

Chapter 7 extracted with permission from:

# Working with Values: Software of the Mind

---

*A Systematic and Practical Account  
of Purpose, Value and Obligation  
in Organizations and Society.*

---

**Warren Kinston**

**The Original Reference Text as used by Consultants in  
SIGMA:  
THE CENTRE FOR TRANSDISCIPLINARY SCIENCE**

The right of Warren Kinston to be identified as the author of this work has been asserted by him in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. Except for the quotation of short passages for the purposes of criticism, review or academic studies, no part of the main text may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publishers. However, Glossary entries and Master-Matrices may be freely used and photocopied for educational purposes subject to acknowledgement of the author.

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not by way of trade or otherwise be lent, resold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

© **Warren Kinston 1995**

V.1.0 first published 1995 in hardback by The SIGMA Centre  
(Chapter drafts progressively published between 1986 and 1994.)

**ISBN: 1 874726 02 7**

Originally published and distributed by  
The SIGMA Centre  
London, UK.

Printed on acid-free paper by Reedprint, Windsor, U.K.  
Index compiled by Indexing Specialists, Hove, U.K.

Cover design and illustration by Chris Price: the figures (from left to right)  
represent religion, philosophy, law, government, natural science,  
social science, business, finance and the imagination.

# Chapter 7

## Developing Identity

Once we start making choices and following them through, we define who we are. When the choice is to set rules and publicly value those rules and abide by them, we create a continuity which is of the essence of any social identity. Our ethical choices and ethical rules define us for ourselves and others.

Ethics finds its origin in the felt obligation to sustain and protect human identity and, because man is a social being, community identity. We have explored the identity-defining quality of values and seen how values link people and social groups (Ch. 5). We have also discovered how ethical choices are made, and recognized that each approach operates as part of a person's identity (Ch. 6). It seems indeed that all of ethics revolves around the bedrock of human identity.

The time has come to explore human identity in a little more detail — just sufficient to orient us as we move to the very heart of society and its ethical concerns. Until now, I have deliberately restricted myself to a conception of man as a social being. Although this remains the focus, the qualities of such an identity do not and cannot capture the totality of being human. Even if responsible participation in society is identity-defining, it says little about things like inner feelings or intimate relationships, which most people would view as intrinsic to their identity. Readers more solidly located in psychological or economic disciplines may feel uncomfortable with the emphasis on responsibility, community, participation, work, ethics &c.

Because society must serve people in the most fundamental way, it has evolved moral institutions which not only enable social being but also specifically support other aspects of a human identity (via social being). The main focus of this chapter is on these natural moral institutions. But before they can be examined and their rationale understood, we need to have some appreciation of what 'human identity' involves.

A review of the general literature on identity is out of place. It reveals a bewildering variety of apparently conflicting and even contradictory approaches. My understanding and inquiry in this domain were again based on my efforts to help people, that is to say, on my work as a psycho-analyst and psychiatrist.<sup>1</sup>

### INTRODUCING IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

I rapidly discovered that practical and theoretical differences in the psychotherapy world are so extreme that practitioners and theoreticians of each school segregate themselves. Each school bolsters morale and loyalty through attacking significant rival schools and ignoring the rest as insignificant. A unified theory was obviously not possible. However, it seemed to me that underpinning any theory of the mind (or whole human functioning) there had to be assumptions of what it is to exist as a human being. If there could be multiple conceptions of existence, then there would have to be multiple theories explaining and using those conceptions. I speculated that a framework specifying sharply distinct systems of assumptions and calling for many theories must exist. This proved to be the case. To put this finding in the context of the previous chapter: just as there is more than one way that a person can make and justify their ethical choice, so there is more than one way that a person can develop (and repair) their identity.

### Origins of Human Identity

Human existence and identity are rooted in experiencing. The elemental forms of experience were identified earlier as a hierarchy which ascends as follows: sensation (L-I), image (L-II), emotion (L-III), idea (L-IV), intuition (L-V), identification (L-VI) and imagination (L-VII).<sup>2</sup>

Our concern is identity, so we need to focus now on identification (L-VI). Identifications are the basic components of any human identity. Identification is an experience: we feel our identifications and we can recognize identifications in others. We use identification both unconsciously and deliberately to relate to others, and to influence them and ourselves. Many identifications are transient, but others become permanent parts of our identity. We may say that a human identity is an organized set or system of persistent interacting identifications. So identity is not just what defines our self or makes us recognizable, it is our very existence and experience of existence.

Because experience is at the root of identity, it is necessary and possible to construct an identity by making identifications which assign special significance to one of the basic forms of experience over and above the other forms. Given seven elemental forms of experience, this leads to precisely seven sharply distinct approaches (systems of identity assumptions) for developing and sustaining an identity. The relationship between experience and identity development is illustrated in Master-Figure 10. It directly parallels the relation between the approaches to ethical choice and the framework of purpose (cf. Master-Fig. 9: Ch. 6). The full picture is shown in Master-Figure 16 in Ch. 8.

Each approach serves as a scaffold for constructing an identity and simultaneously puts constraints on what is possible. (In this, the approaches are again similar to those for ethical choice which define how choices can be made in principle, but do not select issues for choice or indicate the required choice.)

Identity construction is, of course, normally an intuitive and largely unconscious process which involves all approaches to some degree. But psychotherapy and (especially) psychotherapy training and research evoke the need to be self-conscious and coherent in dealing with identity. This effort is what produces multiple perspectives.

I must emphasize that evoking psychotherapeutic notions here is unavoidable. There is no other way to see identity clearly. Other disciplines — philosophy, economics, sociology, psychology — may take a position on the nature of human identity, but only psychotherapy seeks to work with identity directly. The research rule established at the beginning of this work is that valid knowledge only comes from interventions and notions that clients accept and use. So my psychotherapeutic work and the psychotherapy literature must be the prime source of knowledge in this context.

### Summarizing the Approaches

Social being is just one way of conceptualizing and developing an identity. It has been emphasized so far because of its close link with action, values and ethics. Now it is time to recognize other forms of existence and different approaches to the development of identity.

These seven approaches are first described here in the briefest of outlines. To be oriented to what is to come, see Master-Table 11 which sets out the main characteristics of the approaches in a matrix form. Details of the psychotherapies and theories whose observations and assumptions provide the evidence for the classification will be only mentioned in passing and in the Notes. Those interested in psychological distur-

bance and its management should see Master-Table 12. Master-Figure 13 shows the evolution of the identity systems in terms of their dualities.

All forms of existence and all approaches to identity development are relevant to everyone because each is so obviously essential to identity maintenance and to healthy functioning. Each realm can be understood as emerging from the previous one as an attempt to grow within it reaches a peak. We start the summary from sensory existence which is the irremovable basis of all identity.

**L'-I: Sensory existence:** Sensation (L-I) is dominant — so one can be a **sensory being**. This means being embedded in a physical milieu, having a drive for equilibrium and a need for stimulation, and being satisfied by sensory contact. A person's identity is essentially that of a receptive being, but a degree of physical activity is nonetheless needed to ensure a flow of stimuli. As the focus on being active increases, a new identity realm emerges based on bodily function.

**L'-II: Vital existence:** Image (L-II) is dominant — so one must be able to see the self, that is to say be a physical or **vital being**. This means being embedded in body structures and functions, having a drive for vitality (health/energy/survival) and a need for concentration, and being satisfied by controlled activity. A person's identity is essentially defined by physiological or instinctual functions. To develop identity on the basis of such functions, they must be symbolically elaborated. As the use of symbolization increases, a new identity realm emerges based on whole body states.

**L'-III: Emotional existence:** Emotion (L-III) is dominant — so one can be an **emotional being**. This means being embedded in feelings and flows of feelings, having a drive for attachment and a need to be valued, and being satisfied by emotional roles which permit the secure containment of desired feelings. A person's identity is essentially defined by whole body states. Identity is developed by generating mind-based states which identify with and master these physiological emotions. As the mind becomes dominant, a new identity realm emerges based on the idea of a self.

**L'-IV: Individual existence:** Idea (L-IV) is dominant — so one can be an **individual being**. This means being embedded in a world of people, having a drive for self-esteem and a need for respect, and being satisfied by acceptance from others. A person's identity is essentially defined by a concept of 'the self'. Identity is developed by interacting with and adapting to others. As attention to others increases, a new identity realm emerges based on self-other relations.

**L'-V: Relational existence:** Intuition (L-V) is dominant — so one can be a **relational being**. This means being embedded in relationships, having a drive towards self-actualization and a need for recognition, and being satisfied by gratification of wishes. A person's identity is essentially defined by a group, itself defined by the relationships of its members. Identity is developed by asserting individuality within a relation. As the group becomes more important, a new identity realm emerges based on the evolution of social life.

**L'-VI: Social existence:** Identification (L-VI) is dominant — so one can be a **social being**. This means being embedded in a particular society at a point in historical time, having a drive to participate and a need for responsibility, and being satisfied by intentional activities. A person's identity is essentially defined by the roles adopted in society. Identity is developed by using social situations to extend those roles. As situations are universalized, a new identity realm emerges based on an eternal and trans-social reality.

**L'-VII: Transpersonal existence:** Imagination (L-VII) is dominant — so one can be a **transpersonal being**. This means being embedded in the cosmos, having a drive for spirituality and a need for faith, and being satisfied by union with others and 'being' in general. A person's identity is essentially defined by the soul or divine spark within. Identity is developed by a search for God or that entity of which the soul is a part or representative. There is no higher identity realm, because increasing the focus on God, especially if conceptualized as the void, leads to the extinction of identity (mind, self) altogether. (Note that this state is close to receptivity in sensory being, so returning us to L'-I.)

It seems likely that the roots of all forms of identity are present from an early stage. Mothers usually act as if this is so, and a developmental process can be discerned. Soon after conception the embryo experiences sensations which even at birth are still unintegrated (L'-I). The baby becomes more evidently integrated at around six weeks. Research suggests that the infant has prenatal memory (images), and soon becomes aware of its body and its capacity for voluntary control (L'-II). Valuation of the infant starts prior to birth, but an intense process of bonding occurs in the early months after birth. Once experiences are rooted in the infant's body and mother-infant bonding is established, mutual exchanges of emotion between mother and infant soon develop (L'-III). Structuring of the self probably commences not long after birth, but a stable cohesive idea of a bounded self is not thought to emerge till around 24 months (L'-IV). Relationships, already evident, become more significant in the oedipal period when the

father-mother-child network dominates family life (L'-V). Societal roles press on the child at school if not earlier (L'-VI). Spiritual awakening in childhood is possible; and, even in the face of parental suppression, universal concerns and ultimate questions commonly surface during adolescence (L'-VII).

If we look deeply into ourselves, it is likely that one or two of the identity realms feel more real, more certain and more usable to us. It is these that we use for personal growth and to make our vocational choice. Naturally, we preferentially activate these to gain knowledge about the human condition. Each approach therefore needs to be seen as a distinct realm of existence, generating distinctive theories of the mind or self. These different realms are most apparent when different therapeutic techniques are chosen and when observing which social supports are used.

There is a natural but unfortunate tendency for adherents, or indeed any of us, to ignore or attack one or other of the approaches to identity as either secondary, irrelevant, or misconceived. But as human beings, we need them all. And, whatever theorists may say, society seems to agree with this view, because (as we shall discover in the second half of this chapter) it recognizes them all in the form of special moral institutions.

**Language Problems.** Theories devised within one realm tend to dismiss other realms entirely or describe their elements in ways that seem strained and extreme to adherents of those realms. A major problem in debates hangs on the meaning of common terms. Of course all approaches must deal with similar phenomena and use the same labels for them. They consider: relationships, self-assertion, distress, satisfaction and so on. But similar words can mean almost entirely different things in the different approaches. Contact, for example, requires some sort of physical stimulation for sensory being, whereas it needs to involve the transfer of emotions for emotional being. A relationship in vital being is about doing something active together, whereas it is about mutual recognition for relational being. Self-assertion is about maintaining faith for transpersonal being but about ensuring notice and acceptance by others for individual being. (Try explaining these terms — contact, relationship, assertion — in the other approaches.) The Master-Tables provide further examples.<sup>3</sup>

### Illustrating the Properties

Without having to be experts, readers of this book do need to know that there are distinct realms of personal identity which demand proper social recog-

nitiation and handling. Many apparently irrational values (like jogging and male superiority) and mysteriously self-defeating behaviours (like non-stop television and warfare) are, on close inspection, powered by human identity in one form or other. Changes in organizations and in wider society should not, either in their aims or their methods, fly in the face of human nature.

So each approach to developing identity will be described, even if only briefly. Rather than explaining the properties of any identity system first in an abstract way as might suit a psychology text, I will illustrate most of them by reconsidering social being. As the account proceeds, I will italicize those categories which I use subsequently to describe each approach.

**Social Being.** The notion that a person is a social being has been the identity assumption so far. Social being takes for granted that a person is inextricably and self-consciously part of — that is to say fully identified with — a range of social institutions, especially its moral institutions. In other words, *experiential primacy* is accorded to identification. Because the form of identity is social, the *dominant reality* is also social. Social existence is *embedded* in a particular society at a point in history. Each person participates in society's evolution and is moulded by its features.

*Functioning well* implies whole-hearted involvement in society: whether by supporting or by disputing its various institutions and aspirations. Conversely *poor functioning* is expressed by a detachment from societal life, aimlessness, and the neglect of social values and institutions. Dysfunction leads to a lack of concern for posterity and a parasitic attitude toward the community. The *felt sign* of such disturbance is the experience of alienation. Further deterioration leads to social isolation and ultimately to reclusion or vagrancy.

Each person has an *identity drive* for orderly participation in communal life. For this to be possible, an individual must be seen as inherently capable of carrying responsibility, and able to discharge it on behalf of other autonomous people. Without a *supply* of responsibility, there is no way to modify society and alter the course of history. So responsibility simultaneously aids the individual and develops the community. Through accepting responsibility, a person can be socially recognized, socially channelled, and socially valued.

Given responsibility, individuals can impact on the social environment only through being intentional: the inner ability and will to pursue purposes. *Satisfaction* for social beings is about operating with a sense of purpose, and this means working. Intentional activities, commonly (but not solely or necessarily) entrepreneurial or employment work, are also the basis for *self-expression*.

