to the ethical and technical laws of reality. Self-mastery results from the exercise of one's capacity for consistency; it stems from giving and devoting oneself to others, in recognition of the distinct, valuable role each being plays within the whole of reality. Self-mastery looks at difficulties and suffering as opportunities to advance in consistency and fulfillment. Thus, self-mastery, as opposed to egotism, alleviates frustrations, anxieties, irritations and unhappiness.

e. Sorcerer's apprentice syndrome

The sorcerer's apprentice syndrome refers to efforts to manipulate reality without respecting its laws. It is often prompted by a fascination with material advances that leads people to distort values, weaken discipline and indulge in decadence. Individuals overestimate their power over things and think that they can escape and even overrule the laws of reality. In doing so, they fail to consider the tightly interwoven system of relations which comprise reality and all its aspects and implications. Modern science and technology and mass media also prompt people to lose sight of the wider framework of reality, encouraging them to believe they are able to manipulate anything and everything. People gain a false sense of their own strengths and ability to control effects which in fact cannot be predicted or controlled.¹⁰⁵ This leads to boomerang effects and decadence, with the destruction of family and interpersonal relations, the decline of spiritual values, environmental degradation, and ad hoc theories which seek to justify destructive actions, such as drug abuse, sexual promiscuity, violence, consumerism and exploitation.¹⁰⁶

f. Neglecting crucial dimensions of reality, and failure

Human beings' mission is to give themselves completely to reality by respecting all aspects and beings. If people neglect crucial dimensions, such as ethical, spiritual, family, interpersonal and emotional considerations, they will fail to adequately control their impulses and will overestimate the importance of economic, scientific, technological and political advances, treating these as if they were sufficient. In doing so, they deprive life of its meaning and devote all their efforts to the misguided attempt to increase and accumulate material rewards which are extremely ephemeral and misleading. This reveals an arrogant attitude of rebellion against reality which prompts people to reject opportunities for contributing to their own and other people's fulfillment.

By neglecting crucial dimensions of reality and attempting to force reality to be something that it is not, people defy consistency, knowledge and freedom.¹⁰⁷ This leads to boomerang effects of failure, frustration and decay, because it violates the laws of reality and unity, from which they derive.¹⁰⁸ Human beings fail to fulfill their mission in life when they refuse to exercise their capacity for consistency, privileging fragments and impulses instead.¹⁰⁹

3. Confusion, vulnerability and loss of meaning

a. Confusion, frustration and disorientation due to lack of solid reference point

When people fail to insert their behavior and beliefs into the systemic framework of reality, which is founded on the solid reference point of integrative unity, they experience confusion and disorientation, like ships adrift.

They lack a firm basis for evaluating beliefs, decisions, ends and social norms. This leads to erratic actions and irrational goals, both of which make individuals into slaves of unmastered impulses.

Individuals depend on ephemeral fragments, which only exist because of their role within the wider framework. By not inserting fragments, objects and people into their place in reality, they are not respected, adhered to, and no free contribution is made for their fulfillment. By denying their true nature and needs, excessive importance is ascribed to the immediate. Instead of reality, an imaginary, deformed and pathological world is served; by agreeing to live in this sub-spiritual and material world, individuals renounce their freedom. This leads to confusion, a feeling of emptiness, frustration, desperation, and even suicide.¹¹⁰ Fictitious needs are created, and professional advances lose their meaning and direction.¹¹¹

b. Postponing recognition of only firm reference point

Individuals who repudiate reality and unity remain adrift, subject to the frustration of growing expectations which invariably fail to satisfy due to the lack of attention to satisfying spiritual needs by exercising genuine consistency.¹¹²

The pursuit of growing expectations aggravates problems and postpones awareness of underlying problems by preventing people from

recognizing the supremacy of unity through their capacity for consistency in contact with reality. Unawareness creates illusions which allow people to defer learning the lesson of punishments and rewards.

When people see themselves as authors of reality, they lose support of the only firm point of reference: reality, based on integrative unity, which connects all parts of reality.¹¹³ Unity is the only self-generating point of reference; it is self-sufficient and needs no other point of reference to support itself. Unity is therefore the basis of reality and existence.

c. Losing focus due to the distraction of endless commitments

In modern, complex, urban societies, it is especially difficult to focus on the appropriate insertion of one's behavior into the systemic framework of reality. In modern societies, it is especially easy to engage in behaviors leading to self-destruction.

Authorities, leaders and citizens are drawn by endless commitments which absorb their attention, time and energy, partly detracting from their ability to see, decide and act clearly, leading them to lose contact with the framework of reality and unity.

They are responsible for ordering these endless commitments and inserting them into the framework of reality, exercising consistency so as to contribute to human fulfillment. If they fail to do so, they waste time and energy, squandering opportunities to achieve fulfillment and bringing destruction instead. If they run from one place to another, striving for immediate gratification, they narrow their horizon and perspective, attaching themselves to fragments of money, power, prestige or pleasure and closing their eyes to truth, goodness and human fulfillment.

d. Living for the moment, postponing solutions; fiction, confusion, contradiction

When people live for the moment and give in to appetites which seek money, power, pleasure and prestige, they let themselves be guided by inconsistent social norms and become obsessed with immediate concerns and gratification.

They try to compensate for the consequent lack of meaning in their lives through shallow, short-term satisfactions. At the same time, however, their conscience (capacity for consistency) continually reminds them that they are not working on behalf of true values, despite references to truth, love, freedom and honesty.

Such declarations provide a false facade for behavior which is based on fiction, exploitation of others, dependency on impulses and corruption.

Such behavior increases confusion and cheats everyone, including individuals themselves since it causes them to postpone making necessary corrections to their deviations, thus aggravating frustrations.

These individuals swing back and forth from one excess to another, and their actions are always characterized by contradiction, which prevents them from finding needed and desired solutions.

e. Reinforcing and disguising social norms which harm others

When social norms reward people who benefit at the expense of others and punish other people who work for the fulfillment of others and themselves, they have an anti-educational and harmful influence on society. This is obscured (but no less true) when declarativism is employed to create a facade of nice words and references to justice, ethics and solidarity. Inconsistent social norms promote injustice, fraud and manipulation and create a sense of impotence regarding personal problems; they tend to narrow information to what people want to hear rather than providing full information about reality. This, in turn, leads to failure.¹¹⁴

f. Dysfunctions of not inserting the economy into the wider system of reality

The failure to insert economic progress into the wider framework of reality and make it serve higher ends harms moral, social and economic systems. Such a failure unilaterally and disproportionately favors one aspect, as when too much food is consumed or too much medicine is taken, which lead to poisoning and damage.

Many people are not aware of the destructive effects of the failure to insert economic progress into a broad, all-encompassing framework. Since reality is an interconnected whole, if one component is disproportionately favored, the whole system, including the favored component, is damaged –in the same way that a cancerous cell harms its host (and ultimately itself) by aggressively and excessively reproducing–. Economic systems are also harmed by such unilateralism, as manifested in environmental deterioration, the loss of creativity and productivity, and the spread of vice and moral decadence. When this occurs, the economic system loses its source of legitimacy, its *raison d'être*: to serve the fulfillment of people and reality, through its balanced insertion into the whole, as a function of such higher ends.

g. Lack of guide for evaluating models

Individuals and societies would benefit greatly from a list of criteria for distinguishing between decisions and social norms and models which are guided by consistency and lead to human fulfillment, on the one hand, and others marred by inconsistency that lead to the opposite results. One of the purposes of this book is to help build such a guide.

h. Dysfunctions of unmastered impulses, not inserted in reality

Efforts to replace reality and unity by an artificial world built on arrogance, impulses and vanity, as in the Tower of Babel, are futile.

Such efforts forget that the whole world is supported by reality and unity; they fail to acknowledge that people can only satisfy their needs, desires and hopes by following the path of reality and unity.

Efforts to replace reality and unity therefore force individuals to forego the opportunity to find meaning and value for their actions and advance toward fulfillment and happiness.

4. Neglecting personal and family relations

a. Egoism and self-destruction, needs and merit

When people refuse to unconditionally give themselves to others or to treat them as they deserve, their personal relations become impersonal and they suffer a loss of meaning and quality of life. Within the harmony of the system of reality, all people have the specific function of contributing not only to their own fulfillment but also to the fulfillment of their families, friends and others close to them, especially people who depend on them.

Their capacity for consistency allows individuals to discover the position of each person in reality, their relations to others and the contributions needed from each one. This allows people to evaluate what each person needs and deserves, within the harmony established by the laws of reality, derived from unity.

Love, solidarity, cooperation and charity toward others are fundamental for providing spiritual and emotional fulfillment and security. Impersonal and egoistic relations, on the other hand, prevent individuals from finding meaning and quality of life, leading to self-destruction.

b. Vicious circle of prejudice, conflict and war

Conflict goes against the laws of reality, which establish that all parts complement and reinforce each other, in a process of mutual fulfillment. Stereotypes and prejudices foster conflict, prompting people to attack others out of a misguided sense of self-defense. This, in turn, confirms other people's stereotypes and prejudices, leading them to respond to the attack with further violence, escalating the conflict. These vicious circles are set in motion without any specific intention to do so and without the awareness of the parties involved of what they are doing. Both sides may attack out of a sense that they are responding to aggression from the other.

Such inconsistent attitudes prevent cooperation and lead to wars through a process of self-fulfilling prophecies. The two world wars in the twentieth century, in addition to other endless wars and lesser conflicts in this century, waste the energies of people and cultures and are determined by reciprocal attitudes of mistrust. These conflicts reveal a lack of adherence to reality and a lack of communication as well as an unwillingness to empathize with others.

By respecting, and only in partial and relative fashion, only members of their own "in-group" and denying respect to others, treating them with mistrust and hostility, cooperation became impossible. This leads to conflict and prevents investment and long-term planning, due to a lack of respected and shared rules of the game.

c. Preventing war and conflict through empathy

Many wars and conflicts could be prevented if people would insert their problems into the wider framework of reality, trying to place themselves in other people's position. By identifying and communicating with others and by humbly acknowledging one's own errors, people can better understand the perspectives which other people hold and can overcome destructive passions.

d. Egoism, hatred and destruction of others and oneself

When personal relations are exclusively governed by egoistic interests and desires to obtain something in return, they lead to conflict, destruction and war, and even to genocide. If, on the other hand, personal relations are governed by genuine love toward others, including people who are not part of one's own family or group, they lead to peace, harmony and happiness. Genuine love is based on adherence to reality and, as a result of this, requires respect for all people and their position

in reality; genuine love is inspired by unity to extend unconditional love and support to others based on the sincere desire for the benefit and fulfillment of all.

When children are taught that love is only disguised egoism and that this “love” can and should be used to satisfy self-interest at the expense of others, they come to believe that it is better not to give or commit oneself to others. This encourages them to develop a hard protective cover of insensitivity as a defense mechanism for surviving with the spiritual and emotional deprivation derived from such a false conception of love. However, their conscience (i.e., their capacity for consistency) continually reminds them of the need and duty of giving oneself to others and reality punishes them for not doing so.

By giving themselves to others unconditionally, despite the teachings of prevailing models, people avoid the extremes and suffering which accompany individualism, egoism and isolation. To the extent that people do not correct the deviations and misconceptions of prevailing social norms, they encounter frustration and unhappiness. Although they may try to manipulate love in order to satisfy a narrow desire for egoism and pleasure, they know that deep fulfillment and satisfaction only derive from giving oneself unconditionally to reality and unity, which includes giving oneself to others and oneself.

e. Conditionality of giving oneself in the family: emotional insecurity

The prevailing social norms in some modern societies encourage spouses, parents and children not to extend unconditional love to each other and not to make life-long commitments. These norms consider family relations to be yet one more example of an exchange-based relation, which can be abandoned if and when other relations open up that offer more satisfaction or advantages.

Children who receive conditional love, resent this fact and harbor aggressive feelings toward their parents; their parents, in turn, interpret their children’s aggression as confirmation that it was right to remain distant. This produces a vicious circle which destroys the family.

Completing this cycle of destruction, spouses look on marriage as a relationship to be preserved only so long as a better opportunity does not emerge; marriage is considered as an exchange arrangement of reciprocal convenience for maximizing gratification. This keeps the possibility open that one of the partners will find a better affective “deal” for replacing the former.

Therefore both spouses believe that they need to retain a certain degree of reserve and distance in order to shield themselves against the eventuality that the marriage breaks up –or in order to better identify other opportunities for replacing partners–.

This is made easier through the practice of free sexual relations before, during and after marriage. All these practices and the social norms supporting them prevent spiritual, affective and emotional security, growth and stability, and thwart fulfillment derived from genuine, deep love.

f. Privileging egoism prevents fulfillment

Social norms which reduce all motives to egoism and deny the obligation and responsibility of loving, respecting and working for the benefit of others and oneself (especially those closest to individuals, like family members, whom they most strongly influence and are influenced by) encourage individuals to use and exploit each other, discourage unconditional love and hinder spiritual, affective and emotional security.

Social norms which reduce all motives to egoism therefore deny the fundamental components of an improved quality of life, required by consistency. They deprive people of the fundamental opportunity to contribute to their own fulfillment and that of others, through reciprocal devotion.

The emphasis on the importance of material and economic assets causes people to subordinate spiritual, interpersonal and family values, with devastating effects in terms of quality of life and human fulfillment, and even in terms of economic progress. ~¹¹⁵

CHAPTER ONE NOTES : UNITY IN VARIETY

1. I have explained the consistency principle in Adolfo Critto, *El Método Científico en las Ciencias Sociales* (Buenos Aires: Paidós, 1982), pp. 17-32.

2. Bronislaw Malinowski has written, "In the field one has to face a chaos of facts, some of which are so small that they seem insignificant; others loom so large that they are hard to encompass with one synthetic glance. But in this crude form they are not scientific facts at all; they are absolutely elusive, and can be fixed only by interpretation. by seeing them 'sub specie aeternitatis,' by grasping what is essential in them and fixing this. 'Only laws and generalizations are scientific facts,' and field work consists only and exclusively in the interpretation of the chaotic social reality, in subordinating it to general rules." From "Baloma: The Spirits of the Dead in the Trobriand Islands", in *Magic Science and Religion and Other Essays* [1916] (New York: Doubleday, 1954), p. 238. Laws and generalizations are links of consistency in the otherwise seeming chaos of facts. Once the links of consistency are found through classification (in dimensions and categories), generalization, rules and laws, integrated in a system the appearance of chaos vanishes, although such an advance is only gradual.

3. Susan K. Langer has written: "An animal's environment consists of the things that act on his senses... He does not live in a world of unbroken space and time, filled with events even when he is not present or when he is not interested; his 'world' has a fragmentary intermittent existence, arising and collapsing with his activities. A human being's world hangs together, its events fit into each other, no matter how devious their connections, there always are connections, in one big framework of space and time... 'The world' is something human." From "The Growing Center of Knowledge," in *Philosophical Sketches* [1956] (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1962), p. 146. The connections which fit into a "big framework" so as to integrate human beings' world point to the unity binding variety in an integrated system.

4. Human beings discover unity in variety by searching for links and observing uniformity. According to Clyde Kluckhohn and Henry A. Murray, "Without the discovery of uniformity there can be no concepts, no classifications, no formulations, no principles, no laws; and without these no science can exist." From "Personality Formation," in *Personality in Nature, Society, and Culture* [1944] (New York: Knopf, 1967), pp. 55-56.

5. Sigmund Freud implicitly recognizes the capacity of human beings to adhere to reality through unity in variety. Freud refers to this as the overriding influence of Eros, according to which all human behavior revolves around the primal drive to satisfy the Libido. Freud argues that Eros serves as the foundation of civilization, working to link people's experiences together, establishing ever-greater unity. He also argues that when the primal libidinal drive is rejected or diverted to alternative paths, the result is frustration and neurosis. In addition, he argues that human beings also possess a natural aggressive instinct which opposes the process of civilization and unity and which cultivates destruction. However, Freud's theory permits a fragment to prevail over reality: the instinctual drive to satisfy sexual desires and aggressive tendencies. According to Sigmund Freud, "After long hesitations and vacillations we have decided to assume the existence of only two basic instincts, 'Eros,' and the 'destructive instinct' ... The aim of the first of these basic instincts is to establish ever greater unity and to preserve them thus – in short, to bind together; the aim of the second is, on the contrary, to undo connections and so to destroy things. In the case of the destructive instinct we may suppose that its final aim is to lead what is living into an inorganic state. For this reason we also call it the 'death instinct'." From "An Outline of Psycho-Analysis," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Vol. 23 [1940] (Lond.: Hogarth, 1964), p. 148. The aim which Freud ascribes to Eros seems to implicitly recognize the existence and importance of the principle of consistency. By labeling the opposite instinct as the "destructive instinct" and the "death instinct," Freud seems to argue that by following Eros, human beings adhere to reality and to life; when human beings do not search for and serve unity in variety, they do not use freedom for construction and fulfillment but for the opposite.

However, Freud's Eros differs significantly from what I call principle of consistency. Freud's theory does not ground the decision between life and death on the exercise of liberty to serve existence and others but rather at the service of impulses, fragments and the ego. Freud even places Eros at the service of the destructive instinct, using and destroying others, oneself and the whole, instead of serving them.

Indeed, Freud said: "Sexual love is undoubtedly one of the chief things in life, and the union of mental and bodily satisfaction in the enjoyment of love is one of its culminating peaks." From "Observations on Transference-Love," *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Vol. 12 [1915] (London: Hogarth, 1958), pp. 169-170. Here, Freud stresses the value of love as "mental and bodily satisfaction," rather than depicting love as the defining characteristic of human beings and their freedom, namely to give themselves, to desire and give life and benefits to loved ones (including others

as well as themselves). Instead, Freud's analysis of sexual love stresses the importance of using the other and making him or her serve one's own ego. This is spurious consistency, which people employ in order to serve fragments and disrupt unity in variety.

Freud also wrote: "One day the brothers who had been driven out came together, killed and devoured their father and so made an end of the patriarchal horde. United they had the courage to do and succeeded in doing what would have been impossible...The violent primal father had doubtless been the feared and envied model of each one of the company of brothers; and in the act of devouring him they accomplished their identification with him..." From, "Totem and Taboo," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Vol. 13 (London: Hogarth, 1958), pp. 141-142.

Fraternal unity is not used here to build unity in variety but to kill and devour the father; according to Freud, communion does not result from giving oneself for the other's benefit and life, but from taking away the other's life, destroying and using him.

In Freud's framework, the unmastered impulses which enslave us replace free adherence to unity in variety: this is an exercise of spurious consistency typical of sorcerer's apprentices who speak of love while describing exploitation of others and oneself. This gives a theoretical basis to dominant social norms in contemporary societies which consider that the basis of all motivation, goals and the meaning of life is located in egotism and self-gratification rather than in the subordination of impulses to superior principles as demanded by consistency. Freud elevates irrationality and the dominance of impulse over reason and consistency when he affirms that the source of "social organization, of moral restrictions and of religion" is the "criminal deed" against the father committed by his own children.

Freud also said: "No one who has seen a baby sinking back satiated from the breast and falling asleep with flushed cheeks and a blissful smile can escape the reflection that his picture persists as a prototype of the expression of sexual satisfaction in later life." From *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Vol. 7: *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* [1905] (London: Hogarth, 1953), p. 182.

In both cases, the consistency which governs reality requires human beings to recognize the higher meaning of a bodily function: the act of eating has a life-sustaining meaning; sexual love and procreation also have a life-sustaining meaning and are an integral part of realizing people's mission within the superior order to which they belong. In both cases, the attainment of life-affirming meaning requires sobriety, balance, self-mastery and respect and love for others and for oneself. This leads people to unconditionally serve the greater good – including the fulfillment, security and spiritual, emotional and physical stability of their sexual partners and their children (their families), considering sexual satisfaction not as a goal but as an integral component of human experience. This is the opposite of seeking to possess and use others.

6. Arthur O. Lovejoy has written: "Through the Middle ages and down to the late eighteenth century, many philosophers, most men of science, and,

indeed, most educated men, were to accept without question the conception of the universe as a 'Great Chain of Being', composed of an immense, or – by the strict but seldom vigorously applied logic of the principle of continuity – of an infinite number of links ranging in hierarchical order from the meagerest kind of existents, which barely escape non-existence, through 'every possible' grade up to the 'ens perfectissimum' – or, in a somewhat more orthodox version, to the highest possible kind of creature, between which and the Absolute Being the disparity was assumed to be infinite – every one of them differing from that immediately above and that immediately below it by the 'least possible' degree of difference." From *The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea* [1936] (New York: Harper, 1960), p. 59.

Lovejoy also wrote: "The history of the idea of the Chain of Being – insofar as that idea presupposed such a complete rational intelligibility of the world – is the history of a failure; more precisely and more justly, it is the record of an experiment in thought carried on for many centuries by many great and lesser minds, which can now be seen to have had an instructive negative outcome. The experiment, taken as a whole, constitutes one of the most grandiose enterprises of the human intellect. But as the consequences of this most persistent and most comprehensive of hypotheses became more and more explicit, the more apparent became its difficulties; and when they are fully drawn out, they show the hypothesis of the absolute rationality of the cosmos to be unbelievable." (p. 329).

The conception of the Absolute Chain of Being implies the existence of the unity underlying all variety, and reveals the fact that knowledge and science advance through the discovery of the links leading us to gradually discover and see such underlying unity (even if imperfectly). In my conception this chain is not a linear one, but a systemic unity among all "existents." The product of such a conception is advancement of science and culture. Mankind's failures are the result of deviating from the balanced search for and service of unity in variety; these failures do not derive from the idea of the absolute rationality of the cosmos, but from deviation from it.

7. Experience is based on stimuli (messages from reality received by means of our external and internal sensory apparatus) which are the raw material which people process and give meaning to through interpretation and which in turn produces the systemic representation of the system of reality in our minds. In the words of John Locke: "Let us ... suppose the mind to be, as we say, white paper, void of all characters, without any ideas: How comes it to be furnished? Whence comes it by the vast store which the busy and boundless fancy of man has painted on it with an almost endless variety? Whence has it all the 'materials' of reason and knowledge? To this answer, in one word, from Experience. In that all our knowledge is founded: and from that it ultimately derives itself". From *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Vol. 1 (New York: Dover, 1960), Book 2, chap. 1, pp. 121-122.

Experience includes the stimuli or messages which come from the environment (also including our "internal" environment, which may be considered as an object worthy of analysis and attention) together with the interpretations which the mind performs on these messages with the help of the capacity for

consistency (reason). The stimuli of which we are conscious are already selected, translated and interpreted in terms of previous messages and are integrated in our mind or psychological frame of reference with the help of the capacity for consistency.

Messages are first perceived by babies who are able to perceive stimuli and construct their meaning, thereby giving them life. This ability leads children to discover a world of internal light that connects them with external and internal worlds, physical and non-physical, linking the components of reality together. At this early age, the light is confused (as in the nebula of the beginning of the solar system), but it is full of energy and life. This may be called infantile curiosity, which moves babies to actively and eagerly strive to bring order to the stimuli they perceive and which at first seem highly dispersed and confusing. This curiosity continues until children discover the structures (of unity in variety) to which they belong. This is what we call experience and knowledge.

8. Knowledge and science advance hand in hand through social norms (regularly repeated, shared behaviors) that incorporate new links into the system of knowledge which is built inside each person, group and society. These links are crucial for progressively solving areas of the immense puzzle of variety. The instruments through which scientists look at reality are made of social norms which shape concepts, ideas, theories, languages, words, methods and paradigms, etc. These instruments are used by scientists and ordinary human beings in their search; the results are then transmitted to others and shared in the collective processes of culture and scientific evolution.

Thomas S. Kuhn comments: "Examining the record of past research from the vantage of contemporary historiography, the historian of science may be tempted to exclaim that when paradigms change, the world itself changes with them. Led by a new paradigm, scientists adopt new instruments and look in new places. Even more important, during revolutions, scientists see new and different things when looking with familiar instruments in places they have looked before. It is rather as if the professional community had been suddenly transported to another planet, where familiar objects are seen in a different light and are joined by unfamiliar ones as well." From: *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* [1962] (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), p. 111.

9. Science advances by discovering similarities and differences and fitting both into the larger picture of the whole. Because of this, I do not share the assumption by E.E. Evans-Pritchard that the "sociological purpose" is "to explain differences rather than similarities." See *The Comparative Method in Social Anthropology* (London: Athlone Press, 1963), p. 16.

10. According to Charles Darwin, "Man with all his noble qualities, with sympathy which feels for the most debased, with benevolence which extends not only to other men but to the humblest living creature, with his god-like intellect which has penetrated into the movements and constitution of the solar system—with all these exalted powers—Man still bears in his bodily frame the indelible stamp of his lowly origin." From *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex* [1871] (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981), chap. 21, p. 405.

The description of human beings' "lowly origin" refers to the physical evolution of the species. Consistency is a superior characteristic which does not belong to the physical realm, although it freely knows and influences it.

11. According to Aristotle, "All men naturally desire knowledge". Cfr. *Aristotle in Twenty-Three Volumes*, Vol. 17: *The Metaphysics* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press., 1980), Book 1, p. 3. The desire for knowledge is equivalent to the desire to find unity in variety, which stems from the use of reason.

12. According to Ernest Nagel, "It is the desire for explanations that are at once systematic and controllable by factual evidence that generates science; and it is the organization and classification of knowledge on the basis of explanatory principles that is the distinctive goal of the sciences." From *The Structure of Science: Problems in the Logic of Scientific Explanation* (San Diego, Calif.: Harcourt, 1961), p. 4. The search for consistency links the phenomenon to be explained with the rest of the available information and is implemented through the organization and classification of knowledge into dimensions, relations among phenomena and the systems to which they belong.

Otto Jespersen wrote: "Man is a classifying animal, in one sense it may be said that the whole process of speaking is nothing but distributing phenomena, of which no two are alike in every respect, into different classes on the strength of perceived similarities and dissimilarities. In the name-giving process we witness the same ineradicable and very useful tendency to see likenesses and to express similarity in the phenomena through similarity in name." From: *Language: Its Nature, Development and Origin* [1922] (N. York: Norton, 1922), pp. 388-389. Classification, i.e., the process of discovering and building classificatory criteria, which I call dimensions (also called variables, attributes or properties), is a basic process of discovering unity in variety. The elaboration of dimensions progresses by unfolding them into sub-dimensions and identifying typologies and structures through operations such as reduction and substruction and by analyzing how the dimensions are related among themselves and integrated into systems.

