INTRODUCTION TO ROB WENTHOLT'S *THE NATURE OF HUMAN NATURE:* AN OUTLINE

Rob Wentholt's 'The Nature of Human Nature' comprises c. 238,000 words. The summing-up in about 30,000 words that follows here may serve as a useful introduction. I have selected those passages in which the author himself introduced a new subject, or inserted a summary of one or more chapters or parts thereof, or drew a point-by-pont conclusion at the end of a chapter. The wording of the passages here brought together, then, is the author's. My textual interventions have remained confined to incidental adaptation of a sentence construction to a context it does not in a grammatical sense belong to.

At various places in his book Wentholt interrupted his running argument in order to set forth both successive aspects of his own method and warnings against more-conventional, not so productive approaches, followed by constructive recommendations. I have therefore split the listing of main lines of thought in his book into two. List I brings together, in the order of the book chapters themselves, passages taken from the book's substantive argument. List II comprises some eighteen passages on method and epistemology: first a range of methodical tools employed and recommended in Wentholt's book, then broader reflections on how the book stands in relation to the social sciences more generally. It would have been pointless to seek to make the separation between lists I and II water-tight — here and there the reader of the former will encounter in passing certain concepts (e.g., the 'process-analytical' approach that is key to the entire argument of Wentholt's book) not set forth even in outline until the second list.

Much in the content and the method of the book is quite unusual. I have therefore reasoned that there is no urgent need to seek to eliminate all repetition. As a result, a few basic insights keep reappearing, notably the centrality of the 'OSR-principle'.

Further, the book's argument is a cumulative one: every chapter builds forth upon those that precede. Therefore I have made the order of the passages in List I coincide with its given order, i.e., with the ongoing build-up of the argument. Not, to be sure, that one may expect to encounter here the entire argument itself — this being but an outline, much looks a great deal more apodictic than, in Wentholt's full treatment, it really is. Indeed, such specification, differentiation, evidence, and illustration as a serious scholarly treatise like this surely needs are in the book itself — the summaries just present a foretaste of what the book seeks to achieve, and how. Hardly any paragraph that follows contains the corresponding segment of the argument in full — most just announce it, or draw a conclusion from it.

In pruning the typescript of 'The Nature of Human Nature' for present purposes I have not thrown out all everyday examples, of a kind Wentholt was especially good at selecting from the endless richness and variety of human life that forms his point of scholarly departure. In this manner he gave this scholarly treatise the human touch that a book dedicated in its entirety to unraveling 'the nature of human nature' can hardly do without.

Finally, for those who care more for Wentholt's substantive results than for the analytical tools he devised to attain them, it suffices to read p. 1 – 31 of this document. Those who rather go for the methodology that underlies those results had better start with p. 32 – 53.

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From ch. 1: Aims and approaches

I distinguish between two principal strategies in the development of animal life to ensure adaptive success in evolution: the fixed-instincts strategy of adaptation by internal 'wiring', and the experiential-learning strategy of adaptation by internal 'processing'. These are reflected in two models for the analyis of behavior used in classical psychology: the s-r model and the s-o-r model. S-r stands for stimulus-response; s-o-r for stimulus-organism-response.

The fixed-response program (as shown by insects) is expressed in terms of a stimulus-response model. Once the investigator is acquainted with his object of study (knowing its behavioral repertoire) he only needs to study the character of a particular stimulus to be able to tell what the action response of his object of study will be. A particular behavior can be expressed as a response to (i.e. produced by, or a *function* of) the stimulus: s-r.

When a stimulus-organism-response model, s-o-r, applies, the features of the response output are determined, not by the character of the stimulus input alone, but by the stimulus input as interpreted by the organism. This is naturally the case in the alternative, experiential-learning strategy of evolutionary adaptation. There, fixed responses to specific stimuli do not (or not sufficiently) cover the behavioral repertoire, and internal digesting, or 'processing', of the environmental information by the organism takes a place of its own.

Not just the variable characteristics of the stimulus need to be inspected. So do the relevant interpretive characteristics of the organism, which are also variable. Behavior can now be understood only as a *function* of specific variables in stimulus situations in *interaction* with specific variables in interpretations by the organism. This makes analysis a good deal more complex.

The foregoing means that there are two structuring conditions for a start. The processing (i.e. the digesting of the information) must be done *personally*, and there is *no pre-set way*.

Under these circumstances the organism must decide from moment to moment the significance for it of the incoming information. Since many stimuli of action-relevant information may arrive in rapid succession, it must instantly evaluate all environmental situations that invite action of some sort, with attention given to its most direct personal relevance: does it repel me, do I feel bad about it; does it attract me, do I feel good about it; or is it just a matter of indifference?

This, then, is what all evaluations of incoming information, in preparation for action responding to it, boil down to. They act as instant signals as to what seems the right action course to follow. Thus, the evaluations which to the judging person seem to be the personally most acceptable thing for him to do naturally become the ones selected as the chosen action response. Depending on the circumstances of the stimulus situation, the most attractive course of action possible may actually be the *least un*attractive course to take.

Centrality of the OSR-principle

What happens in humans in the internal processing of stimuli as preparation for action is of central importance. It actually leads us to an insight into the primary psycho-dynamics of human decision making.

With the 'why' of internal processing being provided by the adaptation strategy of the human mind in

biological evolution, the basic 'what' and 'how' have now become clear as well. The 'what' pertains to the *personal* character of the processing; the 'how' to the *evaluative* character of the process. Together they form the *basic steering principle* of human action. I shall call it the principle of *organic self-regulation*, or *OSR principle* for short.

Organic self-regulation is the biological principle underlying mental behavior in humans. It is how our organism is geared for action. In understanding human behavior this is the first thing to bear in mind.

The OSR principle serves as our prime analytical aid. New about it is not so much the principle itself as, rather, the centrality I claim for it in all productive, systematic thinking about human behavior.

The simple steering process is known well enough. For instance, information processing, which deals with it, has been a thriving branch of psychological research for decades. Yet the OSR principle has never been given quite the attention it deserves in the analysis of human pluralities or even in motivational theory.

The study of what happens in organic self-regulation is largely undertaken by specialists in cognitive studies, since information processing has become a main territory of cognitive psychology. Of course, the internal interpretation of incoming information is very much a matter of thinking processes. But there is more to it. In evaluation activities, which is what the OSR principle is about, the evaluation is in the service of what we as persons *want* and is guided by *feeling* positive or negative about the possibilities which our *thinking* reveals the stimulus situation to possess.

Indeed, thinking, willing and feeling are interacting mental activities, each equipped with psycho-dynamic properties of its own which must be properly distinguished to be insightfully related to those of the others [this is done in ch. 3]. The cognitive studies that at present deal with information processing tend either to subordinate willing and feeling processes wholly to thinking processes (if not ignoring them completely) or indiscriminately and loosely to include motivational and emotional dynamics in the concept of cognition, thereby making it impossible to draw clear analytical conclusions of any kind.

The OSR-principle necessarily selfish?

Even at this early stage it may be useful to warn against a misleading conviction often encountered in psychology. It holds that if you feel good about something you do, it must mean that you are selfishly motivated. For do you not do what you do *because* it makes you feel good? Here inadequate criteria of judgment are used, owing to both a failure to distinguish between really distinct processes and the lack of any idea of how these interact. It is in fact perfectly possible, and not at all uncommon, to feel good about acting for somebody else's benefit. Good feelings and self-interested motives should not be conflated.

All behavioral acts of persons not suffering from brain damage or psychological disorder contain a moment of personal *choice*. This is quite basic for understanding human actions. There are always more ways than one to respond to any stimulus situation that invites an action response. The student of human behavior can always be sure that responses other than the response actually chosen were available to the responding person and might therefore have been chosen but were rejected by the person responding.

To be sure, the choices on offer cannot but be confined by the conditions of the situation to which we must respond. The margins may be very narrow, especially in cases where pressure on us to behave in one way rather than another is enhanced by force. Yet even in the worst cases of power inequality, where the

responding person is at his most powerless, he has a choice: we can choose to die instead of staying alive (as indeed many people have done in the course of history). Even when confronted with the threat of torture, we are still actively, albeit cynically, offered alternatives to choose from. These may be more terrible than most people can bear: not just between death and life, but between dying in hellish pains and betraying all we stand for. But (and precisely here lies the cynicism of the policy behind torture) it is still up to ourselves to choose.

All human behavior, then, is *personally impelled*. It cannot be otherwise, for self-regulation is basic to how action can come about in the human organism in the first place.

On the ordinary phenomenological level of daily human life, the OSR principle simply translates into naturally doing, from moment to moment, what we feel is best for us to do with respect to the actions we feel to be open to us. 'Best' in this sense means nothing but choosing, from the alternative possibilities that present themselves, the one which the processing person feels most comfortable with — the one that appeals most to our sense of wellbeing (or, as the case may be, the one we feel least uncomfortable with — which least offends our sense of well-being).

So what we do from moment to moment is always whatever is to us, in one way or another, or for one reason or another, the *most attractive or least unattractive* thing to do, given the circumstances that impel us to act. Decisive for our choice of action is the way we feel about it.

The above merely means *that* how we feel about something is decisive in our choice of action; it says nothing about *what* feelings will be decisive. Yet, presented in this manner the OSR principle invokes a variety of objections [successively met in much that follows in this introductory chapter].

From ch. 2: The main forces of human behavior

Basic regularities in the behavior of human beings arise from an interaction of biological forces with the forces of society and of culture. In this chapter I attempt to create some preliminary order in that vast field. I examine successively (a) the nature and consequences of what is *universal* and what is *variable* in the human situation; (b) what is *internal* from the start and what is *externally* derived in human motivation; and (c) what in this respect is *generally shared* and what is *individually differentiated*. Since the findings are not a matter of fitting together separate pieces of a jigsaw puzzle but pertain to three-dimensional process dynamics from start to finish, the challenge to insight-formation is how all this works out for (d) *distinctions between the naturally given, the social and the cultural*.

In the analysis of behavior it is customary to think of the various factors that, from within or without, determine our behavior and to think of the decision itself as the product of those determinants. This terminology is not strictly incorrect, yet it is somewhat misleading in seeming to suggest that we are no more than passive recipients of our decisions. In human actions there can be no question of causal chains as in mechanics, and each of us has, as it were, the final say in what we decide to do. Unless forced to act otherwise, our actions are of our own choosing in the end, whether they turn out to conform to the ways things are usually done or not. Of course, all kinds of forces may impel us to choose to do one thing rather than another.

Consciousness is by fairly general consensus taken nowadays to imply that, in addition to being pushed by one thing and another, in human beings there is, as part of motivation, purposive behavior. There is an

ability to look ahead and deliberately plan for the future, substituting actively worked out 'reasons' for passively followed 'causes' at times. Subject to a running debate is rather the question of whether this means that inside the mind or, rather, the brain, there must necessarily be what is called a homunculus, a little man who does the final weighing of all the pros and cons, deciding which action among all the possibilities to choose from is in the end chosen each time.

My phrasing so far might be misinterpreted to mean that in this book a homunculus point of view is taken; this is not the case. In my view it is not necessary to postulate such an extra final arbiter, because the weighing of the various factors inside the mind/brain already takes place as a natural process all the time, by itself on its own strength as it were — this is largely what having a mental life with continuous aspects of feeling, knowing and willing is all about. But the suggestion of simplistic determinism in the choice of terms employed must be avoided even so.

One way to correct determinist overtones is to seek to avoid the causal terminology. Terms like 'considerations' and 'reasons' come in handy here but hardly solve the larger problem. They carry suggestive connotations in the direction of the other extreme: active, planful behavior in all contexts of human decision making. This obviously is not the case either.

The terms chosen here, 'influences', 'forces', although rather vague, seem more neutral in either direction. Therefore, I shall stick to them.

That said, the existence of an element of window-dressing in this choice must be granted. Neutral at first glance, these terms are just as suggestive as 'causes' and 'determinants' in the long run and in the same direction. Their vagueness is what saves them from immediate exposure. The best way seems to settle for the vague words 'forces' and 'influences' as the least misleading terms and to take the trouble to explain more specifically what is meant as soon as any confusion or misunderstanding threatens. There is, after all, still the standby term 'factors' to apply to all occurrences, processes, events, experiences and to all phenomena, objects, things, characteristics that in one way or another, directly or indirectly, in the forefront or in the background, are of influence or act as forces ('forces of influence') in how decisions come about.

From ch. 3: The organic basics of human behavior

In this chapter I look more closely at those biological behavioral forces which are built into the human organism right from the start, separately for each individual but (excepting brain damage only) shared by all of us. The challenge is to grasp these forces within their own dynamics, all the while taking into due consideration the social, cultural, and situational contexts in which they are always expressed.

The questions I raise must further incorporate in systematic fashion *basic organic human motivation of a mental nature*. This requires a prior insight into the phenomena and processes of two subjects of central importance to how human minds work — *mental organization* and *consciousness*.

Whence the centrality of mental organization and of consciousness for questions of basic motivation? The answer is that they flow naturally from that marvelous and mysterious principle of biological adaptation in human beings, organic self-regulation (OSR).

The human mind does not resemble a tabula rasa. All sorts of innate predispositions (to be examined in this chapter) are very much present. But the road from the genotypes of a human organism's native mental equipment to their phenotypic behavioral expressions during his life-time is always long and never

straightforward. Even at the phenotypic level, patterns of interaction cannot be relied on to occur with the kind of predictability which would allow us to pinpoint regular patterns of behavior.

What at any rate we *can* rely on is the OSR-principle at the service of the human mind, which processes the adaptational demands made by incoming environmental stimuli from moment to moment. Expressed simply, the process involves answering three questions. What is the demand? What do I feel? What can I do? None of what comes out of this is certain in advance. How, in processing the demand, the questions interact is decisive for the result.

I approach the subject in the following manner. I seek to find out how the OSR-principle, operating by way of a steady interaction between the three questions, reflects the mental properties which go into them. I identify these properties as the *main faculties of the mind*. Together they form what I shall call *mental organization*. I discuss it at some length in the first section. In the next, basic phenomena of *human consciousness* come up for treatment, partly to enhance understanding of how mental organization works, partly because it affects the nature of human motivation.

That done, the major principles of organic human motivation can finally be properly dealt with and understood.

Our mental organization: the triad of feeling, thinking, and willing

Organic self-regulation is the primary adaptive mechanism for the human species and is the necessary condition for any specifically human motivational life to take place at all. So obviously the OSR-principle of being *guided by good feelings* in setting our course for action is reflected in the basic organization of the mind.

Let us for the sake of ease present the matter at first in a somewhat simplistic and over-schematic fashion. In our dealings with the environment, as human organisms we process what we want from a situation by noting our experientially evaluative *feelings* about what that situation does to us, together with ways we can *think* of to understand and also tackle the situation, so as to attain what we *want*. It is, then, easy to think in terms of main faculties of mental functioning, popularly referred to as *feeling, thinking, willing*. They stand in a hierarchical relation to each other, with willing at the top. Mental organization thus entails the continuous inter-weaving of three closely related but dynamically quite distinct main faculties of mental activity, also called *affects*, *cognition*, and *conation*.

Here is what the conceptualization just presented amounts to. All incoming information is channeled into those three distinct but continuously interacting main mental domains. The information is processed for interpretation of what it is or is about (the cognitive side), for what it means to the person who does the processing (the affective side), and for how actually to respond to it in consequence (the conative side). Each faculty processes in accordance with its own criteria, yet in close coordination with the two others.

As generally conceived, this three-partite vision of an internal organization of the mind, as globally structured, is far from new; there is actually an age-old, venerable tradition behind it. In this tradition three basic human faculties — knowing, feeling, and willing — together were thought to constitute the human mind. In contemporary human science the existence of such a tradition plays no role at all. Neither merely neglected nor willfully discarded, it seems to have been just forgotten; a general state of ignorance as to its possible relevance prevails.

Consciousness

The consequences of the existence of consciousness for human motivation and functioning are a virgin field in human science, waiting to be systematically explored in their proper context, that of general human behavior.

There is a great deal of macro-(semi-)philosophical speculation on the one hand and micro-neurological research on the other. But there is no firm grip on the complications and complexities the phenomenon of consciousness presents for the whats and whys of human behavior, nor is there in social science communities sufficient awareness yet that comprehensive theory-formation stands badly in need of a firmer grip on the phenomenon. Consciousness takes a central place in human existence, which is wholly geared to it, yet it is also responsible for some of our worst problems.

In the present book, not only in this chapter but throughout, and most of all in its central theory formation, I seek to fill the gap as well as is possible for a pioneering work.

As a central and all-pervasive subject in a treatise on human nature, consciousness is in a sense part of the analysis all the time, almost as self-evidently as the term 'human' itself. So I shall handle it as much as possible as a primitive term, without philosophizing about its ultimate nature or discussing its complexities for its own sake.

Even so, consciousness is responsible for some of the gravest complexities of the human situation and of the paradoxes that ensue. So we must face up to its significance for human motivation to the full. I try to claim neither too much nor too little for it in systematically relating the consequences of its existence to the dynamics of other forces.