Pursuing a purpose in society involves organizing and managing. Organization within a social body (also called an organization) provides for stable legitimated roles from which it becomes possible to influence society. Managing is the dynamic counterpart of organization whereby people and events are suitably orchestrated to produce desired results.

*Interpersonal interaction* within this approach is based on the joint pursuit of a shared purpose, with the parties to the interaction taking on different roles. Identification with the purpose and role activates and energizes participants. In so far as the social value of the end result sustains the participants, conflicts centre on details of emphasis and achievement rather than on personalities. Whether the group is a family, a business or a nation, proper matching of personal characteristics and potentials to management needs, purposes and roles is of the essence in ensuring both personal fulfilment and effective group functioning.

The nature of social being corresponds to the legitimist *approach to ethical choice* because responsible participation in society depends on rules being set. Without rules applicable to all, social life, with its demand for cooperation and the handling of differences between people, would be impossible. Rules would be useless if it were not inherent in our nature to follow them. It is the explicit recognition of oneself as a social being that allows us to accept the authority of rules and to view them as valuable tools. Social being also ensures that the legitimist aspiration for the common good is meaningful and urgent. This correspondence suggests that social being exists at the sixth level of a theoretical framework for identity development.

**Additional Properties.** Nothing in the above should feel new or strange to the reader. It merely restates assumptions that have been explored and adopted previously (cf. Introduction to Ch. 5). Now we must note some further characteristics of identity.

The first of these was evident in the summaries: the *dualities* which exist in each system. The pattern of these dualities resembles the pattern found in the progressive emergence of approaches to ethical choice (cf. Master-Figs. 7 and 13). As with the approaches to ethical choice, the dualities have a context-content form. In developing identity, the context is a growth-promoting potential for that type of identity, and the content is the stabilizing core of that type of identity. The core is innately and automatically available, but a person must strive to activate and use the growth-promoting potential. From within the system, the duality appears as an unresolvable and sometimes confusing dialectic. Transcendence of the duality generates a new

essential core for identity at the next higher level where a new growth-promoting force emerges.

It will be recalled that teleological and deontological perspectives alternated in the hierarchy of choices (see Master-Table 5: Ch.6). The teleological good-bad distinction supported a notion of continuous and diffuse grades of quality, whereas the deontological right-wrong distinction was discrete and precise. This phenomenon is paralleled here in regard to *identity boundaries* which oscillate between being externally located and diffusely defined and being internally located and distinctly defined. So the odd levels are similar in that they foster identity fusion and submergence of self — within stimuli (L'-I), within feelings (L'-III), within the group (L'-V), and in the universe (L'-VII); whereas the even levels foster identity distinctions and the assertion of boundaries — of the body (L'-II), of the self-concept (L'-IV), and of one's responsibilities in society (L'-VI).

Finally, characteristic *vocations*, *identity threats* and *identity disorders* are included to sharpen up the differences between identities. Comparisons here may also help the appreciation of those approaches which are not immediately congenial or intelligible.

## THE IDENTITY REALMS

Keep in mind that everyone requires all approaches to developing identity. For example, threats to identity characteristic of an approach you rarely use can still affect your well-being and cause dysfunction. Nevertheless, each identity system is its own relatively self-contained mode of existence, and each of us does have preferential identifications. Dysfunction, to continue the example, usually emerges in the realm with which we are most identified. A person strongly identified with one realm assumes that the world, including even the author of this book, is likewise identified. If the reader can use the Master-Tables to identify his or her own preferred system at this point, this may help in engaging with the ideas as the argument evolves.

We are now ready to examine the identity realms in turn, commencing from the most concrete and tangible.

### L'-I: Sensory Being

At the most concrete identity level, *experiential primacy* is assigned to sensations (L-I); and, as a result, the *dominant reality* is sensory. Identity as a sensory being means that one is *embedded* in a material world, that is to say, in the physical environment. Identity here is organized around physical sensations like colour,

shape, warmth, touch, sound and smell. The *identity drive* is to reach and maintain a state of internal equilibrium. The *essential supplies* which sustain the self are stimuli. Maintaining equilibrium and a sense of stability involves the regulation of inner tensions generated by impinging stimuli, whether in the form of sensations, images, emotions or ideas.

*Satisfaction* for a sensory being involves physical (i.e. sensory) contact — like touching and being touched, making and hearing sounds, looking and being looked at. Attractive things and animal pets can be particularly gratifying. Satisfaction is most likely if stimulation is varied and interesting. But even painful stimuli are better than nothing. As stimulating contact intensifies, excitement develops until over-stimulation becomes painful and disabling. The other typical *threats* to well-being are neglect and boredom. *Self-expression* depends on maintaining a state of (sensory) awareness and generating arousal in oneself and others. Arousal informs others who are expected to be aware. Making a noise or wearing a particular hat, for example, may be a statement about oneself. To *function well* in this system is to be integrated and able to tolerate stimulating input: colloquially referred to as feeling together. *Dysfunction* is about feeling over-whelmed and unable to handle more stimuli. Further deterioration leads to disintegration. Psychological dysfunction is *signalled* by the sensation of pain — like a headache, cramp, sore eye, or skin irritation — which is meaningful in the context of the person's current life-stresses.

There is an *identity disorder* associated with an inability to attribute meaning or feeling to body states which has been called 'psychosomatic personality'. Such people seem to be fixed in sensory being, cannot properly use image to develop themselves, and lack access to higher level identity development.<sup>4</sup>

Adherence to fashions, addiction to television, down-market tabloid newspapers, rituals of dining, desires for colour, enjoyment of wines, use of make-up and perfume, muzak, desultory conversation — all these testify to the importance of stimulation and sensory being in interpersonal relations and communal life. Many *vocations*, like cooking, entertaining, furniture design, decorating, handicrafts, fashion modelling depend on sensory sensitivity, stimulating others and generating coherent interesting patterns. Not surprisingly, sensory psychotherapies are popular. They include: therapeutic massage, aromatherapy (massage with aromatic oils), flotation therapy (in a tank of salt water), and reflexology (massage of the sole of the foot in places claimed to map on to the rest of the body). It is just possible that acupuncture works in this way.

Sensory being potentially promotes a materialistic

orientation to life. At times, it gives the impression of being depersonalized — much like the criticism that was levelled at the rationalist *approach to ethical choice*. A link with the rationalist aspiration — to find solutions — comes from the stimulating and disturbing nature of problems. Their removal reduces tension and so supports the identity drive of sensory being. Those institutions, like etiquette and ceremony, which exist to support sensory being, also have an impersonal and surface quality.

The *duality* faced in sensory being is receptivity (or passivity) and activity. Sensory being is at core a state of passive receptivity, while tension regulation demands a degree of activity. Activity is essential to stimulate others and to optimize the quantity and quality of stimulation received: that is to say, it is growth-promoting. Psychologists still argue whether sensation is a matter of passive direct reception or is generated by an active process in the brain, often concluding that sensation is ultimately part of the mystery of consciousness. Certainly, without some minimal activity, habituation occurs and sensation ceases. But complete absence of sensation is impossible: in sensory deprivation experiments auto-stimulation is provided by hallucinations.<sup>5</sup>

At the next level, the outer-directedness and diffusion of sensory being gives way to an internal and well-defined identity based on bodily functions.

## L'-II: Vital Being

At the second level, a person feels distinct from the environment because the body and its functioning become the *dominant reality*. A person's identity is felt to be *embedded* in bodily structures and functions, that is to say in voluntary and visceral activities. This is the realm of instincts and reflexes. Control of these is therefore equivalent to self-control and mastery of reality. Focus on the body is associated with an *identity drive* for vitality without which endeavours are weakened, intentionality suffers and life itself is put at risk. Vitality manifests as health, vigour and intense physical activity. It is associated with the urge to stay alive, and hence safety and survival. *Supplies* of concentration are *essential* in this approach. Without deliberate focus and careful attention, exercise, for example, cannot be engaged in beneficially and safely.

Bodily functions and intentional physical activity (like sport) can be attended to and affected primarily through the use of image (L-II). Dieting, for example, is as much about body shape as physical health or fitness: indeed much dieting is unhealthy. Because *experiential primacy* lies in image, image-based thinking, perception and memory are used in therapies rather than words and ideas. The Alexander technique, for example, is a

body-based form of psycho-therapy which uses posture and images of the body to heal disturbance; and so does dance therapy. Most forms of behaviour therapy, like desensitization, are also image-driven and body-based.<sup>6</sup>

*Self-expression* using the body demands muscular and mental tension to maintain position and readiness, and movement to allow for coordinated directed responsiveness. Intense, coordinated and rhythmic exercise is *satisfying* and leaves a person feeling relaxed and invigorated, even exhilarated. By contrast even minimal physical activity with which the person is not properly identified leads to exhaustion or enervation, and generates the potential for illness or accident. A failure to ground one's self in one's body leads to simple activities like talking, breathing or running becoming uncoordinated and dysfunctional. Modern methods of teaching sports like tennis and skiing frequently use image. Teachers seek to activate identity processes like commitment (e.g. to the ski edges) rather than focusing on the mechanics of bodily performance.

A person *functioning well* in this system is healthy, fit and energetic; whereas being unhealthy, unfit, or debilitated reveals *dysfunction*. Exhaustion is the *signal* of emerging dysfunction. The typical *threat* is prolonged exposure to perceptions of danger, generally called stress. Stress is associated with lapses in concentration, loss of energy and eventual physical illness. Stress-based fatigue, sometimes called depression, frequently leads to further misuse of the body, most seriously by over-use of alcohol and drugs (medicinal and addictive). The proper vital response is enthusiastic exercise, but people may allow themselves to lapse further into a state of lassitude.

The stress-reducing effect of exercise is recognized by popularizers of healthy living. Exercise in the Western tradition is primarily oriented to toning up the voluntary musculature, although effects on internal organs like the heart are recognized.<sup>7</sup> In the Eastern traditions, exercises to enable control over internal organs are common. In Chinese Qi-gong, for example, physical exercise is primarily developed to benefit internal organs.

The characteristic *identity disorder* is probably the psychopathic-hysterical personality, with psychopathy appearing mainly in men and hysteria mainly in women. Such people seem to be fixed in vital being, cannot properly use emotion or value to link to others, and lack proper access to higher level identity development.<sup>8</sup>

People maximally identified here find their *vocation* in work which uses the body and requires concentration on its functioning. Sports professionals, physical education teachers, singers, musicians, dancers and

physiotherapists must all concentrate on using their bodies well and helping others do so. *Interpersonal relations* depend upon engaging in joint physical activity: the obvious example is sexual activity, whose beneficial effect appears to be well-established at last. Bodily activation and interaction also occur in dancing, sport and brawls.

Just as the conventionalist *approach to ethical choice* submerged individuals in the group, vital being seems to do likewise in the sense that all bodies are similar. Sports, for example, can be promoted and adopted all over the world without people feeling their personal or cultural identity is being threatened. (This is not true of sensory-based things like decoration or cuisine.) When we later examine the institution that concerns itself with the use of bodies: popular morality with its strictures in regard to sex drugs and violence, we find again a tendency to suppress individual differences and preferences. (Note that the identity disorder at this level, the psychopathic-hysterical personality, reveals popular morality being dramatically violated.)

Another link to conventionalism is noticeable. The ethical aspiration of this approach is for continuity. This aspiration is paralleled in the vital realm by the psychological drive for safety and survival, wishes for immortality, and the perception of death as extinguishing identity.

The *duality* when using the body is between instinctual function (or activity) and symbolic function. This duality is again a source of controversy. Theorists argue, for example, about whether dream imagery is to be seen as purely reflex and biological or whether it is a symbolic production. Activity and receptivity, the previous duality, cannot easily be distinguished in bodily function because being receptive may be an active process and vice versa. Interestingly, Freud emphasized that instinctual functioning combined both active and passive components.<sup>9</sup> Instinct is inescapable and vital being is necessarily built on and constrained by the body's reflex and automatic tendencies. The use of bodily functions for identity development requires the deliberate application of images which are the simplest form of symbol. So symbolic activity, as found for example in professional dance, is growth-promoting.

At the next level, symbolic and instinctual activity cannot be differentiated and identity once more becomes externally located and diffusely defined.

### L'-III: Emotional Being

At the third level, the *dominant reality* is emotional because identity development depends on emotion (L-III) having *primacy*. Existence is now *embedded* in an

all-enveloping ground of feelings and emotion-laden imagery called 'psychical reality' by Freud, and the 'inner world' or 'inner reality' by modern psychoanalysts. There is an *identity drive* for attachment which leads people to value others. Whenever one person is valued intensely by another (or a group), each becomes significant, symbolically and practically, for the other. Feelings develop in the person and a sense of taking on an emotional role follows. The inner world is therefore contingent upon *supplies* of value and is pervaded by a good-bad polarity.

Emotions invariably produce symmetrical or complementary pairings: anger, for example, may engender anger or fear. The pair (anger-anger or anger-fear) is the whole over which identity is spread. Each person is, and acts as if he or she is, just one part of that whole — whether or not it consciously feels that way to them. Identity depends on being whole (by definition), and the drive to attach oneself flows from this part-status. Permanent or even temporary separation is the principal *threat* because it signifies loss of part of one's identity — and hence loss of identity or psychic death.

*Self-expression* involves the use of feelings; and *satisfaction* is about emotional containment i.e. taking on an emotional role which maintains and holds certain feelings. One may use other people, animals, things or places, or even fantasies to contain emotions. The aim here is to activate or dispose of pleasant and unpleasant feelings by one of two means: either the feeling is modified by using a defence (like displacement or suppression); or it is relocated within oneself (introjective identification) or elsewhere (projective identification). The term identification is used to emphasize that feelings here are part of one's identity (and not just a transient experience).