13. Talcott Parsons has written: "A scientifically unimportant discovery is one which, however true and however interesting for other reasons, has no consequences for a system of theory with which scientists in that field are concerned." From *The Structure of Social Action: A Study in Social Theory with Special Reference to a Group of Recent European Writers*, Vol. 1 (New York: Free Press, 1978), p. 7.

He also wrote: "All empirically verifiable knowledge – even the common-sense knowledge of every day life – involves implicitly, if not explicitly, systematic theory ... The importance of this statement lies in the fact that certain persons who write on social subjects vehemently deny it. They say they state merely facts and let them 'speak for themselves.' But the fact a person denies that he is theorizing is no reason for taking him at his word and failing to investigate what implicit theory is involved in his statements." (Vol. 1, p. 10)

This implicit theory is always present, since people perceive new facts, interpret them and arrive at conclusions by incorporating new information or experiences within their global conception of reality based on their previous experiences which they integrate into a system through their capacity for consistency or

reason. The success of this integration depends on the degree to which genuine consistency is exercised, since genuine consistency steadily reduces obscure and incomplete points (although some obscurity and incompleteness always remain). In this way, people progress in knowledge and truth.

Parsons also wrote: "A fact is not itself a phenomenon at all, but a proposition about one or more phenomena." (Vol. 1, p. 41) He added that: "The abstractness of some of the concepts which are employed in the theory of action consists precisely in the fact that they are descriptive not of the actual observable state of affairs of overt action, but of norms towards which it may be regarded as being oriented ... The only reason for admitting such concepts to a scientific theory is that they are in fact descriptive of an empirical phenomenon, namely the state of mind of the actor. They exist in this state of mind, but not in the actor's 'external world.' It is, indeed, this circumstance which necessitates resort, on the part of the theory of action, to the subjective point of view." (Vol. 1, p. 295)

The norms toward which action is oriented are part of the integrative system which each person or group builds in order to understand and interpret the external and internal worlds, both of which are real. The reality of the internal world allows us to discover and evaluate what is real in the external world by finding the unity and integration underlying appearances.

14. Consistency also subsumes the concept of time, transcending any specific moment or change. According to Spinoza: "Nothing comes to pass in nature, which can be set down to a flaw therein; for nature is always the same, and everywhere one and the same in her efficacy and power of action; that is, nature's laws and ordinances, whereby all things come to pass and change from one form to another, are everywhere and always the same; so that there should be one and the same method of understanding the nature of all things whatsoever, namely, through nature's universal laws and rules." From *The Chief Works of Benedict de Spinoza*, Vol. 2: *The Ethics* [1677] (New York:Dover, 1955), Part 3, p. 129.

The method which Spinoza refers to is nothing other than the search for consistency, and all cognitive methods and strategies are based on it. The unity which underlies all changing things remains the same, and time and change obey this overarching unity. This is why one and the same general method corresponds to all time.

According to Herbert Spencer, "Progress ...is not an accident, but a necessity. Instead of civilization being artificial, it is a part of nature; all of a piece with the development of the embryo or the unfolding of a flower. The modifications mankind have undergone and are still undergoing result from a law underlying the whole organic creation; and provided the human race continues and the constitution of things remains the same, those modifications must end in completeness..." From *Social Statistics: The Conditions Essential to Human Happiness Specified, and the First of Them Developed* [1850] (New York: Schalkenbach Foundation, 1954), p. 60.

Spencer also speaks about "the evolution of all these endless concrete and abstract products of human activity which constitute the environment of our daily life. From the remotest past which Science can fathom, up to the novelties of yesterday, that in which Progress essentially consists, is the transformation of

the homogeneous into the heterogeneous". From *Essays: Scientific, Political and Speculative*, Vol. 1: *Progress: Its Law and Cause* [1857] (Osnabruck, Germany: Otto Zeller, 1966), p. 35.

In a separate passage, Spencer writes: "Evolution is an integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion: during which the matter passes from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a definite, coherent heterogeneity; and during which the retained motion undergoes a parallel transformation." From *First Principles* [1862] (New York: Appleton, 1888), p. 396.

Elsewhere Spencer said: "A social organism is like an individual organism in these essential traits: -that it grows; that while growing it becomes more complex; that while becoming complex its parts acquire increasing mutual dependence; and that its life is immense in length compared with the lives of its components units... In both cases there is an increasing integration accompanied by increasing heterogeneity." From *An Autobiography*, Vol. 2 (New York: Appleton, 1904), pp. 55-56.

The function of time, within the framework of the integration of unity in variety (or consistency), is to serve as the realm and vehicle for the development or unfolding of the two components of unity in variety: on the one hand, it maximizes the differentiation of variety, thereby magnifying variety; on the other hand, it augments the integration and structuring of variety by unity. In reality, both aspects are part of a single consideration: the integration of unity in variety. Evolution towards heterogeneity is an advance in the gradual unfolding of the endless variety of aspects included in reality. We feel satisfied when we advance in this direction to an extent that is proportionate to our limited talents and energies. The goal of perfect integration serves a positive function insofar as it acts as a distant star whose light, heat and life are sufficient for human purposes. The mutual dependency enriched by heterogeneity stems from the integration of variety by unity. The growth of heterogeneity is accompanied by growing structural simplicity. To the extent that individuals employ their capacity for consistency in a genuine manner, they strive to consider all the implications (including the ultimate implications) of this integration of variety through unity, as integration of heterogeneity by simplicity. Heterogeneity, which provides endless possibilities in the rich profusion of aspects of reality, must follow the path of unity which entails respecting the links through which unity integrates all aspects into reality (whith simplicity).

The "incoherent homogeneity" to which Spencer refers has various implications. At the cognitive level, it signals the need to advance toward consistency by identifying implications. At the objective level, it indicates reality's need (which fulfills itself) to advance in the realization of the possibilities for integrating unity in variety. At the level of human freedom, "incoherent homogeneity" implies the need to fulfill individuals' free and creative contribution to the coherence of the total system of reality, helping each aspect and being to occupy the place where it belongs so that each one may fulfill its proper role within the harmonious order of reality.

"Coherent heterogeneity" is an advancement in the direction of completing these three levels. The greater complexity that an organism acquires as it develops already exists, although this complexity remains to be specified and unfolded.

15. For C. Wright Mills, “[The sociological] imagination is the capacity to shift from one perspective to another –from the political to the psychological; from examination of a single family to comparative assessment of the national budgets of the world; from the theological school to the military establishment; from considerations of an oil industry to studies of contemporary poetry. It is the capacity to range from the most impersonal and remote transformations to the most intimate features of the human self– and to see the relations between the two.” From *The Sociological Imagination* (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959), p. 7.

The sociological imagination implies the capacity to see relationships between more than two perspectives, thereby advancing toward the global system of reality.

16. According to Mary Douglas, “Dirt is essentially disorder ... Dirt offends against order. Eliminating it is not a negative movement, but a positive effort to organize the environment.” From *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (New York: Praeger, 1966), p. 2. The notion of eliminating dirt should be interpreted as a relative statement. The important thing is to try and remove dirt from places where it does not belong. Things qualify as “dirt” when they are out of place, where they harm or perturb. Placing things where they belong means that they no longer are considered dirt; they have the healthy function of fertilizing life and contributing to ecological equilibrium. As Mary Douglas argued, “Dirt ... is never a unique, isolated event. Where there is dirt there is system. Dirt is the by-product of a systematic ordering and classification of matter, insofar as ordering involves rejecting inappropriate elements.” (p. 35) Dirt has to be identified, recognized, and then subordinated to order.

The process described requires people to recognize the systemic integration of reality which discriminates aspects of reality and assigns each one its proper place (a place which fluctuates due to change and interaction among the immensity of aspects). In this way, each aspect contributes to the whole. Eliminating dirt is similar to eliminating attachment to impulses which draw people away from subordination to the system of unity in variety which leads to being, fulfillment, truth and goodness.

17. Human reality is a sub-system of reality where beings coexist and complement each other. Arnold J. Toynbee described civilizations as “wholes whose parts all cohere with one another and all affect one another reciprocally.” From *A Study of History*, Vol. 3 (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1934), p. 380. I would add that this coherence is in a constant process of realization through dynamic processes of growth and change that progressively resolve strains and tensions which present themselves as inconsistencies or contradictions. These strains and tensions will ultimately be completely resolved, in part by human beings (thanks to their free capacity for consistency) and in part by nature based in unity. These processes underlie the endless human task of discovering and serving fulfillment and progress by identifying consistencies and contradictions across time, serving the former and overcoming the latter.

18. G. Stanley Hall writes, "All possible 'truth' is practical. To ask whether our conception of chair or table corresponds to the real chair or table apart from the uses to which they may be put, is as utterly meaningless and vain as to inquire whether a musical tone is red or yellow." From: "The Muscular Perception of Space" in *Mind* (October 1978), p. 446.

Truth is not limited to the practical or utilitarian meaning of an object in a superficial sense, but rather considers the entire system of reality into which the object is inserted. This means that the ethical and moral implications of an object, as well as the implications it has for the community, communication, sharing, love, etc., should be considered, even in order to understand an object like a chair or a table. The otherwise isolated concept is thereby meaningfully expanded to refer to the deeper and more abundant "uses" or relationships (up to the ultimate) of an object within the extremely rich system of reality.

19. On the subject of the whole, Kurt Lewin wrote: "To the psychologist who has observed the historical development of the concept of 'whole' or Gestalt, in psychology, most of the argumentation about the group mind sounds strangely familiar. It took psychology many steps before it discovered that a dynamic whole has properties which are different from the properties of their parts or from the sum of their parts." From "Field Theory and Experiment in Social Psychology," in *Field Theory in Social Science* [1939] (Univ. of Chicago Press, 1976), p. 146. The whole to which Lewin refers is a subsystem of the whole of wholes, which advances in this direction by considering systemic wholes.

20. Ernest Nagel said: "The undeniable difficulties that stand in the way of obtaining reliable knowledge of human affairs because of the fact that social scientists differ in their value orientations are practical difficulties. The difficulties are not necessarily insuperable, for since by hypothesis it is not impossible to distinguish between fact and value, steps can be taken to identify a value bias when it occurs, and to minimize if not to eliminate completely its perturbing effects." (Nagel, op. cit., p. 489).

Since values are an integral part of reality, they must be made explicit and put in their proper place. In this way, they will not disturb the advance of knowledge but rather form an essential part of it.

21. L. S. Vygotsky said: "If the fundamental and most general activity of the cerebral hemispheres of animals and humans is signalization, then the basic and most general activity of humans, the activity that above all distinguishes humans from animals from the psychological point of view, is 'signification' ... Signification is the creation and use of signs, that is, artificial signals." From *The Development of Higher Mental Functions* (1960), quoted in James V. Wertsch, *Vygotsky and the Social Formation of the Mind* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1985), pp. 111-112.

The difference lies in the fact that for human beings, signs are references to integration into a unique system, which humans relate to on more than a mechanical level thanks to their perception and understanding of unity which underlies the totality of reality and variety. This is not a material understanding but goes beyond to the intellectual sphere.

22. Related to this point, Kenneth J. Arrow has written: "To formalize the theory of choice under uncertainty, it is convenient to introduce the concept of the 'state of the world,' a description of the world so complete that, if true and known, the consequences of every action would be known." From *The Collected Papers of Kenneth J. Arrow*, Vol. 3: *Exposition of the Theory of Choice under Uncertainty* [1971] (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1984), p. 173.

23. According to F. C. Bartlett, "Remembering is not the re-excitation of innumerable fixed, lifeless and fragmentary traces. It is an imaginative reconstruction, or construction, built out of the relation of our attitude towards a whole active mass of organized past reactions or experience, and to a little outstanding detail which commonly appears in image or in language form. It is thus hardly ever really exact, even in the most rudimentary cases of rote recapitulation, and it is not at all important that it should be so." From *Remembering: A Study in Experimental and Social Psychology* [1932] (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1967), p. 213.

24. Clyde Kluckhohn proposes the basic postulate "that no cultural forms survive unless they constitute responses which are adjustive or adaptive." Later, he adds: "A given bit of culture is 'functional' insofar as it defines a mode of response which is adaptive from the standpoint of the society or adaptive and adjustive from the standpoint of the individual." From *Navaho Witchcraft* (Cambridge, Mass.: Peabody Museum, 1944), pp. 46-47.

25. H.A. Murray said: "Man is a 'time-binding' organism; which is a way of saying that by conserving some of the past and anticipating some of the future, a human being can, to a significant degree, make his behavior accord with events that have happened as well as those that are to come. Man is not a mere creature of the moment, at the beck and call of any stimulus or drive. What he does is related not only to the settled past but also to shadowy preconceptions of what lies ahead." From: Henry A. Murray, et. al., *Explorations in Personality: a Clinical and Experimental Study of Fifty Men of College Age* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1938), p. 49.

26. On this point, George Sarton commented: "The most ominous conflict of our time is the difference of opinion, of outlook, between men of letters, historians, philosophers, the so-called humanities, on the one side, and scientists on the other. The gap cannot but increase because of the intolerance of both and the fact that science is growing by leaps and bounds." From "The History of Science and the History of Civilization" [1930], in *The History of Science and the New Humanism* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1988), pp. 54-55.

27. Lionel Trilling said: "It proposes to us that culture is not all-powerful. It suggests that there is a residue of human quality beyond the reach of cultural control, and that this residue of human quality, elemental as it may be, serves to bring culture itself under criticism and keeps it from being absolute." From *Freud: Within and Beyond Culture. Essays on Literature and Learning* (San Diego, Calif.: Harcourt, 1965), p. 98. The residue of human quality to which Trilling refers is the genuine exercise of consistency, present in every human being to some extent.

28. T.H. Marshall commented that, "Wide generalizations and the interpretation of concrete social phenomena lie far apart. From whichever end one starts the journey, it is long and arduous, and the travelers are sorely tempted, in their impatience to arrive, to take at some point or other a bold leap over intervening space, landing on the other side dazed and bewildered, having lost a large part of their baggage in their flight. What they need [are] ... stepping stones in the middle distance." From "Sociology at the Crossroads," in *Class, Citizenship, and Social Development* [1946] (New York: Doubleday, 1964), p. 12.

Consistency offers a bridge for connecting concrete observations and generalizations; without such a bridge, we will not get where we want to go and we may even lose what we began with.

29. Max Weber said: "No science is absolutely free from presuppositions, and no science can prove its fundamental value to the man who rejects these presuppositions." From "Science as a Vocation," in H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, eds., *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, (Galaxy, N. York, 1958), p. 153.

30. For Vilfredo Pareto, "Human behavior reveals 'uniformities' which constitute 'natural laws.' If these uniformities did not exist, then there would be neither social science nor political economy, and even the study of history would largely be useless. In effect, if the future actions of men have nothing in common with their past actions, our knowledge of them, although possibly satisfying our curiosity by way of interesting story, would be entirely useless to us as a guide in life". From "Cours d'économie politique," in *Sociological Writings* [1896] (New York: Praeger, 1966), p. 97. Such uniformities are part of the integration of variety by unity.

Pareto also wrote: "Human actions display certain uniformities ... and it is thanks to this property alone that they can be made the subject of a scientific study. These uniformities also have another name. They are called 'laws.' ... Whoever studies a social science, whoever asserts anything at all on the subject of the effects of such and such an economic, political or social measure, implicitly admits the existence of these uniformities; otherwise his study would not have any subject matter, and there would be no basis for his statements. If there were no uniformities, the budget of a state, of a commune, or even of an industrial company could not be drawn up even approximately." From *Manual of Political Economy* [1906] (Fairfield, N.J.: August M. Kelley, 1971), pp. 3-4.

31. Karl Popper implicitly emphasizes the importance of the consistency principle when he argues that the requisite of compatibility or coherence must be considered the first condition of any theoretical system, whether empirical or not. See *La Lógica de la Investigación Científica* (Madrid: Tecnos, 1962), p. 88;. For Popper, coherence is the most general requisite which theoretical systems must fulfill [to be useful] ... Besides being compatible, all empirical systems must fulfill another condition: they have to be falsifiable. (p. 88) Popper explains that without coherence, it is not possible to discriminate between any two propositions and without falsifiability, one cannot discriminate

among two possible empirical propositions. Popper adds that contradictory systems do not provide us any information, since we can derive any conclusion that we choose from them (p. 88); coherent systems, on the other hand, divide all possible statements into two categories, those which contradict reality and those which are compatible with it. The position advocated here is even stronger insofar as it considers the consistency principle to be more than one of several important conditions: it is the central standard from which all the others derive. The criterion of falsifiability is a special application of the wider principle of consistency. These generalizations may be applied to theoretical systems as well as to all rational cognitive processes, and they go further than the concepts of compatibility and similarity.

Max Weber has also implicitly referred to the consistency principle. He writes that the validity of any empirical knowledge rests in this and only this: that the given reality be ordered according to categories which are objective and which represent the presuppositions of our knowledge and are linked to the presupposition of the value of that truth which only empirical knowledge may supply. He adds that faith in the supra-empirical validity of ultimate and supreme ideas of value is present in some way in all human beings, who use this faith as a basis for deriving meaning in their lives. Yet faith does not exclude the unending mutability of concrete viewpoints from which empirical reality receives its meaning: life in its irrational reality and in its content of possible meanings is inexhaustible. See Weber's essay entitled "La objetividad cognoscitiva de la ciencia social y de la política social," in *Ensayos sobre metodología sociológica* (Amorrortu: Buenos Aires, 1973), pp. 99-100.

Only the consistency principle is capable of linking the presuppositions of our knowledge with the hypotheses on truth that only empirical knowledge can provide. This correspondence between the conceptual and the empirical is also mentioned by Weber, who describes a valid conceptual ordering as one in which conceptual and empirical worlds exist simultaneously and both obey the dictate of internal unity. When we come into contact with the variety of beings, the idea of unity is afforded by the idea of the integration of everything within existence. This corresponds to the ultimate and supreme idea of value to which Weber refers when he states that the light which shines upon such supreme ideas of values falls on only a finite, ever-changing part of the immense, chaotic stream of events which flows along time. (p. 100). The light referred to in this passage is given by consistency or unity in variety.

32. M. R. Cohen and E. Nagel state that they reject any hypothesis which leads to false conclusions, "that is, to results which don't prevail in the field of observable facts." In *An Introduction to Logic and Scientific Method* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1934), p. 9. In fact, they reject hypotheses which are inconsistent with other information available. That is why they also say that "the complete meaning of what we believe is discovered when we examine deductively the connections among the various propositions which we consider" (p. 23) and when they add that "the truth of the generalization (or induction) is put to the test by "deducing its consequences and observing if they maintain themselves in new situations." (p. 15)

33. In a similar vein, Claude Bernard has written that "In every enterprise ...the mind is always reasoning, and, even when we seem to act without a motive, an instinctive logic still directs the mind. Only we are not aware of it, because we begin by reasoning before we know or say that we are reasoning, just as we begin by speaking before we observe that we are speaking, and just as we begin by seeing and hearing before we know what we see and what we hear." From *An Introduction to the Study of Experimental Medicine* [1865] (New York: Dover, 1957), pp. 158-159.

34. John Locke said: "The senses at first let in particular ideas, and furnish the yet empty cabinet, and the mind by degrees growing familiar with some of them, they are lodged in the memory, and names got to them." From: *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, op. cit., Book 1, chap. 1, pp. 48-49. It is consistency which interprets and integrates stimuli and messages in order to fill these cabinets.

35. Common aspects (dimensions, variables, attributes) identified as classificatory criteria are underlying signs of unity in variety, which are related to each other in increasingly complex links. Emile Durkheim spoke of the essential role which the discovery and elaboration of common traits, characteristics, variables, dimensions or shared attributes plays in science: "Science cannot describe individuals, but only types. If human societies cannot be classified, they must remain inaccessible to scientific description". From "Montesquieu's Contribution to the Rise of Social Science," in *Montesquieu and Rousseau: Forerunners of Sociology* [1892] (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 1960), p. 9.

Working with such classificatory devices is not only essential to scientific advancement, but also for any type of knowledge and for the rational functioning of human beings. From the very moment that people start to function rationally, they start using classificatory criteria (dimensions), even though they may not be conscious of doing so.

36. According to Aristotle, "The proof that the state is a creation of nature and prior to the individual is that the individual, when isolated, is not self-sufficient; and therefore he is like a part in relation to the whole. But he who is unable to live in society, or who has no need because he has sufficient for himself, must be either a beast or a god; he is no part of a state. A social instinct is implanted in all men by nature, and yet he who first founded the state was the greatest of benefactors. For man, when perfected, is the best of animals, but, when separated from law and justice, he is the worst of all." From *Politics* (New York: Modern Library, 1943), Book 1, chap. 3, p. 55.

37. A. R. Radcliffe-Brown said that "most of the social relations which in their totality constitute the structure, such as relations of father and son, buyer and seller, ruler and subject, cannot be observed except in the social activities in which the relations are functioning." From: "On the Concept of Function in Social Science" [1935], in *Structure and Function in Primitive Society* (New York: Free Press, 1965), p. 181

Social relationships are formed by invisible social norms which receive their power to motivate human beings through the exercise of the capacity for consistency. Therefore, these relationships can be inferred from an analysis of human behavior in terms of its relationship to the genuine or spurious use of reason.

38. Ludwig Wittgenstein wrote: "Like everything metaphysical, the harmony between thought and reality is to be found in the grammar of the language". From *Zettel* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967), pp. 12-12e.

39. According to Benjamin Lee Whorf, "The way of understanding may remain for a long time mysterious but the how or logic of understanding—its background of laws or regularities— is discoverable. It is the grammatical background of our mother tongue, which includes not only our way of constructing propositions but the way we dissect nature and break up the flux of experience into objects and entities to construct propositions about. This fact is important for science, because it means that science can have a rational or logical basis even though it be a relativistic one and not Mr. Everyman's natural logic." (p. 239)

He adds: "We cut up and organize the spread and flow of events as we do, largely because, through our mother tongue, we are parties to an agreement to do so, not because nature itself is segmented in exactly the way for all to see. Languages differ not only in how they build their sentences but also in how they break down nature to secure the elements to put in those sentences". From "Languages and Logic," in *Language, Thought and Reality: Selected Writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf* [1941] (Cambridge, Mass.: Technology Press of M.I.T., 1956), p. 240.

40. According to Edward Sapir, "Everything that we have so far seen to be true of language points to the fact that it is the most significant and colossal work that the human spirit has evolved—nothing short of a finished form of expression for all communicable experience. This form may be endlessly varied by the individual without thereby losing its distinctive contours; and it is constantly reshaping itself as is all art. Language is the most massive and inclusive art we know, a mountainous and anonymous work of unconscious generations." From: *Language: An Introduction to the Study of Speech* [1921] (San Diego, Calif.: Harcourt, 1949), p. 38.

In a different work, Sapir commented: "Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, not alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression of their society. It is quite an illusion to imagine that one adjusts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is merely an incidental means of solving specific problems of communication or reflection. The fact of the matter is that the 'real world' is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group." From: *Selected Writings of Edward Sapir in Language, Culture, and Personality* [1929] (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1949), p. 162.

Sapir adds: "Language is the communicative process par excellence in every known society, and it is exceedingly important to observe that whatever may be the shortcomings of a primitive society judged from the vantage point of civilization, its language inevitably forms as sure, complete and potentially creative an apparatus of referential symbolism as the most sophisticated language that we know of." From: "Communication" [1931] in *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol. 4 (New York: Macmillan), p. 78.

Finally, Sapir notes that, "If a man who has never seen more than a single elephant in the course of his life nevertheless speaks without the slightest hesitation of ten elephants or a million elephants ... it is obvious that language has the power to analyze experience into theoretically dissociable elements and to create the world of the potential intergrading with the actual which enables human beings to transcend the immediately given in their individual experiences and join in a larger common understanding. The common understanding constitutes culture." From: "Language" [1933] in *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol. 9 (New York: Macmillan), pp. 156-157.

41. According to Karl Popper, the objectivity of scientific statements rests in the fact that they can be contrasted by and among different subjects. (op. cit., p. 43)

42. Etienne Bonnot de Condillac said: "But as soon as man comes to connect ideas with signs of his own choosing, we find his memory is formed. When this is done, he begins of himself to dispose of his imagination, and to give it a new habit. For by means of the signs which he is able to recall at pleasure, he receives, or at least is often capable of receiving the ideas which are connected with them." From: "Essai" [1746], quoted in Roy Harris and Talbot J. Taylor, *Landmarks in Linguistic Thought: The Western Tradition from Socrates to Saussure* (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 120. Language and signs enable people to think, to communicate with others and with themselves, and to remember.

For an explanation of empirical and conceptual indicators, see Adolfo Critto, *El Método Científico...*, op. cit.

43. For Charles Darwin, "Without speculation there is no good and original observation." From: "Letter to A.R. Wallace, 22 December 1857," in *The Life and Letters of Charles Darwin* (New York: Appleton, 1896), p. 465.

44. According to Wassily Leontief, "Direct factual study and quantitative descriptions of the structural properties of the economic system, detailed in content, comprehensive in coverage, and systematically designed to fill the specific requirement of an appropriate theoretical scheme, seem to offer the only promising approach to empirically significant understanding of the operational characteristics of modern economics ... the theorist should meet him (the collector of primary factual information) half way by redesigning his analytical scheme so as to take advantage of the strengths and mitigate the weakness of the observational data to which it will have to be applied." From: "Gibbs and Mathematical Economics" [1954], in *Essays in Economics: Theories, Theorizing, Facts, and Policies* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1985), p. 40.

Leontief also said: "Economic theory is constructed in such a way as to extract the most from very little data ... The challenge for economics at the present time is to develop a theory that can absorb data without ruining them, and that, at the same time, will permit us to utilize detailed information instead of arguing in broad generalities." From: "Natural Resources, Environmental Disruption, and Growth Prospects of the Developed and Less Developed Countries," *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* Vol. 30, no. 8 (1977), p. 21.

45. Karl Popper proposed the following single, supreme, indisputable rule: that the rest of the rules of scientific procedures will be such that they will not protect any statement from falsification. (op. cit., pp. 52-53).