Consciousness does not embrace in a general sort of way everything that has to do with all the abilities as such of the human mind to know, remember, plan ahead, have a consciously explicit grasp of things, and the like. If regarded thus, those particular features of being human which the phenomenon of consciousness presents to us tend to get drowned out by the general marvels of the human brain.

Nor, for that matter, is it productive to talk of animal consciousness. No doubt those mammalian species with more developed brains have consciousness in the widest sense of the word, awareness of what they do, just like we have. But that is not where the special significance of the phenomenon lies for the human condition.

This special significance has to do rather with the problematic aspects of consciousness for us humans, which are responsible for some of the worst miseries and subterfuges of being human. It has to do also with its positive aspects, which have made it possible to handle human adaptive challenges in a humanly creative way.

We may call this take on consciousness 'consciousness in the narrower sense'.

The most straightforward way to describe the phenomenon operationally in this narrower sense is as a continuous reflective capacity.

This capacity can be described as a state of inner awareness, which all of us human beings have in our minds, most of the time and in our waking state, about two things:

(1) what it is we are feeling, or thinking, or doing at the very moment we feel, or think, or do it;

(2) ourselves as the unitary possessor of that inner awareness.

With regard to (1), this means that I do not just feel what I feel, I actually know that I feel what I feel. And I do not just think what I think, I know that I think what I think. And I do not just do what I do, I know that I do what I do.

With regard to (2), the same situation also means that in that knowledge I am also aware of myself as the one who feels the feelings I feel, who thinks the thoughts I think, and who performs the actions I perform. I have what is called *self-awareness*.

In possesssing consciousness, we are blessed or cursed (depending on how you see and appreciate it) with an irrepressible habit to watch ourselves at what we are at, all the time, whatever it is we are at. This has immense consequences for the way in which we conduct our lives.

Among these consequences, a *loss of the spontaneity* in expressing our feelings in action that is natural for creatures less bothered by continuous reflective activity springs immediately to mind. What am I feeling, what am I thinking, why do I do what I am doing? It is only one consequence of many; this book is replete with further instances.

The other most immediate consequences pertain to the other part of consciousness, *self-awareness*.

Self-awareness is a very prominent portion of consciousness as a whole. Why should this be so? In part because whenever I feel or think or do something, the awareness never lags very far behind that it is *I* who feels what I feel, that it is *I* who thinks what I think, and that it is *I* who does what I do. In part also because the self-awareness portion of consciousness cannot be lastingly ignored, or even undone, without permanently losing consciousness itself — which implies dying or losing your mind. This compelling feature has some interesting consequences of its own.

Basic motivation

Like all other animal species, ours is equipped with basic impulses or drives (the latter term is easily misunderstood in English), which are physiologically anchored in the organism so as to ensure its survival and functioning. Since our species is adaptively specialized in flexibility and in individual learning, these organically firmly anchored, basic needs (which is what we shall call them whenever no confusion threatens) are limited in number and, in comparison with other species, little elaborated by specific instincts. Even so they are not so few in number as is sometimes thought.

First of all there are the *survival requirements* for the preservation of the *species* (procreation) as well as the direct survival requirements for *individuals* (such as eating and drinking needs and other biological needs). The latter also comprise additional provisions, temporary extra-organic equipment when *fighting or fleeing for dear life i*s required. Finally, organic bases are provided for the *permanent development and employment of the skills* in which the species is adaptively specialized.

All this makes for three distinct kinds of basic motivation. Each is accompanied by a simple, direct and reliable positive/negative signaling system of its own, which lets the organism know how it is faring with respect to its requirements.

None of these processes is unknown as such. Taken together, in their very multiplicity, with each joined to its own mode of realization, they present a picture of wondrous simplicity. And yet, they have never been jointly presented before. As soon as that is done, however, everything falls into place with a eureka sense of

naturalness, with consequences for insight that are nothing less than revolutionary.

We can think of the three kinds of basic motivation as levels, since all three are necessary and not competitive but complementary. Each is distinguished by its own mode (or steering mechanism) of setting the organism in motion, with three corresponding kinds of aims (or functions) of what these motions are for. I shall call them *homeostatic motivation*, *emergency motivation*, and *capacity motivation*, respectively. They stand at the respective service of the organism's vital physiological *maintenance management*, of its external *threats management*, and of its *mental growth management.*

Basic motivation in relation to mental organization and consciousness

Mental organization, with its triptych of faculties — feeling, thinking, willing — is of course expressed in the moment-to-moment OSR-responses which we form while processing stimuli. Basic motivation also enters these responses. Indirectly, the ongoing deliberations of OSR processing are fed by basic mental motives through their being part and parcel of many (but not all) things which need to be done (as, e.g., in job fulfillment). But often enough they are also involved directly. This is the case when basic processes such as thirst or curiosity demand attention, or when an emergency feeling of being threatened obtrudes into the normal course of events.

In addition, there are complications in consequence of human consciousness. These concern the differing significance that the psychological phenomena of consciousness have for the three kinds of basic motivation.

Feelings and emotions

Feeling states generally are about the organism being stirred, whereas emotions are about being stirred up. Four specific features jointly define what we need to distinguish emotions 'properly speaking' from other states of feeling or affect conditions in general: *intensity*, *urgency*, *response to external-stimulus objects*, and *intended action.* This is what turns these feelings into proper motives—that is, internal forces impelling to action—in their own right.

Remarkably, this dynamic distinctness unites emotions which might otherwise be thought to be worlds apart. What unites them dynamically is that they are direct spurs to action and in that sense motivationally unadulterated, raw.

Their dynamic distinctness not only unites but also distinguishes emotions from affective phenomena which may be quite comparable in other respects. Emotions are not the only turbulent affect states the organism knows. The decisive difference is that these other states are more static or more generalized or diffuse or permanent, and that they retain the general character of feeling states as informants for the OSR-processing individual about his motivational condition, rather than becoming autonomous, direct motives which temporarily take the place of the more typical motivational states. These more generalized states of feeling (not dependent on immediate stimulus objects, more generalized in time and scope) may also be very powerful indeed. Joy, happiness, sadness, (dis)satisfaction, anxiety, merriment, bad temper, and the like: all such strong feelings are very much feedbacks to our consciousness regarding the state our organism is in. But in terms of organic functioning, their task remains on the whole one of providing information. Lacking the trigger of concrete objects to respond to, they cannot be put to work as specific motivators. In and by themselves they are not sufficient to galvanize us into action, nor do they as a rule need to. Emotions in the

narrow sense do; they make us move.

So the kind of feelings we call emotions become motives in their own right for the simple reason that the feeling person has an intensely felt, direct relation with the object of this feeling. When for or about something or someone you feel love, hatred, anger, disgust, envy, grief, fear, etc., your immediate impulse is to do something, to take requisite action.

Emotions, then, are themselves additional motives for action, and very powerful ones at that. They are direct and seemingly independent. A good deal of human behavior can be comprehended only if we realize how the vehement impulse to action arisen under the spell of some emotion can seize a person by the throat. As a hybrid phenomenon between affect and conation in mental organization, emotions show typical complications. As feeling it is in their nature to be highly conscious; as willing it is in their nature to be charged with energy.

Positive emotions

Not only are emotions, as raw, hard motivators of direct action, linked up directly with emergency motivation, but that is also where they must have originated biologically. Or so at least it is in the classic cases, those at the service of warding off enemy action.

The really interesting question now is how it is possible that direct motivators of this kind have not remained confined to emergency motivation, since the opposite of hostile emotions, emotions that are just as highly charged but in this case with good feelings toward others and things, exist as well and also have direct motivational force.

This goes primarily for all the emotions falling within the orbit of affectionate relations and attachments (love being universally regarded as the opposite of hatred). From the experiential point of view they are naturally positive — they actually are among the greatest sources of happiness known to humankind (but only, of course, if the power behind them is socio-culturally allowed to be exercised as it aspires to).

The expression of affection, attachment, admiration, appreciation, or love in response to stimuli from persons deemed worthy of them and there to receive them is very much part and parcel of human equipment. Such feelings have vast direct motivational power. The same goes for the range of joyful emotions — pride, engrossment, and devotion are some — expressed in work or other skill-related activities.

There can be, and sometimes is, great joy, devotion, and surrender or abandonment of the self in being absorbed by a relation with an object of attention, be it person or activity, to the extent that the dynamic characteristics of emotions as direct motivators in their own right are achieved.

Motivated action that expresses these positive states is then seen to by our emotional behavior. This already suffices to qualify it as *passionate absorption*.

But the passion principle really comes into its own when the preoccupation is further intensified by what I mentioned earlier in the discussion of intrinsic motivation in capacity motivation: the sensual enjoyment involved in the employment of all skills which have to do with the *perceptual senses*. Some of the most enchanting and magical experiences known to us may then come our way.

The positively passionate emotions—representing the passion principle—*supply basic energy* (dipping into the infra-structural function of the conative faculty) and help to develop further and utilize the skills

involved (dipping into the super-structural function of the conative faculty).

To be sure, all this is theory at the level of functional explanation. At the direct experiential level of explanation, the passion principle is invoked for its own sake.

Passion principle and pleasure principle

In a comparison of the relative strengths of the pleasure principle as a trajectory of homeostatic motivation and the passion principle as a trajectory of capacity motivation, the pleasure principle may seem to claim easy precedence in that it rests on the firm basis of internally produced, recurrent physiological regularities. In contrast, the passion principle is at an advantage in producing *explicit emotions*, with *explosive action force of their own*. The hedonic pleasures are in this respect more modestly based. For instance, one reason why sex claims such a seemingly disproportionate place in human motivational preoccupations is that it combines almost-guaranteed hedonic pleasures in its physiological aspects with the potential of passionate emotional fulfillment in its non-physiological aspects.

From ch. 4: Inner conflicts

In the previous chapter I unfolded a panorama of the human motivational landscape, from the seductions of the pleasure principle to the intensities of the passion principle to the complications of emotional extremes. How essential consciousness is for the fertility of this landscape but also how devastating its ways and wiles can be came to the fore in no uncertain terms.

As we move up the evolutionary ladder of complexity in the development of nervous systems, situations of inner conflict between incompatible desires are known to occur in the lives of animals, certainly in primates. But there they are highly exceptional and of a simple nature in comparison with humans — a world of difference with our own convoluted world, which seems to have selected inner contradictions and the conflicts ensuing from them for the very fabric of its foundations.

Consciousness, our loss of innocence! How wistful we as human beings can feel for a life without second thoughts, for a life with the unselfconscious spontaneity we admire in dogs or cats, our pets. When non-human animals are sexually aroused, that is what, wholly occupied, no second thoughts about it, they are: aroused. With human beings sex, uneasily much of the time, is rarely far removed from thoughts otherwise engaged. When animals show hostility, hostility is all they feel (unless they are dogs made neurotic by contradictory conditioning by humans); for humans a feeling of guilt in the wake of hostile feelings does not lag far behind. Animals fleeing due to fear rest after their escape, once more at ease. Having opted for safety out of fear, many humans feel bad about it afterward, thinking themselves cowards. Or else they feel boastfully smart; or they feel both ashamed and smart at the same time, and often more besides.

In all sorts of twisted but compensatory ways we humans try to prove, to the world and to ourselves, that we are 'better' than we know ourselves to be. Or, if that does not work, we beat our chests for having deserved the strokes fate has dealt us, so as to have at least something to be proud of after all, to wit, insight and honesty, without omitting to feel sorry for ourselves as well.

To make sense of the bewildering array of contradictory human reactions to things, here are two basic paradoxes entailed in the human situation of having conscious knowledge of what we are and are at.

One basic paradox lies in *the relation of man to himself*. Simply put and in a nutshell it amounts to this: as

beings blessed and cursed with consciousness, we can be masters of our intentions and choose to follow what we have resolved is the right action to pursue (we have what is called 'free will', or, better, 'conscious choice'); but we as human beings remain slaves to our motives and bodily conditions as well. It is the classic mystery of man as god and beast.

The other basic paradox lies in *the relation of man to his fellows*. It is about the tension built into our situation as — at one and the same time — organically self-regulating creatures and socially formed and dependent ones as well. This is the puzzle and plight of man as both a stubborn individual and a negligible number of a herd.

These basic paradoxes are so central to the human situation that a general inspection of their motivational consequences must form an integral part of our analysis. The chapters that follow on the present one are dedicated to it. But before embarking on that large-scale enterprise we must consider more directly the manifold motivational quandaries which we get into within ourselves all the time. Most are strongly related to the second basic paradox, some to the first as well; they are all the direct result of having conflicting desires.

'You cannot eat your cake and have it, too'. Yet you may wish to. How to choose one of the incompatible desirables when both are desired? This is the dilemma of choice.

When both sides of the incompatibility are wished for with some intensity, choosing becomes almost impossible; the dilemma grows into a conflict you wage within yourself with yourself.

A literal application of the proverb can be taken as an example: a starved boy in an internment camp has found a small slice of cake while out on a working chore; he is ravenous for the cake, his mouth waters profusely from his longing to taste, chew, and swallow it and to still the throbbing in his stomach; at the same time he desperately wants to save the cake till the end of the day so he can take it back to the camp and share it with his ailing mother. He knows well enough that to eat just half of the slice and put the rest away would be impossible. Although nobody near or far has an inkling of what he is going through, the quandary tears him in two.

Inner conflicts may be defined as the psychological dilemmas which confront us when we eagerly want to obtain two different desirables (or avoid two undesirables) which cannot be satisfied (or avoided) at the same time, because they exclude each other. There is no resolution without sacrificing something dearly wished for. How are we to cope? What are the costs, what the rewards?

Inner conflicts occur inside us. No one else needs to know about the conflict if you decide to keep it to yourself. Not that outside influences play no role in their dynamics. In fact, social interaction situations and sociocultural convictions often put a heavy stamp on them, if not directly, then indirectly.

External societal influences occur *directly* when pressure is exerted on you (or perceived by you to be so exerted) by other people or in the environment generally, while you personally consider the pressure legitimate. For instance, at the outbreak of war a young man is expected to join up voluntarily in the patriotic cause, like most of his contemporaries. He himself shares the conviction, or at any rate he is sensitive to their opinion; although highly reluctant to join up, he feels he should.

Societal influence occurs *indirectly* when no direct external social pressure is being exerted upon you, but internalization processes within you have seen to it that the socio-cultural dynamics pushing toward one

side of a difficult decision are still present. For instance, you are in competition with a friend for a job promotion extremely important to you. The friend has the edge over you in chances of getting the job, but you happen to possess highly confidential information about his private life which, if you were to pass it on in secret to the right quarters, would minimize his chances. To make use of the information will be highly effective for your purpose, yet to act thus goes against everything you have been taught to aspire to and have tried to become — an upstanding man of moral integrity.

The distinction corresponds with what I have called *confrontation* and *socialization* dynamics in the relation of the individual and his socio-cultural environment. For ease of understanding I referred to the psycho-social dynamics arising here as belonging to the confrontation *phase* of the interaction between the person and his living environment or the socialization *phase* of the psycho-social interaction dynamics. Strictly speaking, both phases are of course present in our lives all the time. But the former is most pronounced in adult life; the latter in childhood and youth.

In the relation between the individual, who is compelled to listen to his own internal signals in deciding what he wants to do (driven as he is by organic self-regulation), and his society, which expects him to do what it wants him to do, socialization and confrontation dynamics are the necessary go-between. They are society's adjustment instruments, meant to ensure that the individual himself also wants to do what society wants him to do.

By and large, the arrangement, with its refined machinery, works out well enough. In most collectivities most people usually want to behave in *most* things in the way their society expects them to want to behave *most* of the time. Of course, as human beings, we cannot help wanting to behave differently from how our society expects us to want to behave in *some* things *some* of the time. These complexities of motivation are part of human life.

Inner conflicts are not the least among the strains and stresses which exact a toll in human living situations. Our task then is to further insight into their nature and their consequences.

To be sure, in the realities of contemporary life the inevitable complexities of human motivation are exacerbated by the complexities of societal developments contingent on the rapid growth of civilization and of mastery over nature. Additional contradictions and incompatibilities, which exact an additional toll in strains and stresses in human living situations, are the inevitable result. In Part III we are to encounter some of them.

From ch. 5: Six universal strivings of consciousness

In preceding chapters I have distinguished and analyzed the three big, basic motivational forces: physiological, capacity, emergency. I have examined how, in mental organization, organic self-regulation (the OSR principle) works in relation to affect, cognition, and conation. We have attained insights into the interactions of universals and variables. We can now understand how basic processes help shape the socio-cultural realities of persons, and how these are responsible for the often-astonishing variety of psychological ways of being which exist among humans. I have dynamically pinpointed the myriads of daily concerns filled with obligations and wishes, in ever-recurring dialectics of what remains external and what is internally felt, the ups and downs of emotional life included. All in all, the field of human motivation has been covered in an explanatorily coherent and (I hope) convincing manner.