When things go wrong, feelings are not properly contained and a person feels bad. In this situation, emotions are dumped or evacuated unfairly on to the nearest available person or object — a common enough observation in family and organizational life. The handling and exchange of feelings and emotional roles is the focus of analysis in some forms of dynamic psychotherapy.<sup>10</sup>

Modification and relocation of feelings can generate confusion, particularly if the awareness of those feelings is suppressed. Even more serious is the temptation for a person to split good feelings from bad feelings. If this happens, things and relationships are perceived and created as entirely good (and so embraced), or entirely bad (and so avoided or attacked). Such *poor functioning* is destructive. In reality, there is a need to contain, express and cope with both positively- and negatively-valued feelings in ourselves and in others. Such *good*

*functioning* is constructive. Anxiety is the *experiential signal* that destructiveness is imminent or in process in reaction to a threat. As destructiveness increases, the individual searches for scapegoats and becomes progressively more paranoid.

Destructive people generate intense emotional states in those involved with them. People whose destructiveness is oriented towards being good, needed or loved are typically supported and exploited rather than confronted, and therefore receive little assistance. People whose destructiveness is oriented towards being bad, unwanted or hated are regarded as immature or disturbed and are confronted and rejected.

The *identity disorder* associated with an inability to handle this system is known as primitive, infantile or borderline personality. People with this disorder seem to be fixed in emotional being, cannot properly use ideas to maintain their equilibrium, and lack proper access to higher level identity development.<sup>11</sup>

*Interpersonal relations* are built around the generation and exchange of emotions: a husband and wife may evoke feelings which create emotional roles in which (say) one is forever hurt and the other constantly irritated. Some people welcome and use emotion, find intense attachments congenial, and are prepared to live out roles based on emotional experiences. They take up *vocations* like social work and dynamic psychotherapy. People who resist taking on and changing emotional roles in response to others who are emotion-based tend to be described as hard or cold.

Although personal feelings and value preferences now enter identity, one person is not fully distinct from others. Continuing the above example, a woman may have repetitive relationships with apparently different men, all of whom turn out to feel hurt and miserable with her. Her feelings are not dominating the relationship as it seems on the surface, but rather evoking their complement and completion in his feelings (and vice versa). This corresponds to the situation in the pragmatist *approach to ethical choice* where the chooser's own values appear to dominate because they fit within an ideal emotionally invested by others.

Values activate emotional being, so we now have an explanation for the intensity of feeling that is mobilized in defence of values and value systems. Emotional being makes it easy and natural for people to feel critical and antagonistic toward rival value systems and their adherents. Only where their own value system insists on tolerance and respect are people likely to contain and master these feelings.

The *duality* here is that between mind-based experiences and body-based experiences; or more briefly,

mind-body: perhaps the most notorious of philosophical controversies. The modern debate commenced over 300 years ago when Descartes proposed dualism in preference to mentalist (higher level) or materialist (lower level) solutions to the problem of existence. Psychologists have also puzzled over whether emotions are primarily perceptions of body changes (the James-Lange theory) or whether the body reacts in response to mental emotions (the Cannon critique). In the present way of thinking, bodily states of anxiety, fear, joy and so on provide the stabilizing core of identity, while mind-based states (similarly labelled) offer the potential for growth through the clarification of values (meanings) associated with the feelings.

The intangibility of mental states and the unambiguous nature of bodily states make these two seem irredeemably distinct. Yet by turning inwards again, it becomes possible to insist that man is a psychosomatic unity or a unique embodied mind with distinct boundaries.

#### L'-IV: Individual Being

At the fourth level, an identity implies existence as a separate being — and at last the notion of an enduring psychological self is apposite. The *dominant reality* may now be properly described as individual. *Experiential primacy* is accorded to ideas (L-IV) — because 'the self' is, in essence, an idea. The self is a stable abstraction which reflects and establishes continuity, psychic boundaries and internal structure, despite the flux of feelings and corresponding self-images, and despite varying sensory inputs and bodily changes.

A person feels *embedded* within a world of other similar people. So concern for privacy emerges in order to maintain self-boundaries and ensure uniqueness. The *identity drive* is for self-esteem and the *essential supply* to meet this need is respect. Respect covers affirmation and approval of both the positive and negative aspects of the individual. All aspects of the self are seen as contributing something essential to the unique whole. Respect for oneself is a correlate of receipt of respect from others, which itself depends on respecting others. *Vocations* which express the self abstractly and depend on approval from others include that of author and actor.

*Satisfaction* comes from acceptance by other people in the environment. Ventilation of feelings, for example, is therapeutic when this is met by no more than the listener's acceptance. (By contrast, ventilation supporting emotional being requires certain feelings to be contained by the listener.) Because acceptance is the basis of all social life, rejection and contempt are direct *threats* to identity. *Self-expression* takes the form of estab-

lishing and articulating stable entitlements and developing dynamic adaptations to the entitlements of others. Many forms of therapy are based on such assumptions.<sup>12</sup> *Interpersonal relations* work best when participants' entitlements are similar in key respects and not too much adaptation is demanded of either. Each person is then likely to be intuitively understood and respected by the other, and any conflicts may be resolved by negotiation and reciprocity.

In order to obtain a continuing supply of respect, people may adapt to such an extent that their feelings and actions are no longer consistent with their idea of themselves. This is the essence of *dysfunction*. Being false or artificial in this way is commonly associated with excessive, insufficient or inappropriate entitlement claims. *Functioning well* means being genuine and owning uniquely personal and private wishes, emotions, memories and thoughts, whether they are desirable or undesirable, honourable or dishonourable. These are used to maintain a sense of reality. Shame is the *experiential signal* generated by the urge to become false by hiding or covering up the true self.<sup>13</sup>

Persistent rejection by significant others and failure to assert oneself leads eventually to collapse. If this occurs in childhood, a characteristic persistent *identity disorder* known as narcissistic personality results. Such people seem to be fixed in individual being, cannot properly use intuition within relationships, and lack proper access to higher level identity development.<sup>14</sup>

The ethical dimension is now emerging ever more strongly because individual being is where the self becomes at last whole, stable, bounded and unique. Such a self is capable of being explicitly valued and socially protected. It is the assumption of distinct private individuals with their entitlements and their need to adapt that underpins notions of basic freedoms, personal duties, and positions in a social structure. There is an obvious direct link to the individualist *approach to ethical choice* because it is not possible to do what is advantageous to oneself without a clear conception of a distinct self. The need for respect from others to maintain self-esteem and the importance of acceptance mean that individualist choices do not neglect the social dimension entirely.

The new *duality* is that of the self and the other. The assumptions of this approach mean that an other is sought who resembles the self. This raises the possibility of confusion. Even ideas, the underpinning of individual identity, are not easily localized within just one person. Yet there must be a distinction between self and other if a person's separateness and privacy are to mean anything. This difference is found in the logic of the dualities. The 'self' (i.e. self-concept or self-repre-

sentation) is evidently the stabilizing core of any individual identity. The 'other' provides the growth-promoting potential because the other's entitlements and provision of respect and acceptance put pressure on the person to adapt and grow.

The tension within the duality is resolved by the self becoming inconceivable without an other, and the other becoming inconceivable without a link to the self. In other words, the relation between self and other becomes the new dominant reality. It is immediately obvious that there are many 'others', each defined by relationships. So any identity dependent on a net of relationships has boundaries which are, once again, externally located and diffusely defined.

### L'-V: Relational Being

At the fifth level, identity is conceived largely in interpersonal terms, and the *dominant reality* is relational. A person is fully differentiated and autonomous but *embedded* in networks of relations. The *identity drive* in this system is the realization of a person's full potential — self-development or self-actualization to use the term popularized by Maslow.<sup>15</sup> The *essential supplies* are recognition within the relationship, especially of un-realized potentials within the self.

*Interpersonal relations* depend here on exchanging and sharing inner experiences in such a way that an inter-subjective reality develops. This spontaneously evolves as the relationship deepens. Each person is regarded as autonomous and is expected to pursue their own interests and inclinations within ever-changing relationships, which they partly shape. So *satisfaction* in relationships takes the form of gratification of desires. Frustration indicates lack of satisfaction and threatens the relationship. Because people, hidden potentials, relationships, and even what is actually desired in a relationship, are complex and intangible, such matters can only be recognized, assessed and handled through intuition (L-V). Intuition is therefore accorded *experiential primacy*.

*Self-expression* and recognition take place through the establishment and evolution of relationships whose stability and quality depend on mutuality and dialogue. Mutuality implies the capacity to tolerate all varieties of experience and to relate experiences (the self's or the other's) to the circumstances. Mutuality is non-coercive, so alterations in the relationship require a process of dialogue to protect autonomy and to provide an intuitive way to resolve difficulties. Most humanistic psychotherapists work with the assumptions of this system.<sup>16</sup>

Successful mutual gratification of personal wishes means that relationships are felt to enable achievement. If any *vocation* can be assigned here, it is probably that of the entrepreneur who uses intuition, builds relationships, activates networks, and insists on personal autonomy to get things done. Natural leaders do much work in groups, form strong inter-personal bonds and depend on their intuition.

Identity development is equated with growing within relationships. So aggressive behaviour of a partner, for example, should not lead to distancing, retaliation or passive tolerance, but rather to an attempt to discover its source — possibly in misunderstanding or fear. Causing suffering to the other in a relationship must be accepted as inevitable at times. But it should be dealt with by open acknowledgement, attempts at reparation, and a determination to prevent a repetition.

Scapegoating or non-recognition are typical identity *threats* because they preclude effective and genuine relations. *Functioning well* within a relation generates a sense of liberation. *Poor functioning* is recognized by inhibition which blocks the flow of intuition, leads to frustration of wishes, and generates claustrophobic feelings in relationships. Psychotherapists regularly find inner conflicts underlying inhibitions. Guilt is the characteristic *experiential signal* of inhibition, because it is a form of internal punishment for non-actualized wishes that are reasonable and appropriate in a relation. Deterioration with increasing guilt and worsening inhibition ultimately produces a state of psychological paralysis.

Conflict, guilt and inhibition characterized those middle class neurotics treated by Freud, and on which his theory of the id, ego and superego is based.<sup>17</sup> Neurotic personality is therefore the characteristic *identity disorder*. People who are neurotic seem to be fixed in relational being, cannot properly use identification, and lack proper access to higher level identity development.<sup>18</sup>

In the communalist *approach to ethical choice*, benevolence (the cardinal virtue) and altruism (the ethical aspiration) require people to operate autonomously and yet to view themselves as existing within relationships. In other words, communalism is linked to or based upon a relational approach to identity. Maintaining good relations is time-consuming and demanding, so institutions which support this effort are needed in society: the most important of these being ethical teachings.

The *duality* here is that of the group versus individuality. Relationships automatically create groups and the group provides the stabilizing core of identity within the approach. The growth-promoting potential which emerges is the individuality of each person in

shaping the relationship and group reality. The degree to which one's self-concept should be submerged and shaped by the group identity is never straightforward. It is not even clear, for example, whether a person's apparently spontaneous actions and private intuitions are a property of the individual or whether social reality interferes so much that they are a product of the group. Psychoanalytic therapists and psychologists tend to see the individual as determining features of the group. Whereas group and family therapists and sociologists argue that the group has the primary reality and that individual experiences and actions are manifestations of the group process.

At the next level, groups are constituted and defined by individuals, while individuality and autonomy are simultaneously provided by the group. In short, existence becomes truly social.

Autonomy is now expected to operate responsibly. This results in an identity with boundaries which are, once more, experienced as internal and distinctly defined.

## L'-VI: Social Being (Again)

The social approach to identity development was summarized earlier (in: Illustrating the Properties); and it has been repeatedly explored, assumed and reasserted in previous chapters following its emergence in the introduction to Ch. 5. The two main points to recall are that identity is now embedded in a societal and historical existence, and that social being requires a person to carry formal and informal responsibilities in relation to others who are autonomous. The typical *vocation* which requires this form of inter-personal relating is that of an official or bureaucrat in an organization or government department. Life-long campaigners and radicals are also rooted in social being.

In this way of thinking, there are two stages in resolving any difficult situation. The first is to recognize that it means asserting a social identity which is a complex of enduring values and current purposes; and the second is to gain clarity about the precise responsibility and purposes of those involved. A variety of existential and radical therapies have taken social reality as their starting point.<sup>19</sup>

Social isolation, loss of purpose and removal of responsibility are identity *threats*. These social conditions are simultaneously generated if there is a breakdown of the social environment on which each of us absolutely depends. The resulting *identity disorder* is the traumatized personality. People who are traumatized seem to be fixed in social being, cannot properly use imagination to heal themselves, and lack proper access to the transpersonal dimension.<sup>20</sup>

The *duality* found here is that of role and situation. It is never entirely clear whether an identification or acceptance of responsibility is based on a current social role or whether it is taken on because it is called for by the social situation. Roles are the stabilizing core of any social identity, while evolving social situations provide the growth-promoting potential. Situations may enable roles to be modified, extended or abandoned. The urge to transform self, society and historical reality can only be realized by accepting roles and responsibilities. In other words, this duality appears to relate to the ‘social continuity — social change’ duality of the conventionalist approach to choice: but there continuity was the aspiration and change the constraint while here continuity in role is limiting and change according to the new situation offers hope of improvement.

To resolve the duality would mean creating an identity in which the identity core is relevant to any social role or social situation. Such an identity would have to transcend culture and time. So once again identity boundaries become external and diffuse, this time potentially encompassing the entire cosmos.

### L'-VII: Transpersonal Being

At the seventh level, identity transcends both the person and society by its emergence from a *dominant reality* referred to as transpersonal by psychologists, as transcendental by philosophers, and as mythic by historians of religion. Within this identity, a person experiences an inter-connectedness and commonality with all things going beyond the present time, place and culture. A person is now *embedded* in what is variously termed the cosmos, the All, the universe, the ground of Being, Absolute Reality, or God.

Transpersonal being is often recognized in the form of a soul, spirit, divine spark, higher self, overself, or superconscious. The *identity drive* within this system is spirituality, and the *essential supply* is faith. Without faith, the transpersonal realm where God is to be found cannot be recognized. Paradoxically, supplies of faith are replenished by recognizing the realm. Just as we become aware of participation once social reality is recognized, so we become aware of faith once transpersonal being is recognized. Awareness is the beginning of knowledge, so faith cannot possibly be opposed to knowledge. Nor is it equivalent to superstitious credulity as hard-headed people fear.