The consistency principle, however, goes beyond the negative criterion of refutability which submits each system to the harshest struggle for survival, demanding that people use imagination and creativity in order to unfold the implications of every bit of information and idea.

For Popper, natural laws can be compared to vetoes which dictate that certain things or situations do not exist, as if they could forbid them. (p. 66) Consistency also looks for the positive aspect of integrating these vetoes into broader systems in which all contradictions are resolved. Consistency also gives rise to the methodological rule referred to by Popper who argues that we shall not abandon the search for universal laws and a coherent theoretical system, nor shall we cease in our efforts to causally explain all types of events which we may be able to describe as a methodological rule guides the scientific researcher in his task. (p. 43).

46. Paul F. Lazarsfeld clearly states the essential role of unity in science in the following passage: "I obviously want to deny the unity of science as little as I would speak out for sin. I believe that basically scientific work has a unifying rationality. I am also convinced that each subject matter has its own problems which need special attention. We should be guided by the inversion of a French Proverb: the more it is the same, the more it is different. In my opinion, at this moment, the detailed explication of the differential aspects of empirical social research badly needs the attention of the philosopher of science." From: "Philosophy of Science and Empirical Social Research" [1962], in *Qualitative Analysis: Historical and Critical Essays* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1972), p. 275. This involves an application to the social sciences of the requirement of integration derived from unrestricted consistency.

Using different terms, Lazarsfeld also refers to the process of searching for unity in variety when he writes: "In social observations we are often in the position of a bird which flies across the sky with a flock of other birds. For the external observer, the flock has a clearly visible geometric shape; but does the bird within the flock even know about the shape of his 'group'? By what social interrelations among the birds is the form of the group maintained?" From: "The Obligations of the 1950 Pollster to the 1984 Historian" [1964], in *Qualitative Analysis*, op. cit., p. 288. The form and interrelations of a group are part of the links of unity in variety which give reality not only to the group but also to its members, who exist in the group according to their position in the whole of which they form part.

47. P. F. Lazarsfeld, et. al., state that individuals may learn how to develop certain indices or tests, become adept at applying particular statistical techniques, and master the skills available at the moment. When in the future, new skills are required, they may also learn them. But the question is, will they be able to decide which of the skills they have learned are useful and which are not? Will they understand the assumptions that underlie the various techniques? Will they have the right information and criteria to evaluate whether particular procedures are appropriate or not for given problems? Lazarsfeld, et. al., conclude that "the ability to make judgments of this type is not developed, merely learned [from] present or past techniques." In *Continuities in the Language of Social Research* (New York: The Free Press, 1972), p. 9. This ability derives from explicit application of the capacity for consistency.

48. For William of Ockham, "What can be accounted for by fewer assumptions is explained in vain by more." Quoted in Ernest A. Moody, "William of Ockham," in *Dictionary of Scientific Biography*, Vol. 10 (New York: Scribner, 1974), p. 173.

49. Paul A. Samuelson said: "The existence of analogies between central features of various theories implies the existence of a general theory which underlies the particular theories and unifies them with respect to those central features'... An economist of very keen intuition would perhaps have suspected from the beginning that seemingly diverse fields – production economics, consumer's behavior, international trade, public finance, business cycles, income analysis – possess striking formal similarities, and that economy of effort would result from analyzing these common elements." From: *Foundations of Economic Analysis* [1947] (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Univ. Press, 1961), p. 3. This is only one of countless illustrations of the process of advancing toward higher levels of generality in the direction of unity in variety.

50. According to Adolphe Quetelet, "It would appear... that moral phenomena, when observed on a great scale, are found to resemble physical phenomena; and we thus arrive, in inquires of this kind, at the fundamental principle that 'the greater the number of individuals observed, the more do individual peculiarities, whether physical or moral, become effaced, and leave in a prominent point of view the general facts, by virtue of which society exists and is preserved'". From: *A Treatise on Man and the Development of His Faculties* [1835] (Edinburgh: William and Robert Chambers, 1842), p. 6. With respect to the search for underlying unity, Quetelet wrote: "The average man, indeed, is in a nation what the center of gravity is in a body: it is by having the central point in view that we arrive at the apprehension of all the phenomena of equilibrium and motion." (p. 96) Even if the "average" is not the "center," it is one of the centers, one of the key factors helping us to discover unity in variety. Quetelet also said: "There is a general law which governs our universe and seems destined to create life here. It gives to everything that breathes an infinite variation, without disturbing the balance of nature (les principes de conservation). This law, which has long been unrecognized by science, and which until now has been put to no practical use, I shall call the law of accidental cause" From: *Du système social et des lois que le régissent* (Paris: Guillaumin,

1848), p. 16. Unpublished translation of Stephen M. Stigler, *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, vol. 19 (New York, Macmillan, 1991). The infinite variation which does not disturb the balance of nature is what we have referred to as variety governed by unity.

51. Meyer Fortes writes, "When we describe structure we are already dealing with general principles far removed from the complicated skein of behavior, feelings, beliefs, etc. that constitute the tissue of actual social life. We are, as it were, in the realm of grammar and syntax, not of the spoken word. We discern structure in the 'concrete reality' of social events only by virtue of having first established structure by abstraction from 'concrete reality'." From: "Time and Social Structure: An Ashanti Case Study" [1949], in *Social Structure* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1963), p. 56. The "structure" to which Meyer Fortes refers is composed of dimensions, relations and systems.

52. According to Otto Neurath, "That we always have to do with a whole network of concepts and not with concepts that can be isolated puts any thinker into the difficult position of having unceasing regard for the whole mass of concepts that he cannot even survey all at once, and to let the new grow out of the old... We are like sailors who on the open sea must reconstruct their ship but are never able to start afresh from the bottom. Where a beam is taken away a new one must at once be put there, and for this the rest of the ship is used as support. In this way, by using the old beams and driftwood, the ship can be shaped entirely anew, but only by gradual reconstruction". From: "Anti-Spengler" [1921], in *Empiricism and Sociology* (Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel, 1973), pp 198-199.

53. This leads to the seeming paradox that there are many pairs of proverbs which make opposite claims, both of which seem true: e.g., "the early bird catches the worm" yet "haste makes waste" ("al que madruga Dios lo ayuda" and "no por madrugar se amanece más temprano"). Herbert A. Simon says: "It is a fatal defect of the current principles of administration that, like proverbs, they occur in pairs. For almost every principle one can find an equally plausible and acceptable contradictory principle. Although the two principles of the pair will lead to exactly opposite organizational recommendations, there is nothing in the theory to indicate which is the proper to apply." From: *Administrative Behavior: A Study of Decision-Making Processes in Administrative Organization* [1945] (New York: MacMillan, 1961), p. 20.

54. Allan Nevins said: "To arrive at an interpretation, the historian takes a considerable body of problems and events, and so arranges them as to illustrate some dominant idea. That is, he synthesizes his material about some concept which governs the whole of it: he utilizes a series of analyses, which at first may have seemed chaotic and jumbled, and produces a general conclusion which throws them into perspective. This is not anatomy, it is physiology. It breathes the spark of life into dead materials and makes them move as living bodies." From: *The Gateway to History* [1938] (New York: Doubleday, 1962), pp. 262-263.

55. E.E. Evans-Pritchard writes: "It has sometimes been said that we will be able to establish the laws of social life when we know more and better attested facts, but the contrary appears to be the case. It was easy for anthropologists to speculate about primitive institutions when little was known about them. It is not so easy now, when negative instances, vouched for by competent professional research, crop up everywhere to dispute any general theory." From Evans-Pritchard, *The Comparative...*, op. cit., p. 25.

56. Gustave Le Bon provides an example of closing one's mind by submitting to unmastered impulses: "The characteristics of the reasoning of crowds are the association of dissimilar things possessing a merely apparent connection ... and the immediate generalization of particular cases." From: "The Crowd" [1895], in *Gustave Le Bon: The Man and His Works* (Indianapolis, Ind.: Liberty Fund, 1979), p. 70.

57. Pitirim A. Sorokin gives an example of these imperfections in the limited advancement of science: "Any science, at any moment of its historical existence, contains not only truth but also much that is half-truth, sham-truth, and plain error. This has been especially true of the social and psychological disciplines, for the complexity of mental and social phenomena allows any a fallacy to be taken for the last word of science, 'operationally defined, empirically tested, and precisely measured'." From *Fads and Foibles in Modern Sociology and Related Sciences* (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1956), p. v.

58. See note #20.

59. Frank H. Knight raises questions about the supposed supremacy of quantified information: "The saying often quoted from Lord Kelvin... that 'where you cannot measure your knowledge is meager and unsatisfactory,' as applied in mental and social science, is misleading and pernicious. This is another way of saying that these sciences are not sciences in the sense of physical science and cannot attempt to be such without forfeiting their proper nature and function. Insistence on a concretely quantitative economics means the use of statistics of physical magnitudes, whose economic meaning and significance is uncertain and dubious. (Even wheat is approximately homogeneous only if measured in economic terms.) And a similar statement would apply even more to other social sciences. In this field, the Kelvin dictum very largely means in practice, 'if you cannot measure, measure anyhow!'" From: "'What is Truth' in Economics?" [1940], in *On the History and Method of Economics: Selected Essays* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1956), p. 166.

60. Gunnar Myrdal writes. "Students in the field of social science have imbibed the ethos of truth-seeking so thoroughly that they often appear particularly happy when they arrive at conclusions different from what they had expected or assumed from the start. By increasing true knowledge and purging opportunistic false beliefs in this way, social science lays the groundwork for an ever more effective education: making people's beliefs more rational, forcing valuations out in the open, and making it more difficult to retain valuations on the lower level opposing those on the higher level." From: *Objectivity in Social Research* (New York: Random House, 1969), p. 41.

61. This is what Robert K. Merton refers to as the institutional imperatives comprising the ethos of modern science. He writes that “four sets of institutional imperatives –universalism (truth-claims are to be subjected to preestablished impersonal criteria), communism (scientific property is a heritage held in common), disinterestedness, organized skepticism– are taken to comprise the ethos of modern science.” From: “The Normative Structure of Science” [1942], in *The Sociology of Science: Theoretical and Empirical Investigations* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1973).

All of these are derived from consistency: “universalism” (which refuses to privilege any element), “organized skepticism” (which fights against the temptation to cling to unverified and unquestioned fragments), “disinterestedness” (which does not allow attachment to fragments to interfere with one’s relation to the system of reality) and “communism” (which implies that all human beings are engaged in a common task of discovering reality and unity in variety –which enables them to find their proper place and fulfill their mission). Each scientist receives and uses the advances of others, adds something to them and supports others in a team effort. The capacity for consistency is exercised socially, not individually.

62. See note #28.

63. Max Weber writes, “In science, each of us knows that what he has accomplished will be antiquated in ten, twenty, fifty years. That is the fate to which science is subjected: it is the very ‘meaning’ of scientific work, to which it is devoted in a quite specific sense, as compared with other spheres of culture for which in general the same holds. Every scientific ‘fulfillment’ raises new ‘questions’: it ‘asks’ to be ‘surpassed’ and outdated. Whoever wishes to serve science has to resign himself to this fact. Scientific works certainly can last as ‘gratifications’ because of their artistic quality, or they may remain important as a means of training. Yet they will be surpassed scientifically – let that be repeated – for it is our common fate and, more, our common goal. We cannot work without hoping that others will advance further than we have. In principle, this progress goes on ‘ad infinitum’.” From: Weber, op. cit., p. 138.

64. Auguste Comte writes, “From the study of the development of human intelligence, in all directions, and through all times, the discovery arises of a great fundamental law, to which it is necessarily subject, and which has a solid foundation of proof, both in the facts of our organization and in our historical experience. The law is this: that each of our leading conceptions –each branch of our knowledge– passes successively through three different theoretical conditions: the theological, or fictitious; the metaphysical, or abstract; and the scientific, or positive.” From: “The Positive Philosophy,” in *Auguste Comte and Positivism: The Essential Writings* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1983), p. 71. The three theoretical “conditions” are a necessary foundation for human knowledge in all societies and individuals throughout time.

65. In the words of the great fictional detective, Sherlock Holmes, “The temptation to form premature theories upon insufficient data is the bane of our profession.” Arthur Conan Doyle, “The Valley of Fear” [1914] in *The Complete Sherlock Holmes* (New York: Doubleday, 1958), p. 779. See note 53.

66. According to Otis Dudley Duncan, "A mature science, with respect to the matter of errors in variables, is not one that measures its variables without error, for this is impossible. It is, rather, a science which properly manages its errors, controlling their magnitudes and correctly calculating their implications for substantive conclusions." From: *Introduction to Structural Equation Models* (New York: Academic Press, 1975), p. 114.

67. See note #20.

68. See note #52.

69. In 1795, Condorcet wrote, "If man can, with almost complete assurance, predict phenomena when he knows their laws, and if, even when he does not, he can still, with great expectation of success, forecast the future on the basis of his experience of the past, why, then, should it be regarded as a fantastic undertaking to sketch, with some pretence to truth, the future destiny of man on the basis of his history?" From *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind* (London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1955), p. 173. Condorcet also wrote that "[all phenomena] are equally susceptible of being calculated, and all that is necessary to reduce the whole of nature to laws similar to those which Newton discovered with the aid of the calculus is to have a sufficient number of observations and a mathematics that is complex enough." From an unpublished manuscript quoted in Frank E. Manuel, *The Prophets of Paris* (New York: Harper, 1965), p. 65. Quantification does not seem as important as Condorcet assumes.

70. Thomas S. Kuhn writes, "Scientific development depends in part on a process of non-incremental or revolutionary change. Some revolutions are large, like those associated with the names of Copernicus, Newton, or Darwin, but most are much smaller, like the discovery of oxygen or the planet Uranus. The usual prelude to changes of this sort is, I believe, the awareness of anomaly, of an occurrence or set of occurrences that does not fit existing ways of ordering phenomena. The changes that result therefore require 'putting on a different kind of thinking-cap,' one that renders the anomalous lawlike but that, in the process, also transforms the order exhibited by some other phenomena, previously unproblematic." *The Essential Tension: Selected Studies in Scientific Tradition and Change* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), p. xvii.

71. Milton Friedman comments, "In both social and natural sciences, the body of positive knowledge grows by the failure of a tentative hypothesis to predict phenomena the hypothesis professes to explain: by the patching up of that hypothesis until someone suggests a new hypothesis that more elegantly or simply embodies the troublesome phenomena, and so on ad infinitum. In both, experiment is sometimes possible, sometimes not (witness meteorology). In both, no experiment is ever completely controlled, and experience often offers evidence that is the equivalent of controlled experiment. In both, there is no way to have a self-contained closed system or to avoid interaction between the observer and the observed." From: "Inflation and Unemployment" [1976], in *The Essence of Friedman* (Stanford, Calif: Hoover Institution Press, 1987), p. 348.

72. Robert K. Merton defines serendipity as “[the] discovery, by chance or sagacity, of valid results which were not sought for.” Merton, *Social Theory*, ..., op. cit., p. 157. Merton describes the serendipity pattern as “...the fairly common experience of observing an unanticipated, anomalous and strategic datum which becomes the occasion for developing a new theory or for extending an existing theory.” (p. 283, footnote 2).

73. For Bronislaw Malinowski, “There are no people, however primitive, without religion and magic. Nor are there, it must be added at once, any savage races lacking either in the scientific attitude or in science, though this lack had been frequently attributed to them.” From: “Magic, Science and Religion” [1925], in *Magic, Science and Religion and Other Essays* (N.Y.: Doubleday, 1954), p. 17.

74. Bronislaw Malinowski comments, “No culture could survive if its arts and crafts, its weapons and economic pursuits were based on mystical, non-empirical conceptions and doctrines. When human culture is approached from the pragmatic, technological side, it is found that primitive man is capable of exact observation, of sound generalizations and of logical reasoning in all those matters which affect his normal activities and are at the basis of his production. Knowledge is then an absolute, derived necessity of culture.” From: “Culture” 1931, in *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol. 4 (New York: Macmillan), p. 634.

75. Malinowski writes, “Coastal sailing as long as it is perfectly safe and easy commands no magic. Overseas expeditions are invariably bound up with ceremonies and ritual. Man resorts to magic only where chance and circumstances are not fully controlled by knowledge. From: “Culture” in *Encyclopedia...* op. cit., p. 636.

76. Montesquieu writes, “Laws, in their most general signification, are the necessary relations arising from the nature of things. In this sense all beings have their laws: the Deity his laws, the material world its laws, the intelligences superior to man their laws, the beast their laws, man his laws.” From *The Spirit of the Laws* [1748], vol. 1 (New York: Hafner, 1949), book 1, p. 1.

77. Vilfredo Pareto said: “[Various] considerations tend to keep thinkers from the field of non-logical conduct and carry them over into the field of the logical. Most scholars are not satisfied with discovering what is. They are anxious to know, and even more anxious to explain to others, what ‘ought’ to be. In that sort of research, logic reigns supreme; and so the moment they catch sight of conduct that is non-logical, instead of going ahead along that road they turn aside, often seem to forget its existence, at any rate generally ignore it, and beat the well-worn path that leads to logical conduct.” From: *The Mind and Society* [1916] (San Diego, Calif.: Harcourt Press, 1935), Vol. 1, part 264, p. 179.

78. John Rawls writes, “A complete conception defining principles for all virtues of the basic structure, together with the respective weights when they conflict, is more than a conception of justice; it is a social ideal. The principles

of justice are but a part, although perhaps the most important part, of such a conception. A social ideal in turn is connected with a conception of society, a vision of the way in which the aims and purposes of social cooperation are to be understood... Fully to understand a conception of justice we must make explicit the conception of social cooperation from which it derives." From: *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971), pp. 9-10. Rawls also says: "Social justice is the principle of rational prudence applied to an aggregative conception of the welfare of the group." (p. 24) Rational prudence derives from considering all aspects of reality in a balanced manner, as demanded by consistency.

Rawls further writes: "The difference principle represents, in effect, an agreement to regard the distribution of natural talents as a common asset and to share in the benefits of this distribution whatever it turns out to be. Those who have been favored by nature, whoever they are, may gain from their good fortune only on terms that improve the situation of those who have lost out... We are led to the difference principle if we wish to set up the social system so that no one gains or loses from his arbitrary place in the distribution of natural assets of his initial position in society without giving or receiving compensating advantages in return." (pp. 101-102)

79. J.J. Smart and Bernard Williams note that it is important "to present one or other of the resulting ethical systems in a consistent and lucid manner, and in such a way as to show how common, and often specious objections to them can be avoided." They further comment that "R. M. Hare and others have worked out theories of logical relations between imperative sentences, and even mere expressions of attitude can be said to be consistent or inconsistent with one another." In *Utilitarianism For and Against* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973; reprint 1990), pp. 3,8.

The authors contend that, according to a utilitarian outlook, "our ultimate ethical principles depend on our ultimate attitudes and preferences. Ultimate ethical principles therefore seem to lie within the field of personal decision, persuasion, advice, and propaganda, but not within the field of academic philosophy." (p. 3) However, in order for these ethical principles to be justified in terms of reality (of which human being are a part), they must be derived from consistency, which is the basis of reality insofar as it integrates all variety. This requires that ethical principles be objectively considered, not simply "emotionally attractive." (p. 5) Ultimate principles are genuine only if they derive from unrestricted consistency, respecting the whole of reality and the place of each being and aspect within it. The system of deontological ethics, defined by Smart and Williams "as a system which does not appeal to the consequences of our actions, but appeals to conformity with certain rules of duty" and contrasted to a utilitarian system of ethics (p. 4), is based on genuine consistency. This avoids "heartlessness" and "abstract conformity to a rule [for] the prevention of avoidable human suffering." (p. 6) Consistency also allows people to label an ethical principle as "true" or "false." (p. 8) Consistency gives meaning to results, relating them to the whole of reality, refusing to let ethical justification depend on what people "want and prefer." (p. 80)

80. William James writes, "Science can tell us what exists; but to compare the 'worths,' both of what exists and of what does not exist, we must consult not science, but what Pascal calls our heart." From: "The Will to Believe" [1896], in *The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy* (New York: Longman, 1910), p. 22.

81. Leo Strauss affirms the opposite: "According to our social science, we can become wise in all matters of secondary importance, but we have to be resigned to utter ignorance in the most important respect: we cannot have any knowledge regarding the ultimate principles of our choices, i.e., regarding their soundness or unsoundness; our ultimate principles have no other support than our arbitrary and hence blind preferences." From: *Natural Right and History* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1953), p. 4.

Strauss also writes: "Moral obtuseness is the necessary condition for scientific analysis. For to the extent to which we are not yet completely insensitive to moral distinctions, we are forced to make value judgments. The habit of looking at social or human phenomena without making value judgments has a corroding influence on any preferences. The more serious we are as social scientists, the more completely we develop within ourselves a state of indifference to any goal, or to aimlessness and drifting, a state of what may be called nihilism." From *What is Political Philosophy* [1955] (Westport, Conn: Greenwood, 1973), pp. 18-19.

82. For more on ethical (moral) relativism, see Part F, section 3, of this chapter.

83. This position is different from skepticism, as expressed by David Hume: "There is nothing in itself, valuable or despicable, desirable or hateful, beautiful or deformed; but that these attributes arise from the particular constitution and fabric of human sentiment and affection." From: "The Skeptic" [1742], in *Essays: Moral, Political and Literary* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1985), p. 162.

84. Thomas Hobbes, on the other hand, said: "To this war of every man against every man, this also is consequent: that nothing can be unjust. The notions of right and wrong, justice and injustice have there no place." From: *Leviathan: Or the Matter, Forme and Power of a Commonwealth, Ecclesiastical and Civil* [1651] (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1946), Part I, chap. 13, p. 83.

85. Margaret Mead said: "If we are to achieve a richer culture, rich in contrasting values, we must recognize the whole gamut of human potentialities, and so weave a less arbitrary social fabric, one in which each diverse human gift will find a fitting place." From: "Sex and Temperament" [1935], in *From the South Seas: Studies of Adolescence and Sex in Primitive Societies* (N.Y., Morrow, 1939) p. 322.

86. Montesquieu stated: "Solon, being asked if the laws he had given to the Athenians were the best, replied, 'I have given them the best they were able to bear' – a fine expression that ought to be perfectly understood by all legislators!" From: Montesquieu, *The Spirit*, op. cit., Vol. 1. Book 19, p. 305.

87. See note #76.

88. This position goes beyond Clyde Kluckhohn's and Henry A. Murray's description of human personality: "Human personality is a compromise formation, a dynamic resultant of the conflict between the individual's own impulses (as given by biology and modified by culture and by specific situations) and the demands, interests and impulses of other individuals." From: "Outline of a Conception of Personality" [1944], in Murray and Kluckhohn, eds., *Personality in Nature, Society, and Culture* (New York: Knopf, 1967), pp. 55-56.

89. James George Frazer in an implicit fashion stress the importance of self-mastery: "For it should never be forgotten that by their glorification of poverty and celibacy both these religions [Buddhism and Christianity] struck straight at the root not merely of civil society but of human existence." From: *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion* [1890], abridged edition (London: Macmillan, 1922), p. 420.

90. Immanuel Kant wrote: "The means employed by Nature to bring about the development of all the capacities of men is their antagonism in society, so far as this is, in the end, the cause of a lawful order among men ... By 'antagonism' I mean the unsocial sociability of men, i.e., their propensity to enter into society, bound together with a mutual opposition which constantly threatens to break up the society." From: "Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View" [1784], in *On History* (Indianapolis, Ind.: Bobbs-Merrill, 1963), p. 15.

91. George Herbert Mead wrote: "The attitude of hostility toward the lawbreaker has the unique advantage of uniting all members of the community in the emotional solidarity of aggression. While the most admirable of humanitarian efforts are sure to run counter to the individual interests of very many in the community, or fail to touch the interests and imagination of the multitude and to leave the community divided or indifferent, the cry of thief or murder is attuned to profound complexes lying below the surface of competing individual effort, and citizens who have been separated by divergent interests stand together against the common enemy." From: "The Psychology of Punitive Justice," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 23, No. 5 (1918), p. 591.

92. Thorstein Veblen describes some implications of this human trend toward consistency as follows: "... in human behavior this disposition ('instinct of workmanship' or 'sense of workmanship') is effective in such a consistent, ubiquitous and resilient fashion that students of human culture will have to count with it as one of the integral hereditary traits of mankind." From: *The Instinct of Workmanship and the State of Industrial Arts* [1914] (Fairfield, N. J.: Augustus Kelley, 1964), pp. 27-28.

93. Immanuel Kant said: "There is ... only one categorical imperative. It is: Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law." From: *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals* [1785] (Indianapolis, Ind.: Bobbs-Merrill, 1959), p. 39.

94. Jürgen Habermas writes, "Incompetent behavior, which violates valid technical rules or strategies, is condemned per se to failure through lack of

success; the 'punishment' is built, so to speak, into its rebuff of reality." From: *Toward a Rational Society: Student Protest, Science and Politics* [1969] (London: Heinemann, 1971), p. 254.

95. According to John Maurice Clark, "The machines originally made bargains with man, in which they offered him the thing he much desired, and in exchange bound him to serve and maintain them, to eliminate the unfit among them and promote their racial progress, and to alter his own social and political arrangements in whatever ways might be necessary in keeping pace with the increasingly complex social organization of the machines themselves, and in keeping the children of man faithful to the service the machines require. The full nature of the terms of these bargains was not, however, revealed to man at first. Some of the terms became evident only after generations had passed and of some we cannot yet be sure." From: "The Empire of Machines," *Yale Review*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (1922), p. 136.

96. Charles E. Lindblom stated: "'Muddling through' –or incrementalism as it is more usually labeled– is and ought to be the usual method of policy making ... Incrementalism in politics is not, in principle, slow moving. It is not necessarily, therefore, a tactic of conservation. A fast-moving sequence of small changes can more speedily accomplish a drastic alteration of the 'status quo' than can an only infrequent major policy change." From: "Still Muddling, Not Yet Through," *Public Administration Review* (November/December 1979), pp. 517, 520. Also see note #28.