Still, as far as general patterns of motivational behavior are concerned, something remains to be done. Between the ultimate patterns (applying to all members of the species) and the particular outcomes of motivated human behavior (applying to individuals) there are uncharted dynamics of a general nature that still require exploration. The theoretical part of the analysis is not finished yet.

Suppose that we were to stop looking for general patterns at this stage. In that case a somewhat-too-passive, receptive, mainly reactive overall picture of the human situation would emerge. The situation would be predominantly cut to measure for creatures who (whatever their differences in kinds and intensity of feelings and in qualities of mind) are in the end predominantly eager to fit in. They adapt internal urges and wants to environmental requirements all the time, thus making do the best they can in most of the situations they slide into as their lives run their course and they do their bits as members of society.

All this is very true, yet it is not all there is to it. The interaction between the individual entity and its overwhelmingly nourishing-demanding environment would certainly seem to favor the emergence of a picture of mostly passive reactivity, yet the picture would be lopsided. It is realistic, but not realistic enough. The motivational equipment of the human organism, by and large, is too ornate, too highly charged, too altogether active, to be conceived as predominantly reactive in its actual environmental concerns and as branching out into unorthodoxies of aspiration only in chance interactions of factors leading to idiosyncratic longings or bizarre personality developments.

We must certainly do justice to a common observation. Most of us — at least in thoughts, feelings, and intentions — fancy that a person can 'take his life in his own hands', that is to say, form and realize aspirations of his own. Whether or not this is an illusion is not what matters here — the point is that the mental contents in question all derive from inside our motivational potential. Now to what extent do we share the aspirations expressed? The short answer is: some themes regarding aspirations arising in this manner are easily observed to be very much shared indeed.

Analytically all this means that on the level of personal motivation there exist spurs to action which have not yet been covered. They (1) guide activities *actively*, on a person's own initiative entirely, and they are (2) of a kind common enough, content-wise, to be called *general*. In the field of human motivation as a search for patterns this adds a new domain to the analysis.

It follows from the characteristics of the domain that, with regard to condition 1, the subject-matter yet to be analyzed does not primarily represent products of forces; rather, it represents entities which are themselves forces, creating products. Condition 2 implies that this subject matter is not, in the first instance, about human variables but about human universals.

Thus, major phenomena of human motivation demand attention once again. These are additional, new ones, not covered by the theory discussed so far. Not that new theoretical principles are required. Process-analytically, the new domain fits in well enough with what we already have; the point is that it does so in a different way.

For a start, the resulting, novel regularities of behavior that require analysis do not lie conceptually on the same highly abstract level of analysis as has been the case till now. They exist on a consciously experiential — hence, more concrete — level in the human mind. The basic depth processes already analyzed surely still apply; the difference is that these novel regularities are expressed indirectly, that is, they must be revealed

on further analysis.

Secondly, and decisively so, the novel regularities are not wholly concrete either. They do not prescribe specific ways of realizing an actively pursued aspiration. Rather, they define a category or type of activities within which the goals aspired to may be realized. This is so because all particular activities which can be subsumed under the same heading share a particular dynamic. As soon as such a dynamic (of some limited degree of abstraction) is universally felt, it takes its place in the regularities of human concerns, as a theme.

Our present task, then, is to investigate the relevant *dynamic themes*. The analytical tools at our disposal appear to be well-suited for the task.

The emergence of the new field with its own themes has everything to do with the existence of human consciousness and with the human organism's need for consciously experiencing good feelings as a durable inner state to be in. This is part of what gives us our surplus 'human' character, turning us from reactive parts in a larger system (which, for all that, we remain, too) into ordering systems, characteristically constructive, in our own right.

Good feelings of some duration as an inner state which we are conscious of go as a rule by the name 'happiness'. We may all be observed in various ways to chase, actively, on our own initiative, as consciously chosen aspirations, goals of some generality which in one way or another further our feelings of happiness. It is in our efforts to achieve happiness that new regularities of behavior characteristic of pluralities of persons are seen to emerge. So our search is once again for patterns.

Dynamic themes as universal strivings of consciousness

The dynamic themes or motivational regularities which I discern as arising from consciousness in this manner go here by the name 'universal strivings consequent on consciousness,' or *usc*'s for short. Functionally, they are best looked at as permanent inner steering forces which help us to feel as good as possible about our life and ourselves. To that end, they provide us with a general basis in which to ground our activities and thus, as it were, to structure our conditions of happiness. After all, we all try to feel good about our lives in an overall sort of way (seen to by universal dynamics), but cut to our own measure, since as organically self-regulating (OSR) creatures we must listen to our own steering signals (full of dynamic variables). The tracks along which the lifelong attempt is laid out owe their existence to the concerns of consciousness (again covered by universal dynamics).

In consequence, some general but specifically delineated fields of the experiential, inner life have emerged, which indeed demand lifelong attention in this respect, quite naturally on an enduring basis. In my conception of general human feel-good motivation as channeled into conscious awareness, there are six such fields, each natural (which is why they are universal), but each with dynamics of its own (which is why they must be distinguished and studied both separately and in their interaction). I call our efforts on behalf of these fields 'strivings' because the character of the experiential awareness is aspirational — it seeks positive contentedness of content and it wants to amend shortages and to provide at least an assured effective minimum of realization.

I discern six such strivings: the search for *meaning*; for *grip*; for *hedonic well-being*; for *belongingness* (expressed in the formation of *attachments*); for *esteem* (expressed in activities of *self-assertion*); for *mental*

transport (achieved by acts of *self-transcendence*).

All six themes are named for their end-states. With the first three, the action dynamics speak for themselves. In the case of the latter three, I have in addition listed the activities that go with them, since these activities are not already obvious from the naming of the end-state, whereas they do typically render the psychological dynamics decisive for the realization of the *usc*'s in question.

As permanent or periodically recurring strivings in the mental preoccupations of human beings, none of these six *usc*'s is wholly unknown, even though in the literature some are relatively neglected whereas others are sometimes accorded bestseller status to the point of mono-causal exclusiveness. For us the one important point about their selection is that dynamically each holds its own in the mental functions it performs for us, not being ultimately reducible to any of the other *usc*'s, while together they cover the whole field of universal, permanent or periodic, inner mental concerns.

From ch. 6: Meaning

There is a pragmatic reason for dealing with this striving first. As an example of the forceful impact of *usc*'s it is the simplest one, quickly recognized and accepted as a general aspirational need of the human mind, with unmistakable, pronounced characteristics of its own. This also makes it attractive as a model for the other *usc*'s in pinpointing such analytic criteria for selection as dynamic character, action relevance, range of applicability, and explanatory power.

In the universal striving for meaning, the point in question is not expressed by the term in its simple sense of indicating and describing something, as in: 'what do you mean by that?' There the word meaning applies to any kind of explanatory description of something, as long as it indicates what that something signifies or even just denotes it.

When the term 'meaning' is used for the striving called by that name, something far more ambitious is implied, viz. 'meaningful meaning'. Specifically, it is about the need to obtain and maintain a *sense of meaningfulness* in life, and with life. Here the term 'meaning' is only apposite when what is referred to is considered to be something which is in its own right 'meaningful' to start with. It is full of 'worthwhile' meaning, evaluatively (deontically) gratifying, full of 'meaningfulness'.

From ch. 7: Grip

Grip may broadly be referred to as *the art of knowing how to go about things*, or, more pointedly, as *competence in doing what you do, mastery over the inherent, instrumental requirements of successfully tackling and completing a purposeful activity*. But as a universal striving the need for grip entails something more. It refers more precisely to the need to attain a *general* feeling of having competence in your handling of things. When successfully aspired to, this results in *a sense of grip*.

Of the six strivings universally present in the conscious mind, it is the one most neglected by investigators aiming to gain insight into the human mind. Very often it is not recognized as a factor of importance in durable human concerns at all.

The neglect by students of the human mind can partly be attributed to its very centrality for human action. It is as self-evidently essential as, say, the ability to swallow food, which goes without saying, unless something in the apparatus for swallowing food goes wrong. The difference is that in the human situation,

marked by organic self-regulation (OSR) and dependence on socio-cultural activation of our capacities, specifically human activities involve mental skills. Instead of being provided by instinctual wiring, such skills must all in one way or another be learned. Success is not automatically guaranteed, the learning of skills suffers more easily from interfering factors, performance may go amiss more easily, and abilities may be lost.

The activities in aid of assuring a sense of grip also tend to escape the notice of observers because grip dynamics rarely attract attention under their own banner. This is so because, whereas satisfactory grip on performance seems unremarkable, performance *failure* quickly attracts attention to a person's state. It causes anxiety and may lead to loss of self-confidence; restoration attempts usually include bolstering damaged self-esteem.

Looked at from the outside, the requirements of *self*-esteem (and the related dynamics expressed by the terms 'self-acceptance' and 'self-respect') are easy to confuse with the dynamics of *social* esteem. Obviously, social and self phenomena are related, but in the case of social esteem and self-esteem not as simply as is often thought. The striving for social esteem, expressed in activities of interpersonal, often competitive self-assertion, is a *usc* concern in its own right. But a sense of grip favors unproblematic self-acceptance (being content with who you are, as you are) and self-respect (not thinking lightly of yourself), as well as self-esteem (feeling on the whole positive about the personal qualities which are characteristic of you), so the need for it exists alongside the striving for social esteem and has requirements of its own.

Possession of at least a minimal general sense of grip in felt assuredness of how to go about things is the point at issue here. It comprises all those skills which life, the world, the community, and your fellows may reasonably expect of you. To feel confident in these respects is a great influence on how content you can feel with yourself, as someone who in things that count is in control of his own life.

From ch. 8: Hedonic well-being

The term hedonic generally stands for all direct *physically pleasurable sensations* as consciously experienced by the human organism. As such, they comprise insistent satisfactions of three kinds. One is what are usually called the 'joys of the flesh' — the basic carnal activities, or physical appetites: eating, drinking, and sex. Then there is the (usually enduringly organized) enjoyment of 'creature comforts', typical of sensations of well-being when some luxury is obtained in resting, sleeping, climatic conditions, shelter, muscular effort, or bodily ease generally. Finally, we have the immediate, abundant, spontaneous, but, even so, often-quite-sophisticated 'sensual delights' offered by our senses of perception: vision, hearing, smell, taste, and touch.

Hence, all feelings of pleasure are included that are directly felt bodily in one way or another and that derive from the gratification of a need or impulse occurring in any physical aspect of life. Similarly, feelings of frustration are directly felt bodily when gratification of the needs and impulses arising in these areas is denied.

The maintenance of a general level of well-being in hedonic functioning must count as one of the six conditions for attaining a more or less enduring psychological state perhaps best described as inner contentment or 'happiness' — conditions which have arisen in human motivation in consequence of having developed consciousness. However, given the variety of organic physical needs and impulses, can there indeed be such a thing as a person's hedonic functioning in general? If not, it makes no sense to think of

hedonic well-being in general terms at all. But the answer is yes. It cannot be simply put in quantitative terms, and the minimum of hedonically good feeling sensations required for effective personal functioning naturally varies to some extent from person to person, and yet, as a human datum a person's general level of hedonic functioning is real enough.

This loosely existing general state of psycho-physically vital well-being may more plainly be called 'vital affect'. Descriptively it is best called a person's 'hedonic feeling tone'.

Cultural balance

The hedonic life has a direct link with vital affect and vitality but not with human quality and morality. Attempts in that direction, 'pleasure is good' or 'pleasure is bad', are misleading or worse, because in misinterpreting the causalities of human problems they aggravate them instead.

In our present era many well-meaning modern people are torn between distrust of easy pleasures on the one hand and of life-denying prohibitions on the other. They feel distaste for the superficial consumerism of direct feel-good sensations which commercial interests one-sidedly appeal to, like bad money unrelentingly driving out good money in the conditions on which market economies thrive. At the same time they may loathe fundamentalist societies and religious movements which in reaction against the putative 'Americanization' of the world suppress everything spontaneously joyful and sensuously creative in our nature.

Would the solution lie in a middle course between the puritanical and the hedonistically overindulgent? No, the dialectics of inhibition and pleasure just referred to are not productively put as opposites, nor as entities in one continuum. The quandary cannot be resolved by two-dimensional taxonomic thinking in either/or terms or by a compromise position halfway between. Instead, different dynamic processes must be process-analytically studied in their interaction in depth. In fact, this is precisely why I am paying so much attention to the universal strivings. These reveal the relevant processes which, each in its own manner, put forward their own claims and then interact in specific ways.

Looked at this way, I regard the dilemma, considered on the present-day collective level of global Western civilization, as real but artificial. It is forced on people by one-sided 'consumptive' cultural orientations, gradually grown dominant as system characteristics through their dispersion by mass-communication media. Ideally (albeit in principle simply enough), the solution would be a matter of restoring balance. This, too, could not be a matter of advocating a socio-cultural system halfway between the puritanical and the hedonically over-indulgent, which one way or another would hamper more than help. Rather, it would be a system which (being at once coherent and culturally rich) would provide ample or at least workable general channels of expression for our various strivings—not only hedonic well-being but also meaning, grip, belongingness, social esteem, and self-transcendence.

This is not as far-fetched or naively unrealistic as it may sound. It is a tall order in our era. But our era is marked by cultural influences which are chaotically extended both in interdependence and in incompatibility; they are moreover combined with an extent of individualization which for many people borders on alienation. In traditional, smaller societies the existence of a socio-cultural system balanced for the steady themes of consciousness as expressed in the *usc*'s used to be a matter of course.

Given half a chance, people will again work toward one, creating it themselves.

From ch. 9: Belongingness

Hedonic pleasure seeking does not necessarily lead to selfish acts at all, yet it is naturally wholly self-centered in the nature of its satisfactions. Pleasing physical sensations of the organism itself are the beginning and end of what the pleasure principle in human action is about. In contrast, although achieving a sense of belonging is certainly a good feeling, and the good feeling is what it is all about in the first place, the attachments which we form in achieving a sense of belonging are the opposite of self-centered; the nature of attachments is to be other-centered.

The feelings that go into attachments may actually be so matter-of-course generous, unreserved, unrestricted, without any thought of profit to oneself, that the person seized by them no longer thinks of anything else and may readily sacrifice his own interests, at least for as long as the moments of acute awareness last. Here, for instance, lies the effectiveness (quite apart from social pressures and the like) of an appeal to patriotism (risking death) in periods when the fatherland—a ready object of attachment in the aid of belongingness—seems under threat.

Attachments in aid of belongingness are no different from all affection motivation, in that the satisfactions obtained from emotionally relating to other people or things are the opposite of self-centered. Two simple conditions suffice. The feeling cannot be self-centered; there must be a positive emotional relation to something in the outside world. It must also exist for its own sake; the special feeling of affection is in itself a good feeling to have and requires no other stimulants than being its own reward.

We may easily distinguish between three kinds of attachments: to persons, to things, and to entities of a socio-cultural nature. The subject dynamics invested are the same, yet the objects are so different as to make it worth our while to examine the three kinds separately.

As a category, 'persons' speaks for itself. 'Entities of a socio-cultural nature' refers to objects of attachment found in the collective life of the person who seeks belongingness, but not in the guise of pluralities of persons as such. 'Things', finally, sounds like a catchall category but is actually a major provider of feelings of belongingness, by anchoring us to our spatial living environment (or to aspects or components thereof).

From ch. 10: Social esteem

The six permanent experiential spheres of mental life here referred to as universal strivings of consciousness, or *usc*'s, constitute together a management system for the organism in coping with the problems and predicaments of conscious life. Comparatively speaking, the strivings differ somewhat in how they attract attention to their respective states of minimal fulfillment or of falling below frustration point. Some *usc*'s, when they are fulfilled, appear to ring bells of celebration with a matter-of-course alacrity; some *usc*'s sound the alarm more swiftly than others when deficiencies occur.

Being of an overflowing, directly benign nature, hedonic wellbeing, attachments of belongingness, and experiences of self-transcendence in states of transport are conditions of *usc*'s to which abundant awareness comes naturally in a state of some satisfaction, whereas it may be some time before shortages are consciously felt. In the more cerebral *usc*'s of meaning, grip, and esteem, satisfaction may soon be taken for granted,

whereas nagging feelings to the effect that things are not quite as they should be leap to the foreground readily, thereby calling attention to the need for harder work on the deficiencies. This may be particularly tough in the case of esteem, as the striving for social esteem already demands from us active efforts characterized by self-assertion to start with.

There is also a special reason for this, which in a way sets the striving for social esteem apart from all others. It is the *usc* most dependent on forces not part of ourselves. Social esteem is bestowed by others, so you can less naturally manipulate it yourself. Paradoxically, the striving for social esteem is also the most self-conscious of the universal strivings.

Clearly, then, we are now facing a striving of more than ordinarily problematic complexity.

From ch. 11: Mental transport

I have maintained at the outset that (1) as human beings we cannot live without seeking happiness; (2) consciousness has brought us knowledge of irreconcilable contradictions in our existential situation; (3) in order to live reasonably happy lives we need compensating provisions for this knowledge in some basic existential respects; (4) we universally strive to attain those provisions for ourselves.