Both faith and the sense of the sacred are part of the structure of consciousness, as impartial religious scholarship suggests and as every religion asserts. There have been many personal and social accounts of the experience of God as the ground and ultimate, and their uniformity is striking and undeniable. It seems that to

live as a human being is to be divinely inspired — to have a soul — whether we understand and accept this or not. This idea is the perennial philosophy — a phrase coined by Leibniz and popularized by Aldous Huxley. It follows that doubt is the *experiential signal* of a failure to thrive in the transpersonal realm. Being utterly overwhelmed, deep despair and wilful cynicism are serious *threats* to spiritual functioning. Note that atheists and sceptics must draw on transpersonal powers to gain their sense of conviction, even in the process of deciding spiritual notions.<sup>21</sup>

*Experiential primacy* is accorded to the creative imagination (L'-VII). So God is always approached imaginatively with the use of symbols, metaphors and analogies. *Satisfaction* comes from union with others, or anything and everything outside oneself. If God is defined as a being or a form of being and described using ultimate values, as in most Western religions, then union with God (or God's love, will etc) is sought. The conscious realization of union depends on the imagination. It is assumed that the transpersonal realm is entered by the imagination, and that it is also created and sustained by it. We have already noted (in Ch. 5) that union involves establishing and maintaining a state of harmony through active attunement.

Union enables the perception of helpful meaning in personal and impersonal events. The absence of union leads to a form of blindness expressed as a denial of meaning or a felt sense of meaninglessness. The question of whether life or history has a meaning or purpose is a question about whether there is a further point of reference distinct from man. The answer, as provided by sages and spiritual movements within every culture throughout recorded time, is unequivocally in the affirmative. This reference point is the ground of all being: God. History, even cosmic evolution in this way of thinking, is essentially the slow but progressive unfolding of human consciousness towards an ultimate state.

Well-functioning creative people *express themselves* within the transpersonal system in a detached way. At the height of inspiration, they typically feel as if they are a vehicle for something beyond themselves. They often characterize their creativity in terms of an active pursuit of ultimate values; and in their attempt to reach the essence of something, perceive that essence in all things and all things in that essence. The person *functioning well* feels serene. When *functioning poorly*, a person is filled with anguish, and suffers a sickness of the soul. Further deterioration can provoke a state of torment and spiritual crisis: the dark night of the soul.

The various identity disorders mentioned so far are associated with a deficient use of transpersonal awareness. However, I have been unable to find any *identity*

*disorder* specific to this system. I suspect that social disorder and loss of integrity is the consequence of severe failure. If so, man in the modern world needs to be in search of a soul.

Some schools of psychotherapy, like Jung's analytical psychology and Assagioli's psychosynthesis, have recognized the soul and see God as an irreducible experience of man. Their ideas are drawn from religious philosophies, esoteric traditions and mythology. Therapies like transcendental meditation, psychic healing, yoga, faith healing, and simple prayer all assume an inner source of healing which can be activated by deliberate attunement. Teachers like Gurdjieff, Ouspensky, Aurobindo and Krishnamurti were really therapists of the soul. In their view, the soul is the source of all creativity, energy, harmony, and ultimate value.<sup>22</sup>

*Interpersonal relationships* within this approach strive towards union, maintenance of faith and hope, and recognition and reconciling of differences. Attunement allows each person to understand what cannot be said by another, and to bridge deep personal or social gulfs. Religion is the social institution which is dedicated to defining and affirming the significance of transpersonal reality. It allows people to share an understanding of existence, and provides them with a mode of interaction with the intangible. The religious life is the characteristic *vocation* supported by transpersonal being. Poets too may be primarily identified here.

Transpersonal being naturally corresponds to the transcendentalist *approach to ethical choice*. To make choices within this approach requires activation of the self as a channel to absolute guidance — which is presumably and probably of divine origin. Opening this channel has been discussed already, but it is worth noting that spiritual paths exist which build on each of the approaches to identity development. For those

identified with the sensory being there are techniques of heightened sensory stimulation, for example, using chants and incense; for those identified with bodily activity there are techniques like T'ai Chi Ch'uan, hatha yoga and ritual dance; for those identified with emotional reality, there are devotional methods; for those identified with ideas there are philosophical techniques; for those identified with intuition and relational being there is prayer and dialogue with God; for those identified with social being, there is the religious vocation and the way of service to others; for those identified with transpersonal being there is the mystical path.

The perennial theological controversy is whether God is utterly other and separated in essence from man (i.e. transcendent), or whether God is ultimately identical with man or within man if only this is realized (i.e. immanent). This dialectic of immanence-transcendence is a version of the *duality* of soul-God. The soul is the stabilizing core of transpersonal being, and God contains the growth-promoting potential seeking to draw the soul on upward to an ever-greater awareness and deeper experience of spirituality.

This final duality may be overcome by mystical techniques to generate an identification with the void, pure nothingness, which lies unthinkably outside of existence. This experience, typically fostered in Eastern traditions, has been described with a number of terms — enlightenment, liberation, samadhi, nirvana, satori, moksha, wu.

Spiritual enlightenment involves a sensation of an intense white light and dissolution of the self. It is a sustained experience of oneness, non-dual cognition of ultimate reality, and dissolution of the separate personality into the universal mind. But this is no longer a human identity, and it lies beyond our present concern with values and social life.

**Master-  
Figure 10**

**The framework of experience with its nested hierarchies.**

The framework of experience is in a single box indicating the holistic nature of personal experience. The secondary hierarchy of identity reflects the primary hierarchy and lies wholly within L-VI. These approaches are discrete systems of assumptions and properties and so are in distinct boxes. The natural moral institutions are a hierarchy nested within the L-VI system of the secondary hierarchy. These institutions, though discrete, interact strongly to define the identity of a community and its members.

Level VII	<b>Organized Religion</b>
Level VI	<b>Governance System</b>
Level V	<b>Ethical Teaching</b>
Level IV	<b>Social Structure</b>
Level III	<b>Communal Ideals</b>
Level II	<b>Popular Morality</b>
Level I	<b>Formal Etiquette</b>

**NATURAL MORAL  
INSTITUTIONS**  
*(Tertiary Hierarchy)*

**APPROACHES to  
IDENTITY  
DEVELOPMENT**  
*(Secondary Hierarchy)*

Level VII	<b>Transpersonal</b>
Level VI	<b>Social</b>
Level V	<b>Relational</b>
Level IV	<b>Individual</b>
Level III	<b>Emotional</b>
Level II	<b>Vital</b>
Level I	<b>Sensory</b>

**FRAMEWORK  
of EXPERIENCE**  
*(Primary Hierarchy)*

Level VII	<b>Imagination</b>
Level VI	<b>Identification</b>
Level V	<b>Intuition</b>
Level IV	<b>Idea</b>
Level III	<b>Emotion</b>
Level II	<b>Image</b>
Level I	<b>Sensation</b>

**Master-Table 11 Properties of the seven approaches to identity development.**

The matrix summarizes characteristic assumptions and properties of the seven approaches to developing an identity. Note that the type of identity is also the form of the dominant reality and descriptive of the nature of human existence. The lower term of the duality is the stabilizing core of identity and the upper term is the growth-promoting potential (or source of hope). See text for further details.

L	Type of Identity*	Embedded in:	boundaries	Identity Needs: Drive & Supplies	Satisfaction (Lack)	Well-Poor Functioning	Inherent Duality	Example Vocations
I	Sensory being	Physical environments	External and diffuse	Equilibrium met by providing stimulation.	Sensory contact (Neglect)	Integrated — Overwhelmed	Activity and Receptivity	Decorator Fashion model
II	Vital being	Body structures and functioning	Internal and distinct	Vitality met by providing concentration.	Controlled activity (Fatigue)	Energetic — Debilitated	Symbolic function and Instinctual function	Sportsman Dancer
III	Emotional being	Feelings and flows of feeling	External and diffuse	Attachment met by providing value.	Emotional containment (Feeling bad)	Constructive — Destructive	Mental states and Body states	Social worker Psychotherapist
IV	Individual being	A world of people	Internal and distinct	Self-esteem met by providing respect.	Acceptance from others (Rejection)	Genuine — False	The other and The self	Author Actor
V	Relational being	Relationships and networks	External and diffuse	Self-actualization met by providing recognition.	Gratification of wishes (Frustration)	Liberated — Inhibited	Individuality and Group	Entrepreneur Leader
VI	Social being	Society at a point in history	Internal and distinct	Participation met by providing responsibility.	Intentional activities (Aimlessness)	Involved — Detached	Situation and Role	Official Campaigner
VII	Transpersonal being	The All (Cosmos/Being)	External and diffuse	Spirituality met by providing faith.	Union with the other/Being (Meaninglessness)	Serene — Anguished	God and Soul	Priest Poet

\*Terms like 'individual', 'self' and 'existence' are frequently applied instead of 'being' to several or all the identity descriptors.

**Master-Table 12**

**Psychotherapy and the approaches to identity development.**

This matrix provides an analysis in relation to psychological development, disturbances, techniques and theories.

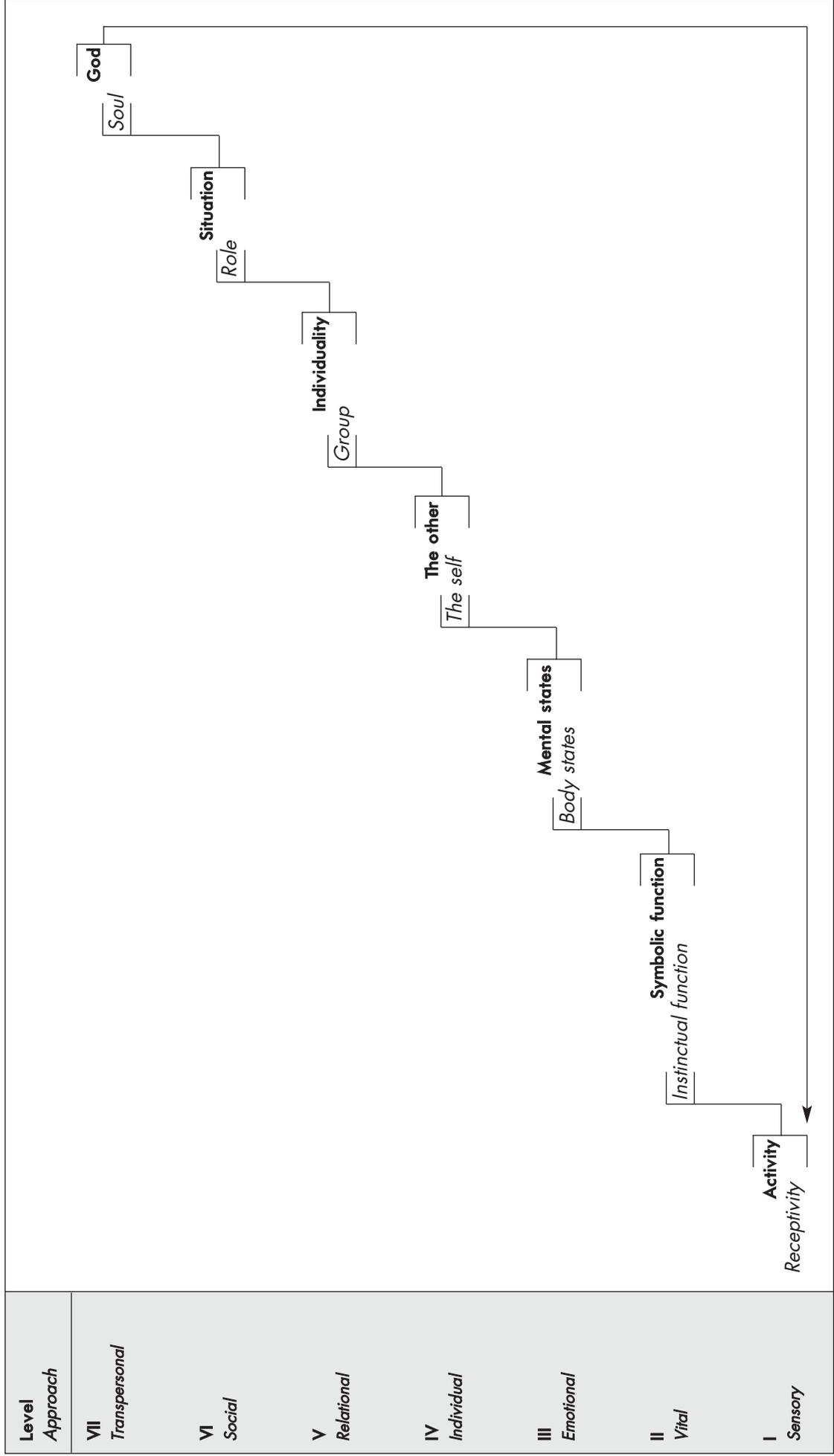
*Notes:*

Everyone uses all approaches implicitly. Self-expression has static and dynamic elements which are listed in that order. Lack of satisfaction is invariably a threat. Threats at unrecognized levels generate dysfunction in the level habitually used. Freud's contribution is more complex than the Table suggests. See text for further details.