97. Alexis de Tocqueville writes, "Nothing is easier than becoming rich in America; naturally, the human spirit, which needs a dominant passion, in the end turns all its thoughts toward gain. As a result, at first sight this people seems to be a company of merchants joined together for trade, and as one digs deeper into national character of the Americans, one sees that they have sought the value of everything in the world only in the answer to this single question: how much money will it bring in?" From: *Democracy in America* [1835-1840] (New York: Vintage Press, 1945), p. 39.

98. Giovanni Battista Vico said: "Men first feel necessity, then look for utility, next attend to comfort, still later amuse themselves with pleasure, thence grow dissolute in luxury, and finally go mad and waste their substance ... The nature of peoples is first crude, then severe, then benign, then delicate, finally dissolute." From: *The New Science of Giambattista Vico* [1725] (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Univ. Press, 1984), Book 1, part. 241-242, pp. 78-79.

While Vico points to the need for self-mastery and realism, Max Weber describes the role of asceticism in the rise of capitalism: "Christian asceticism... undertook to penetrate just that daily routine of life with its methodicalness, to fashion it into a life in the world, but neither of nor for this world." From *The Protestant Ethic*, op. cit., p. 154. See also note 89.

Societies which are impressed by the achievements of developed countries should place more emphasis on the methodicalness of capitalism rather than its tendency toward consumerism, even though the latter is easier to adopt.

99. Emile Durkheim said: "With increased prosperity desires increase. At the very moment when traditional rules have lost their authority, the richer prize offered these appetites stimulates them and makes them more exigent and impatient of control. The state of de-regulation or anomie is thus further heightened by passions being less disciplined, precisely when they need more disciplining ... Egoistic suicide results from man's no longer finding a basis for existence in life; altruistic suicide, because this basis for existence appears to man situated beyond life itself. The third sort of suicide ... results from man's activity's lacking regulation and his consequent sufferings. By virtue of its origin we shall assign this last variety the name of 'anomic suicide'." From: *Suicide: A Study in Sociology* [1897] (New York: Free Press, 1966), pp. 253, 258.

100. Thorstein Veblen said: "In order to gain and to hold the esteem of men it is not sufficient merely to possess wealth or power. The wealth or power must be put in evidence, for esteem is awarded only on evidence. And not only does the evidence of wealth serve to impress one's importance on others and to keep their sense of his importance alive and alert, but it is scarcely less used in holding up and preserving one's self-complacency." From: *Theory of the Leisure Class* [1899] (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973), p. 42.

Commenting further, Veblen remarked: "From the foregoing survey of the growth of conspicuous leisure and consumption, it appears that the utility of both ... lies in the element of waste that is common to both. In the one case it is a waste of time and effort, in the other it is a waste of goods." (p. 71)

101. The unfounded hope in the automatic benefits of material wealth in terms of well-being, justice and development is expressed by Adam Smith: "The rich only select from the heap what is most precious and agreeable. They consume little more than the poor, and in spite of their natural selfishness and rapacity, though they mean only their own convenience, though the sole end which they propose from the labours of all the thousands whom they employ, be the gratification of their own vain and insatiable desires, they divide with the poor the produce of all their improvements. They are led by an invisible hand to make nearly the same distribution of the necessities of life, which would have been made, had the earth been divided into equal portions among all its inhabitants, and thus without intending it, without knowing it, advance the interest of the society, and afford means to the multiplication of the species." From: *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* [1759] (Indianapolis, Ind.: The Liberty Fund, 1982), pp. 184-185.

The error of this belief has been proven by the failures and frustrations to which it gave rise. In addition, the belief that pursuing the common good cannot be effective is also mistaken, although Smith asserted: "I have never known much good done by those who affected to trade for the public good." From: *The Wealth of Nations* [1776] (New York: Modern Library, 1937), Book 4, chapter 2, p. 423. The key is that actions need to be genuinely undertaken for the public good and must be accompanied by social participation and control as well as transparency and careful planning; this is what gives rise to the most effective strategies.

102. John Maynard Keynes warned: "Do not let us overestimate the importance of the economic problem, or sacrifice to its supposed necessities other matters of greater and more permanent significance. It should be a matter for specialists – like dentistry. If economists could manage to get themselves thought of as humble, competent people, on a level with dentists, that would be splendid!" From: *The Collected Writings of John Maynard Keynes*, Vol. 9: *Economic Possibilities for Our Grandchildren* (London: Macmillan, 1972), p. 332.

103. The acquisition motive is dysfunctional when it is not used in a balanced manner in order to serve the fulfillment of individuals and reality. According to Max Weber, "The impulse to acquisition, pursuit of gain, of money, of the greatest possible amount of money, has in itself nothing to do with capitalism ... it has been common to all sorts and conditions of men at all times ... wherever the objective possibility of it is or has been given." From: *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* [1904-1905] (New York: Scribner, 1930), p. 17. Max Weber also said: "In [Richard] Baxter's view the care for external goods should only lie on the shoulders of the 'saint like a light cloak, which can be thrown aside at any moment.' But fate decreed that the cloak should become an iron cage (ein stahhartes Gehduse)." (p. 181)

104. According to Alexis de Tocqueville, "Not only democracy makes every man forget his ancestors, but it hides his descendants and separates his contemporaries from him: it throws him back forever upon himself alone and threatens in the end to confine him entirely within the solitude of his own heart." From: *Democracy in America*, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 106.

105. See note #99.

106. The importance of learning from models which are not ours is stressed by Margaret Mead: "As the traveler who has been once away from home is wiser than he who has never left his own door step, so a knowledge of other cultures should sharpen our ability to scrutinize more steadily, to appreciate more lovingly, our own." From "Coming of Age in Samoa," in *From the South Seas: Studies of Adolescence and Sex in Primitive Societies* [1928] (New York: Morrow, 1939), p. 13.

107. Margaret Mead said: "The way people behave is all of a piece, their virtues and their sins, the way they slap the baby, handle their court cases, and bury their dead. It would be impossible suddenly to introduce 'democracy,' which is a word for a type of behavior and an attitude of mind which runs through our whole culture, through our selection of candidates for office, our behavior in street cars, our schools and our newspapers, into an undemocratic society – as it would suddenly to introduce feudalism into a modern American city." Margaret Mead, *And Keep Your Power Dry: An Anthropologist Looks at America* (New York: Morrow, 1949), p. 20.

108. See note #98.

109. See note #6.

110. See notes #7 and #34.

111. Leszek Kolakowski said: "Positivists do not object to inquiry into the immediately invisible causes of any observed phenomenon, they object only to any accounting for it in terms of occult entities that are by definition inaccessible to human knowledge. "From: *Positivist Philosophy: From Hume to the Vienna Circle* [1966] (London: Penguin, 1972), p. 12. Once "occult entities" are explained, they stop being mysterious and are subject to consistency analysis. Links are never directly visible, but must be inferred from consistency which allows us to see beyond appearances. These invisible threads which hold the order of reality together need to be made explicit so as to be serious, valid and scientific. Their implications must also be made explicit so that they may be checked with observable reality. It is contrary to consistency to arbitrarily set limits to the consideration of invisible threads and implications (e.g., by only considering immediate implications, as positivists are inclined to do).

112. Also see part A, section 1(c).

113. See note #83.

114. Ibn Khaldún said: "The seventh factor of error, and the most important of all, is 'the ignorance of the laws' governing the transformation of human society. For every single thing, whether it be an object or an action, is subject to a law governing its nature and any changes that may take place in it." From: "An Arab Philosophy of History" [1377], in *Selections from The Muqaddimah* (1950), pp. 27-28.

115. For Carl Gustav Jung, "The great problems of life, including of course sex, are always related to the primordial images of collective unconscious. These images are balancing or compensating factors that correspond to the problems which life confronts us with in reality." From: "Psychological Types" [1921], in *The Collected Works of C.G. Jung*, Vol. 6 (London: Routledge, 1971), pp. 220-221.

According to Jung, "Man's unconscious ... contains all the patterns of life and behavior inherited from his ancestors, so that every human child, prior to consciousness, is possessed of a potential system of adapted psychic functioning." From: "The Basic Postulates of Analytical Psychology," in *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* [1931] (San Diego, Calif: Harcourt Press, 1956), p. 185. And further: "Complexes are psychic contents which are outside the control of the conscious mind. They have been split off from consciousness and lead a separate existence in the unconscious, being at all times ready to hinder or to reinforce the conscious intentions." From: "A Psychological Theory of Types," in *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, op. cit., p. 79. Also see note #5.

116. Alfred Binet said: "At one moment [intelligence] apprehends an object, and it is a perception or an idea; at another time it perceives a connection, and it is a judgment; at yet another, it perceives connections between connections, and it is an act of reason." From: *The Mind and the Brain* [1905] (London: Kegan Paul, 1907), p. 1179.

117. See note #17.

118. See note #19.

119. See note #46.

120. R. A. Fisher said: "No aphorism is more frequently repeated in connection with field trials, than that we must ask Nature few questions, or, ideally, one question, at a time. The writer is convinced that this view is wholly mistaken. Nature, he suggests, will best respond to a logical and carefully thought out questionnaire: indeed, if we ask her a single question, she will often refuse to answer until some other topic has been discussed." From: "The Arrangement of Field Experiments," in *Collected Papers of R. A. Fisher*, Vol. 2 [1926] (Univ. of Adelaide, Australia, 1972), p. 92.

121. Niklas Luhmann writes, "For any system the environment is always more complex than the system itself. No system can maintain itself by means of a point-for-point correlation with its environment, i.e., can summon enough 'requisite variety' to match its environment. So each one has to reduce environmental complexity – primarily by restricting the environment itself and perceiving it in a categorically performed way. On the other hand, the difference of system and environment is a prerequisite for the reduction of complexity because reduction can be performed only 'within the system,' both for the system itself 'and' its environment." From: *Ecological Communication* [1986] (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1989), pp. 11-12. Also see notes #4, #12 and #35.

122. See note #51.

123. See note #46.

124. Hippolyte Adolphe Taine said: "Facts only seem to exist, but in reality there are only abstract universals. The more I study the things of the mind, the more mathematics I find in them. In them as in mathematics, it is a question of quantities; they must be treated with precision. I have never had more satisfaction than in proving this in the realms of arts, politics and history." From: *Life and Letters of H. Taine* (London: Constable, 1908), p. 239.

125. Plato reports that Socrates posed the following puzzle: "The same magnitudes seem greater to the eye from near at hand than they do from a distance. This is true of thickness and also of number, and sounds of equal loudness seem greater near at hand than at a distance. If now our happiness consisted in doing, I mean in choosing, greater lengths and avoiding smaller, where would salvation be? In the art of measurement or in the impression made by appearances? Haven't we seen that the appearance leads us astray and throws us into confusion so that in our actions and our choices between great and small we are constantly accepting and rejecting the same things, whereas the metric art would have canceled the effect of the impression, and by revealing the true state of affairs would have caused the soul to live in peace and quiet and abide in the truth, thus saving our life? Faced with these considerations, would people agree that our salvation would lie in the art of measurement?" Plato, "Protagoras," in *The Collected Dialogues of Plato* (New York: Random House, 1961), p. 347.

126. According to Immanuel Kant, "If it were possible to have so profound an insight into a man's mental character as shown by internal as well as external actions, as to know all its motives, even the smallest and likewise all the external occasions that can influence them, we could calculate a man's conduct for the future with as great certainty as a lunar or solar eclipse; and nevertheless we may maintain that the man is free." From: "Critique of Practical Reason" [1785], in *Critique of Practical Reason and Other Works on the Theory of Ethics* (New York: Longman, 1909), p. 193.

127. An application of this is the self-fulfilling prophecy described by Robert K. Merton: "The self-fulfilling prophecy is, in the beginning, a false definition of the situation evoking a new behavior which makes the originally false conception come true. The specious validity of the self-fulfilling prophecy perpetuates a reign of error. For the prophet will cite the actual course of events as proof that he was right from the very beginning... Such are the perversities of social logic." From: "The Self-Fulfilling Prophecy," in *Social Theory and Social Structure* [1948] (New York: Free Press, 1968), p. 477.

128. See notes #94 and 129.

129. Anne Robert Jacques Turgot said: "The ambitious ones themselves, in forming the great nations, have contributed to the views of Providence, to the progress of enlightenment, and consequently to the increase of the happiness of the human species, a thing which did not at all interest them. Their passions, their very rages, have led them without their knowing where they were going." From: "Plan du premier discours sur la formation des gouvernements et le mélange des nations" [1751?], in *Oeuvres de Turgot et documents le concernant*, Vol. 1 (Paris: Librairie Alcan, 1913); quoted Frank E. Manuel, *The Prophets of Paris, Turgot, Condorcet, Saint-Simon, Fourier and Comte*. 1965, N. Y.: Harper, p. 283.

130. Marcel Mauss writes: "To refuse to give, or to fail to invite is – like refusing to accept – the equivalent to a declaration of war: it is a refusal of friendship and intercourse." From: *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies* [1925] (New York: Norton, 1967), p. 11. Refusing to give or receive is interpreted as a hostile action because giving and receiving are considered to be sound and valuable behaviors. If they were not considered as such and held in high esteem, then the refusal to give or receive would not be given much significance.

131. Emile Durkheim said: "We use the word 'function' in preference to 'end' or 'purpose' precisely because social phenomena do not generally exist for the useful results they produce." From: *The Rules of Sociological Method* [1895] (New York: Free Press, 1958), p. 95.

132. Aristotle said: "It is possible for all kinds of cause to apply to the same object: e.g. in the case of a house, the source of motion is the art and the architect; the final cause is the function; the matter is earth and stones, and the form is the definition." From: *The Metaphysics*, Vol. 17 of *Aristotle in Twenty-Three Volumes* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1980), Book 3, p. 105.

133. Condorcet said: "The very passions of men, their interests falsely understood, lead them to spread enlightenment, liberty, happiness, to do good despite of themselves." From an unpublished manuscript, quoted by Frank E. Manuel, *The Prophets of Paris...*, op. cit., p. 73.

134. Alfred Russell Wallace said: "It suddenly flashed upon me that this self-acting process would necessarily 'improve the race,' because in every generation the inferior would inevitably be killed off and the superior would remain – that is, the 'fittest would survive...' The more I thought it over the more I became convinced that I had at length found the long-sought-for law of nature that solved the problem of the origin of species." From: *My Life: A Record of Events and Opinions* [1905] (New York: AMS Press, 1974), p. 362. I do not believe that this should be taken as a question of "improving the race" nor of advancing the species but as a manifestation of the complex chains of events in the unfolding of the potential of reality, in which the future is not necessarily superior to the past.

135. Also see note #132.

136. Robert K. Merton described functional analysis as "the practice of interpreting data by establishing their consequences for the larger structures in which they are implicated." From: *Social Theory...*, op. cit., p. 191.

137. Merton also refers to the postulate of the functional unity of society indicating that "every culturally standardized activity or belief is functional, for the society as a whole and uniformly functional for [all] the people living in it." The postulate of universal functionalism "holds that all standardized social or cultural forms have positive functions." From: *Social Theory...*, op. cit., pp. 81, 87.

138. Alvin W. Gouldner noted that sociologists have developed positive and alternative theories to the dominant functionalist and Parsonian models. He commented that "the development of middle-range 'social problems' research and theory ... [is] often oriented to values of 'freedom' and 'equality' rather than of 'order,' as functionalism tends to be." From: *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology* (New York: Basic Books, 1970), p. 410.

139. See note #94.

140. Leszek Kolakowski said: "Positivists do not object to the inquiry into the immediate, visible causes of any observed phenomenon, they object to any accounting for it in terms of hidden factors which are by definition inaccessible to human knowledge." [1966] (London: Penguin, 1972), p. 12."

141. See note #11.

142. Erving Goffman said: "In our society the very significant assumption is generally made that all events –without exception– can be contained and managed within the conventional system of beliefs. We tolerate the unexplained but not the inexplicable." From: *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience* (New York: Harper, 1974), p. 30.

143. See note #90.

144. It is not necessary to get rid of the values, emotions and other elements adopted through social norms in the processes of social norming and socialization. It is simply necessary to make these explicit and critically evaluate the influence which they have on us. Franz Boas said: "The data of ethnology prove that not only our knowledge, but also our emotions are the result of the form of our social life and of the history of the people to whom we belong. If we desire to understand the development of human culture we must try to free ourselves of these shackles. This is possible only to those who are willing to adapt themselves to the strange ways of thinking and feeling of primitive people". From: "The Aims of Ethnology" [1889], in *Race, Language and Culture* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1982), p. 636.

145. The insertion of such criteria should be complete, beyond the practical or utilitarian implications which are referred to in note #18.

146. Also see Chapter 1, part F.

147. Altruism can only be explained in terms of respect for a superior order based in consistency. Robert K. Merton defines altruism as "behavior which benefits others at the expense of the benefactor." From: Merton, *Social Theory...*, op. cit., p. 110.

148. Franz Boas comments, "The object of study is the individual, not abstractions from the individual under observation ... By regarding a single implement outside of its surroundings, outside of other inventions of the people to whom it belongs, and outside of other phenomena affecting that people and its productions, we cannot understand its meaning." From: "The Principles of Ethnological Classification" [1887], in *A Franz Boas Reader* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), p. 62.

149. See chapter 1, part F.

150. Friedrich Engels said: "The modern individual family is based on the open or disguised domestic enslavement of the woman; and modern society is a mass composed solely of individual families [as in] molecules. Today, in the great majority of cases, the man has to be the earner, the breadwinner of the family, at least among the propertied classes, and this gives him a dominant position which requires no special legal privileges. In the family, he is the bourgeois; the wife represents the proletariat." From: "The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State" [1888], in *Karl Marx and Frederick Engels: Selected Works*, Vol. 2 (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1950). Engels also argued: "The democratic republic does not abolish the antagonism between the two classes; on the contrary, it provides the field on which it is fought out. And, similarly, the peculiar character of man's domination over woman in the modern family, and the necessity, as well as the manner, of establishing real social equality between the two, will be brought out into full relief only when both are completely equal before the law. It will then become evident that the first premise for the emancipation of women is the reintroduction

of the entire female sex into public industry; and that this again demands that the quality possessed by the individual family of being the economic unit of society is abolished.” (pp. 211-212)

Simone de Beauvoir said: “When we abolish slavery of half of humanity, together with the whole system of hypocrisy that it implies, then the ‘division’ of humanity will reveal its genuine significance and the human couple will find its true form.” From: *The Second Sex* [1949] (New York: Modern Library, 1968), p. 731.

151. Herbert Blumer said: “Symbolic interactionism rests ... on three simple premises. The first premise is that human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them ... The second premise is that the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one’s fellows. The third premise is that these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters.” From: *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1969), p. 2.

He also says: “The human individual confronts a world that he must interpret in order to act instead of an environment to which he responds because of his organization. He has to cope with the situations in which he is called on to act, ascertaining the meaning of actions of others and mapping out his own line of action in the light of such interpretation. He has to construct and guide his action instead of merely releasing it in response to factors playing on him or operating through him.” (p. 23)

152. Bernard Barber said: “One essential characteristic of [the] social sciences is that they deal with the social relations between human beings, that is, with those relationships between human beings in which they interact with one another not as physical objects merely but on the basis of mutually attributed meanings.” From: *Science and the Social Order* [1952] (New York: Collier Books, 1962), p. 312.

153. Carl L. Becker said: “The significance of man is that he is insignificant and is aware of it.” From: *Progress and Power* [1936] (New York: Knopf, 1949), p. 115. Despite human beings’ “insignificance” compared to the immense grandeur of integrative unity, individuals nonetheless possess a high degree of dignity and worth.

154. See note #93.

155. See note #78.

156. See note #93.

157. See chapter 1, sections A through D.

158. Colin Cherry said: “The human senses (above all, that of hearing) do not possess one set of constant parameters, to be measured independently, one at a time. It is even questionable whether the various ‘senses’ are to be regarded as separate, independent detectors. The human organism is one integrated whole, stimulated into response by physical signals; it is not to be thought of as a box,

carrying various independent pairs of terminals labeled 'ears,' 'eyes,' 'nose,' etc." From: *On Human Communication: A Review, A Survey, and a Criticism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Technology Press of M.I.T., 1957), pp. 127-128.

159. See note #15.

160. Joseph Butler said: "Probable evidence, in its very nature, affords but an imperfect kind of information, and is to be considered as relative only to beings of limited capacities. For nothing which is the possible object of knowledge, whether past, present, or future, can be probable to an infinite Intelligence; ... to us, probability is the very guide of life." From: *The Analysis of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution of Course of Nature* [1795] (New Haven, Conn.: A. H. Maltby, 1982), pp. 50-51.

161. G.K. Chesterton writes: "(Father Brown): Have you ever noticed this—that people never answer what you say? They answer what you mean— or what they think you mean. 'Is anybody staying with you?' The lady doesn't answer, 'Yes, the butler, the three footmen, the parlourmaid, and so on,' though the parlourmaid may be in the room, or the butler behind her chair. She says 'There is nobody' staying with us, meaning nobody of the sort you mean. But suppose a doctor inquiring into an epidemic asks, 'Who is staying in the house?' Then the lady will remember the butler, the parlourmaid, and the rest. All language is used like that; you never get a question answered literally, even when you get it answered truly." From: "The Invisible Man" [1911], in *The Father Brown Omnibus* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1983), p. 98.

162. See note #120.

163. Michel Foucault comments: "Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true." From: "Truth and Power" [1977], in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977* (New York: Random House, 1980), p. 131.

164. See note #84.

165. See note #83.

166. John Locke asserts: "He that is nourished by the Acorns he picks up under an Oak, or the Apples he gathered from the Trees in the Wood, has certainly appropriated them to himself. No Body can deny but the nourishment is his. I ask then, When did they begin to be his? When he digested them? Or when he ate them? Or when he boiled them? Or when he brought them home? Or when he picked them up? And 'tis plain, if the first gathering made them not his, nothing else could. That 'labour' put a distinction between them and common. That added something to them more than Nature, the common Mother of all, had done: and so they became his private right." From: *Two Treatises of Government* [1690] (New York: New American Library, 1965). pp. 329-330.

167. See note #83.

168. Ludwig Fleck said: "This is how a fact arises. 'At first there is a signal of resistance in the chaotic initial thinking, then a definite thought constraint, and finally a form to be directly perceived.' A fact always occurs in the context of the history of thought and is always the result of a definite thought style." From: *Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact* [1935] (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1979), p. 95.

169. This point of view differs from the position of Emile Durkheim: "We cannot say that an action shocks the public conscience because it is criminal, but that it is criminal because it shocks the conscience. We do not rebuke it because it is a crime, but it is a crime because we rebuke it." *The Division of Labor in Society* (1893) (New York: Free Press, 1964), p. 81.

CHAPTER TWO NOTES :

COGNITIVE IMPLICATIONS OF CONSISTENCY

1. See Chapter 1, note #14.

2. This position explains and complements comments like those of Carleton S. Coon: "The essence of the quantitative approach in cultural anthropology lies in the thesis that the main stream or streams of human culture must have proceeded from simpler to more complex. The evidence of archaeology and of history supports this thesis, which in turn accords with all that we know of life in general. It must be equally apparent that the living cultures of the world vary in degrees of complexity and that whole cultures can be listed and studied with greatest profit on the basis of such a progressive scheme." From: *A Reader in General Anthropology* [1948] (New York: Holt, 1958), p. vii.

3. Robert Redfield said: "The real structure of tradition, in any civilization or part thereof, is an immensely intricate system of relationships between the levels or components of tradition, which we enormously oversimplify by referring to as 'high' or 'low' or as 'great' and 'little'." From: "Civilizations as Cultural Structures" [1958], in *Human Nature and the Study of Society: The Papers of Robert Redfield*, Vol. 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), p. 394.

4. Allen H. Barton, "The Concept of Property-Space in Social Research" in P. F. Lazarsfeld and Morris Rosenberg, *The Language of Social Research* (Glencoe, Ill: The Free Press, 1972).

5. According to Morris R. Cohen, "It is interesting to note how many fundamental terms which the social sciences are trying to adopt from physics have as a matter of historical fact originated in the social field. Take, for instance, the notion of cause. The Greek *aitia* or the Latin *causa* was originally a purely legal term. It was taken over into physics, developed there, and in the 18th

century brought back as a foreign-born king for the adoration of the social sciences. The same is true of the concept of 'law of nature.' Originally a strict, anthropomorphic conception, it was gradually depersonalized or dehumanized in the natural sciences and then taken over by the social sciences in an effort to eliminate final causes or purposes from the study of human affairs. It is therefore not anomalous to find similar transformations in the history of such fundamental concepts of statistics as 'average' and 'probability.' The concept of 'average' was developed in the Rhodian laws as to the distribution of losses in maritime risks. After astronomers began to use it in correcting their observations, it spread to other physical sciences; and the prestige which it thus acquired has given it vogue in the social field. The term 'probability,' as its terminology indicates, originates in practical and legal considerations of probing and proving." From: "The Statistical View of Nature," in *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, Vol. 31 (1936), pp. 327-328.

6. Leon Festinger said: "The basic hypotheses I wish to state are as follows:

1. The existence of dissonance, being psychologically uncomfortable, will motivate the person to try to reduce the dissonance and achieve consonance.
2. When dissonance is present, in addition to trying to reduce it, the person will actively avoid situations and information which would likely increase the dissonance."

From: *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance* (New York: Harper, 1957), p. 3.

7. Else Frenkel-Brunswick wrote: "Intolerance of emotional and cognitive ambiguity seems not only to be a characteristic of the personality of ethnically prejudiced; it also appears as part of the explicitly stated ego-ideal of exponents of the Nazi ideology in professional psychology. The most notable case is that of E.R. Jaensch with his programmatic glorification of a personality type characterized by fixed relationships between stimuli and perceptual responses, and with his rejection of the school of Gestalt psychology mainly on the ground of its stress on the concept of ambiguity." From: "Dynamic and Cognitive Personality Organization as Seen through the Interviews," in T. W. Adorno, et al., eds. *The Authoritarian Personality* (New York: Harper, 1949), p. 464.

8. See Chapter 1, note #142.

9. See Chapter 1, note #114.

10. See Chapter 1, note #4.

11. See Chapter 2, notes #2 and 5.

12. This differs from the role attributed to language by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels: "... language, like consciousness, only arises from the need, the necessity, of intercourse with other men. Where there exists a relationship, it exists for me ..." "The German Ideology" [1845-1846], in *Karl Marx and Frederick Engels: Collected Works*, Vol. 5 (New York: International Publishers, 1976), p. 44.