A clear panorama of universal strivings consequent on consciousness has unfolded next. It amounts to this (the order of precedence depends on our choice of outlook point from which to view the panorama): as *socially driven* individuals we require some lasting general esteem and personal appreciation from our fellows; at the same time, as *biologically bound* beings we must be able to enjoy without too much shame or guilt hedonic pleasures offered by body and senses; as beings *filled with feelings* we need attachments that anchor us effectively in the world we live in; as *mentally expansive* beings we need some confidence that our grip on things helps to see us through life; as *incisively thinking* beings we require convictions that life is not in itself meaningless.

Together, the attainment of at least a minimum of provisions in each of these fields, whether illusory or not, offers a great deal of comfort. But to get minimal provisions in all five respects, required at one and the same time, is a great deal to ask and necessitates a lot of juggling to attain mental balance, which differs from person to person. Even so, this is not enough. A sixth requirement must still be met.

As a universal striving consequent on consciousness, *self-transcendence/transport* is (analytically speaking) basically different from the others in that, instead of permanent background motivation, it provides an occasional, all-absorbing foreground activity. It is dormant a great deal of the time, but when, like a volcano, it all of a sudden erupts, no room is left for consciousness of anything else at all.

However, phenomenologically speaking there is no contradiction. For the person who experiences it, self-transcendence is a natural extension of the other *usc*'s. The other ones all have to cope somehow with the intrusive consequences of consciousness of life's contradictions in general and with the obtrusive never-ending presence of questioning self-consciousness in particular. Self-transcendence extends the application of the same consciousness dynamics in a radical manner, in that it donates the loss of consciousness of self itself. Its subject is the immense (however temporary) relief, liberation, exultation felt by a person who is suddenly freed from all self-consciousness in one fell swoop. This, then, is the requirement that remains for internal mental health management: temporary respites from self-consciousness are themselves an urgent consciousness need.

The phenomenon itself is also known as 'raised consciousness'. The Münchhausen feat is that by raising consciousness in this way, your awareness of self is transcended indeed.

From ch. 12: The consciousness management system

The six universal strivings interact in a systematic circuit which is to a large extent responsible for our psychological functioning. I call this internal order the Consciousness Management System**.**

Its dynamics see to it that the various kinds of upsets we suffer from internal or external turmoil are coped with in such a way as to enable us to live at peace with ourselves and our world. They supply us with the *rationale* for our choices of action. In this view a condition of mental balance is not a matter of being 'sound of mind' — it is less, and it is more. It does not require the absence of symptoms of neurosis or even psychosis; it does require active solutions on our part for finding at least minimal provisions for all of the universal strivings and, if possible, optimal ones for one or more of them.

By the 'rationale' of our activities I do not mean the 'objective justification' we may have for them, or our 'intelligent reasons' or even our 'cognitive reasons', but rather the totality of what we stand for. In my vision of mental organization this totality encompasses an integrated interaction of the three main mental faculties of feeling, thinking, and willing. This amounts to what there is good reason to call a *rationale* indeed. In my understanding it is through the management of universal strivings that the interaction of the three main faculties of mental organization reaches its pinnacle. This is what enables us — circumstances permitting — to cope with things well enough to function and potentially thrive as a psychological entity within our world. As I have insisted at the outset, in this manner some sort of internal order is achieved where otherwise chaotic insecurity, arbitrariness of competing claims on behavior, or undue victimization by the outside world might prevail.

The six universal strivings, for meaning, grip, hedonic wellbeing, belongingness with attachments, esteem with self-assertion, and transport with self-transcendence, can be seen as permanent spurs to action arising from the complexities of human consciousness. They take second place dynamically to the concerns which demand attention from moment to moment. But in view of their enduring interests they can be expected to influence, at times even suffuse, the preoccupations and upsets, the predictabilities and the emotionalities, of everyday life.

The fact that rather large differences occur between us human beings in the relative importance we attach to the various *usc*'s has become abundantly clear from large ranges of real-life examples presented in the previous six chapters. We must now direct our attention to the complementary phenomenon: *limits* to variability.

When discussing the various *usc*'s on their own we have, in addition to those large personal differences, also met with a tendency towards their interdependence — something not of course purposely aimed at by those concerned. We know meanwhile what function interdependence serves, the short answer being that it is essential for the emergence of a consciousness management system. The question that faces us now is rather how this interdependence comes about — that is, in what manner our consciousness management system is actually achieved.

Balancing through channeling

This is how the consciousness management system within our minds works in general. Finding a personally fitting balance between the claims of the six universal strivings of consciousness is what it is all about. The necessary balancing of *usc*'s is accomplished by channeling. Channeling is about the incorporation of the turmoil and variety of immediate motives for action into functions for underlying *usc*'s. The channeling required for balancing is ensured by lifting the experiences and activities of immediate motives onto platforms for combined *usc* fulfillments.

These platforms come naturally to human consciousness because the fulfillments of *usc* aspirations are together what the contents of our mental life are largely about in the first place.

The synthesizing extra qualities of the sixth *usc* of transport are of special value at this very point — they facilitate considerably the platform potentials for the *usc*'s in their totality.

To be sure, the consciousness management system is unthinkable without the principle of minimal provision for each *usc*. Whatever the (sometimes considerable) differences between us humans in what we value in life, human mental health dynamics cannot lastingly tolerate the complete neglect of any one of the six. With those minima ensured, the human mind can be a fortress of surprising strength and resilience.

Group dynamics

The durability of socio-cultural institutions, then, is connected to the requirements of *usc*'s in combination. This in itself is already a dramatic demonstration of the centrality of those strivings as content carriers of the mental life of humans. But it is far from a complete picture.

The same viability condition also holds for other activities which, though perhaps thought of as single-purpose and at least for a start not institutional, become durable. The phenomena of group life are particularly instructive in this respect.

All voluntary group formations try to offer what is to their receptive clientele an attractive living climate. This is actually provided by fulfillment of universal strivings. We must make a distinction between what may be called groups of *partial* participation and groups of *total* or (more aptly still) *totalitarian* participation. In both kinds the provision of good feelings from *usc* fulfillment is offered as an alternative for what the parent society at large has on offer, but the extent to which the special group actually takes over is very different.

Mental addictions

The consciousness management system has two big enemies. One is extreme socio-cultural one-sidedness in the preferences and evaluations of a given society. External to the person in its origins, it is a matter of societal dynamics throughout. I deal with it in the next chapter.

The other enemy is addiction. It is the internally situated enemy, a matter of psychological dynamics (which of course do not exclude social and cultural antecedents). In the case of mental addictions, *usc*'s and their interaction in our consciousness management system are often involved. The obsessive pursuit of a goal that gives the required good feelings feeds into a particular *usc* (or, most often, a combination of *usc*'s). The essential activities forcibly neglected are those that feed into the remaining *usc*'s. That is, maximal instead of optimal attention has been given to some *usc*'s, so that minimal attention is no longer possible for

those that remain.

Conclusion

How to restore balance so as to make the full functioning of the consciousness management system possible again? With regard to the problem of recovery, the persistence of a mental addiction can be stubborn to an amazing degree. The inability to let work go from time to time; to look for bigger, faster roller coasters all over the world; to be pulled into the red-light district in every new town—all this is just as inevitable as lighting another cigarette.

The parallelism between physiological and mental phenomena of addiction is so striking as to invite a hypothesis that in a mental addiction, as surely as in physiological ones, a particular neural circuit is formed in the brain. As soon as a stimulus that contains relevance for the addiction is presented for processing (as with the obsessive visit to a prostitute as soon as one arrives in a new town), it monopolizes the response mechanism by conducting the response through that particular neural circuit.

True, in our active daily lives *usc*'s can never replace our direct urges, needs, and wishes, not even when the motives of the moment fit smoothly into the more permanent concerns behind them. This point needs repeating. General feelings of attachment do not take the place of immediate surges of affection given and received; sexual longings of the moment are not stilled by a sense of hedonic well-being; a general sense of possessing grip over our concerns does not lessen the urge to exercise and test our capacities and skills; the engagement with ethical concerns and issues of moral choice is not exhausted by having a sense of the meaningfulness of life; and so on. Rather, as a functioning circuit the *usc*'s in their togetherness act as shock absorbers of the strains and stresses of daily experiences (the immediate *external* influences on psychological functioning). They also form a natural embedding for the non-disruptive incorporation into life's going concerns of the usual onslaught of direct emotions and motives, including emergency ones (the immediate *internal* influences on psychological functioning).

A sense of minimal well-being with regard to all strivings is essential in helping to provide psychological structure to our lives and a general feeling of ease about it. If environmental living conditions are relatively constant and reasonably livable (i.e., 'normal'), this is what our consciousness management system—that is, the ongoing balancing act implied in dealing with the demands of the various strivings—is for. When all six strivings are at least minimally provided for, the basic mental hygiene required of our motivational dynamics is ensured. Our permanent organic needs (both those directed by the pleasure principle and those directed by the passion principle) are largely expressed through the strivings, not outside them. This is what oils our integration as a person and welds us to the circumstances of our lives.

From ch. 13: An inner peace of mind

The consciousness management system as a provision of mental hygiene is not about harmonious adjustment in the balance between the person and his living environment. Rather, it is about inner harmony, the relation of the variety of different elements inside us. It is not about 'peace of mind' generally, which may well be largely a matter of the relationship of the wishes inside us with the external demands exerted upon us, potentially fraught as these are with elements of tension and conflict. Rather, it is about our 'inner peace of mind', which reflects the extent to which, and the ways in which, we manage to cope with the

contradictory demands and wishes within ourselves.

Interestingly enough, our ease in coping with our societal circumstances may have more to do with our inner harmony, the inner peace of mind we have managed to attain, than with the satisfactions and frustrations allotted to us in our society.

In other words, an inner peace of mind, in its various shapes and disguises, may have as much or more impact on our feelings of happy well-being than our external fortunes. Despite two limiting specifications, this is a major finding.

In the first place, the external factors of our living conditions are *not*, to be sure, of little importance to our mental well-being. To the contrary, the social and cultural demands of the external world do carry a great deal of relevance for our sense of well-being. But they do so in an indirect way, as digested by each of us in our universal strivings. This in itself enlightens us as to how internal mental hygiene and socio-cultural functioning are related.

Secondly, my finding can only be true up to a certain point. Indeed, a major purpose of this chapter is to investigate the limits to its application, with special interest devoted to what actually happens when it has ceased to apply.

The basic contents of the universal strivings as such —our search for meaning, our need to feel grip, the necessity of belongingness, our longing for esteem, the level of our hedonic well-being, the urgency of occasional self-transcendence — are well-nigh intransigent. This applies even though they are expressed (like all mental phenomena) in communally organized lives, where many different societal conditions operate. So for a listing of these societal variables to make sense, its relevance must be clear.

Given the intransigence of the subject matter, the impact of societal factors is confined to major forces for a start; no more than broad distinctions are asked for. Basic societal differences in social *structure,* in *culture,* and in *situations* are what we shall look for.

Because of the straightforwardness of its findings, the analysis starts with (1) structural differences with regard to pronounced socio-economic advantages and disadvantages as expressed in a *social class system*. It moves from there to (2) *basic cultural differences* in convictions and provisions. This will turn out to absorb considerably more attention. The analysis then moves on to (3) the most important situational difference between societies. Under conditions of *disaster*, whether from natural causes or man-made, the societal system of control is thrown out of order and no longer functions at all. The pathologies that result from this situation, but also the coping attempts then undertaken, form a significant concern of my analysis.

The final kind of societal force dealt with in this connection refers to (4) power-skewed societies. Psychologically the pathologies and coping attempts encountered there are a continuation of the preceding situation. But since, unlike with (3), this final category (4) is once again about societies in (at least sociologically) running order, the analysis returns to the differences in societal structure analyzed under (1). This may or may not be taken as an alarm bell sounding forebodings about the present world's future.

Transition to Part III: Weighing humanity's chances

Now that I open the third and final part of the book I must briefly set out my reasons for continuing it. Validity of the insights attained remains the first and major condition of all generalizations about human actions, and yet, this has not been the only aim that has inspired the writing of this book. Alongside the self-

evident goal of wanting to arrive at reality-valid insights for their own sake, there is another goal. The new insights, more adequate than those available so far, may be helpful for practical concerns that trouble humankind in our time.

In the present era, the entire future of humankind, and indeed of the natural world itself, is being assailed. Through unraveling the laws of external nature we have become masters of the natural world, but now we face problems that may surpass our ability to solve them. This is so because these problems are ruled by the dynamics of the one field which has escaped man's discipline: his own internal nature. This has immediate relevance for what has been investigated in this book. Why those dynamics are there, and what contradictions but also convergences may lie at their basis, can now be better understood.

The contribution to specific practical purposes of the new knowledge displayed in this book can only be minor. Human science insights, which may reveal regular patterns at best, have neither certainties nor recipes nor predictions nor even concrete probabilities to offer about specific large-scale social concerns, where complex relations facing complex problems over longer stretches of time are involved. Yet I do feel that a clarifying contribution is possible, albeit in a roundabout way, even for public affairs and social policy. Such clarification is the aim of the insights proffered in Part III. The insights are about some main problem areas in the relations of individuals and their collectivities.

The primary question I hope to help answer is how at least chances may increase that the great problems facing the world now are tackled in a problem-solving way, by people in positions where they can make a difference. A first necessary condition is to have at the helms of leadership persons of quality. Quality is about the application of human talents at their best. Problem-solving thinking is one of the most pronounced talents the human species has at its disposal; at its best it can 'move mountains'. To help solve the problems humanity faces in our time, top-quality use of this talent is required indeed.

So we need first a thorough analysis of what it is that makes for pivotal differences in quality, and what it is that makes these differences so important for problem-solving thinking. For a start, I undertake an analysis of the concept itself, the extent of its reality-value, and the nature of its reality-value.

That done, I examine conditions of influence on top-quality use of the gift of problem-solving thinking. This entails three further steps. One is an analysis of features inherent in the thinking capacity as such, which includes dysfunctions likely to occur in its development and use. The next step is an analysis of competing human motives that menace the full employment of our thinking capacity. Finally, I analyze societal forces in the contemporary world propitious to its chances of success.

Thus the main problem areas of this third, applied part of my theory are treated in the following chapters on quality, rationality, evil, and pro-social prospects.

From ch. 14: Quality

Do we need a concept denoting quality in an analysis of human problem situations? This is not a question with a self-evident answer. It assumes that the concept has reality-value as something that exists as a characteristic of somebody in some respect (like the color of your eyes) and can be so perceived by everybody else in their right mind (except the color-blind). This does not go without saying. Further, if there is reality-value in that sense indeed, it may still be doubtful whether it is specific enough to allow the concept to become useful for scientific handling in the analysis of human problems. So what we need first is

an analysis of the concept itself.

An analysis concerned with quality is inevitably an analysis about differences in quality between people. This is a delicate subject, which raises difficulties in several respects. One difficulty concerns the motives of thinkers who raise it, another is ideological, and a third would bring us to dismiss any such analysis as sloppy in view of the tangle of alethic and deontic aspects into which any discussion of quality judgments leads [see for these two concepts under List II].

From ch. 15: Rationality

'Rationality' is one of those uneasy terms in the human sciences which invite misunderstanding due to loose handling and to being harnessed to conflicting purposes. However, the concept of rationality deals with the difference between effective, reality-sensitive, problem-solving thinking and its opposite, so we cannot do without it — to differentiate between the two is more urgent than ever.

In what follows, I shall ignore primitive errors in the handling of the term (usually errors of association), such as taking the word 'rational' to mean the opposite of 'emotional', or to equate irrationality in thinking with violence of action. I shall pay some attention to confusions of a theoretical nature about the interaction of willing, feeling and thinking in questions of rationality, but let us consider first what, if sensibly handled, the concept of rationality does and does not stand for.

In the previous chapter we were on the lookout for criteria for particular excellence, among other things in the employment of human aptitudes. Elements crucial for the development of quality in the thinking aptitude have appeared to be authentic motivation (fully directed towards the requirements of valid thought processes), purity of the accompanying feelings (wholly in accord with that direction), and concentration of the thinking activities on the task at hand. These provided fertile soil for the characteristics which distinguish quality thinking: openness of mind, integrity in problem formulation, a measure of audacity in thinking, and clarity of insight.

The concept of rationality is not about quality thinking in particular, but about the general conditions on which all cognitive effectiveness must be based in any case. To say that we think rationally means no more, really, than that in judging what something is about we do so in accordance with the dictates of our reason ('ratio'). This in its turn means predominantly that there is a willingness on our part to recognize the known or knowable realities involved in arriving at the judgment. This is a basic requirement because effective problem solving is not in the end possible if whatever known or knowable factual features pertinent to the case are not incorporated in the judgment.