<b>L</b>	<b>Identity (Reality)</b>	<b>Self-expression involves:</b>	<b>Identity Threats</b>	<b>Signal of Dysfunction</b>	<b>Identity breakdown</b>	<b>Identity Disorder</b>	<b>Psychotherapies (Non-psychoanalytic)</b>	<b>Psychoanalytic Theorists</b>
<b>I</b>	<b>Sensory being</b>	Awareness and arousal	Boredom; overstimulation; neglect.	Pain	Disintegration	Psychosomatic personality	Aromatherapy; reflex zone therapy; shiatsu.	Paris school
<b>II</b>	<b>Vital being</b>	Tension and movement	Stress; inattention; fatigue.	Exhaustion	Illness	Psychopathic – hysterical personality	Alexander technique; behavioral conditioning; dance therapy.	(None)
<b>III</b>	<b>Emotional being</b>	Modification and relocation	Separation; confusion; hardness.	Anxiety	Paranoia	Borderline personality	Transactional analysis.	Klein
<b>IV</b>	<b>Individual being</b>	Entitlement and adaptation	Rejection; contempt; devaluation.	Shame	Collapse	Narcissistic personality	Client-centred therapy; cognitive therapy.	Winnicott Kohut
<b>V</b>	<b>Relational being</b>	Mutuality and dialogue	Non-recognition; frustration; scapegoating.	Guilt	Paralysis	Neurotic personality	Humanistic therapies.	Freud
<b>VI</b>	<b>Social being</b>	Organization and management	Aimlessness; loss of responsibility; social isolation.	Alienation	Vagrancy	Traumatized personality	Existential therapies; radical therapy.	Kinston & Cohen
<b>VII</b>	<b>Transpersonal being</b>	Harmony and attunement	Despair; being overwhelmed; cynicism.	Doubt	Torment	(Sickness of the soul)	Psychosynthesis; transcendental meditation; analytical psychology.	(None)

**The hierarchical evolution of dualities in identity development.**

The term in bold is the growth-promoting potential of the duality and the term in italics is the stabilizing core of any identity within that reality. The stabilizing core and the growth-promoting potential are transcended and apparently synthesized to produce a new stabilizing core at the next higher level, where a new growth-promoting potential emerges. See text for further explanation.



## INTRODUCING THE NATURAL MORAL INSTITUTIONS

Despite the variety of valid and necessary approaches to identity development, it still remains true to say that, ultimately, a person can only realize himself or herself within a society at a particular moment of history. In short, man is a social being. The founding fathers of sociology — Comte, Spencer, Durkheim, Weber — were unyielding in this assertion. We must stick with their perspective, but without surrendering our newly won clarity about other realms of human existence. Society too recognizes all these realms, as it must, and provides institutions to support them and therefore itself.

We need and want social arrangements which ensure that each and all of us are the ‘right’ sort of social being. Of great importance in this regard are seven **natural moral institutions**. These primal institutions emerge spontaneously within any enduring community, giving it both character and coherence. They control or constrain much social interaction and ensure responsible participation. Newcomers who reject or ignore them are in effect refusing to integrate.

The natural moral institutions are special because their specific *function* is to define and develop social being (L'-VI) itself. They do so by recognizing the significance of each of the approaches to identity development described in the previous section, and by building on natural human concerns within those approaches. As a result, they can be arranged in ascending order as follows: *formal etiquette* (L"-I), *popular morality* (L"-II), *communal ideals* (L"-III), the *social structure* (L"-IV), the *ethical teaching* (L"-V), the *governance system* (L"-VI), and *organized religion* (L"-VII).

These seven moral institutions demand full identification by all members of society. They are inherently within the ethical domain precisely because they are identity-defining and identity-preserving both for the person (as a social being) and for the community.

The present aim is not the enormous and impossible task of discussing and describing each of the natural moral institutions in detail. Instead I want to throw light on certain of their features in order to open up the exploration of ethical entities and to begin clarifying the ethical authorities of any society. Keep in mind that these seven moral institutions are primal expressions of humanity and that they develop spontaneously in all societies, traditional and modern. Legislation may strengthen or undermine an existing institution, but the institution itself is not a product of legislation. These institutions, unlike many which are described in later chapters, are highly resistant to straightforward design and re-design.

Although the natural moral institutions embody binding rules and have a deeply conservative character, some degree of autonomy within them is always possible. The degree of autonomy varies according to the institution and according to the type of society. If variation were impossible or unthinkable, cultures would never change or progress. But people experience any change here as deeply significant because these institutions are identity-defining: that is to say, they are part of the foundations of their existence.

Ensuring that any institution, spontaneous or designed, actually serves people rather than enslaving them is difficult. This task possibly ranks as the greatest challenge to humanity. The first step is to gain greater self-awareness: especially in regard to the characteristic rules used by these natural institutions. Rules, as we shall soon see, are the versatile building bricks of any social order and the stumbling blocks to inter-cultural harmony.

### Summarizing the Institutions

Ordering the natural moral institutions into seven levels reflects their emergence from each of the seven approaches to identity. Because a person's identification with these institutions generates a social identity, the hierarchy can be placed within the sixth approach to identity development, social being (L'-VI). The hierarchy also reflects a progressively greater significance for social coherence.

The positioning of the natural moral institutions is diagrammed in Master-Figure 10. (See Master-Fig. 16 in Ch. 8 for a fuller picture.)

Each institution contains rules found in lower-level institutions together with an additional characteristic type of rule. In other words, the first institution contains one type/level of rule, the second contains two types/levels, the third three types/levels and so on. The arrangement is shown in Master-Figure 14. The institutions are far more than just the rules of course — they include history and physical objects, for example — but the rules are particularly relevant when working with values or seeking social change.

In ascending order, the characteristic types of rule are as follows. *Prescriptions* are intrinsic to etiquette (L"-I); *conventions* emerge with popular morality (L"-II); *tenets* characterize communal ideals (L"-III); *rights* define the social structure (L"-IV); *maxims* are found in the ethical teaching (L"-V); *laws* are intrinsic to the governance system (L"-VI); and *absolutes* are needed by organized religion (L"-VII).

The relevant properties of the natural moral institutions are summarized in Master-Table 15. By way of

introduction, the function of each of these institutions is indicated below, together with its principal foci of concern, its characteristic rule, and the impersonal need of society which it meets.

**L"-I: Formal etiquette** coheres society by requiring a common identification with what constitutes correct behaviour in public interactions. Etiquette meets society's need for ceremony and impersonal respect. Its focus is sensory, and it controls matters like gestures, dress, dining, and speaking. The characteristic type of rule is a **prescription** which specifies a correct behaviour precisely.

**L"-II: Popular morality** coheres society by requiring a common identification with the right attitudes in regard to use of the body. It therefore deals with matters like sex, drugs and violence which use or affect the body. Popular morality meets society's need for conformity. It uses **conventions** as well as prescriptions. Conventions specify the right attitudes and change slowly as the social group evolves.

**L"-III: Communal ideals** cohere society by requiring a common identification with its essential values. The ideals include **tenets** which specify what values are to be unquestioningly affirmed, as well as conventions and prescriptions upholding those values. The focus here is emotional: ideals engender and sustain human energies in the service of society. Ideals include any aspect of a society which evokes an intense attachment and can be idealized: the language, the countryside, the great buildings, the method of government and much else. These communal ideals are transmitted during socialization, but loyalty to ideals is ultimately a matter for each person's conscience.

**L"-IV: The social structure** coheres society by requiring a common identification with its proper boundaries and internal differentiation. The social structure deals with the need for order in society and expresses the rights of membership, as well as embodying certain tenets, conventions and prescriptions. **Rights** specify what is due to and from each person according to their classification, and so their focus is individual. They include each person's claims, powers, duties (or responsibilities), privileges, immunities, disabilities and liabilities. The social structure is sustained and modified according to each person's use and respect of their rights.

**L"-V: The ethical teaching** coheres society by requiring a common identification with what constitutes proper social functioning. Its focus is on the handling of the inter-personal relationships inherent in social life, and it meets society's need for virtue in its

members. The ethical teaching includes **maxims** which specify the general requirements for virtuous functioning; and also rights, tenets, conventions and prescriptions related to these. The teaching is usually to be found in religious-philosophical writings which are assigned respect and authority.

**L"-VI: The governance system** coheres society by requiring a common identification with the means for deciding what rules are to be enforced and how. Its focus is on security, peace, justice freedom and well-being for members of the society. The governance system meets the need for stability through the maintenance of order. **Laws** are the distinguishing rule-type, but maxims, rights, tenets, conventions and prescriptions are also important. The system determines the governing organs of society — legislative, judicial, administrative — which must also operate, maintain and shape the system.

**L"-VII: Organized religion** coheres society by requiring a common identification with a solution to the meaning of life. The focus of concern is the mystery of social existence, its uncertainties, its suffering and its evils. Although religious doctrines are transpersonal and harness the experience of the sacred to embrace all humanity, an organized religion is coloured by immediate social needs and mundane concerns. For example, it authorizes the governance system. In return, the religion may be established officially. All religions characteristically build on **absolutes** which enjoin utterly abstract duties; and they also contain regulations, maxims, rights, tenets, conventions and prescriptions, all imbued with an absolutist streak. Religions use scriptural and clerical authority as a substitute for (or channel to) the ultimate source of all authority, God.

**Properties.** In describing and comparing the various moral institutions, certain properties (italicized below and in each account) will be regularly examined.

Each type of institution has a distinct *function*. In performing its function, each handles certain human concerns. These can be traced back to a distinct *approach to identity* — which is, therefore, highly reinforcing for the institution.

Each institution is built around a characteristic type of *rule*. Society values the rules greatly. People often call them moral values. Each member of society is expected to internalize and identify with its moral institutions. As a result, people feel a definite obligation not just to conform to the rules, but also to value them and ensure others conform. Because the institutions are accepted as natural or inevitable, authority and responsibility for them is diffusely distributed and felt to be both personal

and communal.

The institutions are quintessentially social and yet communities are made up of unique individuals. So the way *individual differences* are handled by each moral institution deserves note. From the communal perspective, each ensures survival by meeting an *essential need*. Determined rejection of any of the institutions makes it difficult if not impossible for a person to remain a full member of society. *Change*, even when spontaneous, is difficult and anxiety-provoking, progressively more so as the hierarchy is ascended. Yet dissatisfaction and dissent is not uncommon. To obtain *compliance*, socialization is viewed as a continuing process with distinctive inducements and sanctions. These include permission for acceptable forms of dissent. Each type of natural moral institution has inherent limitations and receives a characteristic type of *criticism*.

Now, each of the institutions will be taken in turn and explored with examples.

## L'-I: FORMAL ETIQUETTE AND ITS PRESCRIPTIONS

All societies recognize that the everyday brushing up of one person against another needs to be definitively controlled. To do this, systems of **formal etiquette** spontaneously develop. The *function* of formal etiquette is to cohere society by requiring a common identification with what constitutes correct behaviour in public interactions. Formal etiquette is defined by *rules* which have the quality of **prescriptions** and call for ritualized or near-automatic observance. Prescriptions specify precisely what behaviour must be performed, when and how.

The prescriptions in formal etiquette deal with the minutiae of physical interaction in regard to matters like: dressing, grooming, speaking, dining, gesturing, time control, touching, and posture. In other words, etiquette protects, supports and derives its rationale from the sensory *approach to identity* (L'-I).

Etiquette helps control the mutual and unavoidable sensory awareness and sensory stimulation that people generate in their social interactions. Any behaviour is potentially given significance by people and treated as a communication about the relationship. Ceremony can control such automatic attributions. Society needs a minimum of ceremony and ritual to avoid unnecessary misinterpretations and to function smoothly. Society has an *essential need* for ceremony because this is the only way that people can show genuine respect for each other on superficial, formal or transient acquaintance.

Such provision differs from each person's requirement for respect (L'-IV) based on their unique individual qualities. Etiquette is about showing and receiving respect unambiguously during interaction, whether or not that respect is actually felt.

The prescriptions of formal etiquette are not optional or amenable to personal preference. If we fail to use eating implements as prescribed, then we are behaving rudely and will generate offence. The evolution of etiquette is obscure and secondary to changes in the higher institutions. Etiquette must also meet the practicalities of daily living, so new inventions like the telephone, television and air travel call for new etiquette rules. Ceremonies are not easily re-fashioned, but people who are foci of popular attention, celebrities, can have an influence because they are allowed a certain license; and then others emulate them. Note that celebrity status depends on superficial things like pomp, public profile and splendour rather than personal merit or virtue.

**Maintaining Etiquette.** *Compliance* with etiquette feels natural. The inducement to comply is the feeling of confidence and certainty that comes from the sure knowledge that one is doing precisely the right thing. Also, because we are all sensory beings, the stimulation that etiquette provides meets a deep need and this reinforces its use. Compliance with etiquette is therefore its own reward, and the result is ritualized automatic adherence. Failure to follow etiquette is liable to generate shame and confusion and may bring proceedings to a halt. The usual consequence of not following etiquette is that someone will exert direct control, either forcing the offending person to comply or preventing him from proceeding. For example, some editors now regard use of the masculine form of a pronoun to include the feminine as a breach of etiquette, and so they rewrite material (like the previous sentence) without asking for permission, or they return the manuscript and instruct the author to rewrite.

Formal etiquette ignores *individual differences*. Perhaps that is why it has been simplified in Western societies in association with the social trend to individualism. Even so, many prescriptions remain. They become particularly noticeable in cross-cultural interaction. In regal and diplomatic circles, where appearances are important and where individuals must relate in terms of what they represent not what they personally feel and think, elaborate ceremonies persist.

Because etiquette is somewhat mechanical and impersonal, *change*, while not always welcomed, is not necessarily problematic. The usual *criticism* of an

etiquette prescription is in terms of its artificiality. When justified, this usually indicates that the prescription has outlived its usefulness. It no longer communicates respect meaningfully, possibly because of evolutionary change in higher level institutions. For example, the etiquette requirement that a man should open the door for a woman now conflicts with communal ideals of equality.

Etiquette is essential in social life. But society must do more than just support sensory being. And the protection and preservation of social identity and society itself requires more than merely ensuring impersonal ceremonial respect.

## L"-II: POPULAR MORALITY AND ITS CONVENTIONS

Every community finds it needs to develop agreement on the control of bodily activities and urges to handle not just sensory but physical encounters between people. In other words, it must regulate and support vital being (L'-II). Because such activity and interaction often take place in private or in small groups and under very varied situations, precise behavioural control through prescriptions is not always appropriate. A more general control using attitudes is required so that each person can handle and adapt to different situations in a similar way. This control over attitudes is provided by *rules* which have the quality of **conventions** or are viewed as norms. The result may be called **popular morality** or conventional morality (or sometimes: the moral code). Its conventions do, of course, lead to prescriptions seeking to exert precise behavioural control over body use.