13. Benjamin L. Whorf argues that in order to understand the nature of human beings, it is necessary to break it down, dissect it "and break up the

flux of experience into objects and entities to construct propositions about.” See Chapter 1, note #13.

14. Anne Robert Jacques Turgot said: “The study of language, if well done, would perhaps be the best of logics. In analyzing, in comparing the words of which they are fashioned, in tracing from the beginning the different meanings which they acquired, in following the thread of ideas, we will see through which stages, through which metamorphoses, men passed ... This kind of experimental metaphysics would be at one and the same time the history of the human mind and the history of the progress of its thoughts, always fitted to the needs which gave birth to them. Languages are at once their expression and their measure.” From: “Reflexions sur les langues” [1751?], in *Oeuvres de Turgot et documents le concernant*, Vol. 1. Quoted in Frank E. Manuel, *The Prophets...* op. cit., p. 347.

15. Benjamin Lee Whorf said: “Thinking is most mysterious, and by far the greatest light upon it that we have is thrown by the study of language. This study shows that the forms of a person’s thoughts are controlled by inexorable laws of pattern of which he is unconscious. These patterns are the unperceived, intricate systematizations of his own language – shown readily enough by a candid comparison and contrast with other languages, especially those of a different linguistic family.” From: “Language, Mind, and Reality” [1942], in *Language, Thought, and Reality: Selected Writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf* (Cambridge, Mass.: Technology Press of M.I.T., 1956), p. 252.

Whorf also said: “...linguistics is essentially the quest of MEANING ... its real concern is to light up the thick darkness of the language, and thereby of much of the thought, the culture, and the outlook, upon life of a given community, with the light of this ‘golden something,’ as I have heard it called, this transmuting principle of meaning.” From: “A Linguistic Consideration of Thinking in Primitive Communities” [1956], in *Language, Thought, and Reality*, op. cit., p. 73.

16. William Dwight Whitney said: “A language is, in very truth, a grand system, of a highly complicated and symmetrical structure; it is ... comparable with an organized body; but this is not because any human mind has planned such a structure and skillfully worked it out. Each single part is conscious and intentional; the whole is instinctive and natural. The unity and symmetry of the system is the unconscious product of the efforts of the human mind, grappling with the facts of the world without and the world within itself, and recording each separate result in speech.” From: *Language and the Study of Language* [1867] (New York: Scribner, 1891), p. 50.

17. According to Oliver Wendell Holmes, “General propositions do not decide concrete cases. The decision will depend on a judgement or intuition more subtle than any articulate major premise.” From *Lochner v. New York*, U.S. 76, 1905.

18. See Chapter 1, notes #12, 13, 28, 30, 46 and 48.

19. See Chapter 1, notes #55 and 60.

20. See Chapter 1, note #13.

21. R. A. Fisher said: "Men have always been capable of some mental processes of the kind we call 'learning by experience.' Doubtless this experience was often a very imperfect basis, and the reasoning processes used in interpreting it were very insecure; but there must have been in these processes a sort of embryology of knowledge, by which new knowledge was gradually produced. Experimental observations are only experience carefully planned in advance, and designed to form a secure basis of new knowledge; that is, they are systematically related to the body of knowledge already acquired, and the results are deliberately observed, and put on record accurately." From: *The Design of Experiments* (New York: Hafner, 1935), p. 8.

22. See Robert K. Merton, *Sociology of Science*, op. cit., pp. 6 and 264; also see *Social Theory...*, op. cit., p. 69.

23. Aristotle said: "The difference between a historian and a poet is not that one writes in prose and the other verse ... poetry is something more scientific and serious than history, because poetry tends to give general truths while history gives particular facts." From: "The Poetics," in *Aristotle in Twenty-Three Volumes*, Vol. 23 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973), p. 35.

24. Carl L. Becker said: "To establish the facts is always in order, and is indeed the first duty of the historian; but to suppose that the facts, once established in all their fullness, will 'speak for themselves' is an illusion. It was perhaps peculiarly the illusion of those historians of the last century who found some special magic in the word 'scientific.' The scientific historian, it seems, was one who set forth the facts without injecting any extraneous meaning into them." From: "Everyman His Own Historian," *American Historical Review*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (1932), pp. 221-236.

25. See Chapter 1, note #161.

26. W.I.B. Beveridge said: "No one believes an hypothesis except its originator but everyone believes an experiment except the experimenter. Most people are ready to believe something based on experiment but the experimenter knows the many little things that could have gone wrong in the experiment. For this reason the discoverer of a new fact seldom feels quite so confident of it as others do. On the other hand other people are usually critical of an hypothesis, whereas the originator identifies himself with it and is liable to become devoted to it." From: *The Art of Scientific Investigation* [1950] (New York: Random House, 1961), p. 65.

27. See Chapter 1, note #65.

28. See Chapter 1, note #66.

29. The principle of consistency is the "good judgment" which Frank H. Knight refers to when he says: "The right principle is to respect all principles, take them fully into account, and then use 'good judgment' as to how far to follow one or another in the case in hand. All principles are false, because all

are true—in a sense and to a degree—; hence, none is true in a sense and to a degree which would deny to others a similarly qualified truth.” From: “The Role of Principles in Economics and Politics” [1951], in *On the History and Method of Economics: Selected Essays* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1956).

30. Plato refers to the following statement by Socrates: “There are not many very good or very bad people but the great majority are something between the two... Can you think of anything more unusual than coming across a very large or small man, or dog, or any other creature? Or one which is very swift or slow, ugly or beautiful, white or black? Have you never realized that extreme instances are few and rare, while intermediate ones are many and plentiful?” From: “Phaedo,” in *The Collected Dialogues of Plato* (N.Y.: Random House, 1961), p. 72.

31. According to William Stanley Jevons, “There must be perfectly free competition, so that any one will exchange with any one else upon the slightest apparent advantage. There must be no conspiracies for absorbing and holding supplies to produce unnatural ratio of exchange... A market, then, is theoretically perfect only when all traders have perfect knowledge of the conditions of supply and demand, and the consequent ratio of exchange.” From: *The Theory of Political Economy* [1871] (N.Y.: Kelley C. Millman, 1957), pp. 86-87.

32. See Chapter 1, note #71.

33. See Chapter 1, note #60.

34. Also see the discussion of the role of contradictions in Chapter 1, part A, section 2(f), along with notes #70, 71 and 72.

35. Advances which have been surpassed do not constitute a mere gratification of the scientist. See Chapter 1, note #63.

36. Bernard Cohen wrote, “All revolutionary advances in science may consist less of sudden and dramatic revelations than a series of transformations, of which the revolutionary significance may not be seen (except afterwards, by historians) until the last great step. In many cases the full potentiality and force of a most radical step in such a sequence of transformations may not even be manifest to its author.” From: *The Newtonian Revolution* (Cambridge University Press, 1980), p. 162.

37. See Chapter 1, note #61.

38. Also see Chapter 2, part A, section 1(c).

39. I disagree with the viewpoint expressed by James McKeen Cattell: “It seems to me that most of the research work that has been done by me or in my laboratory is nearly as independent of introspection as work in physics or in zoology. The time of mental processes, the accuracy of perception and movement, the range of consciousness, fatigue and practice, the motor accompaniments of thought, memory, the association of ideas, the perception of space color-vision, preferences, judgments, individual differences, the behavior of animals and of children, these and other topics I have investigated without requiring the slightest

introspection on the part of the subject or undertaking such on my own part during the course of the experiments. It is usually no more necessary for the subject to be a psychologist than it is for the vivisected frog to be a physiologist". From: "The Conceptions and Methods of Psychology," in *Popular Science Monthly* (December 1904), p. 180.

40. See Chapter 1, note #43.

41. See Chapter 1, note #8.

42. Elton Mayo said: "The difference between a good observer and one who is not good is that the former is quick to take a hint from the facts, from his early efforts to develop skill in handling them, and quick to acknowledge the need to revise or alter the conceptual framework of his thinking. The other—the poor observer—continues dogmatically onward with his original thesis, lost in a maze of correlation, long after the facts have shrieked in protest against the interpretation put upon them." From: *The Social Problems of an Industrial Civilization* (Cambridge, Mass.: Boston Graduate School of Business Administration, Harvard University, 1945), p. 116.

43. Walter Benjamin wrote: "The products of art and science owe their existence not merely to the effort of the great geniuses that created them, but also to the unnamed drudgery of their contemporaries. There is no document of culture which is not at the same time a document of barbarism." From: "Edward Fuchs: Collector and Historian" [1937], in Andrew Arato and Eike Gebhardt, eds., *The Essential Frankfurt School Reader* (New York: Urizen, 1978), p. 233.

44. See Chapter 1, note #26.

45. See Chapter 1, note #64. Comte's theological, metaphysical and scientific conditions jointly contribute to human knowledge and fulfillment.

46. For Arthur F. Bentley, "If we are going to infer a soul quality from the social fact and then use the quality to explain the fact, we put ourselves on a level with animists in the most savage tribes. A branch falls. It was the life in it or behind it that threw it down. Thunder peals. It is a spirit speaking. The grain grows. It is the spirit of the corn pushing it up. This man is a slave. It is because it is his nature ..." From: *The Process of Government: A Study of Social Pressures* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1908), p. 19.

47. See Chapter 1, note #55.

48. Robert K. Merton defined anomie as "a breakdown in the cultural structure, occurring particularly when there is an acute disjunction between the cultural norms and goals and the socially structured capacities of members of the group to act in accord with them". From: *Social Theory and Social Structure*, (New York: Free Press, 1968), p. 216.

Merton also writes: "Simple anomie refers to the state of confusion in a group or society which is subject to conflict between value-systems, resulting in some degree of uneasiness and a sense of separation from the group; acute anomie, to the deterioration and, at the extreme, the disintegration of value systems which results in marked anxieties." (p. 217)

49. See Chapter 2, note #21.

50. See Chapter 1, note #50.

51. Wilhelm Wundt wrote: "The new statistics has provided extremely rich materials which have as yet scarcely been used by psychologists. Beyond opening up new realms for investigation, statistics offers the boundless advantage of replacing with unshakable certainties. It enables one to draw conclusions with mathematical precision rather than relying upon imprecise deductions ... One can say without exaggeration that now psychology can be learned [more] through the use of statistical methods than from all the philosophers with the exception of Aristotle." From: *Beitrage zur Theorie der Sinneswahrnehmung* (Leipzig: Winter, 1862), pp. xxiv-xxv. Unpublished translation by Edward J. Doberty quoted by International Encyclopedia..., op. cit. Vol. 19. p. 257.

Warning against this panacea, Stephen M. Stigler cautions: "Beware of the problem of testing too many hypotheses; the more you torture the data, the more they are to confess, but confessions obtained under duress may not be admissible in the court of scientific opinion" From: "Testing Hypotheses or Fitting Models: Another Look at Mass Extinctions," in Matthew H. Nitecki and Antony Hoffman, eds., *Neutral Models in Biology* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1987), p. 148. In an earlier work, I criticized this "myth" of numbers: "It is necessary to fight against the unilateral idealization and myth of quantification. Such excess leads [investigators] to destroy quantification and to interfere in its efficacy by taking it out of context, depriving it of the support it needs, which should come from its insertion in the wider system of knowledge. This allows quantification to enter fully, freely, without rigid attachments, into the systematic play of confrontations and derivations of consistency". From: *El método científico en las ciencias sociales* (Buenos Aires: Paidós, 1982), p. 232.

I added that: "Qualitative material resulting from a flexible previous work permits adequate definition of variables or dimensions and their categories, adjusted to reality, and [it permits people to] construct questions in a wording which will facilitate communication with interviewees and [obtain] the information aimed at. The application of quantification without such conditions could be useless and even harmful since it starts from unreliable premises." (p. 233)

I also referred to the application of mathematical or statistical formulae to information which does not meet the basic conditions that would allow such formulae to be used legitimately, or to applying mathematical formulae to obtain results they are unable to provide. (p. 234) Also see Chapter 1, note #59.

52. Mocking the "charms" of statistics, Francis Galton commented: "It is difficult to understand why statisticians commonly limit their inquiries to Averages, and do not revel in more comprehensive views. Their souls seem as dull to the charm of variety as that of the native of one of our flat English counties, whose retrospect of Switzerland was that, if its mountains could be thrown into its lakes, two nuisances would be got rid of at once. An Average is but a solitary fact, whereas if a single other fact be added to it, an entire Normal Scheme, which nearly correspond to the observed one, starts potentially into existence." From: *Natural Inheritance* (London: Macmillan, 1889). pp. 62-63.

53. Norbert Wiener comments: "The future offers very little hope for those who expect that our new mechanical slaves will offer us a world in which we may rest from thinking. Help us they may, but at the cost of supreme demands upon our honesty and our intelligence. The world of the future will be an ever more demanding struggle against the limitations of our intelligence, not a comfortable hammock in which we can lie down to be waited upon by our robot slave." From: *God and Golem, Inc.: A Comment on Certain Points where Cybernetics Impinges on Religion* (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1964), p. 69.

54. See Chapter 3.

55. See Chapter 1, note #66.

56. Lord Kelvin said: "I often say that when you can measure what you are speaking about and express it in numbers you know something about it; but when you cannot measure it, when you cannot express it in numbers, your knowledge is of a meager and unsatisfactory kind: it may be the beginning of knowledge, but you have scarcely, in your thoughts, advanced to the stage of science, whatever the matter may be." From: "Electrical Units of Measurement" [1883], in *Popular Lectures and Addresses*, Vol. 1 (London: Macmillan, 1891), pp.80-81.

Frederick Gard Fleay also praises quantitative analysis: "Our analysis, which has hitherto been qualitative, must become quantitative; we must cease to be empirical, and become scientific; in criticism as in other matters, the test that decides between science and empiricism is this: 'Can you say, not only of what kind, but how much?' If you cannot weigh, measure, number your results, however you may be convinced your-self, you must not hope to convince others, or claim the position of an investigator; you are merely a guesser, a propounder of hypotheses." From: "On Metrical Tests as Applied to Dramatic Poetry", in New Shakespeare Society, *Transactions* (1874) 1:1-16, p. 3.

57. W.I.Thomas and Dorothy Swaine Thomas said: "In any interpretative study, by selecting out only those factors which are at the moment capable of quantitative expression, there is necessary overweighting of those factors as against factors not readily expressed quantitatively." From: *The Child in America: Behavior Problems and Programs* (New York: Knopf, 1928), p. 567.

58. See Chapter 2, note #52.

59. William Playfair provided the following, somewhat one-sided, bit of advice: "Statistical accounts are to be referred to as a dictionary by men of riper year, and by young men as a grammar, to teach them the relations and proportions of different statistical subjects, and to imprint them on the mind at a time when the memory is capable of being impressed in a lasting and durable manner, thereby laying the foundation for accurate and valuable knowledge. From: *The Statistical Breviary: Shewing on a Principle Entirely New, the Resources of Every State and Kingdom in Europe* (London: T. Bensley, 1801), pp. 5-6.

60. Nathan Keyfitz writes of the common misuse of numbers: "Numbers provide the rhetoric of our age... What rounded periods and flourishes were to

Victorian eloquence, what Latin tags did for the eighteenth century, numbers contribute to eloquence now: they testify to the seriousness and trustworthiness of the speaker, as well as to his proper education." From: "The Social and Political Context of Population Forecasting," in William Alonso and Paul Starr, eds., *The Politics of Numbers* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1987), p. 235.

61. Describing the purpose of statistical analysis, James Clerk Maxwell wrote: "If we betake ourselves to the statistical method, we do so confessing that we are unable to follow the details of each individual case, and expecting that the effects of wide-spread causes, though very different in each individual, will produce an average result on the whole nation, from a study of which we may estimate the character and propensities of an imaginary being called the Mean Man." From: Lewis Campbell and William Garnett, *The Life of James Clerk Maxwell* [1882] (New York: Johnson, 1969), p. 439.

Recognizing the limits of mathematical analysis, Alfred Marshall wrote: "I had a growing feeling in the later years of my work at the subject that a good mathematical theorem dealing with economic hypotheses was very unlikely to be good economics: and I went more and more on the rules -1) Use mathematics as a shorthand language, rather than as an engine of inquiry. 2) Keep to them till you have done. 3) Translate into English. 4) Then illustrate by examples that are important in real life. 5) Burn the mathematics. 6) If you can't succeed in 4), burn 3). This last I did often." From: "Letter to A. L. Bowley, 27 February 1906" in *Memorials of Alfred Marshall* (New York: Kelley & Millman, 1956), p. 427.

62. Lynn T. White, Jr. said: "Some of the most perceptive systems analysts are pondering today [are] how to incorporate into their procedures for decision the so-called fragile or non quantifiable values to supplement and rectify their traditional quantification. Unhappy clashes with aroused groups of ecologists have proved that when a dam is being proposed, kingfishers may have as much political clout as kilowatts. How do you apply cost-benefit analysis to kingfishers? Systems analysts are caught in Descartes's dualism between the measurable 'res extensa' and the incommensurable 'res cogitans,' but they lack his pineal gland to connect what he thought were two sorts of reality. In the long run the entire Cartesian assumption must be abandoned for recognition that quantity is only one of the qualities and that all decisions, including the quantitative, are inherently qualitative. That such a statement to some ears has an ominously Aristotelian ring does not automatically refute it." From: "Technology Assessment from the Stance of a Medieval Historian," in *American Historical Review* 79 (1974), p. 3.

63. See Thomas C. Schelling, "What is Game Theory?," in *Choice and Consequence* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1984), pp. 240-241.

64. As J.H. Plumb wrote, "Whether we like it or not, quantification in history is here to stay for reasons which the quantifiers themselves might not actively approve. We are becoming a numerate society; almost instinctively there seems now to be a greater degree of truth in evidence expressed numerically than in

any literary evidence, no matter how shaky the statistical evidence or acute the observing eye." From: "Is History Sick?" in *Encounter*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (1973), p. 64.

65. Aristotle said: "It is equally unreasonable to accept merely probable conclusions from a mathematician and to demand strict demonstration from an orator." From: "The Nicomachean Ethics" in *Aristotle in Twenty-Three Volumes*, Vol. 19 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982), Book 1, p. 9.

66. See Chapter 2, note #26. E.H. Carr. *What is history?* (New York, Knoff, 1961), p. 9.

67. Charles Booth warned about the limitations of statistics in the following passage: "As to methods of inquiry, I think I should say that the statistical method was needed to give bearings to the results or personal observation and personal observation to give life to statistics... It is this relative character, or the proportion of facts to each other, to us, to others, to society at large, and to possible remedies, that must be introduced if they are to be of any value at all in social diagnosis. Both single facts and strings of statistics 'may' be true, and demonstrably true, and yet entirely misleading in the way they are used." From an unpublished letter to Beatrice (Potter) Webb, quoted in T.S. Simey and M.B. Simey, *Charles Booth: Social Scientist* (Oxford University Press, 1960).

68. See Chapter 1, note #66.

69. See Chapter 1, note #59.

70. Thomas Carlyle said: "A witty statesman said, you might prove anything by figures. We have looked into various statistic works, Statistic-Society Reports, Poor-Law Reports, Reports and Pamphlets not a few, with an sedulous eye to this question of the Working Classes and their general condition in England... Tables are abstractions, and the object a most concrete one, so difficult to read the essence of. There are innumerable circumstances; and one circumstance left out may be the vital one on which all turned. Statistics is a science which ought to be honorable, the basis of many most important sciences; but it is not to be carried on system, this science, any more than others are; a wise head is requisite for carrying it on. Conclusive facts are inseparable from inconclusive except by a head that already understands and knows." From: "Chartism" [1839], in volume 29 of *The Works of Thomas Carlyle in Thirty Volumes*, Vol. 29 (New York: Scribner, 1904), p. 124.

The "wise head" is one which is inspired by consistency and therefore considers both quantitative and qualitative information.

71. Writing in 1713, Jakob Bernoulli said: "We define the art of conjecture, or stochastic art, as the art of evaluating as exactly as possible the probabilities of things, so that in our judgments and actions we can always base ourselves on what has been found to be the best, the most appropriate, the most certain, the best advised; this is the only object of the wisdom of the philosopher and the prudence of statesman." Quoted in Bertrand de Jouvenel, *The Art of Conjecture* (New York: Basic Books, 1967), p. 21.

CHAPTER THREE NOTES: CONSISTENCY, HUMAN FULFILLMENT AND REALITY

1. Referring to the material success of the United States, Richard Hofstadter commented, "Societies that are in such good working order have a kind of mute organic consistency. They do not foster ideas that are hostile to their fundamental working arrangements. Such ideas may appear, but they are slowly and persistently insulated, as an oyster deposits nacre around an irritant." From: *The American Political Tradition and the Men Who Made It* (New York: Vintage: 1948), pp. viii-ix.

2. See Chapter 1, note #83.

3. In 1776, Adam Smith argued: "Man has almost constant occasion for the help of his brethren, and it is in vain for him to expect it from their benevolence only. He will be more likely to prevail if he can interest their self-love in his favor, and show them that it is for their own advantage to do for him what he requires of them. Whoever offers to another a bargain of any kind proposes to do this. Give me that which I want, and you shall have this which you want, is the meaning of every such offer; and it is in this manner that we obtain from one another the far greater part of those good offices which we stand in need of. It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest." From: *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* [1776] (New York: Modern Library, 1937), Book I, Chapter 914.

The following statement by John Locke also illustrates a unilateral vision of human motivation, which posits that human beings are primarily motivated by self-interest: "The great and 'chief end' therefore, of Men's uniting into Commonwealths and putting themselves under Government, is the Preservation of their Property." From: *Two Treatises of Government*, op. cit., p. 395.

4. Writing in 1741, David Hume remarked that: "In contriving any system of government, and fixing the several checks and controls of the constitution,

every man ought to be supposed a 'knave' and to have no other end, in all his actions, than private interest." From: "Of the Independency of Parliament," in *Essays: Moral, Political and Literary* (Indianapolis, Ind.: Liberty Fund, 1985), p. 42.

For Francis Ysidro Edgeworth, "The first principle of Economics is that every agent is actuated only by self-interest." From: *Mathematical Psychics: An Essay on the Application of Mathematics to the Moral Sciences* (London: Kogan Paul, 1881), p. 16.

5. Adam Smith argued: "Consumption is the sole end and purpose of all production; and the interest of the producer ought to be attended to, only so far as it may be necessary for promoting that of the consumer." From: *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, op. cit., Book 4, chap. 8, p. 625.

Yet production not only serves the consumer, it also serves the individuals involved in the production process (laborers, managers, investors, owners, etc.) as well as society in general. It also contributes to the harmony of reality.

In contrast to Adam Smith, Dostoyevsky commented, "Who has ever, in all these millennia, seen men acting solely for the sake of advantage? What's to be done with the millions of facts that attest to their 'knowingly' –that is, with full awareness of their true interests– dismissing these interests as secondary and rushing off in another direction, at risk, at hazard, without anyone or anything compelling them to do so, but as if solely in order to reject the designated road, and stubbornly, willfully carving out another –a difficult, absurd one-seeking it out virtually in the dark? Evidently, then, this stubbornness and willfulness has really pleased them more than any advantage... Advantage! What is advantage?" From: Fyodor Mikhaylovich Dostoyevsky, *Notes from the Underground* [1864] (New York: Bantam Books, 1981), p. 22.

6. David Ricardo said, "Under a system of perfectly free commerce, each country naturally devotes its capital and labour to such employments as are most beneficial to each. This pursuit of individual advantage is admirably connected with the universal good of the whole... it diffuses general benefit, and binds together, by one common tie of interest and intercourse, the universal society of nations throughout the civilized world." From: *The Principles of Political Economy and Taxation* [1817] (Homewood, Ill.: Richard D. Irwin, 1963), p. 70.

7. Piere Joseph Proudhon remarked: "What no monarchy, not even that of the Roman emperors, has been able to accomplish; what Christianity, that epitome of the ancient faiths, has been unable to produce, the universal Republic, the economic Revolution, will accomplish, cannot fail to accomplish." From: *General Idea of the Revolution in the Nineteenth Century* [1851] (London: Freedom Press, 1923), p. 283.

8. William J. Goode comments: "All courtship systems are market or exchange systems. They differ from one another with respect to 'who' does the buying and selling, which characteristics are more or less valuable in the market, and how open or explicit the bargaining is." From: *World Revolution and Family Patterns* (New York: Free Press, 1963), p. 8.

9. Jon Elster said: "(A) category of paradoxes is paradigmatically given by Groucho Marx's saying 'I would not dream of belonging to a club that is willing to have me as a member.' ... Someone willing to recognize 'me' must obviously be unworthy of recognition, and his recognition of me equally worthless ... Anyone observing small children at play will have seen this paradox, when one refuses to accept an object that he has solicited because he reckons that it must be pretty worthless if the other is willing to part with it. I also believe that writers sometimes fall victim to this fallacy: if anyone praises their work this automatically disqualifies him from being a serious critic." From: *Ulysses and the Sirens: Studies in Rationality and Irrationality* [1979] (Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 152-153.

10. In a survey of the values of university students in the United States, Argentina and Spain, the importance of ascribing value to giving for the sake of others is empirically analyzed. The findings of this study are discussed at length in Adolfo Critto, *Choosing Models of Society* (to be published).

11. Robert N. Bellah, et. al., comment that "many Americans are concerned to find meaning in life not primarily through self-cultivation but through intense relations with others... there is an attempt to move beyond the isolated self." At the same time, however, "romantic love [is] an excuse to use another for one's own gratification." From: *Habits of the Heart* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), p. 291.

12. For Marcel Mauss, "Homo oeconomicus" is not behind us, but before, like the moral man, the man of duty, the scientific man and the reasonable man. For a long time man was something quite different; and it is not so long now since he became a machine—a calculating machine—." From: *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*, op. cit., p. 74.

13. Edward L. Thorndike said: "The Law of Effect is that other things being equal, 'the greater the satisfyingness of the state of affairs which accompanies or follows a given response to a certain situation, the more likely that response is to be made to that situation in the future. Conversely, the greater the discomfort or annoyingness of the state of affairs which comes with or after a response to a situation, the more likely that response is not to be made to that situation in the future.'" From: *Education: A First Book* [1912] (New York: Arno Press, 1973), p. 96.