As a result, the rationality concept is relatively simple to understand. Of the four characteristics of quality thinking, only sufficient openness of mind is required — and this only to the extent that realities observable in one way or another are not obscured. Even so, to be rational about something does mean that at least those tendencies that stand in contrast to quality thinking (in the way motives and affects enter the picture) are absent.

For instance, to think that something must be true because you long for it to be true while the evidence points to its being false is not rational. An inability to admit that an intensely disliked person may make positive contributions to a shared cause which are plainly discernable to any unbiased observer is not rational. In the former case the prior motivational investment in a wished outcome prevents clear thinking;

in the latter case the strength of an already existing feeling clouds judgment from the start.

Obviously, in these instances an unfortunate interaction of the mental faculties of willing, feeling and thinking has taken place. Ultimately, the function of knowledge is to serve motivation, and the affective faculty carries a signalling function in that respect. But apparently at least some freedom from vested motivational and emotional involvements must be guaranteed for thinking processes to be capable of yielding effective knowledge; willing and/or feeling easily interfere.

From ch. 16: Evil

Empirically it is not difficult to pinpoint the particular experiences and activities relevant to evil which reality has on offer. Those which are always regarded as evil and called by that name are in no doubt at all. Evil is at all times minimally about the untoward (in the sense of 'occurring outside the due, societally permanently recognized, regular procedures of law') taking of human life. It refers to the inviolability of human beings as organic entities, as persons, and the transgression thereof.

One of the universals of human interaction is involved here—as universal as the usage of a common language in social intercourse or the growth of position-related role prescriptions in the execution of social tasks. The sanctity of a person's life, together with condemnation of the untoward deprivation of it as evil, is respected wherever human beings band together, as we inevitably do. The general principle of inviolability of a person is acknowledged everywhere by the societies in which we live.

The addition of the word 'untoward' is necessary to indicate that (if we look for empirical universality) the sanctity of human life is not unconditional. When the taking of a person's life is at issue, exceptions considered to be legitimate are frequently allowed.

The alternative—that is, the unconditional sanctity of human life—is certainly an option. It would apply under all conditions for everyone, irrespective of being guilty or innocent of any offense. The most striking example is the condemnation of capital punishment. The option is not immediately and naturally adhered to everywhere, nor is it universally professed. It is *not* part of empirical universality.

What on the other hand *can* be empirically demanded at all times is that the exceptions to the sanctity of life are justified as an integral part of the permanent and recognized judicial system of the collectivity where the taking of lives is at stake. Also, these exceptions are not allowed to take place outside the official collectivity's public jurisdiction or beyond its regular means of control. These two provisos, then, ensure the required universality of the principle of the sanctity of human life as being universally shared by human beings.

As is so often the case with shared human processes, the socio-cultural ways of how they are worked out in the interactions of communal life vary. The universality of the principle of the sanctity of the life of persons does not self-evidently extend to the definition of who may be regarded as persons; nor to what is and what is not considered to be untoward; nor even to the extent to which the right to 'bare' life (for persons recognized as such, i.e., as persons) includes such closely related matters as the integrity of the body and whether one may be dispossessed of everything else one holds dear. These are territories where variable interpretations have to be taken into account, just as the actual languages spoken in communication differ from one collectivity to another, and just as the particular roles prescribed for similar tasks may differ from

one society to another. I shall now discuss the universality of the principle first, and then the variables just listed.

Socio-cultural differences in how *the universal principle of inviolability* of the person applies in practice are (or at least used to be) quite striking. How is it, then, that as a basic process of regulated human interaction there can be a universal principle here in the first place?

Of course, regular human interactions take place in a socially defined world, a socio-culturally organized collectivity, or society. Any given society is characterized by such mutual interactions from start to finish. In order to function at all, a society needs to be in running order. That is, the way it is ordered is reliably executed and predictably maintained, whatever its virtues or its defects. This necessarily includes a system of justice in which the personal interactions of its members are regulated, positionally but also morally. Basic prescriptions and proscriptions, rights and obligations, with recognized notions of right and wrong, are known to all citizens.

All social conduct is delineated by norms which specify what are the approved or (at a minimum) the permissible ways for persons to behave in their interactions with other persons. From this perspective, evil is nothing other than what runs fundamentally counter to what is considered minimally permissible in this regard. This always includes: *Thou shalt not kill – at least not just like that.*

In the more or less 'normal' situations of societies in running order, where the main behavioral norms are generally adhered to, all individual members, whatever their station in life and no matter how unfortunate their situations or how badly exploited their positions, can count on (or hope for) one basic and protected right: their right to exist. Other things being equal, this at least cannot be taken away from them arbitrarily. This actually cuts both ways: no matter how privileged someone's position may be, the restriction against arbitrary disposition of other people's lives sets a limit on his power.

Evil, when it does occur, is associated with events which do not normally happen and which are expected to occur only in highly abnormal social or psychological situations. In psychologically abnormal situations (such as violent anger or unchecked greed) norms are knowingly or compulsively transgressed and sanctions go unheeded.

Such individual trespasses, in a society in running order, are exceptional, and the society's machinery of justice protects its citizenry against them. When the societal situations themselves become abnormal (as readily occurs in times of war or of social disorder and anomie), rules which limit the right to take lives, etc., are more easily lost sight of, while sanctions may be lacking. Nevertheless, both in normal and in difficult times, feelings of indignation, anger, and revolt against the pivotal evil of murder are the same everywhere.

Wherever people live together, 'to kill, just like that,' is, in the most basic way, how things must not be done. This is why attempts to minimize it in normal society, and to stave off situations which facilitate its occurrence in abnormal times, are universal. It is also why it comes to the forefront in any system of justice.

The awareness of evil is closely allied with feelings of injustice; combating evil is basic to the concept of justice (but hardly exhaustive, thus creating new confusions, as we shall see soon enough).

From ch. 17: Pro-social prospects

What human beings are generally after and about

Whatever our positions in life, we lead reasonably contented lives as long as we live in a predictable society in running order, in which we have recognizable functions with tasks befitting our abilities and in which we are not without minimal basic comforts (in an absolute sense); are not less well off (in a relative sense) than the kind of people we feel we can be reasonably compared with; feel respected and esteemed by our fellows; can attach ourselves to whom and what we hold dear; are allowed the pleasures of the senses; are convinced that our lives are intrinsically meaningful; are capable of losing ourselves in moments of rapture and of finding the vehicles to do so; and feel we have some command over the conditions of life, both in insightful grip of its realities and in the rightness of our moral values.

In all this the sociocultural collectivity in which we grow up and function, and the specific group ties we form, supply the general and particular referential frames in which what we actually look for in our lives is mostly decided. These frames are both culturally and socially variable to a considerable extent. But emphases placed on one aspect or another also vary biologically for different age categories.

In addition to these generalities, more variety comes about as a result of individual differences. These are partly caused by the complexities and complications of the long learning period of the socialization process of the human young, partly the result of given differences in aptitudes and gifts between individuals, and partly also of the interaction between the great gift of thinking power and the consequences of having consciousness, thus on occasion leading to new discoveries and new creative ways of thinking.

Set against the probability of new creative thinking taking place in times of relative peace and societal harmony, however, is the certainty of destructiveness arising from the emergency motives of anger and fear, which at the service of survival tend to take instinctive priority in times of war and disorder.

This outline covers the main determinants as well as the main variables. Although a priori there is nothing systematically selfish in the picture thus emerging, neither is there anything to be discerned that looks like a built-in tendency toward a prevalence of altruism. 'Simple and sovereign' mono-theories about what drives us as human beings just won't do, and intricate interaction processes must be examined in order to increase understanding. It just so happens that this takes time, all the while the attainment of incisive, process-rendering insights is now of particular urgency.

The problem

We live in a period of history which at least for the time being has seemed to establish a reign of universally humanist values in basic rights, at any rate in the civilized world [NB this was written in 2008]. On the other hand, the utmost further efforts in mobilizing the pro-social problem-solving capacities of humankind are now required, since the inroads made on the earth's resources and the degradation of environmental conditions for the sake of further growth in material well-being — between mutually competitive collectivities for that matter, destructively armed to boot — have now become so drastic as to set the survival of humanity as such at stake.

In other words, in the real world of the 21st century, staving off disaster requires the actual triumph of a great deal of insight over dysfunctional actions; that is, we are in need of what in the absence of a better term

may be called 'real rationality'. This requires in addition the power to abstain from non-productive temptations, that is, the wisdom to think ahead and to let short-term advantages pass. Success in such an undertaking is far from assured.

In what follows I seek to discern possibly propitious factors that may help enable a succesful effort to take place. For that, we need a closer inspection of general human interactional dynamics, which requires us in its turn to go back to basics and delve into some fundamental quandaries of the human situation all over again.

Three possibly propitious factors

The chapter consists of three sections, with for principal subject matter the following issues:

(1) The second great paradox of consciousness, viz., to be utterly dependent on others while also being an independently feeling, thinking, willing organic unit of action, entails a basic rift in how a human being can relate to other humans. The socialization process inevitably entails our individuation: we become separate individuals, intensely aware of our being so, while at the same we become tied to other individuals, needing them, being needed by them, intensely aware of this as well. Hence, in discovering our own separateness and in claiming our right to be recognized as an independent subject, we also learn to recognize other individuals like ourselves as beings in their own right. We realize that every other person has the right to be approached and respected as a *subject* in his own right, just like we ourselves have that right.

But we also need other people at times and in a variety of circumstances as vehicles for and providers of our own personal needs or wishes, thus turning them undeniably into *objects* for our own use. Often enough we are likewise regarded and treated by others as an object, whose inevitable function it is at times to serve their needs.

This dual aspect of what other people mean to us, as well as what we mean to other people, is the subject/object dilemma. It never ceases to claim attention, demanding, in each interaction of some duration, either a fine balancing of the two contrasting aspects or else a drastic choice for one side or the other (which leaves the claim of the side not opted for unfulfilled).

Traditionally, in the societal arrangements of collective life the coarser aspects of the dilemma tend to be resolved quickly in favor of the powerful sections of society, who are then at liberty to dispose of powerless others — preferably strangers or people who start out as strangers — as objects to be used to their advantage. The convenient upshot is indifference to the same people as subjects, which in its turn entails leaving them to their fate with a clean conscience.

But at the personal level consciousness of other persons as human beings likewise, with an existence as subjects in their own right and the right to be treated as such, remains a structural datum of the human situation. It cannot be ignored at all times by all those who benefit from ignoring it, even though the usual tricks of self-deception may go a long way.

The dynamics of the situation thus outlined provide the subject matter of this first section.

(2) Whereas the dynamics of the previous section are an *outcome* of consciousness, the dynamics to be dealt with in the next are of the kind that *feeds* consciousness.

As just stated, it would at the present stage of our knowledge be naive to pronounce a generalized selfish drive in the interactive life to hold sway without further ado. Even so, there are a number of reasons (dealt with in previous chapters) why in many situations in many spheres of societal life motives of self-interest, especially when conceived or realized in a group context (or in a collective context of another kind), may be expected to prevail.

Likewise, it would be naive to claim the presence of a generalized altruistic tendency in our dealings with each other. Yet there are human tendencies which are *not* altruistically propelled as such but which are spontaneously pro-social *in their consequences*. There are in fact organically built-in impulses or characteristics which at a fundamental level (neurologically preceding consciousness, yet expressed in conscious life) make a potential difference to the patterns of human interaction in a pro-social direction, and which can certainly make themselves felt in alliance with other propitious factors.

In the affective faculty of the human mind there is the power of empathy; in the cognitive faculty there is a 'deontic logic' that shapes our sense of justice. Both are powerful weapons, the former in the wish for humane treament of other people, the latter in the struggle for fair treatment of other people.

Here, too, the (in traditional times) limited effect of the pro-social dynamics is not a matter of a lack of goodwill at the direct level of personal intentions as such. Rather, it results from the way in which on the collective level in normative systems the considerations and stipulations of the two spontaneously pro-social forces are interpreted and applied.

In this section I shall pay special attention to how in human history the rights of others have been traditionally denied or minimized and responsibility toward them restricted in such a way that people who act as perpetrators do not have to feel guilty. The upshot is indifference to the fate of other people altogether, in particular of strangers. But since both empathy and deontic logic are organic properties, their promptings keep returning in our minds. Each time they do, the promptings are felt afresh.

(3) Remarkably, the kind of indifference to others which as an upshot of societal arrangements has been exceedingly common throughout history in both (1) and (2), and for that matter still is, does not appear to have prevailed forever. By now it even seems to have been replaced by a principled moral system of universal responsibility and of at least minimal care.

In my analysis, the victory(in the Western world) as a basic and potentially world-wide value system of universal human rights is linked to the two great background revolutions of the modern era: the Scientific Revolution (which represents what humankind's most capable thinking has achieved) and the Industrial Revolution (which represents what the most competent conative capacities of humankind have produced). In a very paradoxical manner, universal human rights thinking can be understood only in the context of those two historical phenomena (themselves intimately, though not straightforwardly, linked).

The normative system that this thinking has produced may be thought of, not so much as their passive product but certainly as having been liberated by these revolutions from its previous societally limiting trappings. If things turn out as is to be hoped, it will itself prove to have become the third great revolution of our time (in what humankind's most advanced feelings of responsibility have achieved).

Such an outcome is as yet far from certain. The scientific/technological revolutions had a definite take-off point and also passed a point of no return. The potential revolution of conscience has had its take-off

point, but whether it has a similar point of no return, being so much more a matter of software than of hardware, remains to be seen.

Still, this is what our future depends on. On the one hand, the achievements of the third revolution cannot make do with good intentions but must be actually expressed in a selection of priorities on which actions are based. On the other hand, the consequences of the other two revolutions, which can no longer be undone, would, without the effective continuation of the third revolution alongside them, turn out fatal to the future of humankind.

LIST II: METHODOLOGICAL AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL ISSUES

Methods recommended and employed in this book

Patterned complexity

To pinpoint the scientific nature of our subject-matter as patterned complexity helps to make clear what, in thinking about human behavior, is a productive alternative for standard procedures of thinking in the natural sciences. In natural science the recommendation is to be as parsimonious as possible in hypothesizing causal factors. Human science is unable to share this procedure, yet it *has a proper, fully equivalent substitute for it*.

In what is called exact science, the explanatory ideal aspired to is to find one ultimate cause for a phenomenon or event. Hence, it is no wonder that *parsimony* of hypotheses in scientific efforts is advocated as a goal to strive for in theory formation. Given the gigantic successes of exact-science procedures in achieving mastery over the phenomena of nature, it is no wonder that the term 'scientific efforts' is usually understood to mean all scientific efforts, in all theory formation.

However, suited as it is to mono-causal explanatory thinking and to reductionist methods of analysis, the parsimony principle is not a relevant guideline for the social sciences. In thinking about the realities of human behavior, which are complex from start to finish, the corresponding principle is not some approximation of parsimony but a principle of a different kind, which does full justice to the nature of the subject matter. It is to be found in the principle of *patterning*.

Human science theorizing ideally discovers regularities of dynamic interaction — or patterns — among a multiplicity of explanatory factors active in the various subjects studied. Theories in the domains of human science, the social sciences in particular, can successully look for patterns in the complexities and indeed should do so. Adoption of the principle of patterning is the proper thinking strategy.

[From ch. 1: Aims and approaches]

Process analysis

In what I call process-analytical thinking about human concerns, an empirical reality (which may be a phenomenon, an event, a behavioral field, or an observed regularity) is accepted for what it is, an *undivided* whole, a phenomenological unity, all the while it is conceived as a *product* of a variety of forces or influences (multiple and interacting) which have made it into what it is. The question for theory formation then becomes: what various dynamics may be involved?

This kind of analytical approach enables us to deal with multiple concepts on different levels (personal, interactional, supra-individual, internal) and with different dynamics (behavioral, motivational, collective system dynamics). In so doing it also uncovers certain processes — processes in interaction, processes clashing. The analyst could, if so inclined, diagnose in the empirical sample he encounters conditions which favor psychological harmony or conditions which favor psychological pathology. Or he could diagnose conditions favoring social harmony or social pathology. The range of approaches to understanding human situations increases substantially.

Whatever the analytical preferences of the analyst, the findings uncover the various processes in *depth*, thus revealing possible tensions, dilemmas, and conflicts in the pulls of the different positional, role and task

dynamics [in an example given earlier in this chapter]. The approach also makes it possible to relate (not just vaguely but specifically) the particular behaviors uncovered to the dynamics of other processes, such as are met with in personality differences. Something comparable could be done in relation to group phenomena, social class interests, cultural frames of reference, or ideological movements.

The process-analytical approach to human realities as products of forces analyzed in depth may be contrasted with a more common way of analyzing (or rather ordering) the phenomenological world at the level of empirical observation. This is the *taxonomic* way of looking at things. It is static rather than dynamically propelled. It distinguishes categories of classification and explanatory types that exist alongside one another rather than processes in harmony or tension. It is two-dimensional rather than three-dimensional, in that it arranges its subject matter like points and planes on a geographical map rather than distinguishing levels of depth.