The *function* of popular morality is to cohere society by requiring a common identification with the right attitudes to hold and follow in regard to bodily matters. Matters covered in this *approach to identity* include: sexuality; the consumption of alcohol and drugs to alter the body's functioning; affectionate and aggressive contact between people; participation in sports and other physical activities such as dancing and music; handling the sick, the hurt, the dying and the dead; modes of suicide or ritualized killing; the physical handling of animals; and work (which originated as a bodily activity). It also covers the use of money including interest rates, lending and gambling. (The link to the body seems more distant in this last group. Perhaps the link is to be found in payment for work, or the psychoanalytic view that money is unconsciously equivalent to faeces, the child's first precious possession.)

**Attitudes to Death:** The social acceptance of life-endangering activities shows great cultural variation and temporal evolution. Gladiatorial sport was prominent in Roman times. Until recently, duelling was regarded as honourable in central Europe even though it was illegal. Capital punishment, even where legal, is used to a greater or lesser extent according to convention. Bull-fights in Spain lead to the death of the bull, whereas those in Portugal do not. Fights between animals are accepted in some countries but not others. In the West, insect fights are not viewed as deplorable in the way that dog fights are, but the Jains in India take precautions not to kill insects accidentally. Slaughter of animals is carried out differently by different religious groups, sometimes in ways thought by non-believers to be inhumane. **Ex. 7.1**

All communities within which one must live and deal — the household, the neighbourhood, the locality, the region, the whole country — produce their own version of popular morality to accord with the amount and quality of physical interaction they generate. As a result, the moral conventions in a small isolated village will have certain features quite distinct from those in the centre of a cosmopolitan capital city within the same country. Popular morality reflects the strongly felt and *essential need* for a degree of uniformity and conformity in society. So the smaller and more tightly knit the community, the more restrictive popular morality is likely to be.

Responsibility for maintaining morality appears to be disseminated throughout society, with every single person aware of the various conventions and prescriptions and expected to ensure they are upheld. Popular morality therefore tends to suppress *individual differences*: newcomers to any community, for example, are expected to recognize and adopt the local morality. It seems that most people find popular morality an absorbing preoccupation: it is the subject matter of much humour and gossip and it sells mass circulation tabloid newspapers.

Because popular morality is in the hands of the whole community, single individuals, no matter how prominent, cannot decide it. Although public figures may exert some influence during transitional phases, they are generally expected to adhere to popular morality in an exemplary fashion. Becoming eminent may be difficult if immoral behaviour, or its advocacy, becomes public knowledge. Publicity over the birth of an illegitimate child, sexual peccadilloes, alcoholism or financial scandal has ended the career of many ambitious politicians.

**Maintaining Morality.** The demand for *compliance* with this institution is intense. Depending on your point of view, popular morality always seems to be too rigid or too lax. The prime inducement to morality is the social acceptance accorded to those who adhere.

Conformity produces feelings of security and ease. The complementary sanction is social rejection expressed through the spontaneous exertion of social pressure. Direct compulsion is not permitted and is generally impractical. Our needs as vital beings are most easily met through adhering to popular morality and this provides it with further reinforcement.

Any person known to have offended against popular morality may suffer considerably. He or she may be avoided or ignored, discriminated against, have their activities or career unofficially blocked, be forced from public office, sent hate mail, or be vilified in the press. The greater the sense of moral violation, the greater the intensity of pressure on the offender (or offending group). At the extreme, people may be physically attacked or killed and the assailant seen as justified or even heroic.

Organizations and social sub-groups are as subject to popular morality as persons. Firms may for a time resist moral pressures in society, but if social pressure builds up and exerts itself in ways that are commercially damaging, the firm soon modifies its stance. The same is not true for ethnic groups. Territorially dispersed minorities, whose conventions and prescriptions in popular morality diverge in an extreme way from the surrounding populace are a challenge to the pressure for social conformity. Because of the intensity of feeling and pressure, ghettos are likely to develop and unbridgeable schisms in society may form.

*Change* in popular morality usually occurs in response to new circumstances, new knowledge and the pressure of higher level institutions. Without external forces, change is slow. Boxing is still promoted and accepted world-wide and even funded by governments as a sport, despite unambiguous evidence for many years that the contestants aim to damage each other's brains — and regularly succeed in doing so.<sup>23</sup>

**Premarital Sex:** Sexual intercourse prior to marriage was regarded as immoral in the West in the first half of the 20th century. However the development of contraception, sexual hygiene and medical treatments for venereal disease, undermined any practical rationale; and developing notions of personal autonomy weakened the hold of convention. As the behaviour of public figures changed, an intense and emotional public debate was provoked. The result was a gradual change in moral attitudes to the point that sexual initiation and experience prior to marriage became regarded as a positive good in many circles. In these circles, premarital sex is viewed as an expression of freedom and responsibility, and as an aid to the development of personal maturity. Whether premarital sexual relations are acceptable in any particular community setting is still determined by local conventions.

Ex. 7.2

Rejection of popular morality means acting in secrecy or being branded as immoral. A person then becomes an outsider and may be forced to leave the community entirely. Reconciliation with the community requires acknowledgement of the transgression and positive demonstration of a willingness to conform. But non-conforming individuals of a like mind often welcome exclusion and abjure reconciliation. They may band together spontaneously in a sub-community within the main community, as occurred in the hippie communes and love-ins of the 1960s. People in such new communities find that they evolve their own moral conventions which turn out to be as strict in their own way as any in the community that they abandoned.

So *criticism* of popular morality really reflects a preference for different conventions rather than the abandonment of morality or conformity altogether. A more specific criticism is to be found in the way that popular morality turns private decisions into social problems and thereby exacerbates personal difficulties. For example, the use of an intoxicant like caffeine, nicotine, marijuana, opium or alcohol is not necessarily a social (or personal) problem until popular morality makes it so.

Moral crises are recognized when rational action demands attitudes at variance with popular morality. Popular morality in many countries has severely impeded the handling of the AIDS epidemic: in Uganda, for example, promiscuous heterosexuality is normal and has spread the virus widely. Similarly, moral conventions which inhibit discussion of sexual activity, especially with children, impede the diagnosis of child sexual abuse. The use of anatomically correct dolls in diagnostic play sessions has proved particularly controversial in some countries.

Aspects of popular morality are invariably embodied in the law, even though their private and personal nature often makes them poor targets for legislation. Monitoring and enforcing the law cannot but be insensitive and intrusive in regard to bodily matters. In such cases, enforcement is unlikely to work. Prohibition of alcohol in the USA in the 1920s was a spectacular failure. In the same way, whatever the form of sexuality desired in a society, it is certainly impractical, and probably harmful overall, to criminalize certain sexual habits between consenting adults in private.

Popular morality adapts itself to the history and circumstances of local neighbourhoods and communities in a way that the governments and religions cannot. Exertion of informal pressure can be sensitively adjusted according to the individual and the situation,

and morality can evolve as a natural social process. In the case of AIDS, for example, sexual conventions amongst homosexuals have changed markedly following public awareness of how infection is spread.

The conformity demanded by popular morality is a powerful force for unity. Fortunately, its concerns are relatively circumscribed: something which could never be said of the next natural moral institution.

### L"-III: COMMUNAL IDEALS AND THEIR TENETS

All social groups come to endorse values which members prize intensely. These values are taken to be essential, natural, and deserving of loyalty. They are the **communal ideals**. The *function* of communal ideals is to cohere society by requiring a common identification with values which must be unquestioningly affirmed. In other words, the characteristic *rule* is a value which is a **tenet**. Ideals include or imply both conventions disposing people to certain responses, and also prescriptions demanding specific actions.

Communal ideals may encompass any aspect of a society or social life which evokes and enables attachment and loyalty. People feel strongly about certain social institutions, their mode of government, certain buildings, parts of the countryside, their language and mode of education, some aspects of relationships between people, types of food and their preparation, and so on. We can be sure we are dealing with a communal ideal if most people are deeply attached to that aspect of their society, vigorously defend it against all criticism (especially from outsiders), and proclaim its value even in the face of their own complaints and the reasonable arguments of others against it.

**Health Care Systems:** The American and British health care systems have evolved very differently. The USA system is viewed as a product of private enterprise — even though government expenditure and regulation is high and most people are insured through their jobs. Health care costs per person are four times higher than in England — and yet life expectancies are lower and infant mortality is worse. The system does provide a great deal of choice but many have no continuing care at all. There is also much over-treatment: up to 30-50% of some surgical procedures are inappropriate or without benefit. The NHS in the UK is publicly financed, and provides reasonably good quality care at a low cost, but generates rationing and long queues for treatment, almost abolishes choice, and is insensitive to patients' preferences. The most striking thing about the American and British health systems is that they are defended so vigorously in their own societies despite their serious defects. The British

regularly make the unsubstantiated claim that the NHS is the envy of the world. For decades, representatives of each country have viewed the idea of adopting aspects of the other's system with horror. **Ex. 7.3**

Communal ideals recognize emotional reality rather than cold logic, and so they originate from and support the emotional *approach to identity* (L'-III). Ideals provide for the emotional unification of a society, enabling people to feel part of a community, and only truly themselves when they are within it. Ideals liberate the powerful energies associated with values (cf. Ch. 4). Societies have an inescapable *essential need* for these energies if they are to survive in the face of disintegrative tendencies and challenging stresses within and economic forces and enemies without.

To ensure that people in society share ideals, their inculcation occurs universally during childhood. In his structural model of the mind, Freud developed the notion that values promulgated during childhood by the family, school and other influences are internalized together with associated inducements and threats as the superego, ego-ideal or conscience. So the conscience is the repository and guardian of communal ideals.<sup>24</sup> Once socialized, the adult can adapt easily to others similarly socialized because all share and define themselves in terms of the same underlying values. These values govern their attitudes and thence their behaviour. Whereas popular morality and formal etiquette are experienced as external social requirements, communal ideals call for the personalization and internalization of authority. Social stability and cohesion depend on communal ideals feeling like the personal property of each member of society.

**Maintaining Ideals.** Society entitles and expects families to inculcate its values and to control exposure of their children to moral influences. Variations in family circumstances and modes of upbringing as well as individual variability mean that consciences and personal values will vary. In addition, different activities and concerns within society invariably lead to emphases being placed differently on a wide range of societal things. However, while it is essential to tolerate *individual differences* in ideals within society, it is necessary to have a certain unity in regard to society as a whole. Too disparate a mixture of ideals inevitably puts a strain on society.

To allow greater flexibility and more recognition of the diversity of individuals and sub-groups, pluralism (of value systems) may itself become an ideal. In the Netherlands, for example, they speak of 'compartmentalization', which refers to the presence of many

organizations with the same aims and objects but infused by different philosophical, religious or ideological assumptions.

The conscience deals out self-approval and pride if the internalized values are followed, and disapproval, self-reproach, guilt, and remorse if those tenets are breached. Given our identity as emotional beings, we willingly project ourselves and our feelings into communal ideals. So these become reinforced at the same time as our identity is strengthened. *Compliance* is also externally ensured in society using both inducements and sanctions. Espousal of ideals meets with a warm endorsement whereas their rejection leads to trouble. As with health care (Ex. 7.3), whatever the merits of a new idea, if it crosses society's current ideals, it meets a wall of misunderstanding and opposition. Because knowledge, for example, is idealized, an established academic found it difficult to publish a thoughtful article arguing that ignorance is preferable in certain circumstances.<sup>25</sup> Rejection of a communal ideal is taken to mean being disloyal or having a conscience which permits or even demands socially objectionable activities. Others then feel a responsibility to oppose and prevent such ideas and practices.

Because the family is the transmitter of communal values and the guardian of the conscience, governments attempting large scale social engineering bring intense pressure to bear on the family. This has occurred in recent decades in Iraq, Cambodia, and East Germany; and it was widespread in China under Mao, and Russia under Stalin. In these regimes, children were indoctrinated at school and encouraged to inform on their parents if they detected incorrect thinking — sending them to torture, imprisonment or death and so destroying the offending family unit.

Communal ideals are rather slow to *change* because of the emotional hold they have on people and the continuity they provide. Except during times of transition, attacks on communal ideals are muted within society at large. However, certain institutions, like the universities and radical periodicals, may take it on themselves to analyse and challenge ideals. From their detached perspective, certain *criticisms* regularly emerge in relation to the inherent conservatism of communal ideals, especially the taboos on new thinking and the blocks to innovation that result.

Communal ideals provide society with energy and enable people to feel a part of worthwhile society. However, they do not clarify how a person should properly fit within society. For this, a higher level moral institution built around the significance of the individual is required.

## L"-IV: THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND ITS RIGHTS

All societies distinguish all of their members from those in neighbouring societies, and differentiate their members to a greater or lesser degree. These distinctions define the **social structure**, an institution built on *rules* which are **rights**. Tenets, conventions and prescriptions are also found within the institution bolstering these rights. The *function* of the social structure is to cohere society by requiring a common identification with a defined bounded social entity and its internal structure. The corresponding expectations of society on its members (i.e. of each member on every other member) is that they fulfil certain duties. So the internal structure of society is based on differential rights and duties accorded to different roles and classes of its members.

The social structure is concerned with distinct, separate and self-contained aspects of individuals. Its origin and rationale is to be found in the self-contained and self-motivated existence assumed by the individualist *approach to identity* (L'-IV). The social structure must deal with anything an individual may do — like obtaining material necessities, associating with others, working, owning property, transacting business, marrying and so on. In all societies there is both equality and differentiation in respect of such matters, and the exact details vary greatly. The resultant pattern of social rights and social duties is invariably complex.

**The Pollution Concept:** The Hindu caste system divides all citizens into four main groups: priests and sages, warriors and rulers, merchants and farmers, and labourers and other unskilled workers. The untouchables belong to no caste and are therefore excluded from normal social life. Each caste has its rights and duties. The key rules distinguishing the groups and determining social activities and relationships concern pollution by association with such things as death, bodily excretions and alcohol. The main castes are further subdivided leading to over 6000 castes in all. Ritual status exists side by side with secular status based on such factors as wealth, land ownership, education, and skill. The relationships between ritual and secular status and the principles of movement between castes are complex in the extreme. Caste government and inter-caste relations are justified via religious and mystical tenets. The caste system provides for a wide variety of social needs, and escape from it is almost impossible.