Thorndike adds that "When the law of effect is omitted... unproductive or extremely wasteful forms of drill are encouraged." From: *The Psychology of Learning* (New York: Teachers' College, Columbia University, 1913), p. 22.

14. Instead for William Stanley Jevons, "A free labourer ... will cease to labour just at the point when the pain becomes equal to the corresponding pleasure gained." From: *The Theory of Political Economy* [1871] (New York: Kelley C. Millman, 1957), p. 165.

15. See note #3 above.

16. James Coleman, *The Foundations of Social Theory* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1990), pp. 20, 30.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

18. *Ibid.*, pp. 31-32. Coleman elaborates as follows: "My intent ... is, rather, to indicate that at some point in the theory, I take as problematic [the] genesis and maintenance of norms, adherence of persons to norms, development of a moral code, identification of one's own interest with the fortunes of others, and identification with collectivities. To begin with, normative systems would preclude the construction of theory about how normative systems develop and are maintained ... To assume adherence to norms would impose determinism that would reduce the theory to a description of automats, not persons engaged in voluntary action. To assume that persons come equipped with a moral code would exclude all processes of socialization from theoretical examination." (pp. 31-32)

On the contrary, without the normative reference point given by the criterion of consistency, neither knowledge nor voluntary action would be possible.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 28.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 29.

21. See Mauss, note #12.

22. For example, Coleman argues that if "an institution exists to ensure full communication of information about all tentative contract... The market price is an emergent property of the system that arises from the pairwise interactions" and these feedback processes are "interdependencies among the actions of different actors." (pp. 27-28)

Coleman also speaks of "social status as a substitute for money," arguing that it serves as a means for "balancing transactions in social and political systems," making "possible half-transactions" and "balancing otherwise unequal transactions" by "granting a status" or "showing deference by one party to another" when transactions are "asymmetric" and persons (e.g. "advice-seekers") cannot pay back ("reciprocate advice") since showing deference increases the other's status and decreases one's own. (pp. 129-131)

According to the consistency model, showing deference enhances the status of the giver if the action is inspired by a sense of truth and goodness (which includes justice and humility); in such cases, deference contributes to truth, justice and the fulfillment of others as well as oneself. It not only increases the status of the person who receives deference but also increases the status of the person who gives deference. If deference is denied, this not only negatively affects the person who is denied but even more negatively impacts on the person who fails to show deference since he or she loses the opportunity to fulfill his or her true calling. If people show deference out of an opportunistic and egotistic motivation which goes against truth and goodness, neither party benefits.

23. Coleman writes, "all the time in their everyday assessments of social functioning," people infer "the power that various actors have in a system ... from what they control, and how valuable something is, determined by how interested those who have some resources are in gaining control of it." (p. 134)

24. Ibid., p. 133.

25. Ibid., p. 137.

26. Ibid., pp. 139-140.

27. Ibid., p. 136.

28. Ibid., p. 138.

29. Ibid., p. 135.

30. See Bellah, note #11.

31. Significantly, the responses of the American students revealed that these attitudes were not as strongly held as in their Spanish and Argentine counterparts. The results of this survey are more fully analyzed in Adolfo Critto, *Choosing Models of Society* (to be published).

32. Robert and Helen Merrell Lynd note that there is an inherent contradiction between following one's own personal interests and acting for the sake of others and for society as a whole. They sum up the dilemma in the following passage, quoting an ancient poem: "So many gods, so many creeds, so many paths that wind and wind, while just the art of being kind is all the sad world needs." From: "Middletown in Transition" [1937], reprinted in Lewis A. Coser, *The Pleasures of Sociology* (New York: New American Library/Penguin Books, 1980), p. 49.

33. George Herbert Mead said: "The self can exist for the individual only if he assumes the roles of the others. The presence in the conduct of the individual of the tendencies to act as others act may be, then, responsible for the appearance in the experience of the individual of a social object, i.e. an object answering to complex reactions of a number of individuals, and also for the appearance of the self. Indeed, these two appearances are correlative." From: "The Genesis of the Self and Social Control" [1921-1925], in *Selected Writings* (Indianapolis, Ind.: Bobbs-Merrill, 1964), p. 284.

Mead further said: "We are unconsciously putting ourselves in the place of others and acting as others act... We are, especially through the use of the vocal gestures, continually arousing in ourselves those responses which we call out in other persons, so that we are taking the attitudes of the other persons into our own conduct." From: *Mind, Self, and Society: From the Standpoint of a Social Behaviorist* [1934] (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1962), p. 69.

Mead also said: "The self has a character which is different from that of the physiological organism proper. The self is something which has a development: it is not initially there, at birth, that is, [it] develops in the given individual as a result of his relations to that process as a whole and to other individuals within that process." From: *Mind, Self, and Society*, op. cit., p. 135.

Later Mead adds: "Man's behavior is such in his social group that he is able to become an object to himself, a fact which constitutes him a more advanced product of evolutionary development than are the lower animals." From: *Mind, Self, and Society*, op. cit., p. 137n.

Mead adds: "For he [the individual] enters his own experience as a self or individual, not directly or immediately, not by becoming a subject to himself, but only in so far as he first becomes an object to himself just as other individuals are objects to him or in his experience..." From: *Mind, Self, and Society*, op. cit., p. 138.

Mead also said: "The organized community or social group which gives to the individual his unity of self may be called 'the generalized other'..." From: *Mind, Self, and Society*, op. cit., p. 154.

34. Saint Augustine said: [If we assume that] a people is an assemblage of reasonable beings bound together by a common agreement as to the objects of their love, then, in order to discover the character of any people, we have only to observe what they love... And it will be a superior people in proportion as it is bound together by higher interest, inferior in proportion as it is bound together by lower." From: *The City of God* (New York: Modern Library, 1950). Book 19, p. 706.

35. The "widened self" goes beyond William James' statement: "In its widest possible sense... man's Self is the sum total of all that he CAN call his, not only his body and his psychic powers, but his clothes and his hose, his wife and children, his ancestors and friends, his reputation and works, his lands and horses and yacht and bank account. All these things give him the same emotions. If they wax and prosper, he feels triumphant, if they dwindle and die away, he feels cast down – not necessarily in the same degree for each thing, but in much the same way for all." From: *The Principles of Psychology* [1890], Vol. 1 (New York: Dover, 1950), pp. 291-292.

36. For a definition of altruism, see Chapter 1, note #147.

37. The following statement by Harry Stack Sullivan could probably be interpreted in this way: "When the satisfaction or the security of another person becomes as significant to one as is one's own satisfaction or security then the state of love exists. So far I know, under no other circumstances is a state of love present, regardless of the popular usage of the word." From: *Conceptions of Modern Psychiatry: The First William Alanson White Memorial Lectures* [1940] (New York: Norton, 1953), pp. 42-43.

38. John Stuart Mill said: "Opinion is itself one of the greatest active social forces. One person with a belief, is a social power equal to ninety-nine who have only interests." From: "Considerations on Representative Government" [1861], in *Collected Works of John Stuart Mill*, Vol. 19 (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1977), p. 381.

Mill also said: "[While participating in public functions, the private citizen] is called upon... to weigh interests not his own; to be guided, in case of conflicting claims, by another rule than his private partialities; to apply, at every turn, principles and maxims which have for their reason of existence the common good ... He is made to feel himself one of the public, and whatever is for their benefit to be for his benefit." (p. 412)

39. According to Robert A. Nisbet, "The word [community] encompasses all forms of relationships which are characterized by a high degree of personal intimacy, emotional depth, moral commitment, social cohesion, and continuity in time. Community is founded on man conceived in his wholeness rather than in one or another of the roles, taken separately, that he may hold in a social order. It draws its psychological strength from levels of motivation deeper than those of mere volition or interest, and it achieves its fulfillment in a submergence of individual will that is not possible in unions of mere convenience or rational assent. Community is a fusion of feeling and thought, of tradition and commitment, of membership and volition. It may be found in, or be given symbolic expression by, locality, religion, nation, race, occupation, or crusade." From: *The Sociological Tradition* (New York: Basic Books, 1966), pp. 47-48.

40. Through his experiments, Solomon Asch shows the force of an orientation toward responsibility and objectivity rather than egoism. See: *Social Psychology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).

41. Robert A. Nisbet describes this tendency in the following way: "A generally odious form of historiography today, called psychohistory, uses psychoanalytic recall at a distance, to discern Oedipal strivings and castration complexes in a Martin Luther or a Woodrow Wilson. Thus, it is said triumphantly, the assignment of cause is now scientific. Another form of history currently vying with psychohistory is quantitative history or cliometrics. The data, the facts all historians work with, are dug out in vast detail and given computer assimilation. The result, it is said solemnly, is the replacement of such vague words as 'few' and 'many' with 364 and 13,458, thus giving accuracy and within that accuracy the 'true' story." From: "Historical Necessity," in *Prejudices: A Philosophical Dictionary* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Univ. Press, 1982), p. 160.

42. Consider the following example: Three people have three loaves of bread to eat, only two of which are fresh and of good quality. If one of the individuals values generosity and service to others above all, he or she will choose the worst loaf, leaving the good loaves to the others. If, on the other hand, the individual is most strongly motivated by self-interest, then he or she will try to choose one of the good loaves. Assume for a moment that the self-interested individual mistakenly chooses the worst bread. In this case, he or she will have apparently acted in a selfless manner. However, the fact that the person will be quite upset about not getting one of the good loaves shows that in order for a good action to lead to a sense of satisfaction, a person must be motivated by the proper values and intentions.

43. David Hume, "The Stoic," in *Essays: Moral, Political, and Literary* [1741] (Indianapolis, Ind.: Liberty Fund, 1985), p. 148.

44. See Chapter 1, note #130.

45. *The Chief Works of Benedict de Spinoza*, Vol. 2: *The Ethics* [1677] (New York: Dover, 1955), Part 3, p. 137.

46. See Chapter 3, note #9.

47. These will be explored in greater depth in Chapter 4.

48. Werner Sombart said: "While individual action under capitalism is informed by the ideal of highest rationality, the capitalistic system as a whole remains irrational, because the other dominant capitalistic idea, that of acquisition ... leaves the regulation of the total economic process to the uncoordinated discretion of individual economic agents." From: 1930 "Capitalism" in volume 3 the *Enciclopedia of the Social Sciences*, New York, Mac Millan.

49. Lewis Henry Morgan said: "This great passion (for gain), in its use and abuse his blessing and his curse, never roused the Indian mind. It was doubtless the great reason of his continuance in the hunger state; for the desire of gain is one of the earliest manifestations of progressive mind, and one of the most powerful passions of which the mind is susceptible. It clears a forest, rears the city, builds the merchant man—in a word, it has civilized our race." From: *League of the Iroquois* [1851] (Secaucus, N.J.: Citadel Press, 1972), p. 60.

50. Peter M. Blau said: "The conception of social interaction as an exchange process follows logically from the assumption that men seek to obtain rewards in the social associations ... The individual who fails to discharge his obligations and reciprocate in some form for benefits received robs others of incentives to continue to befriend him. Besides, such an individual is likely to be accused of ingratitude. This very accusation indicates that reciprocation for favors freely given is expected and it serves as a social sanction to discourage men from forgetting their obligations." From: "Interaction: Social Exchange," in *The International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol. 7 (New York: Macmillan and Free Press, 1968), pp. 452-453.

51. Robert Darnton said: "One thing seems clear to everyone who returns from field work: other people are other. They do not think the way we do. And if we want to understand their way of thinking, we should set out with the idea of capturing otherness... We constantly need to be shaken out of a full sense of familiarity with the past, to be administered doses of culture shock." From: *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Basic Books, 1984), p. 12.

52. Mark Granovetter said: "Our acquaintances ('weak ties') are less likely to be socially involved with one another than are our close friends ('strong ties')... Weak ties, far from being productive of alienation... are actually vital for an individual's integration into modern society." From: "The Strength of Weak Ties: A Network Theory Revisited," in Peter V. Marsden and N. Lin, eds., *Social Structure and Network Analysis* (Newbury Park, Cal.: Sage, 1982), pp. 105, 107.

53. See Chapter 3, note #36.

54. See Chapter 3, note #38.

55. Jon Elster said: "In the older body of literature rational-choice models were often associated with the assumption that behaviour is motivated merely by egoistic, hedonistic or narrowly self-interested purposes, and the phenomena of altruistic behaviour were either denied or believed to create an insuperable anomaly for these models. At a superficial level this link between rationality and narrowly conceived self-interest can no longer be upheld. Economists of most persuasions agree that the consumption (or even the utility) of other people can enter as an argument in my utility function. My utility may go down as a result of an increase in other people's consumption (as in envy) or it may go up (as in altruism). My welfare may depend in part upon the consumption of some specific person or persons (as in love) or upon the average level of consumption (as in the search for status). In altruistic gift-giving, the very act of giving may be evaluated positively, over and above the positive evaluation of the pleasure taken in the gift by the recipient." From: *Ulysses and the Sirens*, op. cit., pp. 141-142. Also see Chapter 3, note #39 and Chapter 1, note #130.

56. A different view is presented by Edward O. Wilson: "How can altruism, which by definition reduces personal fitness, possibly evolve by natural selection? The answer is kinship: if genes causing the altruism are shared by two organisms because of common descent, and if the altruistic act by one organism increases the joint contribution of these genes to the next generation, the propensity to altruism will spread through the gene pool." From: *Sociobiology: The New Synthesis* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1975), pp. 3-4.

Later, Wilson adds: "When a person (or animal) increases the fitness of another at the expense of his own fitness, he can be said to have performed an act of altruism... In contrast, a person who raises his own fitness by lowering that of others is engaged in selfishness ... Finally, a person who gains nothing or even reduces his own fitness in order to diminish that of another has committed an act of spite." (p. 117)

57. An application of this is the self-fulfilling prophecy. For an explanation of this, see Merton, *Social Theory...*, op. cit., pp. 182 and 477.

58. Albert O. Hirschman says: "Since we necessarily underestimate our creativity, it is desirable that we underestimate to a roughly similar extent the difficulties of the task we face so as to be tricked by these two offsetting underestimates into undertaking tasks that we can, but otherwise would not dare, tackle. The principle is important enough to deserve a name: since we are apparently on the trail here of some sort of invisible or hidden hand that beneficially hides difficulties from us, I propose the Hiding Hand." From: *Development Project Observed* (Washington DC: The Brookings Institution, 1967), p.13.

59. Max Weber wrote: "Not ideas, but material and ideal interests, directly govern men's conduct. Yet very frequently the 'world images' that have been created by 'ideas' have, like switchmen, determined the tracks along which action has been pushed by the dynamic of interest. 'From what' and 'for what' one wished to be redeemed and, let us not forget, 'could be' redeemed, depend

on one's image of the world." From: "The Social Psychology of the World Religions" [1915], in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, op. cit., p. 280. W. I. Thomas and Dorothy Swaine Thomas report: "The warden of Dannemora prison recently refused to honor the order of the court to send an inmate outside the prison walls for some specific purpose. He excused himself on the ground that the man was too dangerous. He had killed several persons who had the unfortunate habit of talking to themselves on the street. From the movement of their lips he imagined that they were calling him vile names, and he behaved as if this were true. If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences." From: *The Child in America*, op. cit., p. 572. This conclusion, according to D.L. Sills and R.K. Merton, has become known as "The Thomas Theorem." See *The International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol. 19, op. cit., p. 229.

60. The influence of the self-image in personal and social behavior was systematically explained and illustrated by R.K. Merton. See Chapter 1, note #127. I have analyzed this issue in an earlier work, where I commented that "society defines some children as belonging to a group which is inferior or delinquent. Such a definition tends to become the self-image of such children, who consequently act as delinquents ... Once the individual is convinced that he is a morally inferior person, that his actions are not important for society, and that he is expected to behave in a deviant, anti-social way, he defines himself as delinquent, and acts in consequence." From: "Presiones Sociales y la Conducta Antisocial del Menor," in *La Conducta Antisocial del Menor en Nuestro País* (Córdoba, Argentina: Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, 1963), pp. 33-34.

In other previous works, I discuss "the psychological barriers or ceilings, explaining that we often consider them functional responses –from the individual or group level– to the situation determined by the real barriers to the achievement of certain objectives. We call them functional because they protect us from the frustration which would derive from aspiring to reach what is impossible to achieve... The psychological ceiling derives from the trend of not attempting what one considers impossible. When something is thought to be impossible, or the actor feels powerless, he tends to act coherently with such images. Often this is preceded by a period of idealism and optimism, rebellion and frustration, the latter reinforcing the pessimistic image about possibilities. It is not necessary that the frustration cycle happen within the life or experience of each individual, for him to internalize the psychological ceiling. It is sufficient that in the history of community, the situation had happened or is believed to have happened." From: *La Comunidad Frenada* (Buenos Aires: Paidós, 1977), p. 199.

61. E.H. Carr said: "In a group or nation which is in the trough, not on the crest, of historical events, theories that stress the role of chance or accident in history will be found to prevail. The view that examination results are all a lottery will always be popular among these who have been placed in the third class." From: *What is History?*, op. cit., p. 132.

62. Albert O. Hirschman says that "Love, benevolence and civic spirit neither are scarce factors in fixed supply nor do they act like skills and abilities

that improve and expand more or less indefinitely with practice. Rather, they exhibit a complex, composite behavior: they atrophy when not adequately practiced and appealed to by the ruling socioeconomic regime, yet will once again make themselves scarce when preached and relied on to excess." From: "Against Parsimony; Three Easy Ways of Complicating Some Categories of Economic Discourse" [1984], in *Rival Views of Market Society and Other Recent Essays* (New York: Viking Press, 1986), p. 157.

63. This pessimistic perspective is reflected in the work of Richard Hofstadter who said: "We have, at all times, two kinds of processes going on in inextricable connection with each other: 'interest politics', the clash of material aims and needs among various groups and blocs; and 'status politics', the clash of various projective rationalizations arising from status aspirations and others personal motives. In times of depression and economic discontent –and by and large in times of acute national emergency– politics is more clearly a matter of interests, although of course status considerations are still present. In times of prosperity and general well-being on the material plane, status considerations among the masses can become much more influential in our politics." From: "The Pseudo-conservative revolt - 1954" [1954], in *The Paranoid Style in American Politics and Other Essays* (New York: Knopf, 1965), p. 53.

Hofstadter reacts against an unrealistic or systematically conspiratorial view of history. Indeed, he said: "There is a great difference between locating conspiracies in history and saying that history is, in effect, a conspiracy, between singling out those conspiratorial acts that do on occasion occur and weaving vast fabric of social explanation out of nothing but skeins of evil plots." From: *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F. D. R.* [1955] (New York: Knopf, 1956), pp. 71-72.

64. Sigmund Freud is a prime representative of this trend toward interpreting human behavior in terms of destructive and unmastered impulses. He writes, for example: "One day the brothers who had been driven out came together, killed and devoured their father and so made an end of the patriarchal horde. United they had the courage to do and succeeded in doing what would have been impossible... The violent primal father had doubtless been the feared and envied model of each one of the company of brothers: and in the act of devouring him they accomplished their identification with him..." From: "Totem and Taboo," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Vol. 13 (London: Hogarth, 1958), pp. 141-142.

In addition, Freud's analysis tends to misconstrue consistent actions, treating them as if they were deviant. Thus, bodily functions, sexual relations, social organization and moral and religious communion all come to be explained by unmastered impulses. This may be seen in the following example: "The excremental is all too intimately and inseparably bound up with the sexual position of the genitals –inter urinas et faeces– remains the decisive and unchangeable factor. One might say here, varying a well-known saying of the great Napoleon: 'Anatomy is destiny'." From: "On the Universal Tendency to Debasement in the Sphere of Love," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, op. cit., Vol. 11, p. 189.

65. Otis Dudley Duncan said: "One very constructive function of the ability measured by intelligence tests is that it serves as a kind of springboard, launching many men into achievements removing them considerable distances from the social class of their birth. IQ, in an achievement-oriented society, is the primary leaven preventing the classes from hardening into castes." From: "Ability and Achievement," *Eugenics Quarterly*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (1968), p. 11.

66. Robert K. Merton, *The Sociology of Science: Theoretical and Empirical Investigations* [1942] (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1973), p. 446.

67. See Chapter 1, note #127.

68. George F. Kennan said: "History shows that belief in the inevitability of war with a given power affects behavior in such a way as to cripple all constructive policy approaches towards that power, leaves the field open for military compulsions, and thus easily takes on the character of a self-fulfilling prophecy. A war regarded as inevitable or even probable, and therefore much prepared for, has a very good chance of eventually being fought." From: *The Cloud of Danger: Current Realities of American Foreign Policy* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1977), pp. 201-202.

69. Karl Kautsky wrote, "Few things are ... more childish than to demand of the socialist that he draw a picture of the commonwealth which he strives for ... Never yet in history of mankind has it happened that a revolutionary party was able to foresee, let alone determine, the forms of the new social order which it strove to usher in." From: *The Class Struggle* [Erfurt Program, 1892] (New York: Norton, 1971), pp. 122-123.

70. Herbert Spencer wrote: "The law is the survival of the fittest ... The law is not the survival of the 'better' or the 'stronger,' if we give to those words anything like their ordinary meanings. It is the survival of those which are constitutionally fittest to thrive under the conditions in which they are placed; and very often that which, humanly speaking, is inferiority, causes the survival." From: "Mr. Martineau on Evolution" [1872], in *Essays: Scientific, Political & Speculative*, Vol. 1 (Osnabruck, Germany: Otto Zeller, 1966), p. 379.

71. John Kenneth Galbraith cites an example of the reciprocal influence which characterizes balanced and stable processes: "Private economic power is held in check by the countervailing power of those who are subject to it. The first begets the second. The long trend toward concentration of industrial enterprise in the hands of a relatively few firms has brought into existence not only strong sellers, as economists have supposed, but also strong buyers as they have failed to see. The two develop together, not in precise step but in such manner that there can be no doubt that the one is in response to the other." From: *American Capitalism: The Concept of Countervailing Power* [1952] (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1980), p. 111.

72. Charles Darwin said: "Owing to this struggle for life, any variation, however slight and from whatever cause proceeding, if it be in any degree profitable to individual of any species, in its infinitely complex relations to other

organic beings and to external nature, will tend to the preservation of that individual, and will generally be inherited by its offspring. The offspring, also, will thus have a better chance of surviving... of the many individuals of any species who are periodically born, but a small number can survive." From: *On the Origin of Species* [1859] (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1964), p. 61.

73. In their study of the attitudes and values of Americans, R. N. Bellah, et. al., state that "the keys to the survival of free institutions is the relationship between private and public life, the way in which citizens do or do not participate in the public sphere." From: *Habits of the Heart*, op. cit., p. vii. Such participation would primarily include pressure to obtain high transparency and social control.

74. John B. Watson said: "At three years of age, the child's whole emotional life plan has been laid down, his emotional disposition set. At that age the parents have already determined for him whether he is to grow into a happy person, wholesome and good-natured, whether he is to be a whining, complaining neurotic, an anger-bearing slave driver, or one whose every move in life is definitely controlled by fear." From: "Are You Giving Your Child a Chance? The Behaviorist Speaks" *McCall's Magazine* (October, 1927), p. 74.

75. James Mill said: "We have already remarked, that, of all the Causes of our Pleasures and Pains, none are to be compared in point of magnitude, with the actions of ourselves, and our Fellow-creatures. From this class of causes, a far greater amount of Pleasures and Pains proceed, than from all other causes taken together." From: *Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind* [1829], Vol. 2 (Fairfield, N.J.: Augustus M. Kelley, 1967), p. 280.

76. Edward Gibbon said: "If we contrast the rapid progress of this mischievous discovery [gunpowder] with the slow and laborious advances of reason, science, and the arts of peace, a philosopher, according to his temper, will laugh or weep at the folly of mankind." From: *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* [1776-1778], Vol. 7 (New York: AMS Press, 1974), chap. 65, p. 86.

77. This position is diametrically opposed to the following statement by David Hume: "Reason is, and ought only to be the slave of the passions and can never pretend to any other office than to serve and obey them." From: *A Treatise of Human Nature* [1739-1740] (Oxford Univ. Press), Book 2, p. 415.

78. Irving Fisher wrote: "Other things being equal, the smaller the income, the higher the preference for present over future income; that is, the greater the impatience to acquire income as early as possible... Man is the most versatile of all forms of capital, and among the wide range of choices as to the disposition of his energies is the choice between using them for immediate or for remote returns." From: *The Theory of Interest* [1930] (New York: Kelley and Millman, 1954), p. 72.

79. Ernst Engel wrote: "The poorer a family, the greater the proportion of its total expenditure that must be devoted to the provision of food." From "Die

Produktions - und Consumptions-verhältnisse des Königreichs Sachsen" [1857], in the Bulletin of L'Institut International de Statistique, No. 9 (1895), p. 59.

80. Sigmund Freud wrote: "No one who has seen a baby sinking back satiated from the breast and falling asleep with flushed cheeks and a blissful smile can escape the reflection that his picture persists as a prototype of the expression of sexual satisfaction in later life." From *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Vol. 7: *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* [1905] (London: Hogarth, 1953), p. 182. Both situations reflect the satisfaction of basic needs, without one being subordinate to the other.

81. See Chapter 1, note #91.

82. John Dollard said: "Aggression is always a consequence of frustration. More specifically the proposition is that the occurrence of aggressive behavior always presupposes the existence of frustration and contrariwise, that the existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression." From: John Dollard, et. al., *Frustration and Aggression* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 1939), p. 1.

83. See Chapter 1, note #16.

84. See Chapter 1, note #90.

85. Arnold J. Toynbee said: "Civilizations, I believe, come to birth and proceed to grow by successfully responding to successive challenges." From: *Civilization on Trial* (Oxford Univ. Press), p. 56.

86. Charles H. Cooley said: "Conflict and cooperation are not separable things, but phases of one process which always involves something of both. Life, seen largely, is an onward struggle in which now one of these hazes and now another may be more conspicuous, but from which neither can be absent." From: *Social Process* [1918] (Carbondale: Southern Illinois Univ. Press, 1966), p. 39.