The only solution is to stop trying to reduce the complexity of things human to more malleable thinking units, as the practice seriously vitiates the attainment of substantial theoretical progress. Instead, the various complexities can and should be used as the starting point of analysis and of its strategy. This is made possible in practice by an insight into the OSR principle of human decision making. It teaches us to analyze the multiplicities of factors which may be involved in such action choices as occur in the realities of human life.

But to take that step is not enough. The 'what to do' must be followed by the 'how to do it'. Proceeding along the lines here recommended can be done effectively only if the analytical ordering is accomplished in a 'process-analytical' fashion.

Is this not too large a step? Not as such, I am inclined to respond. True, the 'depth-digging' way to go about a scientific investigation into the realities of human life requires a different kind of mind-set from the topographical pinpointing that goes with taxonomic ordering. But that in itself does not present a major difficulty — explanatory analytical thinking comes naturally to the human mind. To systematize it is not all that hard to learn.

Another difficulty may be somewhat harder to overcome. Yet overcome it must be, if the potential benefits of process-analytical theory-formation are to be properly utilized. The difficulty concerns how we handle our analytical concepts.

[From ch. 1: Aims and approaches]

The handling of concepts

In analytical thinking in human science, abstract conceptual terms which designate processes and dynamic principles are a main ingredient. There is one indispensable condition which such terms must naturally meet. They can only fulfill their function to the extent that what they purport to mean is *clearly* conceived and *consistently* put into words, so that the designated meanings, and the resulting implications, can be unambiguously understood. Just think how impossible a process-analysis of multiple dynamics present in a phenomenon would become if the concepts used to analyze it each carried some unspecified multiplicity of combined, uncertain or mixed-up meanings themselves.

The condition of clarity and consistency in the use of conceptual terms being essentially a simple one, it does not seem too much to ask; in fact it need present no extra problems if the abstract concepts are handled

in a responsible, analytically conscious manner. But here a complication arises. It presents a handicap which should not be given the ostrich treatment, but which we must face up to.

The social sciences do not possess an analytical language of their own, as many natural sciences have in mathematics. Nor are they able to approximate the kind of exactitude which would make adoption of mathematical analysis or an equivalent thereof a realistic aim to strive for. For theoretical analysis there is just no alternative available to working with concepts expressed in terms shared with language in general. This holds in particular for the abstract concepts we cannot do without.

Terms denoting abstract concepts show some peculiar characteristics in general-language use — they are not amenable to discipline. In general language there is little rein on looseness and free developments in the meanings of terms. Since in scientific usage dependability of meaning of the language used is one of the pre-conditions of being able to do the work at all, it might be expected that much attention has been paid to the subject. The odd reality, however, is that concept handling is a very rare topic of discussion, or even of consideration, in the social sciences, or, for that matter, in human science generally.

Part of the reluctance to discipline our conceptual thinking is readily understandable. 'Surely there can be no question of disciplining the language everyone speaks! That is just the wrong kind of rigidity.'

Indeed, it is quite true that a living language cannot be disciplined. Attempts by academics to force the language we speak into a straitjacket by assigning specific meanings to its words and by forbidding them to be used in any other way are as ludicrous as they are pedantic. Initiatives in that direction have failed, of course, and are no longer attempted.

But this does not mean that the problem has disappeared, as if for as long as we act in a professionally disciplined manner in other respects, the messiness of the general-language words we are compelled to employ were of no concern to us, so that the less attention be paid to the matter, the better. Such a head-in-the-sand policy only turns us into its permanent victims.

What can be disciplined indeed is the scientific user's *awareness* of the ways and wiles of words in general language. There is no need to remain a victim of its uncertainties, its duplicities, its deceptive proliferation of implicit denotations and suggestive connotations. What we can do is train ourselves to become more sensitive to what goes on in the use of language.

Carelessness, implicit undertones, and explicit vagueness in the general use of words cannot be prohibited. But we can be sensitive to the existence of these phenomena and recognize them and explicitly *not* employ them in that fashion ourselves. In short, *as human scientists we cannot discipline general language use, but we can discipline ourselves.*

This is not a confining straitjacket of new technical procedural rules. It is mostly a matter of becoming very aware of what to avoid in our traffic with our conceptual terms. The disciplining is not a constricting list of '*do's*', but rather a liberating one of '*don't's*'.

[From ch. 1: Aims and approaches]

Variables and universals; processes and contents; external and internal; species and personal

The analysis and unraveling of dynamic patterns in the variety of mental phenomena and underlying processes of human behavior require that we make some main distinctions. The first is between what is *universal* and what is *variable* in character. The second is between what is a matter of regularity of *processes*

underlying behavior and what is a matter of regularity of behavioral *contents*. In the taxonomic manner of ordering subject matter, these two distinctions would lead to just lumping together the universal with regularity of underlying process, and the variable with regularity of behavioral content. Taking instead a process-analytical approach, I stay alert to the dynamics of processes and phenomena where the underlying processes are *not*, in one way or another, universal or where the behavioral contents partly or wholly *are*.

But this is still not all there is to it. To do justice to the complexity of the human situation, in addition to 'universal versus variable' and 'depth process versus behavioral content,' two more, likewise basic distinctions in the phenomena and processes of mental life must be taken into account: the third distinction concerns *origin*, and the fourth concerns *generality*.

Distinction 3 is between *internal characteristics*, built in *as such*, of the organism that displays the feature and *externally derived* features. In other words, is the feature *genotypic* or *phenotypic* in character? About this pair of concepts I shall have more to say below.

Distinction 4 concerns a feature's *generality of application*—that is, whether or not it applies to human beings *species-wide*. In other words, is it a property of the species as such? Or is it a feature which wholly or partly belongs to some people but not to others, one which at any rate *individually differentiates* between specific members of the species?

Here, too, a taxonomic approach might easily give rise to the temptation to lump together the alternatives listed first in all four distinctions: universality, underlying process, internal origin, and species-wide extent. But this would be asking for trouble. What, for instance, about the famous example of socialization, which as a process is universal for all human societies and in content is highly variable between them? The dynamics of species-wide occurrence are certainly relevant here, but to characterize socialization as organically internal in origin would not only be nonsensical but would also be highly misleading in terms of explanation. No matter how universal socialization is as a process, as a societal phenomenon it is not something we are born with but something we learn. The relevant feature we are born with (i.e., the internal characteristic applicable) is our capacity to learn (the capacity must still translate into a motivation to perform the job expected of it here). Insight into socialization questions, then, requires thinking in terms of nature, society, and culture, with the learning capacity as the N contribution and socialization emerging as a product of the interaction of this N with the relevant S and C forces. A mistaken attribution of dynamics would prevent the proper analysis.

Likewise, a natural conjunction might be claimed for variability, content level, external derivation, and differentiation on the level of the individual. As a description of the particular socialization practices, which are variable in content from one culture to another, external derivation now fits well enough, since what we do in our socialization activities is learned behavior, not specifically genetically programmed. But here the juxtaposition with individual differentiation as a basic characteristic goes awry. No doubt some of us learn more easily than others, but primary here is the fact that all members of society are socialized and have to use their learning capacities for it. Socialization is not only universal as a process in society but also shared by all human beings as a species, even though it is learned behavior, not genetically imprinted, and even though it varies enormously from one place to another and from one person to another.

Why bother with distinctions that at first sight look self-explanatory? Particular distinctions may in

dynamics go well with other distinctions, supporting alliances in behavioral dynamics easily expected by theorists, but (and this is the point) they may also unexpectedly deviate and prove impossible to reconcile, thus compelling the analyst to ask further questions and to explore at greater depth.

[From ch. 2: The main forces of human behavior]

The 'alethic'/'deontic' contrast

There is with regard to examining and judging things a familiar and basic distinction between what in the social sciences are often called 'the empirical' and 'the normative' territories of judgment, and in philosophy the spheres of 'Is' and 'Ought'. The former sphere has to do with the world of facts, with what things are like; the latter, with the world of appreciations, how things are evaluated. Statements about things in the former sphere are called correct or right (in the sense of *true*) when the description of a thing seems to correspond with what it is like in fact. Statements in the latter sphere, the sphere of appreciation, are said to be correct or right (in the sense of *valuable*) as soon as some arbiter of appreciative correctness finds them to be so.

The point of the distinction, and the reason for its basic importance in human cognition, is that the extent to which something is positively or negatively appreciated (no matter how valuable or reprehensible its credentials) can never make any difference to the rightness or wrongness of its factual description (the extent to which the description is true). Otherwise, there would be no way to differentiate between wishful thinking on the one hand (how one would like things to be) and reality-perceptive thinking on the other (how things factually turn out to be).

In both empirical and normative questions there is a judgment relation between a judging subject and a judged object. But in the former case (how things are) the characteristics of the judged *object* as such are what matters; in the latter case (how things are appreciated) the characteristics of the judging *subject* are decisive for the outcome. In order to get any insightful hold on reality problems at all, the human mind must be able to grasp the difference.

As a rule, the basic distinction between thinking in the realms of Is and Ought (factual description and analysis on the one hand, evaluation and appreciation on the other) is clear enough and does not invite misunderstandings. But all simplicity disappears when the judging is by people of other people, which certainly includes the judgments of human behavior by students of human nature. To speak of 'man's humanity and his inhumanity to men' is just one of innumerable instances where evaluative, analytical, appreciative and descriptive exercises have jelled into one intractable mix.

Throughout this book I shall use a different contrasting pair of basic terms in processes of judgment. For questions about realities as they exist, which seek answers that are true, I speak of *alethic* (derived from ancient Greek 'truth'). For questions about desirabilities, which seek answers that are valuable, I use the term *deontic* (derived from ancient Greek 'duty').

Whence this unusual terminology? The terms alethic and deontic are little known and do not suffer from the customary associations and contaminations with which traditional terms such as 'Is' and 'Ought' are saddled. More importantly, they can for that very reason be systematically employed to cover territories which are less easily analyzed in surveys working with concepts such as 'empirical' and 'normative'.

The uses of the term alethic extend to all aspects of reality-percipient truth seeking: theory formation as

well as empirical procedures; principles of analytical productivity as well as of perceptual organization; instruments for attaining coherence as well as correspondence as prime cognitive aids in the mastering of reality through insight.

The gains for the field of evaluative judgments are immediately apparent. The present freshness of the term 'deontic' makes it possible to extend in a realistic manner the idea of the 'desirable' from what in appreciative thinking is officially thought to deserve being desired to what people may actually think desirable without meriting official (or their own normative) approval. This opens up a whole new field to alethic (scientific) investigation. Deontics, in this broad sense of being concerned with the desirabilities of all desires, cover a large slice of human concerns; hence, the *alethics* of the *deontic field* demand special attention of their own and must necessarily be central in a theory of human motivation.

[From ch. 4: Inner conflicts]

Gauss distribution instead of laws

What about the regularities that occur in human affairs? How to conceive of them; how to handle them? The question arises because, after all, mental regularities met with in concrete human situations, whether on the level of surface phenomena or in depth, whether the outcome of variations or a reflection of universals, are just human regularities. As such, these can never be an all-or-nothing matter. In the search here undertaken for patterns in behavioral (mental) human affairs we need to realize that any regularities we discern never apply with the kind of validity of natural laws.

In the social sciences, the thing nearest to a law is what we obtain when pluralities of people show ways of behaving which can be proclaimed to demonstrate — in the relevant socio-cultural context — the ordinary, or representative, or 'normal' way to be or to act. This, and no more, is what the discovery of regularities in the collective life and in personal behavior can signify. It is certainly possible to claim validity for the generalizations about all sorts of aspects and elements of human lives thus obtained, if only we realize that the behavioral regularities found possess neither the strength nor even the character of laws.

The reasons why are straightforward: there can be no laws about human behavior in society that apply in any absolute sense, as in physics, because as human beings we can always behave differently from the representative ways, and thus provide exceptions to general rules. The complexity of interacting influences, together with the principle of organic self-regulation, see to it that there are always persons who have digested learning information idiosyncratically in some respect, or who have built up unlikely action priorities. Even on the level of organic universalities, the evolutionary principle of de-specification just discussed allows for some unpredictability.

In any aggregate of human beings of some size, then, exceptions to the regularities found are bound to occur. This is our one absolute law. It fits in of course with the search for patterns as an alternative to the search for laws in natural science.

What, then, are the consequences of this state of affairs for analysis? Some patterns represent regularities as found in pluralities of people. Whether pertaining to socio-cultural collectivities or to sections of society or to specific categories, such regularities never apply to all individuals examined. They apply to a majority large enough to be considered representative for the investigated phenomenon in question (which may be a matter of behavior but also of dispositions or of characteristics). Statistically this means that the regularity

can be expressed in a distributional curve shaped like an inverted U — bell-shaped, and well-known as the 'Gauss-curve'.

A regularity of this kind makes it possible to inspect in a simple manner the behavioral dynamics of majorities and minorities in the plurality patterns we discover. Whenever we hit upon a majority of people who display a certain pattern, we may also expect to find a minority on the one side of the curve which shows the pattern to a much larger or even extreme extent, and a minority on the other side which shows little sign of it or none.

For our kind of analysis, one of the fascinating things about majority and minority distributional variables is that, human realities not being fixed points on a map, a signaled minority variable may in interacting with other minority variables create a new regularity. Thus, in the same example where I employed empathy as a human phenomenon I noted the existence of a distinct personality pattern marked by special concern for others, growing out of the interaction of unusually strong empathy with other factors propitious for the development of the pattern.

[From ch. 2: The main forces of human behavior]

Levels of explanation

A possible source of confusion concerns levels of explanation. Take a case like the following: some regularity in human behavior is noticed, the question arises why we behave like that, and the answer refers to the useful biological purpose which the regularity serves.

Silly answers like this almost always point at a confusion between levels of explanation. Biologistically minded theorists suffer from such confusion when they declare, for instance, that some people perform altruistic acts to their own detriment because altruism has a function in the preservation of the species. So do sociologistically minded theorists when they explain people's suddenly flocking to church in times of emergency by declaring that churchgoing strengthens community ties.

In the sciences of life, we ought to distinguish between three levels of explanation of the behavior of human beings — distinctions which, in explaining the whys and wherefores of human behavior, should be kept in mind always.

Why this is so, can be illustrated simply by asking the classic question why most people like sex and pay a lot of attention to it. When asked why human beings have sex so often, few observers will give the silly answer, 'because sex serves procreation', since they know full well that most people, when having sex, go out of their way most of the time to ensure that there is no procreation. They will just give the perfectly right, phenomenological answer: 'because most people like sex a lot; they get a great deal of pleasure from sex'.

This is the first, experiential, level of explanation. It is of course fully in line with the general finding that when we voluntarily choose to do something this is because in one way or another it makes us feel good (this is always the first thing to seek to confirm in an explanatory sequence of human behavior).

Far from a final answer, this first-level explanation seems rather an invitation to keep asking. The next question then is: why do most people like sex such a lot? Indeed, why on earth should we derive so much pleasure from something so untidy, unhygienic, uncomfortably exerting and so revealing of a standardized succession of animal tics and compulsive movements as the sexual act? The rather lame answer can only be something in the nature of 'we cannot help it, we are built that way'. This straightforward answer is the

second level of explanation.

For all its lameness this is no longer mere understanding but a real process explanation, which moves insight to another level. This is the level of the human organism — how it is put together, how it works.

The second level of explanation must never be skipped, and yet, it is still only an intermediate level. Inevitably it invites a new question: why should the organism be built that way?

Only now have we arrived at the third, or theoretical level of explanation. In the life sciences it tends to be functionalist. Now the answer can finally refer to the fact that sex must be biologically built in because it is necessary for procreation (with additional points regarding the special human situation, where sex is 'liberated' from the periodic restraints supplied for most animal species, on which are imposed specific response mechanisms to particular stimuli).

As far as scientific interest is concerned, this third degree of explanation is the ultimate one (even though on a metaphysical level the questioning of why things are as they are may only now begin in earnest).

Remarkably, from the first to the third degree of these process explanations the levels of abstraction and generality have increased to such an extent that phenomenological human reality seems to have been wholly left behind. Yet the progression seems inevitable. Of course there is nothing wrong with this — it is mandatory even — as long as the level differences are kept in mind.

Even so, third-degree explanations, on the level of biological functions for the species (or of macro-functions for society), *can never explain actual human behavior*. Nor can we ever skip the level of first-degree explanations, which give direct understanding (even if no more than that). Similarly, with regard to human motives the insight that in everything we do we try to achieve good feelings and avoid bad feelings must never be left out, even though this insight does no more than open a preliminary gateway to the analysis of human motivation.

Second-degree explanations are indispensable as a bridge between the first and the third. Both the nature and the variety of factors inherent in most human actions can be revealed only at this level. Suppose, for instance, that the question which served us as an example had not been a simple 'why do people like sex?' but rather 'why does this person like this type of sex'? In such a case all simplicity of explanatory steps would have evaporated, and a variety of factors that contribute to the actual specific behavior would have to be analyzed.