Ex. 7.4<sup>26</sup>

A less ambiguous name for those rights which arise spontaneously within a society might be 'membership' or 'customary' rights. As well as having membership rights which establish the commonality of all members,

the social structure also provides for differentiation. For example, each person carries numerous social roles — parent, employee, patient, friend, colleague, club member &c — and each of these has a distinctive set of membership rights. In other words, the social structure classifies and institutionalizes *individual differences* and provides for order.

The *essential need* for order in society is uncontroversial because order is so central to the whole system of society. Without order, people cannot realize those social needs for energy and conformity mentioned in relation to previous natural moral institutions, nor meet subsequent needs for virtue, stability and meaning associated with the institutions to come. However, any order depends on adherence to rights.

Rights are the written and unwritten rules within social groups indicating what is properly due to and what is properly due from an individual by virtue of membership. Sociologists and anthropologists sometimes refer to a membership right as a status. What is due from an individual is commonly termed a duty or responsibility rather than a right. Legal scholars differentiate rights and duties still further into powers, claims, privileges, immunities, disabilities and liabilities. I will usually use the term right to include all related terms including duties, unless a special emphasis is required.

In any social structure, the minimum general duties are: (a) tolerance of others when they exercise their established rights, and (b) trying positively not to violate the established rights of others. If this can be achieved, social order prevails and the basis for peaceful activity and change exists.

Because rights are probably the most confusing of all ethical entities, now is the time to assert their importance and commence their clarification. It is worth noting that some philosophers pour scorn on the very idea of rights. Two centuries ago, Bentham referred to them as “nonsense”, and more recently an eminent modern moral philosopher, MacIntyre, concluded that “belief in them is at one with belief in witches and unicorns”. However, if a right is defined as ‘something one can exercise, earn, enjoy, give, claim, demand, assert, insist on, secure, waive, or surrender’, then it is indisputable that such things do exist. Rights are social facts (not fictions) because they are the basis for social structure.<sup>27</sup>

Rights exist whether or not a society conceptualizes and formulates them, or whether learned academics think they are important or not. They exist even if the concept of a separate individual is weak. In the same way, they exist even when the culture emphasises what

is expected of a person as opposed to what a person may expect as due to them. If rights did not exist, society would lack structure and a person could be treated utterly arbitrarily and could behave similarly. Not only would this be humanly intolerable, it would remove all meaning from the notion of membership of a society.

In recent debates about the structure of society, much concern has focused on those rights which apply solely by virtue of being a citizen, irrespective of ethnic origin, religion, sex, social status, occupation, wealth, property, language or any other differentiating feature. Rights which apply across the board to all citizens in a society are sometimes termed basic or fundamental rights.

Note that society has members for whom the basic rights and duties are modified or abrogated because they are not part of the citizenry (defined as those who choose the government). Slaves fell in this category in the past. Today, people like prisoners, children and the severely mentally ill or intellectually handicapped are not full citizens. They are placed under the control of people assigned powers to apply force to control a wide range of their living activities. Society’s non-citizen members cannot associate freely to discuss their situation and pursue their needs, and they have difficulty exerting what rights they do possess.

The minimum rights in any society are: (a) the right to live, and (b) the right to some freedom from arbitrary interference. Without the former a person has no guarantee of existence, and without the latter the community has no guarantee of existence. The degree to which those two fundamental rights are accorded, as well as any additional rights, depend on how enlightened citizens in that society are, and on the type of regime in power (cf. Ch. 12: G-6 and G-7).

**Maintaining the Structure.** *Compliance* with the social structure is natural, even if it feels or seems unfair. The inducement to assert one’s rights and perform one’s duties is that this is the prime way that each obtains the benefits of membership in that society. The sanction that flows from neglect or passivity is the likely abuse of one’s rights and the loss of those benefits. Rights assume and demand a sense of oneself as a distinct individual. So identity requirements reinforce the significance of social structure, even if the current structure is viewed unfavourably.

Differentiating people evokes notions of classes which are permanently inferior or superior (or midway). As a result, the usual *criticism* of the social structure is that it institutionalizes actual injustices. Such injustice only matters in social terms when it is experienced as such by many in the community. Often

injustice is tolerated because of inherent beliefs, conventions and practices plus pressures to maintain order. (In very recent times, however, external bodies and societies have felt increasingly entitled to exert pressure to reduce what they perceive as extremes of injustice.)

Once the perception of extreme injustice starts growing, it markedly reduces the incentive of members to identify with and uphold related rights and duties. This poses a threat to order and the existing structure, so *change* of some sort becomes necessary. Political revolutions are often about structural change to remedy injustice. Even more limited change generates intense anxiety and has the potential to release violence. For example, the attempt to replace the caste system in India by Western conceptions of equality has not been successful after 40 years of trying. Mahatma Gandhi's efforts in this direction led to his assassination; and in more recent times limited proposals to improve the access of untouchables and lower castes to government jobs have led to rioting and deaths.

The social structure provides necessary order and is a natural focus for legislation, especially since many existing (non-legal) rights are open to the criticism of being unjust. Although legislation may attempt to remedy injustice, legal change is only a change in the legal system — not in the social structure. Real change means change in that structure. So legalizing rights is not a panacea for ending injustices.

Injustice may be unavoidable, but it is never desirable. Fortunately, at least some of the injustices bedded into the social structure can be relieved or even overcome by the next moral institution. This one seeks to ensure that relationships in society are operated in way that is intrinsically good.

### L"-V: THE ETHICAL TEACHING AND ITS MAXIMS

An institutionalized guide to moral conduct, whatever the circumstances, is to be found in all societies in the form of an **ethical teaching**. (Sometimes this is called a moral teaching or an ethical code.) The ethical teaching includes examples of all of the rules so far identified and in addition contains a new type of *rule*, the **maxim**. Maxims specify general requirements of virtuous functioning. For example, the rule 'to love your enemy' is a maxim. It would seem odd to say that it was a social duty or that enemies had a right to be loved. In any case, the social structure does not have a place for enemies.

Maxims imply the capacity for autonomous choice

and a voluntary commitment by each person to their group. Maxims commonly regarded as part of Western ethical teachings include: keeping promises, telling the truth, defending the innocent, and showing mercy for a wrongdoer who repents.

As these examples indicate, the ethical teaching is concerned with the virtuous handling of personal relationships. In an ethical teaching, *individual differences* are recognized fully and valued. The way a person should respect and handle these is not specified in detail, because of the wish to encourage adaptation to the particular relationship and situation. In this way, the ethical teaching supports the exercise of individuality and gains its rationale from the relational *approach to identity* (L'-V).

Ethical teachings may also deal with a person's relationships with him or herself, with embryos, with members of other species, and with the natural environment. Animal rights, for example, are not rights that have any meaning within the social structure because animals are not responsible for the social order and can neither exert nor waive their rights. However, the ethical teaching can include rights for animals as a way of clarifying what constitutes a proper or virtuous relationship with an animal.

The *function* of an ethical teaching is to cohere society by requiring a common identification with what constitutes proper social functioning. Virtue in society is an *essential need*. If ethical precepts are not followed and virtue is treated with contempt, the social system is weakened and the possibility of social breakdown looms. If no one kept faith, or treated others with kindness, or forgave wrongdoing, then social relations would collapse into a state of mutual distrust and enmity. Communication and exchange would become difficult and inefficient. Eventually society itself would cease to function. This is something that few desire.

**Honour among Thieves:** Once a follower of the great Chinese brigand Chih asked him whether thieves had any use for wisdom and morality. 'To be sure, they do,' said Chih, 'just as much as other people. To find oneself in a strange house and guess unerringly where its treasures lie hid, this surely needs Inspiration. To be the first to enter needs Courage; to be the last to leave needs Sense of Duty. Never to attempt the impossible needs Wisdom. To divide the spoil fairly needs Goodness. Never has there been or could there be anyone who lacked these five virtues and yet became a really great brigand.'

Ex. 7.5<sup>28</sup>

Acting virtuously means living by society's ethical teaching. The ethical teaching is usually elaborated by philosophers, although the source is typically found in a society's official religion. In the West, the medieval

ethics of Abelard, Anselm, Augustine, Bonaventura, Aquinas, Duns Scotus, and William of Ockham, primarily concerned itself with the development of a Christian ethical code. In the East, most of the great Chinese philosophers have developed or elaborated ethical teachings which focus on the conduct of social life while taking the divine for granted. Ethical teachings do not necessarily agree with each other. Confucius (551-479 BC) emphasized discriminating amongst people and situations, practising humanity, using arts and ceremony, fulfilling moral obligations, respecting inborn nature, and governing by moral example. Mo Tzu (479-438 BC) thought most of this to be ill-advised, and especially condemned fatalism, music and ceremony. He generated an ethical teaching which urged minimizing differences amongst people, obeying the will of heaven as defined by superiors, agreeing with superiors, and producing profit and practical benefits.<sup>29</sup>

*Change* in the teaching means a cultural revolution and it is rare. By contrast, superficial changes are routinely required because the content and application of ethical maxims must be constantly kept topical. The particular social virtues emphasized at any time and place — say: from among honesty, trust, fairness, mercy, generosity, compassion, wisdom, or humility — depend on what is most urgently needed by society. Ethical teachings are continually re-activated, reformulated and re-interpreted by whomever desires to exert moral leadership in the community. Anyone at all may apply the ethical teaching to try to improve the conduct of those they deal with. For example, piracy has moved from the high seas to computer terminals, so software houses block the copying process to prevent unauthorized duplication of their programs. Unfortunately, this causes practical problems for genuine purchasers. Now many firms have removed the copy-protection and apply ethical pressure by reminding users that distribution of copies, however undetectable and easy, is wrong because it is stealing.

Occasionally, rather than merely emphasizing or reinterpreting given maxims, attempts are made to re-articulate a complete ethical teaching by synthesizing and systematizing maxims. Spinoza's attempt is the most well-known in the West. There has also been a recent attempt in Japan (see Ex. 7.6).

**Morality:** Hiroike founded the Institute of Moralogy in Japan to develop and promote 'the science of supreme morality'. This is based on the moral teachings of Jesus Christ, Buddha, Confucius, Socrates and Amaterasu Omikami (the Heavenly Ancestress of the imperial house of Japan). Hiroike extracted five maxims from their writings. These are: 1. Ensure motives are disinterested (i.e. be altruistic); 2. Maintain a belief in the benevolence of God (i.e. never despair); 3. Give duty precedence over

rights (i.e. be responsible); 4. Show respect and loyalty for lines of succession — the ortholines which include the nation, the family, and the religion (i.e. maintain social continuity); and 5. Seek enlightenment and salvation. A sixth has been added by followers: recognize that actions have results according to their moral worth. The practice of these maxims, summarized as benevolence, involves justice, self-sacrifice, expiation of others' faults, self-perfection, criticism and self-examination. Such a philosophy is communitist (L<sup>-5</sup>) and derived from the relational approach to existence (L<sup>-V</sup>). Hiroike distinguished morality sharply from society's usual morality which he saw as preoccupied with personal rights and duties (L<sup>-4</sup>) and rooted in the self-centredness of individual being (L<sup>-IV</sup>).

Ex. 7.6<sup>30</sup>

**Maintaining the Teaching.** It is evident that society needs its members to internalize the ethical teaching and use it reflexly. Certainly each person wishes to be treated in accordance with it. However, while the receipt of any virtuous action is beneficial, the production of a virtuous action on its own may generate little immediate benefit to the producer. Worse still, any person may benefit himself greatly in the short term at the expense of another by ignoring the teaching. People are therefore repeatedly exhorted to adhere to the ethical teaching in the face of the temptation to abandon it. Most teachings abjure coercion, so following the path of virtue demands an effort of self-command and an inner resistance to the urge to do what is expedient. Triumphant by violating the ethical teaching is so easy that evil-doers, modern tyrants as much as mythical villains, regard virtue as a fatal weakness to be utterly eradicated in themselves and ruthlessly exploited in others. This is criminal in spirit.

Criminal teachings are perverse because they destroy themselves. Each time a person benefits by breaching a maxim, others are encouraged to do likewise in order not to lose out. When standards spiral downwards like this, the social fabric is weakened. If a criminal organization like the Mafia infiltrates city government, for example, every official or business transaction soon involves a rake-off. Individuals who attempt to oppose this bribery and extortion are ruthlessly beaten or killed, and their firms disrupted. As a result, capable individuals and respectable businesses move out until eventually there is nothing left to exploit and the town collapses in a state of poverty and self-disgust.

The paradox of ethical teaching is that *compliance*, however essential for society, cannot be communally enforced and still remain true to itself. Virtue must be voluntary to have its full effect. The main inducement to follow the ethical teaching is the social approval and admiration which results; while the sanction for breaches is social condemnation. If a breach is recognized, then the offender may be asked to justify the

action. If this reveals that the individual did not properly realize the significance of the breach, and that conventions permitted the breach, then little is usually done beyond exhorting better behaviour. A virtuous person will have appreciated the significance of the breach, and an apology and provision of due compensation will ensure reconciliation. Reinforcement of virtue comes from the gratification associated with relational being, because unrepentant (or even repentant) ethical violation generally leads to loss of trust and, if persistent, to the termination of a relationship.

If there is a widespread failure by people to follow the ethical teaching, then the situation is more serious. Even the governance system cannot mend the situation because it is operated by people who are part of that dysfunctional society. Gratuitous or self-serving lying to the public, for example, seems to be widespread amongst governments.

*Criticism* of the ethical teaching centres on the fact that, like virtue, it seems so demanding and even unrealistic in the turmoil of everyday life. The ethical teaching, though fundamental to the quality of social life, is not by nature strictly enforceable. Worse, it potentially encourages weak individuals to choose to disregard the maxims and to exploit those who adhere to them. In order to prevent exploitation and instability, a higher level moral institution naturally emerges to confront hard social realities explicitly.