87. David Hume said: "Of all the animals with which this globe is peopled, there is none towards whom nature seems, at first sight, to have exercised more cruelty than towards man, in the numberless wants and necessities, with which she has loaded him, and in the slender means, which she affords to the relieving of these necessities." From: *A Treatise of Human Nature* [1739-1749] (Oxford Univ. Press), Book 3, p. 484.

Hume also said: "It is by society alone [that man] is able to supply his defects, and raise himself up to an equality with his fellow-creatures, and even acquire a superiority above them." (p. 485)

88. See Chapter 1, note #133.

89. Anthony F.C. Wallace said: "It can be argued that all organized religions are relics of old revitalization movements, surviving in routinized form in stabilized cultures, and that religious phenomena per se originated... in the revitalization process -i.e., in visions of a new way of life by individuals under extreme stress-." From: "Revitalization Movements," in *American Anthropologist*, No. 58 (1956), p. 268.

90. I therefore disagree with Thomas Jefferson's argument that: "What [significance does the loss of a few lives] in a century or two [have]? The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants. It is its natural manure." From: "Letter to William S. Smith, November 13, 1787," in *Thomas Jefferson: Writings* (New York: Library of America, 1984), p. 911.

91. Jacques Barzun said: "All steps in political progress that we most venerate were in actuality riotous, fanatical, marred by atrocities. But the political mind cannot give in to this spectator's view of history. It would be yielding to tragedy instead of acting to avert it. The statesman (and likewise the theorist of political comedy like Bagehot) must defend an interest greater than progress itself, present life. He must perpetuate order which he does by keeping the multitudinous aggressions of men in balance against one another. His task looks paradoxical because, through order, he intends that moral force, which always does have the last word, shall not speak it from beyond the grave". From: "Bagehot, or The Human Comedy" [1946], in *The Energies of Art* (New York: Random House, 1962), p. 28.

92. Anne Robert Jacques Turgot said: "Before we have learned that things are in a given situation, they have already been altered several times. Thus we always become aware of events when it is too late, and politics has to foresee the present, so to speak." From: "Plan d'un ouvrage sur la géographie politique, in *Oeuvres de Turgot et documents le concernant*, Vol. 1: *Pensées diverses sur la morale* (Paris: Libraire Alcan, 1913), p. 321.

93. Seymour Martin Lipset said: "Cleavage –where it is legitimate– contributes to the integration of societies and organizations. Trade-unions, for example, help to integrate their members in the larger body politic and give them a basis for loyalty to the system... Consensus on the norms of tolerance which a society or organization accepts has often developed only as a result of basic conflict, and requires the continuation of conflict to sustain it." From: "The Sociology of Politics" [1960], in *Political Man: The Social Basis of Politics* (Baltimore, Md.: John Hopkins Univ. Press, 1981), pp. 1-2.

94. Lewis A. Coser said: "Insofar as conflict is the resolution of tension between antagonists it has stabilizing functions and becomes an integrating component of the relationship. However, not all conflicts are positively functional for the relationship, but only those which concern goals, values or interests that do not contradict the basic assumptions upon which the relation is founded. Loosely structured groups and open societies, by allowing conflicts, institute safeguards against the type of conflict which would endanger basic consensus and thereby minimize the danger of divergence touching core values. The interdependence of antagonistic groups and the crisis crossing within such societies of conflicts, which serve to 'sew the social system together' by canceling each other out, thus prevent disintegration along one primary line of cleavage." From: *The Functions of Social Conflict* (New York: Free Press, 1956), p. 80.

95. See Chapter 1, note #90.

96. Michael Porter, in *The Competitive Advantage of Nations*, (The Free Press, New York, 1991), demonstrates the stimulus which such pressures and challenges represent for the development of the competitive advantages of nations.

97. Clifford Geertz said: "As a religious problem, the problem of suffering is, paradoxically, not how to avoid suffering but how to suffer, how to make of physical pain, personal loss, worldly defeat, or the helpless contemplation of others' agony something bearable, supportable –something– as we say, sufferable." From: "Religion as a Cultural System" [1966], in *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), p. 104.

98. Nassau William Senior wrote: "To the Third Principle, or Instrument of Production, without which the two others (Human Labour and the Agency of Nature) are inefficient, we shall give the name of 'Abstinence': a term by which we express the conduct of a person who either abstains from the unproductive use of what he can command, or designedly prefers the production of remote to that of immediate results." From: *An Outline of the Science of Political Economy* [1836] (Fairfield, N.J.: Augustus M. Kelley, 1965), p. 58.
Also see Chapter 3, note #80.

99. See Chapter 3, note #98.

100. Edward Gibbon said: "It was scarcely possible that the eyes of contemporaries should discover in the public felicity the latent causes of decay and corruption. This long peace, and the uniform government of the Romans, introduced a slow and secret poison into the vitals of the empire. The minds of men were gradually reduced to the same level, the fire of genius was extinguished, and even the military spirit evaporated ... The name of Poet was almost forgotten; that of Orator was usurped by the sophists. A cloud of critics, of compilers, of commentators, darkened the face of learning, and the decline of genius was soon followed by the corruption of taste." From: *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. 1, op. cit., chap. 2, p. 31.

101. See Chapter 1, note #89.

102. See Chapter 1, note #90.

103. Chapter 3, note #88.

104. See Chapter 3, note #78.

105. See Chapter 1, note #125.

106. Alfred Marshall said: "A machine will not run well unless oiled; and a novice may infer that the more oil he supplies, the better the machine will run; but in fact oil in excess will clog the machine. In like manner an excessive increase of currency, causes it to lose credit, and perhaps even to cease to be 'current'." From: *Money, Credit & Commerce* [1923] (Fairfield, N.J.: Augustus M. Kelley, 1960), p. 38.

107. Henry A. Murray, et. al., wrote: "Man is a 'time-binding' organism, which is a way of saying that by conserving some of the past and anticipating

some of the future. a human being can, to a significant degree, make his behavior accord with events that have happened as well as those that are to come. Man is not a mere creature of the moments, at the beck and call of any stimulus or drive. What he does is related not only to the settled past but also to shadowy preconceptions of what lies ahead." From: *Explorations in Personality: A Clinical and Experimental Study of Fifty Men of College Age* (Oxford University Press, 1938), p. 49.

108. As required by genuine consistency.

109. E. F. Schumacher said: "I have no doubt that it is possible to give a new direction to technological development, a direction that shall lead it back to the real needs of man, and that also means: 'to the actual size of man.' Man is small, and, therefore, small is beautiful. To go for giantism is to go for self-destruction." From: *Small is Beautiful: A Study of Economics as if People Mattered* (London: Blond & Briggs, 1973), p. 148.

110. Harold J. Laski said: "Liberty in a laissez faire society is attainable only to those who have the wealth of opportunity to purchase it; and these are always a negligible minority. Experience accordingly drove the state to interfere; and the liberal state of the nineteenth century was gradually replaced by the social service state of the twentieth. This may be described by saying that it again joins the ideal of liberty to that of equality, and this in the name of social justice." From: "Liberty," in *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* (New York: Macmillan, 1933), p. 443.

111. According to Harold Laski: "My property is, from the standpoint of political justice, the measure of economic worth placed by the State upon my personal effort towards the realization of its end." From: *A Grammar of Politics* [1925] (London: Allen & Unwin, 1938), pp. 87-88.

Furthermore: "It is today a commonplace that the real source of authority in any state is with the holders of economic power. The will that is effective is their will; the commands that are obeyed are their commands." From Harold Laski, "The Problem of Administrative Areas" [1918], in *The Foundations of Sovereignty and Other Essays* (Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press, 1968), p. 62.

Laski also wrote: "Social legislation has the incurable habit of tending towards paternalism; and paternalism, however wide be the basis of consent upon which it is erected, is the subtlest form of poison to the democratic state." From: *A Grammar of Politics*, op. cit., p. 43.

The unilateral shift toward materialism and the tendency to treat human beings as machines (rather than integrated members of healthy families) are expressed by Peter Laslett: "Time was when the whole of life went forward in the family, in a circle of loved, familiar faces, known and fondled objects, all to human size. That time has gone forever. It makes us very different from our ancestors." From: *The World We Have Lost* [1965] (New York: Scribner, 1973), p. 22.

112. See Chapter 3, note #93.

113. Thomas Babington Macaulay said: "The Fire of London, it has been observed, was a blessing. It burned down the city, but it burned out the plague.

The same may be said of the tremendous devastation of the Roman dominions. It annihilated the noisome recesses in which lurked the seeds of great moral maladies; it cleared an atmosphere fatal to the health and vigor of the human mind. It cost Europe a thousand years of barbarism to escape the fate of China." From: "History" [1828], in Volume 1 of *Critical and Miscellaneous Essays*, Vol. 1 (Philadelphia, Pa.: Carey and Hart, 1843), p. 184.

114. Milton Friedman said: "I know of no economist of any standing... who has favored a legal limit on the rate of interest that borrowers could pay or lenders receive—though there must have been some. I know of no country that does not limit by law the rates of interest— and I doubt that there are any. As Bentham wrote, 'in great political questions, wide indeed is the distance between conviction and practice'." From: "Defense of Usury." *Newsweek* (April 6, 1970), p. 79.

115. T.H. Green said: "To uphold the sanctity of contracts is doubtless a prime business of government, but it is no less its business to provide against contracts being made, which, from the helplessness of one of the parties to them, instead of being a security for freedom, become an instrument of disguised oppression." From: "Lecture on Liberal Legislation and Freedom of Contract" [1881], in *Works of Thomas Hill Green* (New York: Longmans, 1888), p. 382.

116. See Chapter 3, note #114.

117. Robert K. Merton wrote: "Culturally standardized practices are not all of a piece. They are subject to a wide gamut of control. They may represent definitely proscribed or preferential or permissive or proscribed patterns of behavior." From: *Social Theory and Social Structure* [1948] (New York: Free Press, 1968), p. 187.

118. See Chapter 1, note #86.

119. See Chapter 3, part B, section 1.

120. Frank H. Knight said: "The supreme and inestimable merit of the exchange mechanism is that it enables a vast number of people to co-operate in the use of means to achieve ends as far as their interests are mutual, without arguing or in any way agreeing about either the ends or the methods of achieving them." From: "The Role of Principles in Economics and Politics" [1951], in *On the History and Method of Economics: Selected Essays* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1956), p. 267.

121. Friedrich A. von Hayek said that "collectivism, communism, fascism, etc... differ from liberalism and individualism in wanting to organize the whole of society and all its resources for this unitary end and in refusing to recognize autonomous spheres in which the ends of the individuals are supreme." From: *The Road to Serfdom* [1944] (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1972), p. 56.

122. Henry Sumner Maine said: "Nor is it difficult to see what is the tie between man and man which replaces by degrees those forms of reciprocity in rights and duties which have their origin in the Family. It is Contract. Starting as from one terminus of history, from a condition of society in which all the relations of Persons are summed up in the relations of Family, we seem to have

steadily moved towards a phase of social order in which all these relations arise from the free agreement of Individuals... the movement of the progressive societies has hitherto been a movement from Status to Contract." From: *Ancient Law* [1871] (London: Dent, 1917) pp. 99-100.

123. William McDougall said: "The striving to achieve an end is ... the mark of behavior; and behavior is the characteristic of living things." From: *Psychology: The Study of Behavior* (New York: Holt, 1912), p. 20.

124. Erich Fromm said: "In order that any society may function well, its members must acquire the kind of character which makes them 'want' to act in the way they 'have' to act as members of the society or of a special class within it. They have to 'desire' what objectively is 'necessary' for them to do." From: "Individual and Social Origins of Neurosis," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 9 (1944), p. 381.

125. See Chapter 3, note #34.

126. Talcott Parsons said: "The central fact—a fact beyond all question—is that in certain aspects and to certain degrees, under certain conditions, human action is rational. That is, men adapt themselves to the conditions in which they are placed and adapt means to their ends in such a way as to approach the most efficient manner of achieving these ends. And the relations of these means and conditions to the achievement of their ends are 'known' to be intrinsically verifiable by the methods of empirical science." From: *The Structure of Social Action*, op. cit., Vol. 1, p. 19.

127. John Dewey said: "Men hoist the banner of the ideal, and then march in the direction that concrete conditions suggest and reward." From: "The Quest for Certainty" [1929], in John Dewey: *The Later Works, 1925-1953*, Vol. 4 (Carbondale: Southern Illinois Univ. Press, 1984), p. 224.

128. Alexander Hamilton said: "Though we cannot acquiesce in the political heresy of the poet who says: 'For forms of government let fools contest; That which is best administered is best,' yet we may safely pronounce that the true test of a good government is its aptitude and tendency to produce a good administration". From: *The Federalist Papers* [1788] (New York: New American Library, 1961), No. 68, p. 414.

129. John Dewey said: "The term 'pragmatic' means only the rule of referring all thinking, all reflective considerations, to 'consequence' for final meaning and test. Nothing is said about the nature of the consequences: they may be aesthetic, or moral, or political, or religious in quality" From: (Dewey, John (1916) 1980 "An Added Note as to the 'Practical'" [1916], in John Dewey: *The Middle Works, 1899-1924*, Vol. 10 (Carbondale: Southern Illinois Univ. Press, 1980), p. 366. Dewey also said: "Certainly nothing can justify or condemn means except ends, results. But we have to include consequences impartially... It is willful folly to fasten upon some single end or consequence which is liked, and permit the view of that to blot from perception all other undesired and undesirable consequences." From: *Human Nature and Conduct: An Introduction to Social Psychology* (New York: Holt, 1922), pp. 228-229.

130. Harold Garfinkel said: "Sociological inquiry accepts almost as a truism that the ability of a person to act 'rationally', that is the ability of a person in 'conducting his everyday affairs' to calculate; to act deliberately; to project alternative plans of action; to select before the actual fall of events the conditions under which he will follow one plan or another; to give priority in the selection of means to their technical efficacy; to be much concerned with predictability and desirous of 'surprise in small amounts'; to prefer the analysis of alternatives and consequences prior to action in preferences of improvisation; to be much concerned with questions of what is to be done and how it is to be done... This ability depends upon the person being able to take for granted, to take under trust, a vast array of features of the social order." From: *Studies in Ethnomethodology* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1967), pp. 172-173.

131. Immanuel Kant wrote: "Now I say: man and, in general, every rational being exists as an end in himself and not merely as a means to be arbitrarily used by this or that will. In all his actions, whether they are directed to himself or to other rational beings, he must always be regarded at the same time as an end. All objects of inclinations have only a conditional worth, for if the inclinations and the needs founded on them did not exist, their object would be without worth. The inclinations themselves and the sources of needs, however, are so lacking in absolute worth that the universal wish of every rational being must be indeed to free himself completely from them." From: *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*, op. cit., p. 46. See also Chapter 1, note #93.

132. See Chapter 1, notes #83 and #84.

133. I disagree with Locke's argument on self-interest as human beings' primary motivation, as cited earlier in this chapter (note #3).

134. See Chapter 1, notes #132 and #133.

135. Aristotle said: "The universal and chief cause of... revolutionary feeling (is) the desire of equality, when men think that they are equal to others who have more than themselves; or, again the desire of inequality and superiority, when conceiving themselves to be superior they think that they have not more but the same (as) or less than their inferiors; pretensions which may and may not be just. Inferiors revolt in order that they may be equal, and equals that they may be superior." From: *Politics*, op. cit., Book 5, chap. 2, p. 212.

136. The Declaration of Independence stresses the "inalienable Rights" of men and urges that government be organized so as "to effect their Safety and Happiness." In addition to rights and happiness, it is important to stress duties and obligations, including the duty to act on behalf of future generations. This was noted by Thomas Jefferson, who wrote: "the earth belongs in usufruct to the living; that the dead have neither powers nor rights over it." From: "Letter to James Madison, 30 January 1787," in *Thomas Jefferson: Writings* (New York: Library of America, 1984), p. 959.

137. John Locke said: "Every Man, by consenting with others to make one Body Politick under one government, puts himself under an Obligation to every

one of that Society, to submit to the determination of the 'majority', and to be concluded by it; or else this 'original Compact', whereby he with others incorporates into 'one Society,' would signify nothing, and be no Compact, if he be left free, and under no other ties, than he was in before in the State of Nature." From: *Two Treatises of Government*, op. cit., p. 376.

Locke also raised the following question: "The great Question which in all Ages has disturbed mankind, and brought on them the greatest part of those Mischiefs which have ruined Cities, depopulated Countries, and disorders the Peace of the World, has been, Not whether there be Power in the World, nor whence it came, but who should have it." (p. 257)

138. Thomas Paine said: "Every age and generation must be as free to act for itself 'in all cases' as the ages and generations which preceded it. The vanity and presumption of governing beyond the grave is the most ridiculous and insolent of all tyrannies. Man has no property in man; neither has any generation a property in the generations which are to follow... I am contending for the rights of the 'living,' and against their being willed away, and controlled and contracted for, by the manuscript assumed authority of the dead; and Mr. (Edmund) Burke is contending for the authority of the dead over the rights and freedom of the living." From: *The Rights of Man* [1791-1792] (London: Dent, 1958), pp. 12-13.

139. I therefore disagreed with James S. Coleman's contention that "the interest a resource holds for an actor lies in the potential it has for affecting his satisfaction." From: *The Foundations of Social Theory*, op. cit., p.133.

140 In the American context, R. N. Bellah, et. al., advocate a social movement to change the "social ecology" in the United States and suggest reducing the punishments of failure and the rewards of success and returning "in a new way to the idea of work as a contribution to the good of all and not merely as a means to one's own advancement," adding that "if the extrinsic rewards and punishments associated with work were reduced, it would be possible to make vocational choices more in terms of intrinsic satisfactions." From: *Habits of the Heart*, op. cit., pp. 286-288.

In an outlook oriented toward consistency, and therefore toward the disinterested service of others, the goal of contributing to the good of all surpasses the goal of finding intrinsic satisfactions. R. N. Bellah, et. al., add that "undoubtedly, the satisfaction of work well done, indeed 'the pursuit of excellence' is a permanent and positive human motive. Where its reward is the approbation of one's fellows more than the accumulation of great private wealth, it can contribute to what the founders of our republic called civic virtue. Indeed, in a revived social ecology, it would be a primary form of civic virtue." (p. 228) They present an alternative to the motivation of great private wealth: the desire to obtain others' approbation. Even in the alternative, the motivation is self-interested insofar as it is centered around finding personal satisfaction. Despite their special effort to upgrade the quality of life as well as social and moral approaches to life, their effort is limited by its failure to supersede self-interest.

141. See Chapter 1, note #104.

142. See Chapter 3, note #43.

143. See Chapter 1, note #94.

144. See Chapter 3, note #48.

145. For more on the relationship between happiness, ultimate ends and suffering, see part B, section 2 of this chapter (including the corresponding endnotes).

146. John Elliot Cairnes said: "What Astronomy does for the phenomena of the heavenly bodies; what Dynamics does for the phenomena of motion; what Chemistry does for the phenomena of chemical combination; what Physiology does for the phenomena of the functions of organic life; that Political Economy does for the phenomena of wealth; it expounds the laws according to which those phenomena co-exist with or succeed each other; that is to say, it expounds the laws of the phenomena of wealth." From: *The Character and Logical Method of Political Economy* [1857] (London: Macmillan, 1875), p. 18. This type of analogy may also be explained by the politics of social development.

147. See Chapter 1, note #99.

148. James C. Davies said: "Revolutions are most likely to occur when a prolonged period of objective, economic and social development is followed by a short period of sharp reversal. The all-important effect on the minds of people in a particular society is to produce, during the former period, an expectation of continued ability to satisfy needs—which continue to rise—and during the latter, a mental state of anxiety and frustration when manifest reality breaks away from anticipated reality." From: "Toward a Theory of Revolution" [1962], in Barry McLaughlin, ed., *Studies in Social Movements: A Social Psychological Perspective* (New York: Free Press, 1969), p. 86.

149. Ernest A. Hooton said: "Man is a predatory mammal which has achieved dominance over all vertebrates by a fruitless use of superior intelligence. From prehistoric times this ingeniously selfish biped has realized that the greatest gain of power and booty lies in preying upon his own species. It is easier to seize wealth than to create it." From: "Plain Statements about Race." [1936] in *Apes, Men, and Morons* (New York: Putnam, 1937), p. 150.

150. Erik H. Erikson discusses some of the difficulties involved in giving each aspect its due and leading an integrated, balanced life. He also discusses the efforts and challenges that must be faced in order to continually advance such efforts. Erikson comments that "The study of identity... becomes as strategic in our time as the study of sexuality was in Freud's time." From: *Childhood and Society* [1950] (New York: Norton, 1963), p. 282. Erikson refers to "Psycho social Crises in the Life Cycle, e.g. in Infancy, Basic Trust versus Basic Mistrust; in Adolescence, Identity versus Confusion; in Young Adulthood, Intimacy versus Isolation; in Old Age, Integrity versus Despair." From: "Life Cycle" [1950], in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol. 9 (New York: Macmillan and Free Press, 1968), p. 287.

CHAPTER FOUR NOTES :

DEVIATING FROM CONSISTENCY

1. Talcott Parsons said: "It is a fact that social existence depends to a large extent on a moral consensus of its members and that the penalty of its too radical breakdown is social extinction. This fact is one which the type of liberal whose theoretical background is essentially utilitarian is all too apt to ignore –with unfortunate practical as well as theoretical consequences. Thus Durkheim is able to offer what this type of liberal theorist entirely lacks– an explanation of why increasing diversity of ethical opinion should be associated with social instability, 'anomie', rather than, as such liberals would tend to assume, an increase of happiness." From: *The Structure of Social Action*, op. cit., Vol. 1, pp. 395-396.

2. John R. Hicks said: "Whether it is a rule of economic affairs that 'to him that hath shall be given' may be disputed; but there can be no doubt that it is a rule of borrowing and lending that 'to him that hath shall be lent'." From: *The Social Framework: An Introduction to Economics* [1942] (Oxford University Press, 1943), p. 89.

3. See Chapter 3, part B, section 2 and the discussion of anorexia.

4. See Chapter 3, note #3.

5. According to Spinoza, people do not strive for or desire something because they deem it to be good but rather they deem it to be good precisely because they strive for and desire it. See Chapter 3, note #45. However, the exercise of the capacity for consistency enables people to wish for something because it is considered good.

6. See Chapter 3, note #64.

7. See Chapter 3, notes #4, #5, #6, #7, #8, #12, and #13.

8. See Chapter 3, note #77.

9. Robert K. Merton said: "...nonconformers aim to change the norms they are denying in practice. They want to replace what they believe to be morally suspect norms with ones having a sound moral basis. Aberrants, in contrast, try primarily to escape the sanctioning force of existing norms, without proposing substitutes for them." The former have "disinterested purposes" which "appeal to an allegedly higher morality" and "claim to legitimacy [draws] upon the ultimate values rather than the particular norms of the society." From: *Social Research and the Practicing Professions*, pp. 457-458.

10. For a discussion of deviations caused by insatiability, impulses and bewilderment, see Chapter 1, note #99.

11. In 1532, Niccolo Machiavelli wrote: "In constituting and legislating for a commonwealth it must be taken for granted that all men are wicked and that they will always give vent to the malignancy that is in their minds when opportunity offers." From: *The Discourses* (Harmondsworth, U.K.: Penguin, 1974), p. 132. Machiavelli also adds: "when the safety of one's country wholly depends on the decision to be taken, no attention should be paid either to justice or to injustice, to kindness or cruelty, or to its being praiseworthy or ignominious." (p. 515)

Machiavelli also exalts power, force, evil and war in modern life. This may be seen in the following passages: "Armed prophets always win and unarmed prophets lose... things must be arranged so that when they no longer believe they can be compelled to believe by force." From: *The Prince* [1532] (New York: Norton, 1977), Chap. 6, p. 18. And further: "A prince... should have no other object, no other thought, no other subject of study, than war, its rules and disciplines..." (Chap. 14, p. 42) Still further: "Any man who tries to be good all the time is bound to come to ruin among the great number who are not good. Hence a prince who wants to keep his post must learn how not to be good..." (Chap. 15, p. 44).

12. Heinrich von Treitschke said: "The greatness of war is just what at first sight seems to be its horror – that for the sake of their country men will overcome natural feelings of humanity, that they will slaughter their fellow-men who have done them no injury, nay, whom they perhaps respect as chivalrous foes. Man will not only sacrifice his life but the natural and justified instincts of his soul; his very self he must offer up for the sake of patriotism; here we have the sublimity of war. When we pursue this thought further we see how war, with all its brutality and sternness, weaves a bond of love between man and man, linking them together to face death, and causing all class distinctions to disappear. He who knows history knows also that to banish war from the world would be to mutilate human nature." From: *Politics* [1897-1898] (San Diego, Calif.: Harcourt, 1963), pp. 244-245.

13. Franklin H. Knight said: "The 'personal' interests which our rich and powerful business men work so hard to promote are not personal interests at all in the conventional economic sense of a desire to consume commodities. They consume in order to produce rather than produce in order to consume, insofar as they do either. The real motive is the desire to excel, to win at a game.

the biggest and most fascinating game yet invented, not excepting even statecraft and war.” From: *Risk, Uncertainty and Profit* [1921] (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1971), p. 360.

Knight adds that “the only possible ‘science’ of conduct is that which treats of the behavior of the economic man [who] is the ‘rational’ man, the man who knows what he wants and orders his conduct intelligently with a view to getting it.” From: “Ethics and the Economic Interpretation” [1922], in *The Ethics of Competition and Other Essays* (New York: Harper, 1935), p. 35.

Knight suggests: “Where the family is the social unit, the inheritance of wealth, culture, educational advantages, and economic opportunities tend toward the progressive increase of inequality with bad results for personality at both ends of the scale.” From: “The Ethics of Competition” [1923], in *The Ethics of Competition and Other Essays*, op. cit., p. 50.

14. Alfred Adler said: “Whether a person desires to be an artist, the first in his profession, or a tyrant in his home, to hold converse with God or humiliate other people; whether he regards his suffering as the most important thing in the world to which everyone must show obeisance, whether he is chasing after unattainable ideals or old deities, overstepping all limits and norms, at every part of his way he is guided and spurred on by his longing for superiority, the thought of his godlikeness, the belief in his special magical power.” From: “Individual Psychology, Its Assumptions and its Results,” in *The Practice and Theory of Individual Psychology* (San Diego, Calif.: Harcourt Press, 1914), p. 7.