Third-level explanations of general application are of little help here; the analytical work must be done on the levels of the first and second degree. Broad, speculative surmises at the third level should therefore be kept at a minimum, and certainly never take the place of the others.

The meta-methodological principle here involved may serve as an aid to analytical thinking, just as I showed earlier with the statistical bell-shaped, or Gaussian, distribution curve of regularities shown by human pluralities.

[From ch. 3: The organic basics of human behavior]

This book and the social sciences

General statement

The kind of insight sought in this book constitutes an essential, though of course no more than preliminary,

step in tackling with some chance of success the problems that menace humanity in our times. It is the one way in which human science can make a substantial contribution to the world of action now: *to recognize the complexity of the human make-up, to discover the structure of this complexity, and to provide insights into the ways in which it fills human behavior.*

The quest, while arduous, is fascinating in its own right. But how can it be that the contribution here sought is not already available? After all, scientific investigations of human behavior are many and highly varied, and they are thriving concerns.

Unfortunately, the efforts made so far are uncoordinated, competitive, contradictory, and partial at best, and above all, *they do not add up*. To the extent that they aspire to general explanations of human behavior, they overgeneralize on simplistic grounds. A general accumulation of empirical data, such as has so successfully served the theoretical grip on reality attained by the natural sciences, is lacking; nor will it become possible in human science without a great deal of disciplining of theoretical, analytical, and conceptual thinking.

Consequently, an effort in this direction, such as undertaken in this book, is bound to be a pioneer enterprise in many respects. And yet, very many regularities have already been recorded. Our quest is considerably facilitated — in fact, it could not have been attempted at all — without the availability of a great deal of scientific knowledge about human behavior, as gathered in about a century and a half of systematic research in the human sciences generally, and in the social sciences in particular.

[from ch. 1: Aims and approaches]

Treatment of the social science literature

To avoid adding a further layer of complexity to a treatise already sufficiently complex by virtue of its subject matter, throughout this book the insights and views promoted occupy center stage. I shall make but little effort to criticize specific theories I disagree with. Nor shall I call attention to purported or real shortcomings of current, diverging views, except when theoretical clarity and analytical considerations make it imperative to do so. There will be no citations of individual authors with whom I disagree. Nor, for that matter, of the many views of which I approve.

The point is this. The following pages do not contradict (or even deviate substantially from) numerous main findings readily available in the social sciences of psychology, sociology, and cultural anthropology. I have worked in these disciplines for a lifetime, and the insights propounded here are squarely based on empirical findings and conceptual achievements attained in them. The difference this book claims to make is in three principal regards only. It faces up to human complexity squarely and without sidestepping. It offers a theory of human motivation that expands what may be encountered in the literature and is more comprehensive than what has so far been attempted, without becoming speculative. And it approaches our biological make-up and the consequences of consciousness with analytical tools of a mostly novel kind.

[from ch. 1: Aims and approaches]

Crucial differences with the social science literature

In this book I have deliberately abstained from explicit confrontation with the customary social science literature. Instead, I have done things my own way in deciding on analytical priorities, in dealing with

empirical data, and in finding criteria for sound reasoning when plausible-looking explanations are at stake. That is, I have presented my own methodology and my own way of forming theories. I have preferred to offer clear-cut alternatives of my own, because I considered these to be more productive. What, in all this, have I sought to accomplish, and what not?

I do not believe in looking for instinctive — genetic — mechanisms for every regularity of human behavior patterns met on the phenomenological level. Human heredity does not work that way. Sociobiologists and biopsychologists, in fashion for as long as it lasts, mostly make fools of themselves with their compulsive efforts to find biological explanations, with evolutionary survival value, for every cultural or social regularity they come across (or, for that matter, for every behavioral difference between one human category and another). Not that there cannot be organically built-in tendencies which find expression of some sort in regularities of behavior; surely there are, but on another level entirely.

I do not believe either in looking for sociological or culturological explanations of human behavior patterns divorced from — that is, unrelated to — regularities of human nature. If that were possible, it would save us a lot of work. In fact, much monocausal social or cultural — or, at its best, sociocultural — research now available has proved theoretically sterile due to conceptual fuzziness, one-sidedness, and lack of human depth. Even so, as providers of the contexts in which we as human beings live our lives, work by numerous sociologists and anthropologists, whether out of fashion or not, is of truly great value. In providing some of the process determinants of human behavior patterns, we cannot do without insights derived from these disciplines.

In my treatment the interaction between the main determinants of Nature, Society and Culture is no longer directed towards the generalities of basic human motivation, as related to specific variables which are derived from socioculturally differentiating forces. Rather, it is about specifically built-in tendencies of the human organism, in interaction with societal forces of a mostly general nature.

Each in its own way, and all of them in the tradition of monocausal explanation, many pychological theories claim selfishness to be the one main motivator of our social actions. This is meant to explain everything in one fell swoop. Equally monocausal sociological theories proclaim humans in their interactions to be essentially just passive executors of societal first causes; therefore whatever regularities of a pro-social nature arise are thought to be a product of sociocultural learning and/or mechanisms (depending on the sociological school one belongs to).

My own enquiry into our motivational equipment has found different. I have demonstrated for a start that it makes no sense to reduce personal motivation to self-seeking and self-maintaining impulses (with other persons being included at best as ego-extensions). I also found that both altruist and selfish patterns of behavior at the phenotypical level are better viewed as end-products of intricate chains of interacting variables than as main determinants at the beginning of such chains.

Nevertheless there are some tendencies, part of the human situation at all times, which at the least carry pro-social consequences. To investigate the reach of these has now become the specific assignment of the present chapter.

[From ch. 17: Pro-social prospects]

Evil: a preliminary consideration

In discussing questions of good and evil in human behavior, I am about to pass various judgments and to express certain convictions which may raise eyebrows. The discussion is likely to cross the sometimes uncertain and at all times delicate dividing line between human science and moral philosophy.

To be sure, in the argument developed in this book so far I have not observed appreciative neutrality, either. Pro-social — or, more widely put, humanist — elements acquired special importance. Motives, feelings and actions of a nature which appeared to be beneficial for others as well as for those expressing them, or for society in general, were weighed against detrimental ones. On a number of occasions and with regard to a variety of situations, I expressed concern in this regard.

A very large question is inherent in all this. Why express expectations — or even hope — about such things in the first place? Surely it is not self-evident that, in a book about human nature, ethical questions may be relevant; a book, in other words, about how things are, not about how we might like them to be.

Actually, there is nothing either haphazard or arbitrary about this. I have counted considerations of human well-being as relevant to the enterprise for three principal reasons. The first is a scientifically 'objective' reason; the second is about purposes which 'justify' employing insights for non-scientific ends; the third pertains to 'subjective' limitations inherent in 'objective' research on human beings.

[Introduction to ch. 16]

The requirements of objectivity in science

The dangers of subjective bias loom large throughout this book, for the simple reason already that questions of a moral nature are part of what is investigated all the time. Intended impartiality of analysis may be unwittingly contaminated by personal preference.

Indeed, is it at all proper, feasible, and not incapacitating at the outset, for a human scientist to dabble in questions of a moral nature?

Proper subject-matter it surely is — since we as human beings are occupied by moral matters a great deal of the time, consideration of those matters cannot very well be left out if the student is at all serious about his chosen field of study.

The *feasibility* question requires a nuanced investigation, unless you take a dogmatic stance and side with the option 'incapacitating at the outset', as indeed both positivists and relativists do. The 'positivist' attitude simply forbids the human scientist to deal with moral choices at all (which quickly makes the remaining avenues for studying human beings irrelevant). The 'relativist' attitude declares the whole undertaking to be subjective by definition anyway (which turns the scientific study of human beings by human beings into an illusion).

A more nuanced approach recognizes the dangers of bias that beset the scientist who, human himself, has chosen to study human beings, but seeks to arm him against these dangers as well as possible. He begins with a distinction between the subject-matter, or object studied, and the way it is being looked at. This is best done by creating conceptual clarity in the terminology right from the outset.

In this book the terms *alethic* (derived from ancient Greek 'truth') and *deontic* (derived from ancient Greek 'duty') will be employed whenever a distinction is apt between the factual and the desirable. Alethic

questions are concerned with the real, exploring the realities of the world as it exists, seeking answers that are 'true'. Deontic questions are concerned with the desirable, with the world as it ought to be, seeking answers that are 'right'. While this distinction corresponds to the time-honoured distinction in moral philosophy between 'Is' and 'Ought' (German 'Sein / Sollen'), there are advantages in employing the comparatively virginal, hitherto unknown or differently employed pair of terms. 'Ought' or deontic questions can be asked in philosophy about what is right, regardless of what is factually, alethically, the case. In science 'Is' or alethic questions can be asked about what truly is the case regardless of what deontically ought to be. But a scientific study of human situations and motivations brings the two kinds of questions together in a special way. It certainly does not ask primarily what people ought to want, but in asking *what they want in fact* it encounters one of the vagaries of human nature. We often — at times wholly, at times only partly, which is part of the complexity — do factually want what we are supposed to ought to want. And even if we do not at all want what other people think we ought to want, we are confronted with social consequences for not doing so. So a scientific study of human nature most definitely includes what can be called the alethic investigation of human deontics. It is one of the major behavioral fields to be investigated.

For the responsible human scientist, this clean demarcation between what the investigated field is about and what the criteria for the investigational approach must contain is enough to protect him against the coarser forms of bias. The main thing, then, is to work out the alethic criteria for approaching the sensitive subject-matter explicitly, and stick to them as well as one can. Self-deception still threatens — it always does — but, as it so happens, self-deception is one of the standard cognitive tricks the researcher is bound to meet in a research population that suffers from deontic conflicts. So he is well acquainted with its manifestations, and can train himself to be alert to their appearance in his own case. A self-critical attitude about his susceptibility to bias and its subterfuges needs to be part of the equipment of every human scientist.

But it becomes more difficult when out of an observed multiplicity of contrasting human motives which all have reality-relevance for how things may go in the future, some are more morally desirable (according to some particular deontic preference) than others. Which ones are most likely to prevail? No amount of well-intentioned integrity can wholly protect the scientist from subjectivity when in such cases judgments must be made of factual developments that have not yet come to pass. A dramatic example occurs towards the end of the book, when the recurrent history of wholesale slaughter between human collectivities and the gradual growth of international cooperation on the basis of universal human rights are weighed against each other with regard to probabilities for the future.

The only thing the judge can do in such a case is to come out in the open about his own deontic preferences, which are likely to sway his judgments. In this author's case the point of view is clear. My values are humanist, and I desperately hope that the pro-human 'good' qualities in humans will be able to offset, and successfully combat, the anti-human 'bad' ones. Given my pledge to truthfulness, the last thing I shall consciously do is close my eyes to the latter. But I cannot deny that I am eager — perhaps over-eager — to give the former their due.

[From: Appendix]

Six universal strivings of consciousness: a preliminary consideration

What makes us happy, what gives us durable feelings of well-being? This territory, easily understood and of

great general appeal, has naturally caught the attention of inquiring minds and has become a preserve of popular psychology. There is some cleaning-up to be done.

Not surprisingly, numerous key explanations exist of what our innermost selves are after, what we seem to be guided by, what we aspire to in our quests for happiness, for the good life, for inner fulfillment. The reasons may differ, yet here as much as in more rigorous branches of thinking about human beings, one-sided insights in distinct processes are typical, while something close to anarchy reigns in the field as a whole. In the official academic centers, organizational and group interests have been the main forces behind the persistence of bias; in popular writings, over-generalizing, mono-causal thinking is supported in addition by the lure of best-seller sales, which encourages the venting of sensational claims.

All this is a pity, for the main themes are highly relevant. Take, for instance, the search for meaning. Efforts undertaken to make sure that life has a *meaningfulness* for you which amounts to more than chasing your own personal interests is definitely a universal aspiration of some importance. But in the manner in which its advocates push the theme they are apt to argue their case at the expense of other, contrasting themes of active attention which are also impressive as permanent aspirations, such as, for example, *ego-satisfactions* or *sensual delights*. The latter themes of course find their own defenders. As a result, analyses tend to be flawed becasue of overstatement — they claim too much explanatory value for the theme of choice and do not allow for the existence of contradictory aspirations as possibly universally important as well. Also, in the eagerness to uphold one's claim, the explanatory concept of choice becomes so expansionist, all the while being defined loosely or with shifting meanings, that particular process dynamics cannot be sufficiently distinguished from other ones. As a net result, what the theme dealt with actually contributes to human motivation remains as uncertain in nature and strength and as non-committal in its argumentation as it was before.

Rather than minimizing the importance of any general themes of conscious pursuit, my aim here is (a) to find and distinguish those which do possess particular universal dynamics of their own; (b) to place these within the totality of behavioral processes, and so (c) to arrive at an understanding of their nature and their contribution to the patterns of motivated human action.

[Introduction to ch. 5]

In need of systematic feed-back

In the end my claim to have found a rewarding pathway toward the analysis of our common nature rests on the authority of evolutionary theory. How different is this from arguing in favor of any other thesis on the sheer authority of claims to be in possession of the truth, such as the authority of the Bible? As far as going by authority is concerned, it is no wonder that born-again Christians claim equal rights with evolutionary theory for their own approach to be taught at schools. The difference in the respective merits of these points of view lies elsewhere.

The special merit of scientific findings with regard to competing claims to truth lies in their being open to correction: they are susceptible to procedures of verification and falsification which makes correction as to the validity of what is claimed possible. We no longer have to accept any views on authority — full stop. The great achievement of modern science has been that it developed procedures which obtained decisive

feedback as to whether suppositions regarding how things are and how they came to be that way tally with external reality.

In the life science of biology this was even more difficult to achieve than in the physical sciences, and much is still unknown. Yet the success of its principal tenets has been well-nigh total. More than enough feedback was obtained from paleontological and physical-anthropological evidence to establish the explanatory value of evolutionary theory, which argues that a human species arose from forebears it shared with other primates and that its special adaptive equipment in the Darwinian struggle for survival has been the extraordinary development of the human brain.

The approach here followed has further consequences. One disadvantage of human science generally (the social sciences principally) is that it just has not managed to develop standard procedures guaranteeing feedback from reality comparable to (or in any way approximating) what the methodology of the natural sciences has provided in getting a valid grip on laws which explain the natural world. The parallel phenomenon that there has been no dependable general accumulation of empirical data on which to base joint efforts to formulate theories in human science has not helped matters. The shortcomings entailed by all this have been exacerbated by the way the subject matter (human concerns) has been parceled up among academic disciplines. These became institutionally competitive and so, owing to mutual ignorance or to incompatible conceptualizations, could not benefit from each other's findings — all the while needing each other badly for further growth.

In sum, proven methodological procedures for obtaining reality feedback are just not available in human science, so one primary task is to find ways of dealing with the subject matter which approximate proper feedback to the largest extent possible and which at least guarantee analytic quality. Valid *coherence* in the argumentation (in both the formation of theories and the use of concepts) must compensate to the best of my ability for what is still lacking in ease of *correspondence* with objective reality. That is, I aim throughout this book to conceptualize matters of substance properly.

Next, I shall pay special critical attention to topics in which the human sciences generally (and the social sciences in particular) have failed as yet to overcome procedural weaknesses or (at a minimum) have failed to reach agreement about *how* to overcome them. A number of these weaknesses concern defective modes of thinking and reasoning (such as overgeneralizing). These can be blamed in part on monocausal explanatory traditions which are unproductive in human situations, but they also flow from lack of attention to simple logic and to discipline in our handling of terms.

Exacerbating the situation is an ongoing underestimation of the complexity of the human make-up. In addition, the phenomena of human *consciousness* are still badly understood. These tend to be treated as a non-existent or else as an all-embracing factor in the explanation of human actions. The contribution of consciousness to the explanation of behavior is that it adds to the complexities underlying specifically human motivation and also complicates impulses shared with other species. For the explanation of behavior as such, a further complication of consciousness rests in this: customary ways of explaining events as determined causally by preceding ones are not really *replaced* for humans, yet they are *supplemented* by another principle, which is that some actions require explanation as goal-directed actions indicating purposeful choice.

Differences between natural and human science

The insistence on mono-causal thinking has proved highly fertile in the natural sciences but counter-productive in the sciences of man. To take wing, the latter should not only allow for the occurrence of complexities but actually start from multi-dimensionality in the analysis of events. The primary methodological task for us therefore is not to seek to liberate human affairs of their complexity but to make their many-sidedness manageable.

To that end I have strewn all over this book analytical and conceptual notes with recommendations and suggestions for improving our thinking in and with complexities. Rather than presenting these all-in-one, I have introduced them as the topics dealt with seemed to warrant.

I saw it as a primary task to offer alternatives for one-dimensional, all-or-nothing, and either/or theorizing. This is why I have kept alerting the reader to the limitations of taxonomic thinking, which by way of an alternative to the stark choice between black and white makes the investigator opt automatically for an in-between entity, gray, on the same simple level, halfway between black and white. Instead, I have recommended and also, throughout the present book, sought to practice what I call process analysis, that is, thinking in terms of a plurality of independent and intermediary variables from different levels of analysis, with the ensuing interaction being held responsible for the behavior shown by the dependent variable.

By the same token I felt bound to make distinctions between matters which are frequently thrown onto one indiscriminate heap but whose dynamic distinctness in the power they exert is a pre-condition for understanding things human. This led to an exposition of multiple human faculties, multiple kinds of basic motivation, multiple kinds of basic influences or determinants of human action (including the cultural and the social structural as well as the generally biological). After all, the interactions between all such entities with dynamics of their own can only be studied after they have been properly distinguished.

Concerning the generalization of our findings I have emphasized time and again the need to be alert to the nature of regularities in human pluralities: never an all-or-nothing matter, always a question of a majority of persons who display the regularity to a fair extent, with a minority at one end of the spectrum doing so to an extreme extent and another, at the other end, displaying the regularity hardly or not at all.

I further addressed the complications that arise from the interaction of human 'free will', contingent on the emergence of consciousness, and 'determinism', inexorably bound to the lasting presence of organic impulses, each subject to dynamics irreducible to those of the other.

Both with regard to my own approach and in my observation of how people go about things, I pinpointed the difference between (alethic) reality questions that look for what is true and (deontic) desirability questions that look for what is good. Hence, I examined the difference (in alethic questions) between instruments of correspondence and of coherence, as well as the difference (in deontic questions) between general human dynamics present in ethics and culturally relative dynamics.

Last but not least, I stressed the importance of one of the most neglected topics in human science thinking: the need to distinguish between diverging meanings hidden in the mono-use of conceptual words. Here resides an important source of muddled thinking, and one of the basic reasons for why systematic general theorizing in the human sciences has failed to take flight. Yet it is most often shrugged off as mere

pedantry, of no real concern to the serious scientist.

Here, too, the cultural climate is no help. To treat diverging meanings in conceptual terms as a mere trifle, and generally to pay no heed to different dynamic processes which may be involved, helps to keep things look simple, thus suiting the monist mood.

Grooves are not gotten rid off any easy or simple way. One consolation is that, since the insistence on mono-causal principles and on reductionist thinking in the natural sciences is very much a learned pattern, the principles of multi-causal thinking as applicable in the human sciences are not beyond being learned either.

[From ch. 15: Rationality]

Genotype and phenotype

A great deal of my thinking about motivational universals so far has been about, on the one hand, theoretically assumed, organically built-in impulses to action (genotypes) and, on the other, empirically observed regularities in actual motivated behavior (phenotypes). The ways in which they relate to each other are central to the quest here undertaken.

The capacity to walk upright seems a simple example of a genetically given potential which human beings share with each other; as it happens, it also sets us apart from other animal species. It is easy to conclude that this is a genotypical characteristic if ever there was one.

Of course, since the human infant is not at birth physically ready for walking, the actual walking behavior of humans — hands and arms left free to do other things — can only be a phenotype (the product of a mix of influences which took time to come about). In the production of this phenotype, early learning in a social interaction context is involved, even though in this case the learning is as much if not more by observation and imitation than from instruction and encouragement. But it is not difficult to relate the phenotypic performance ability to a straightforwardly genotypic basis.

For mental features the analysis that relates phenotypic achievement to genotypic antecedent is more complicated. Some species-specific mental abilities, universal for humans but not shared by other species, such as human cognitive powers, still appear to be as clearly genetically grounded as a physical one like walking upright. But this is so simply because the development of cognitive powers is part of the evolutionary adaptive specialization of the human species; it belongs to our species' biological heritage. Cognitive differences within the species (i.e., between human individuals) pale into insignificance beside the differences in this respect between the human species as a whole and other species.

Still, the question is rather whether, and if so to what extent, given genotypic differences in mental characteristics such as cognitive capacity may also be responsible for behavioral differences between one individual organism and another within the species. In physiological matters (e.g., inherited diseases) this rarely complicates analysis badly, whereas with respect to mental dispositions it is problematic from the very beginning.

For instance, it would again seem easy to conclude from the awesome differences in actual ability in cognitive matters which on the phenotypic level are plain to the eye that some persons are just born more cognitively gifted than others. But as we have seen throughout this book so far, it is extremely difficult

straightforwardly to trace, let alone reduce, phenotypically observed differences in mental functions to comparable inborn differences in ability potentials. Too many variable factors during the growth of the individual have left their imprint on the development of the ability, in unpredictable and idiosyncratic interactions: social ones, cultural ones, inter-personal ones, socialization ones, intra-personal depth ones, even other genotypically given ones (such as differences in basic temperament). Add to this that, with regard to cognitive capacities, there is not just one cognitive ability potential but a number of quite distinct ones, such as ease of learning, ease of toolmaking, and ease of conceptual thinking. These all interact with each other as well as (each in its own way) with the other variables. So this, too, stands in the way of facile generalizations.

As a result, in the human motivational situation generally a great distance exists between, on the one hand, what on the *phenotypic* level is actually observed in behavioral regularities and, on the other hand, what may lie behind these regularities in native *genotypic* mental equipment that differs from one individual to another (in addition to the mental equipment potentials for development which all non-brain-damaged members of the species share). In itself this is not really surprising. After all, the long human maturation period for learning from cultural impregnation, instruction, example, and experience is responsible for the abundance of influences, and this maturation process is itself biologically built in for the effectuation of the evolutionary adaptive purpose.

As a consequence, the application of general evolutionary theory to the human species requires an analysis which accounts for the processes that occur *between* genotypic givens and phenotypic regularities in human behavior. This is a neglected field. The neglect has led to a gap in our knowledge of the whys and wherefores in the ways of humans.

In mental matters no 'right' line leads forward from genotypic theory to phenotypic empirical reality, nor does a right line lead back from empirically proven behavioral frequencies to theoretically plausible explanations. There are plenty of connections, but they are complex, divergent, full of loops and cross-references, never causally simple; the best to be hoped for in analysis is the emergence of revealing patterns.

This circumstance has created an explanatory gap in the analysis of mental human regularities, which demands to be filled up but has not so far been tackled fully. An awareness of the gap, which would at least alert us to the problem, may also be lacking. A lack of awareness of its existence is a shortcoming in theory formation that is often encountered in theories based, as mine is, on humanity as a biological animal species, considered in an evolutionary context.

Of course, the more socially and culturally inclined among human scientists are very much aware of the wealth of environmental determinants of human behavior. However, they tend to neglect the nature of the biological animal and therefore to make us in one way or another passive receptacles of outside influences without further ado. On the other hand, the biologically inclined among human scientists have tended to neglect the impact of experiential factors. They are usually content to ignore the difference between regularities actually shown on the phenotypic level of behavior and the natural native characteristics which in one way or another may or may not have gone into their making. In my view, this lack of interest in what comes between genotypic and phenotypic as apparent in biologists' thinking about human beings, may be attributed to naiveté, or it may just be due to incomplete theorizing.

In the case of theoretical naiveté, explanatory short-cuts abound. As soon as they are widely shared, human phenomena of even a most intricately sophisticated, complex kind are explained by claiming a simple, special, separate genetic basis for them. And as soon as a distinctive feature in some persons is observed, which makes them in that respect different from most other people, the existence of a genetic mutation is posited to explain it. The complex intricacies of phenotypic regularities are just not allowed for. There is no gap between phenotype and genotype because there is no difference between them. And there is no difference between them because there is no gap. All we have to do is to find a plausible biological survival function for the special gene posited in everybody or for the genetic mutation posited in some, and explanation is assured.

In the case of incomplete theorizing, the consequences for behavioral regularities of the human evolutionary specialization in brain development (together with all its biological corollaries) are ignored, left vague, or just not taken into consideration. The empty space between basic genetic equipment and phenotypic regularities of behavior is not fully faced, let alone systematically inspected. Nor can it be, because ways to go about it have not been worked out.

One advantage that my primary principle of analysis, organic self-regulation (OSR), bestows on theory formation is that it necessitates the working out of an intricate interactional field of universal and variable forces of diverse origins that enable the actual regularities of human behavior to be understood. This may have been painstaking work. But it has ensured that these regularities can actually *be* understood.

There should not be the slightest doubt about what has made it possible to achieve this. It is to conceive of OSR as having come about as a second strategic principle of evolutionary adaptation, an alternative — gradually increasing in importance during the evolution of species — to the fixed instincts strategy of adaptation. In introducing the distinction I have called it the *experiential learning strategy of adaptation*. It allows individual organisms (cooperating with others of their kind) to adapt to changing environmental demands by processing these from moment to moment on the basis of their own interpretive capacities, improved through the developments of culture, learning and skill.

True enough, this alternative strategy of *active processing* before undertaking action remains only partial even in the human species (it applies fully to activation-dependent mental capacity motivation rather than to homeostatically regulated physiological motivation, whereas emergency-ruled fight-or-flight motivation follows different dictates again). No thoughtful theorist has doubts about the dynamics of active processing as an explanation for the overwhelming success of humans in the inter-species 'struggle for survival'. At least implicitly, the tenets of the alternative strategy of evolutionary adaptation are universally embraced in the explanation of human behavior.

Even so the reader needs to be warned. At the present stage of knowledge it is no more than common sense to proceed analytically from the processing dynamics of OSR, and yet, *explicitly* it is rarely employed systematically, if at all. To old-fashioned biologists, its consequences for the relation between phenotypic and genotypic in the human situation may actually seem revolutionary still. Not attuned to the complexities of the human species, they still tend without further reflection to apply the model of the first strategy (with minimal corrections as animal species move up the evolutionary ladder of developments in the central nervous system) to the analysis of human behavior as well.

However, you cannot at one and the same time have the advantages of immediate specific rightness of response to stimuli and the advantages of processing information before the right response is decided on. The latter, of necessity, entails a new processing principle — *de-specification* of the responses that would otherwise be given automatically in anticipation of adaptive adequacy.

It may be objected that the tendency towards de-specifying representative responses to external stimuli in much of the human behavioral repertoire complicates analysis. And so it does. As for the objection: so much the worse for the simplicity of analysis; to simplify it does not change the nature of reality.

In my theory of basic motivation I have taken pains to distill organically based universalities of three kinds for their all-over predominance, whether conducted in states of consciousness or not. Yet, when we look at the varieties and unpredictabilities of impulses to action in daily reality, these basics may well seem to fall apart or else spread at random, to dwindle or diversify without rhyme or reason, and generally to get messed up or mysteriously mixed up or even just lost. The consequences of human consciousness are quickly blamed. But here a discovery lay in wait: basic organic motivation does not cease to function systematically but is in practice integrated into a new set of universals, themselves the products of consciousness and demonstrating new, phenotypic regularities. The analysis in this and previous chapters has shown how it is done.

Six universal strivings of consciousness interact in a consciousness management system which sees to the expression of basic motivation. The special merit of analysis in terms of *usc*'s and of the consciousness management system as a theoretical construct is that it reveals some of the main dialectics and processes involved in the development in humans that goes from shared genotypes, through a diversity of variables, to shared phenotypes — universal again, but on a new, different basis. On that basis, the gap can persuasively be filled up. As an extension of my analysis of basic motivation, this is the second major contribution of the theory here put forward.

Ideal illustrations for my argument are supplied by the fields of justice and injustice and of beauty and ugliness. They do touch on universals of human concern, very much so, yet not (as just noted) at the genotypic but rather at the phenotypic level.

Ethics and aesthetics, important parts of our lives everywhere and throughout human history, are very complex phenomena. At the same time they indicate clearly what processes eventuate between genotypic and phenotypic regularities and what part *usc*'s and the consciousness management system have to play in them.

The moral life certainly has a great deal to do with judgments; judgments are inseparably bound up with the gifts of cognition; cognition precedes the trials and tribulations of consciousness. But questions of justice are unthinkable without the awareness of ourselves and of others, which includes the awareness of both the links with and the differences from others. These states of awareness come with consciousness.

Hence, the emergence of a general ethical sense, with principles of deontic logic, is a natural enough outcome of the post-conscious striving for *grip*. Grip includes getting cognitive grasp of something which exists in its own right and therefore possesses characteristics of its own; one gets grasp by finding out what those characteristics in fact are.

This leads us without further ado to the main point. The right of other people to be looked at in this

manner—they possess characteristics of their own—follows at once from considering the situation in this light—other people exist in their own right. Yet this would have been utterly alien to any consideration before consciousness entered the scene.

The foregoing suffices to cover the general aspects of a sense of justice and injustice as a universally present content category of attention. The central dynamic involved is the manner in which conscious awareness of other people's separate existence is involved in deontic logic. This serves as an enlightening guide to understanding the whys and wherefores of the lasting concern of humans with questions of ethics, as well as the inner conflicts to which the awareness may give rise.

More is required to explain how a special devotion to questions of justice may arise as a priority preoccupation of some people, distinct in this respect from the majority of their fellows.

An exceptional devotion to questions of justice is a typical multi-purpose platform. Here a great deal depends on how this part of the striving for grip connects for a person with considerations of other strivings (meaning, attachments, and esteem especially), to say nothing of the intra-personal depth concerns such a person may have.

As for special native predispositions, there is only one biological propensity, built into human motivation organically at the genotypic level, which actually predisposes in this respect. This is empathy. The possibility that a person has been genetically endowed with a predisposition to empathize more than most people need not be excluded (in the population spread of human characteristics there is always a Gaussian distribution to be reckoned with). But in view of the multiple interactions required for a real preoccupation to result, it is clear that the additional genotypic input of empathy can have played only a small part at most.

Just as the emergence of ethics in human behavior is fed by deontic logic, so the emergence of aesthetics as an integral part of human life is fed by the sense of beauty. Very much a matter of the joys of the senses, beauty arises from a particular fulfillment of *hedonic well-being*, while as soon as it becomes intense, it feeds into the potentials of *transport* as well. When the sensations of beauty are produced by art, the production of the artistic effort and its reception and participation require an active engagement of both the *usc* of *grip* and the *usc* of *meaning*. *Grip* is engaged for the form aspects of the art products, which set challenges for comprehension as soon as a certain expertise develops in experiencing them or in making them; *meaning* is engaged for their symbolic content aspects, which make demands on the powers of imagination.

All these needs/capacities are consciousness bound. The larger the extent to which the multiple *usc*'s are engaged, the more fascinating it becomes for us to get involved in art experiences. Moreover, when the sensations of beauty are elaborated for the sake of artistic experience, transport is no longer merely a potential; its *self-transcendence* is what artistic products are meant to culminate in. As noted earlier, this particular *usc* does not even derive support from pre-conscious genotypic homeostatic motivation (as hedonic well-being does) or from capacity motivation (as grip and meaning do); it is entirely a product of the phenotypic regularities that arise from consciousness as such.

A simple genetic endowment as a sufficient condition for the emergence of artistic creativity and products is out of the question. But their omnipresence in human activities is not difficult to understand from another point of view. In the diverse fields of art, platform constellations of the consciousness management system are plentiful; *usc* interactions on these platforms yield an abundance of good feelings.

An interesting aspect is the influence potential for human relations that is inherent in aesthetic sensitivity. A developed feeling for beauty carries alertness in its wake for its opposite, a revulsion against what is felt to be ugly. With feelings generally, and with emotions in particular, a conscious life instantly experiences some affect conditions as beautiful, others as ugly, and this has consequences for how we experience, interpret, and judge our social and inter-personal relations. Not, to be sure, that this consideration should tempt us into entertaining excessively glowing expectations of the pro-social effects of aesthetic sensibility.

[From ch. 12: The consciousness management system]

Arguments taken from evolutionary theory

In finding theoretical explanations for basic processes there is a final or semi-final stage when biological anchoring becomes apposite, imperative even. Wishing to avoid the trap of biologistic speculations, I think the greatest caution must be observed before evolutionary survival fitness and similar mechanisms are claimed as explanations for any features of human nature which seem organically fixed. At the same time it must be regarded as highly plausible that the basic data of the brain humans are still born with today not only evolved under, but were also biologically adapted to, the environmental and social living conditions common to humankind when people were living together in relatively small bands of hunters and food gatherers. Prior to the advent of the neolithical revolution, the natural pro-social provisions may be expected to have worked reasonably well, devoid of the complications, boomerangs, crises of conscience, hypocrisies, self-deceptions, brutal denials or subtle sabotage, the miseries of shame and guilt, or more generally the contradictions, which have beset them since.

The conception of the hunting and food gathering period of human existence as a socially relatively harmonious and peaceful way of life may be a romantic illusion, even though the few contemporary remnants that we know anthropologically, such as the Bushmen in the Kalahari desert, at least do not contradict it. Regardless of whether it is or not, humankind certainly lost its innocence with the neolithic revolution — the rise of agriculture, husbandry, population increase and an accumulation of wealth. Ever since has humanity, trampling on and living off its own kind, lived with a bad conscience.

Why should this become different now? There are signs that with the advent of universal human rights as the reigning system of values a new phase of history may have started.

[From ch. 17: Pro-social prospects]