15. Alfred Adler says: “I began to see clearly in every physical phenomenon the ‘striving for superiority.’ It runs parallel to physical growth. It is an intrinsic necessity of life itself. It lies at the root of all solutions of life’s problems and is manifested in the way in which we meet these problems. All our functions follow its direction; rightly or wrongly they strive for conquest, surety, increase. The impetus from minus to plus is never-ending. The urge from ‘below’ to ‘above’ never ceases. Whatever premises all our philosophers and psychologists dream of self-preservation, pleasure principle, equalization – all these are but vague representations, attempts to express the great upward drive.” From: “Individual Psychology, Its Assumptions and its Results,” in *The Practice and Theory of Individual Psychology*, op. cit., p. 7.

16. Aristotle said: “It is not the possessions, but the desires of mankind which require to be equalized.” From: *The Politics*, op. cit., Book 3, chap. 9, p. 141.

17. See Chapter 3, note #41.

18. See Chapter 1, note #90.

19. See Chapter 3, section B.

20. See Chapter 1, note #96.

21. Gordon W. Allport said: “A business man, long since secure economically, works himself into ill-health, and sometimes even back into poverty, for the sake of carrying on his plans. What was once an instrumental

technique becomes a master-motive." From: *Personality: A Psychological Interpretation* (New York: Holt, 1937), p. 196.

22. See Chapter 1, note #99.

23. Otto von Bismarck said: "Politics is the art of the possible." From: "Gespräch mit dem Journalisten Friedrich Meyer von Waldeck am 11 August 1867 in Berlin," in *Bismarck: Die Gesammelten Werke*, Vol. 7: *Gespräche* (Berlin: Otto Stollberg & Co., 1924), p. 222.

24. Kenneth J. Arrow said: "we no longer speak of 'goods' but of 'advantages'... The conception of an ethical code and a compromise among imperfections may appear inelegant to some who prefer to devote themselves completely to the Cult of the Good." From: "The Principle of Rationality in Collective Decisions" [1952], in *Collected Papers of Kenneth J. Arrow*, Vol. 1 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1983), p. 49.

25. John Law said: "Goods have a Value from the Uses they are applied to; and their Value is Greater or Lesser, not so much from their more or less valuable, or necessary Uses; as from the greater or lesser Quantity of them in proportion to the Demand for them. Example: water is of great Use, yet of little Value; because the Quantity of Water is much greater than the Demand for it. Diamonds are of little use, yet of great Value, because the Demand for Diamonds is much greater than the Quantity of them." From: *Money and Trade Considered: With a Proposal for Supplying the Nation with Money* [1705] (London: W. Lewis, 1720), p. 4.

26. See Chapter 1, note #98.

27. See Chapter 3, note #140.

28. Ferdinand Tönnies said: "The group which is formed through this positive type of relationship is called an association [Verbindung] when conceived of as a thing or being which acts as a unit inwardly and outwardly. The relationship itself, and also the resulting association, is conceived of either as real and organic life –this is an essential characteristic of the *Gemeinschaft* (community); or as an imaginary and mechanical structure– this is the concept of *Gesellschaft* (society)... In contrast to *Gemeinschaft*, *Gesellschaft* is transitory and superficial. Accordingly, *Gemeinschaft* should be understood as a living organism, *Gesellschaft* as a mechanical aggregate and artifact." From: *Community and Society (Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft)* [1887] (East Lansing, Mich.: Michigan State Univ. Press, 1957), pp. 33, 35.

29. Abraham H. Maslow said: "It is quite true that man lives by bread alone – when there is no bread. But what happens to man's desires when there is plenty of bread and when his belly is chronically filled?... 'At once other (and higher) needs emerge' and these, rather than physiological hungers, dominate the organism. And when these in turn are satisfied, again new (and still higher) needs emerge, and so on. This is what we mean by saying that the basic human needs are organized into a hierarchy of relative prepotency." From: *Motivation and Personality* (New York: Harper, 1954), p. 83.

30. See Chapter 1, note #101.

31. See Chapter 4, note #13.

32. See Chapter 3, note #12.

33. See Marshall Wolfe, *El Desarrollo Esquivo*, op. cit., pp. 54-56.

34. In a 1968 campaign speech, Robert F. Kennedy said: "The gross national product (GNP) does not allow for the health of our children, the quality of their education or the joy of their play. It does not include the beauty of our poetry, or the strength of our marriages, the intelligence of our public debate or the integrity of our public officials. It measures neither our wit nor our courage, neither our wisdom nor our devotion to our country. It measures everything, in short, except that which makes life worthwhile, and it can tell us everything about America except why we are proud that we are Americans." Quoted in E.J. Dionne, "Biden Was Accused of Plagiarism in Law School," *The New York Times* (September 17, 1987), p. b12.

35. See Chapter 3, note #140.

36. Kenneth B. Clark said: "America has contributed to the concept of the ghetto the restriction of persons to a special area and the limiting of their freedom of choice on the basis of skin color... Negroes will not break out of the barriers of the ghetto unless whites transcend the barriers of their own minds. for the ghetto is to the Negro a reflection of the ghetto in which the white lives imprisoned. The poetic irony of American race relations is that the rejected Negro must somehow also find the strength to free the privileged white." From: *Dark Ghetto: Dilemmas of Social Power* [1965] (Middletown, Conn.: Wesley University Press, 1989), pp. 11, 240.

37. R. H. Tawney said: "The faith upon which our economic civilization reposes, the faith that riches are not a means but an end, implies that all economic activity is equally estimable, whether it is subordinate to a social purpose or not." From: *The Acquisitive Society* [1920] (San Diego, Calif.: Harcourt, 1948), pp. 33-34.

38. Wesley C. Mitchell said: "Because it... rationalizes life itself, the use of money lays the foundation for a rational theory of that life. Money may not be the root of 'all' evil, but it is the root of economic science." From: "The Role of Money in Economic Theory" [1916], in *The Backward Art of Spending Money and Other Essays* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1937), p. 171.

39. Wesley Mitchell also said: "An incipient revival of activity... develops into full prosperity, prosperity gradually breeds a crisis, the crisis merges into depression, depression becomes deeper for a while, but ultimately engenders a fresh revival of activity, which is the beginning of an other cycle." From: *Business Cycles and Their Causes* [1913] (Berkeley and Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1941), p. ix.

40. Frank H. Knight said: "As Lord Acton said, power corrupts—corrupts the initially good— and absolute power corrupts absolutely. But weakness in the

face of power corrupts equally and apart from consequences, both the power-seeking attitude and that of servility are inherently to be condemned.” From: *Intelligence and Democratic Action* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1960), p. 14.

41. Frank Knight also wrote: “A society made up of economic men, even as consumers, would be a fantastic monstrosity and physical impossibility. Nor have I mentioned the worst limitations.” From: *Intelligence and Democratic Action*, op. cit., p. 107.

42. See Chapter 3, note #121.

43. John Maynard Keynes wrote: “The fundamental psychological law, upon which we are entitled to depend with great confidence both ‘a priori’ from our knowledge of human nature and from the detailed facts of experience, is that men are disposed, as a rule and on the average, to increase their consumption as their income increases, but not by as much as the increase in their income.” From: *The Collected Writings of John Maynard Keynes*, Vol. 7: *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* [1936] (London: Macmillan, 1973), p. 96.

44. See Chapter 3, note #52.

45. Keynes warned: “Do not let us overestimate the importance of the economic problem, or sacrifice to its supposed necessities other matters of greater and more permanent significance. It should be a matter for specialists – like dentistry–. If economists could manage to get themselves thought of as humble, competent people, on a level with dentists, that would be splendid!” From: John Maynard Keynes, “Economic Possibilities for Our Grandchildren” [1930], in *The Collected Writings of John Maynard Keynes*, Vol. 9 (London: Macmillan, 1972), p. 332.

46. See Chapter 4, note #2.

47. The Vanderbilt’s family story is well known through books, movies, and the media, in the United States and abroad.

48. See Chapter 3, notes #48 and #49.

49. According to John Locke, “Things... are good or evil, only in reference to pleasure or pain. That we call ‘good,’ which is apt to cause or increase pleasure, or diminish pain in us; or else to procure or preserve us the possession of any other good or absence of any evil. And, on the contrary, we name that ‘evil’ which is apt to produce or increase any pain, or diminish any pleasure in us; or else to procure us any evil, or deprive us of any good.” From: *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, op. cit., Vol. 1, Book 2, Chap. 20, p. 303.

50. See Chapter 3, note #131.

51. See Chapter 3, notes # 8 and #9.

52. Also see Chapter 1, notes #73, #75 and #76.

53. One illustration of the general unawareness of how human thoughts, feelings, wishes and behavior are influenced by social myths is contained in the following passage by Claude Levi-Strauss: "I therefore claim to show, not how men think in myths, but how myths operate in men's minds without their being aware of the fact." From: *The Raw and The Cooked* [1964] (Chicago, Ill.: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1983), Vol. 1, p. 12.

54. Ashley Montagu said: "The idea of 'race' represents one of the most dangerous myths of our time, and one of the most tragic. Myths are most effective and dangerous when they remain unrecognized for what they are. Many of us are happy in the complacent belief that myths are what primitive people believe in, but of which we ourselves are completely free. We may realize that a myth is a faulty explanation leading to social delusion and error, but we do not usually realize that we ourselves share in the myth making faculty with all men at all times and places, that each of us has his own store of myths which have been derived from the traditional stock of the society in which we live. In earlier days we believed in magic, possession, and exorcism, in good and evil supernatural powers and until recently we believed in witchcraft. Today many of us believe in 'race.' 'Race' is the witchcraft of our time. The means by which we exorcise demons. It is the contemporary myth. Man's most dangerous myth". From: *Man's Most Dangerous Myth: The Fallacy of Race* [1942] (New York: World, 1964), p. 23.

55. Derek J. De Solla Price said: "Using any reasonable definition of a scientist we can say that 80 to 90 percent of all the scientists that have ever lived are alive now. Alternatively, any young scientist, starting now and looking back at the end of his career upon a normal life span, will find that 80 to 90 percent of all scientific work achieved by the end of the period will have taken place before his very eyes, and that only 10 to 20 percent will antedate his experience." From: *Little Science, Big Science... And Beyond* [1963] (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), p. 1.

56. See chapter 1, note #101, chapter 3 note #109.

57. See Chapter 3, notes #111, 114 and 115.

58. Nassau William Senior said: "The instant wages cease to be a bargain—the instant the laborer is paid, not according to his 'value,' but his 'wants,' he ceases to be a free man—. He acquires the indolence, the improvidence, the rapacity, and the malignity, but not the subordination of a slave." From: "The Causes and Remedies of the Present Disturbances" [1830], in *Three Lectures on the Rate of Wages* (London: Murray, 1831), p. x.

59. Max Weber said: "The impulse to acquisition, pursuit of gain, of money, of the greatest possible amount of money, has in itself nothing to do with capitalism... it has been common to all sorts and conditions of men at all times... wherever the objective possibility of it is or has been given." From: *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* [1904-1905] (New York: Scribner, 1930), p. 17.

Max Weber also said: "In [Richard] Baxter's view the care for external goods should only lie on the shoulders of the 'saint like a light cloak, which can be thrown aside at any moment.' But fate decreed that the cloak should become an iron cage (*ein stahlhartes Gehduse*).'" (p. 181)

60. Carl Gustav Jung said (this illustrates such a trend to deifying impulses): "I can still recall vividly how Freud said to me, 'My dear Jung, promise me never to abandon the sexual theory. That is the most essential thing of all. You see, we must make a dogma of it, an unshakable bulwark'... In some astonishment I asked him, 'A bulwark, against what?' To which he replied, 'Against the black tide of mud' –and here he hesitated for a moment, then added– 'of occultism'." From: *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* [1961] (New York: Random House, 1963), p. 150.

61. Andrew Carnegie said: "While the law (of competition) may be sometimes hard for the individual, it is best for the race, because it insures the survival of the fittest in every department. We accept and welcome, therefore, as conditions to which we must accommodate ourselves, great inequality of environment, the concentration of business, industrial and commercial, in the hands of a few, and the law of competition between these, as being not only beneficial but essential for the future progress of the race." From: "Wealth," in *North American Review*, No. 148 (1889), p. 655.

62. Charles Darwin wrote: "We see variability in every tongue, and new words are continuously cropping up, but as there is a limit to the powers of the memory, single words, like whole languages, gradually become extinct... The survival or preservation of certain favoured words in the struggle for existence is natural selection." From: *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex* [1871] (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981), pp. 60-61.

63. See Chapter 3, part A, section 3. On the self-fulfilling prophecy, see Chapter 1, note #127.

64. See Chapter 3, note #82.

65. Bronislaw Malinowsky said: "The emotional attitude of man has a greater way over custom than has reason. The main attitude of a native to other, alien groups is that of hostility and mistrust. The fact that to a native every stranger is an enemy, is an ethnographic feature reported from all parts of the world." From: *Argonauts of the Western Pacific: An Account of Native Enterprise and Adventure in the Archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea* [1922] (New York: Dutton, 1961), p. 345.

66. Isaiah Berlin said: "When everything has been said in favour of attributing the responsibility for character and action to natural and institutional causes... We blame others as we blame ourselves; and the more we know, the more, it may be, we are disposed to blame." From: *Historical Inevitability* (Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 58.

67. Charles Booth said: "Seen from without, the same habits of life, amount of income, method of expenditure, difficulties, occupations, amusements, will

strike the mind of the on-looker with an entirely different meaning according as they are viewed as part of a progress towards a better and higher life, or of a descent towards a more miserable and debased existence. Felt from within, a position will be acceptable and even happy on the upward road, which on the downward path may be hardly endurable". From: "Life and Labor of the People in London" [1889], in *First Series: Poverty* (London: Macmillan, 1904), pp. 172-173.

68. Thrift is socially beneficial not only because it allows saving, investment and other material advantages, but primarily because it helps people advance toward self-mastery. Franco Modigliani said: "The study of individual thrift and aggregate saving and wealth has long been central to economics because national savings is the source of the supply of capital, a major factor of production controlling the productivity of labor and its growth over time. It is because of this relation between saving and productive capital that thrift has traditionally been regarded as a virtuous, socially beneficial act." From: "The Life Cycle, Individual Thrift, and the Wealth of Nations," in *American Economic Review* 76, no. 3 (1975), p. 297.

69. Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote: "Great cases, like hard cases, make bad law. For great cases are called great, not by reason of their real importance in shaping the law of the future, but because of some accident of immediate overwhelming interest which appeals to the feelings and distorts the judgement. These immediate interests exercise a kind of hydraulic pressure which makes that [which was] previously clear seem doubtful, and before which even well settled principles of law will bend." From: *Northern Securities Co. v. United States*, 193 U.S. 400-401 (1904).

70. Peter L. Berger and Hansfried Kellner said: "Sociology gives one a constant awareness of the force of consequences, including the force of (probable) unintended consequences. The moral absolutist, by contrast, dismisses or at least de-emphasizes consequences... With impressive regularity, moral absolutists produce consequences that are diametrically opposed to their own intentions... The pacifist produces war, the rebel tyranny, the puritan license." From: *Sociology Reinterpreted: An Essay on Method and Vocation* (New York: Doubleday, 1981), p. 75.

71. This type of phenomenon is similar to the one reported by Malinowsky: "When the native is asked what he would do in such and such case he answers what he should do; he lays down the pattern of best possible conduct." Malinowsky, Bronislaw (1926) 1951 *Crime and Custom in Savage Society*. London: Routledge, p. 120.

72. John Locke said: "When men have found some general propositions that could not be doubted of as soon as understood, it was, I know, a short and easy way to conclude them innate. This being once received, it eased the lazy from the pains of search, and stopped the inquiry of the doubtful concerning all that was once styled innate. And it was of no small advantage to those who affected to be masters and teachers, to make this the principle of principles - that

principles must not be questioned'—. For, having once established this tenet, —that there are innate principles —it put their followers upon a necessity of receiving 'some' doctrines as such; which was to take them off from the use of their own reason and judgment, and put them on believing and taking them upon trust without further examination; in which posture of blind credulity, they might be more easily governed by, and made useful to some sort of men, who had the skill and office to principle and guide them." From: *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, op. cit., Vol. 1, Book 1, chap. 3, p. 116.

73. See Chapter 4, notes #69 and #70.

74. John Bates Clark said: "As real as gravitation is the force that draws the actual pay of men 'toward' a standard that is set by the final productivity law. This law is universal and permanent: everywhere it will outlive the local and [changeable] influences that modify its operation. We are to get what we produce —such is the dominant rule of life— and what we are able to produce by means of labor is determined by what a final unit of mere labor can add to the product that can be created without its aid. 'Final productivity governs wage'." From: *The Distribution of Wealth: A Theory of Wages, Interest and Profit* [1899] (Fairfield: Augustus M. Kelley, 1965), p. 180. See also chapter 3, Section C. 1.

75. See Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*, (1963) (New York: Norton 1983), p.395.

76. Robert L. Heilbroner said: "Less than seventy-five years after it officially began, the contest between capitalism and socialism is over, [and] capitalism has won." From: "Reflections: The Triumph of Capitalism," *The New Yorker* (January 23, 1989), p. 98.

77. Easy solutions which offer simplistic conclusions avoid the effort of considering the complex network of variables which underlie all reality. As a result, these solutions are often misleading. Consider, for example, the following proposal by Arthur Cecil Pigou: "Any transference of income from relatively rich men to a relatively poor man of similar temperament, since it enables more intense wants to be satisfied at the expense of less intense wants, must increase the aggregate sum of satisfaction. The old 'law of diminishing utility' thus leads securely to the proposition: any cause which increases the absolute share of real income in the hands of the poor, provided that it does not lead to a contraction in the size of the national dividend from any point of view, will, in general, increase economic welfare." From: *The Economics of Welfare* [1920] (New York: AMS Press, 1978), p. 89.

78. Hugo Munsterberg commented: "(In America), the feeling of equality will crop out where nature designed none, as for instance between youth and mature years... Parents even make it a principle to implore and persuade their children, holding it to be a mistake to compel or punish them; and they believe that the schools should be conducted in the same spirit." From: *The Americans* (New York: McClure, Philips, 1904), p. 28.

79. On women, see Chapter 1, note #150.

80. Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman wrote: "Time on the cross did not come to an end for American blacks with the downfall of the peculiar institution. For they were held on the cross not just by the chains of slavery but also by the spikes of racism. It is one of the bitterest ironies of history that the antislavery critics who worked so hard to break these chains probably did as much as any other group, perhaps more to fasten the spikes that have kept blacks in the agony of racial discrimination during their century of freedom." From: *Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1974), p. 263.

81. R. H. Tawney said: "As the history of the Poor Law in the nineteenth century was to prove, there is no touchstone, except the treatment of childhood, which reveals the true character of a social philosophy more clearly than the spirit in which it regards the misfortunes of those of its members who fall by the way." From: *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism: A Historical Study* (New York: New American Library, 1926), p. 222.

82. See Chapter 1, notes #97 and #104.

83. See Chapter 1, note #5.

84. See Chapter 4, notes #14 and #15.

85. See Chapter 4, note #16.

86. See Chapter 3, notes #110 and #111.

87. Diana Trilling said: "There is all the difference in the world between a society which 'permits' such of its women as to have other than female capacities to pursue extra-domestic lives, and a society (like our own) that virtually 'compels' its women to seek extra-domestic occupations in order to feel valued." From: "Men, Women, and Sex," in *Claremont Essays* (San Diego, Calif.: Harcourt, 1970), p. 62.

88. In Plato we read: "(Socrates)... the truth being that the excessive increase of anything often causes a reaction in the opposite direction; and this is the case not only in the seasons and in vegetables and animal life, but above all in forms of government... The excess of liberty, whether in States or individuals, seems only to pass into excess of slavery." From: *The Republic* (New York: Modern Library, 1982), Book 8, section 564, pp. 320-321.

89. See Chapter 1, note #150.

90. Alexis de Tocqueville said: "People did not fall from the excess of evil into revolution, but from the excess of progress into revolution. Having come to the middle of the staircase, they threw themselves out of the window in order to arrive at the bottom sooner. Thus, moreover, does the world almost always go. It is almost never when a state of things is the most detestable that it is smashed, but when, beginning to improve, it permits men to breathe, to reflect, to communicate their thoughts with each other, and to gauge by what they already have the extent of their rights and their grievances. The weight, although less

heavy, seems then all the more unbearable.” From: “Letter to Pierre Freslon, 23 September 1853,” in *Alexis de Tocqueville: Selected Letters on Politics and Society* (1835) 1985 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press) p.296.

91. Georges Sorel said: “Hatred can unleash upheavals, destroy a social organization and throw a country into an era of bloody revolutions; but it produces nothing. Our forefathers could afford to believe that after overthrowing power it is enough to allow things to take their natural course of the reign of reason to begin. We have gained too much experience to accept this naive optimism; the position of authority does not long remain vacant; tyranny quickly succeeds tyranny. Socialists no longer want to leap into the unknown.”

Sorel also said that “The final regime imagined by socialists cannot be fixed at a determined date by a sociological prediction; it is in the present. It is not outside us: it is in our own hearts. Socialism is being realized every day, under our very eyes...” From: *The Ethics of Socialism* (1899) (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1987) p. 100.

92. I disagree with E.E. Evans-Pritchard, who said: “Actually, I would contend, non-logical conduct plays a relatively minor part in the behavior of either primitive or civilized man and is relatively of minor importance.” From: “Science and Sentiment: An Exposition and Criticism of the Writings of Pareto,” *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts* (Egyptian University, 1936), quoted in Mary Douglas, *Edward Evans-Pritchard* (New York: Viking, 1980), p. 184.

93. See Chapter 3, notes #102 and #103.

94. John Rae said: “The things to which vanity seems most readily to apply itself are those to which the use or consumption is most apparent, and of which the effects are most difficult to discriminate. Articles of which the consumption is not conspicuous are incapable of gratifying this passion”. From: *The Sociological Theory of Capital* [1834] (New York: Macmillan, 1905), p. 247. See also chapter 1, note #100.

95. Giovanni Battista Vico wrote the following in 1725: “Men first feel necessity, then look for utility, next attend to comfort, still later amuse themselves with pleasure, thence grow dissolute in luxury, and finally go mad and waste their substance... The nature of peoples is first crude, then severe, then benign, then delicate, finally dissolute.” From: *The New Science of Giambattista Vico* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Univ. Press, 1984), Book 1, par. 241-242, pp. 78-79.

This process of degeneration points out the need for self-mastery. It also illustrates the imperative of facing reality – including hardships and challenges– squarely and respecting all its aspects. This is consistent with the idea that the origin of the economic growth associated with capitalism lies in austerity; as Max Weber commented: “Christian asceticism... undertook to penetrate just that daily routine of life with its methodicalness, to fashion it into a life in the world, but neither of nor for this world.” From: *The Protestant Ethic*, op. cit., p. 154.

96. See Chapter 4, note #69.

97. See Plato, "Protagoras," in *The Collected Dialogues of Plato* (New York: Random House, 1961), p. 347.

98. See Chapter 3, part B, section 2.

99. Robert K. Merton describes anticipatory socialization as follows: "The acquisition of values and orientations found in statuses and groups in which one is not yet engaged but which one is likely to enter." From: *Social Theory and Social Structure*, 3d ed. (New York: Free Press, 1968), p. 438.

Merton also says: "For the individual who adopts the values of a group to which he aspires but does not belong, this orientation may serve the twin functions of aiding his rise into that group and of easing his adjustment after he has become part of it." (p. 319)

100. See Chapter 1, note #94.

101. See Chapter 3, note #49.

102. See Chapter 1, note #99.

103. See Chapter 1, note #99.

104. See Chapter 4, note #21.

105. See Chapter 3, part A, section 3.

106. See Chapter 4, note #95.

107. See Chapter 3, part C, section 1.

108. According to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Everything is good as it leaves the hands of the Author of things; everything degenerates in the hands of man. He forces one soil to nourish the products of another. He mixes and confuses the climate, the elements, the seasons. He mutilates his dog, his horse, his slave. He turns everything upside down; he disfigures everything; he loves deformity, monsters. He wants nothing as nature made it, not even man; for him, man must be trained like a school horse; man must be fashioned in keeping with his fancy like a tree in his garden." From: *Emile, or On Education* [1762] (New York: Basic Books, 1979), p. 37.

109. See Chapter 1, note #133.

110. Rollo May said: "The chief problem of people in the middle decade of the twentieth century is 'emptiness.' By that I mean not only that many people do not know what they want; they often do not have any clear idea of what they feel." From: *Man's Search for Himself* (New York: Norton, 1953), p. 14.

111. See Chapter 4, note #29.

112. See Chapter 3, note #151.

113. Edward Sapir said: "Fashion is custom in the guise of departure from custom... Human beings do not wish to be modest; they want to be as expressive—that is, as immodest—as fear allows; fashion helps them solve their paradoxical

problem.” From: 1931 “Fashion” [1931], in *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol. 6 (New York: Macmillan), pp. 140, 143.

114. The importance of transparency is linked to the importance of information and communication. All of these are necessary to ensure that individuals and groups can decide freely and behave rationally; this, in turn, allows them to integrate with reality in a consistent manner. Jon Elster gives a dramatic illustration of the importance of this factor in the following example: “The most fundamental reason why the Soviet rulers are unable to achieve their goals is found in the lack of reliable information. The omnipotence-cum-impotence of despotism in this respect is classically captured by Tocqueville: ‘the sovereign can punish immediately any faults he discovers, but he cannot flatter himself into supposing that he sees all the faults he should punish.’ In the Soviet Union reliable information does not exist, or if it does, cannot be reliably distinguished from the unreliable. The flaw of the system is that all acts tend to have an immediate political significance, which means that information degenerates into informing and so becomes worthless for planning purposes. Or else the information is offered that the informant believes his superiors want to hear, even if they insist on information that reflects the world as it is rather than the world as they would like it to be. The tradition of punishing or at least not rewarding the bearer of bad news is too ingrained for such insistence to be taken seriously. Both the KGB and Gosplan suffer accordingly.” From: *Sour Grapes: Studies in the Subversion of Rationality* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1983), p. 88.

115. See Chapter 4, note #91, chapter 3, note #48.

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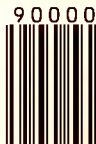
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