## L'-VI: THE GOVERNANCE SYSTEM AND ITS LAWS

All social institutions depend upon a bedrock of social stability, and so all societies develop an institution dedicated to maintaining order within the community. This is the **governance system** which is characterized by *rules* which are formally sanctioned **laws** or regulations. Its *function* is to cohere society by requiring a common identification with the means for deciding what rules are to be formally enforced and how. The governance system specifies the form and operation of government. Government itself is a cluster of special social bodies whose members collectively rule society. So it is quite possible to idealize and support the system while hating and opposing the government.<sup>31</sup>

Laws constituting the system reflect core social values and enable a precise definition of rights and duties for participation in the ruling of society. The governance system also depends on and uses maxims, rights, tenets, conventions and prescriptions which support all the paraphernalia, arrangements, tech-

niques and practices which go into developing, sanctioning, monitoring, and enforcing laws. The institution evidently emerges from and supports the social *approach to identity* (L'-VI).

Governance arises primarily from the *essential need* for stability and peace in any community. Even an imposed peace is worthwhile. Violence and instability generated from within or without make social existence almost unbearable and ordinary activity scarcely possible. A central authority is also needed to provide certain things that the collective as a whole needs or wants but which will not, cannot, must not or should not be spontaneously taken up by individuals. In the last century, most governments have moved with variable success far beyond the deepest needs for peace and stability. Almost every domain — education, health care, energy, transport, even leisure — has felt the hand of government.

Legal regulation and enforcement must be distinguished from non-legal or private regulation and social pressures. The paramount requirement for stability through legal enforcement is an awesome thing because it implies the moral use of coercion, ultimately physical force and death, to control citizens. A free citizenry recognizes that its wish for sovereignty requires it to assign any form of government a near-monopoly on the exercise of threats and force. Nevertheless, there is an assumed underlying condition (or perhaps hope) that coercion of individuals will only occur when it is genuinely needed for the common good.

A governance system evolves spontaneously and comes to be taken for granted and idealized. People under one system look askance at the workings of others and wonder how and why the populace endures certain aspects. Japanese faction-dominated politics, German elitist technocratic management, American pressure group democracy, British tolerance of the individual, Asian authoritarian governments — all reflect distinct cultural heritages.

Despite the evidence that the governance system evolves to suit the culture, social engineering efforts persist.<sup>32</sup> But the theoretical merits of democratic, theocratic, aristocratic, monarchic and other systems and their variants are not as relevant to the average person as the perceived defects of the particular government of the day. I suspect that Samuel failed to convince the Israelites to stick with judges as rulers rather than a king because the current judges (his sons as it happened) were corrupt. There is at least no report in the Bible of any discussion of the relative merits of priestly, judicial or kingly rule.

The powers of any governance system are legislative, judicial and executive. The doctrine of separation of powers, most powerfully argued by Montesquieu, has led to the use of a range of distinct bodies to provide for institutionalized checks and balances defined within a legal system.<sup>33</sup>

A simple division of the legal system is into public and private law. Public law is organizational in nature and deals with the privileged position of government in its dealings with people. It includes constitutional law which formally sets up the governance of society, administrative regulation which covers procedural and executive matters of government (like raising taxes, providing services, waging wars), and other official areas (e.g. ecclesiastical and military law). Private law is juridical in nature and views government as another individual in the social realm. It includes civil and commercial law which handles claims individuals have on each other or the state, and criminal law. Criminal law applies when the community regards a particular harmful act to be so serious for the ethical order, for the very fabric of society, that it needs someone, the government, to prosecute whether or not the particular person or people harmed wish to do so.

The most important sort of laws from an ethical perspective are those which govern the conduct of ordinary members of society so that it is just — I mean ‘just’ as understood and defined in the ethical teaching and as evolved in customary practice. These laws are not simply replicas of, say, membership rights or moral conventions, but are modified to suit the formal nature of any legal system. Laws assume the existence of *individual differences* and try to protect them by providing a framework for their formalized handling.

The notion that laws and government inherently restrain man’s brutish tendencies appears misguided. Laws can and do legitimate every sort of brutishness. Hitler and Stalin used parliament and the courts to harm and kill millions of people. Despots simply find ways to remove parliamentarians and judges who refuse to endorse the laws that they desire. Justice is important, but governments and their legal systems regularly show themselves to be more concerned to maintain social order and stability than to deliver justice.

A system of positive law with constitutional control of the legislature and executive permits the ‘rule of law’. In absolutist regimes, rule by decree replaces rule of law. If the law forbids absolutism and does not acknowledge a superior authority within the community (e.g. from priestly edicts), one speaks of the ‘supremacy of the law’. This is possible only if a community has a genuine desire for the law and accords it supremacy. The guardian of the governance system is

‘the law’ and the courts. As we shall see, the law enables a definitive answer to be given in courts of justice as to whether something is right or wrong according to that society.

**Maintaining Governance.** The governance system is mostly taken for granted by people in a stable society. Rejection of the system is not compatible with continued membership of the society. Breakdown of the assumptions which sustain government action leads to disruptive conflict and anarchic chaos. This has occurred in recent times during civil wars (such as that in Lebanon), the terminal phases of dictatorships (such as Ceaucescu’s in Romania) and when empires disintegrate (as in Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union).

*Change* to the governance system is controlled from within it. Pressure for such change may build up through successful social movements. However, the power implications and procedural aspects mean that actual changes are complex, lengthy, and controversial. Transformation of the system (rather than just a change of government) may occur if people are subject to continuing venality, incompetence, class bias or disconnection in a succession of regimes. These mark historic junctures in the development of the society. A coup, usually masterminded by army leaders with physical force at their disposal, tends to generate a more repressive system. A revolutionary movement in which people rise en masse and overthrow the regime may provide the basis for a beneficial transformation — as in the USA in 1776.

Governance is preoccupied with the issue of *compliance*. The system, even if autocratic and maintained by physical force, only persists as long as the public accept it. Yet they do so apparently without thinking too much about it. Extra-legal inducements for each person to maintain the system are relatively minor. Individuals may experience personal satisfaction and feel a diffuse public support in recognizing their mode of governance. By contrast, penalties for explicitly rejecting the system through contempt of court, treason or subversion are typically harsh. The main reinforcement probably comes from the identity needs of social being itself, because without governance it is hard to see how social existence would be possible at all.

*Criticisms* of any governance system abound. The commonest complaints are: that the system is a juggernaut that crushes individuals; that it is inherently elitist or discriminatory and panders to special interests; that it is intrusive and coercive or absent when needed; and that it places too much power in the hands of a few. The complexity and brute power of modern government is awesome. Even in 13th century England, administrative

and judicial processes had become so complex that it was impossible for the ordinary citizen to appreciate or penetrate them.<sup>34</sup> As a result, those in government too easily become identified with it and remote from ordinary people. This enhances its corrupting effect.

The necessary powers assigned to government invite its take-over by a dominant class and this also discredits the governance system. Modern ideology-dominated social engineers view any evolved system as unsatisfactory. Individualists and liberals complain of excessive restraints on personal freedom, while collectivists and ecclesiastics complain of insufficient order and authority.

Stability and good government are difficult to realize. But all suffering and injustice cannot be removed however well-designed the system and however enlightened the government in power. People need to find meaning in the tribulations of their social existence and be helped to tolerate imperfection. A supreme natural moral institution with greater regulatory power, able to justify governments and laws, and with more concern for man's ultimate well-being is required. This need is met in society by organized religion.

## L"-VII: ORGANIZED RELIGION AND ITS ABSOLUTES

Skeletal remains in Neanderthal burial sites suggest that religion existed in the first small communities of cave-dwellers more than 50,000 years ago. As social life evolved, so did religions. Religion was developed and sustained then as now to bring the totality of existence under social control: in short to harness awe, structure the sense of the sacred, and master mystery. As city-states and then empires and civilizations emerged from 5,000–3,000 BC, the importance of **organized religion** emerged too. A single widely accepted religion tames spirituality, reduces existential anxieties, provides for a communal identity and enables social cohesion.

The *function* of any organized religion is to cohere society by requiring a common identification with a solution to the mystery of social existence with its uncertainties and suffering. Religion provides answers to questions of origins, of life and death, and of the nature of man and society: it asserts whether or not a Supreme Being (God) exists and how God and the soul are to be imagined; it explains how life emerged and where it is going; it tells whether life exists after death and how suffering and evil are justified; it determines the value of human life and specifies certain basic qualities of people. In offering such explanations, the

religion is meeting each person's and the community's deepest and most *essential need* to possess and share the meaning of existence — not its need for validated knowledge or technical expertise.

Religion generally fosters restraint of selfish and anti-social tendencies, fills people with hope, and enables suffering and evil to be borne. Beyond these social measures, religions respond to the sense of awe that results from contemplating the infinite universe and wondering about the place of humanity within it. It recognizes a transcendental reality and is built on a recognition of the sacred and a sense of the numinous or holy. So it supports and gains its rationale from the transpersonal *approach to identity* (L'-VII).

All organized religions contain a theoretical component including myths and beliefs, and a conduct component in the form of rituals and guides to behaviour, as well as experiential and organizational components.<sup>35</sup> Even if scientific knowledge replaces most of the theories of religion, it cannot replace its values and injunctions in regard to conduct. Nor, of course, will science penetrate the ultimate mysteries. Science can do no more than, as here, document (or, as so often elsewhere, attempt to disqualify) spiritual and mystical experiences which suggest the existence of an unseen power entitled to obedience and reverence.

Religions are characterised by *rules* which are **absolutes**. Absolutes specify the path of duty in the most abstract way possible and merge man with God or Being. Religions typically see man as made in the image of God or as a microcosm of the cosmos. In Hinduism, for example, dharma refers both to cosmic order and right conduct. God may be referred to wholly abstractly as Absolute Reality or as The Absolute. Although God is not essential to religion, absolutes are. Buddhism, for example, is an atheistic religion based on four Truths. The first three Truths are: suffering is part of existence; desire is the cause of suffering; and suffering ends when desire ends. The fourth constitutes the Noble Eight-fold Path which is the way to know the Truths. The Path is: right views — i.e. tenets; right intention, right speech, right action and right livelihood — absolutes forming the deontological core; and right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration — i.e. virtues required for personal development.

The link between religion and ethics is evident on etymological grounds alone (L. *religione* = obligation OED). Organized religion therefore seeks to invest all previously discussed institutions with a moral character, and strives to control and specify rules within these institutions too. As Buddhism illustrates, the absolutes are so contentless and abstract that they defy direct interpretation. The various absolutes in a religion may

often be reduced to a single epitome. In the Judeo-Christian ethic, it might be stated: Love God and all His Creation. In Confucian thought: Become perfect in word, thought and deed. In Advaita Vedanta: Realize the Absolute.

Here we must recognize that organized religions are social institutions which mediate transcendental realities within current historical and cultural limits. Prehistoric religions, for example, were organized around the perspectives and concerns of hunters, fisherman and early farmers; while historical religions recognize kingship, politics, economics and law. Indeed all developed religions are concerned with the whole gamut of the social order including government, war, education, family life, domestic activities, food, sexuality, and personal differences. When operating well, their end result is the consecration of life and the stimulation of the will to live and create in society as it is. In principle at least, religions recognize and value *individual differences* while expecting individuality, in the sense of subjectivity or ego, to be transcended.

In order to preserve the faith and maintain a hold on members, the church organization takes control of the religious absolutes and generates a wide variety of lower level rules (including laws for members) which are also infused with an absolute quality. Religion is the main source of social cohesion in all simpler societies. Even in modern Western societies, religion seems to be the only available base for a moral community. (This is the wider meaning of church). We see in Islam, Christianity and Judaism that the response to intense secular pressures is to form fundamentalist groups which encourage voluntary withdrawal into virtually closed communities.

Religions are generated by one or more inspired founders and their immediate followers, but they are not organized or official at that stage. If the popular imagination is caught, a social movement commences and the private religion of the few becomes the popular church of the many. The spirituality and philosophy of the original founder then becomes modified to accommodate the limited horizons, existing beliefs, superstitions and anxieties of ordinary people. The religion can be said to be official when it dominates society and is explicitly used to define the social-political order in terms of God's authority and its historical scriptures. Its doctrine is then accepted as superior to temporal law and as legitimating government and kingship. Government in turn may then legally establish and promote the religion. (However, if parliament is sovereign as in the UK, then an established religion will be subject to state control over its doctrine, government and discipline.)

The absolutes of religion are socially channelled by

scriptural commandments or religious laws and church regulations. The absolutes are realized in reality by each person's virtuous conduct in line with its ethical maxims. But lower levels of rule are also important. Religions specify rights and duties as the example of Hindu castes illustrates (Ex. 7.4). Adherence to certain tenets is emphasized to ensure allegiance and emotional commitment. The Roman Catholic church, for example, has a catechism which is a simple memorizable exposition of what all Catholics should believe and defend. All religions include a variety of conventions and strive to dominate popular morality; and all use ritual and prescriptions to extend control of behaviour to sensory interaction with the self (e.g. waking, bathing, thinking), with the community (e.g. the common language) and with the natural world (e.g. responding to the seasons). Of all prescriptions, those in the liturgy governing worship are particularly significant. Even though Confucius emphasized ethical living and rejected the superstition and magic of his time, he still regarded the meticulous performance of rites and ceremonies of worship as essential to express reverence for a supreme cosmic spiritual power (Tien).

**Maintaining the Religion.** The tendency of organized religion to shape the other moral institutions in its society means that it may be difficult for members of the community to distinguish the boundary between religious observance and cultural practice. Islam, in many places, still strongly resists attempts to separate out its religious sphere.

Where an organized religion is official or coterminous with society, its maintenance is unproblematic because it pervades the culture. Rejection of such an institution becomes extremely difficult because all the sanctions primarily associated with lower level moral institutions are used — penalties, condemnation, exclusion, opposition, rejection and direct control. However, religion has the potential to generate a particular form of non-coercive *compliance* based on trust. A genuine fellow religionary can be trusted, while the person who actively dis-identifies himself from the true faith, the apostate or non-believer, is distrusted.

Religion also provides a straightforward way to activate and nourish transpersonal being and is in turn reinforced by this identity realm. However, because its function is essentially social and practical — the security of the community and the prosperity and good conduct of its members according to Giordano Bruno writing in the late 16th century — organized religions are deeply conventional and suspicious of transcendental support. Bruno, despite his deep belief in God, was burned alive for teaching Copernican ideas.

*Change* in an organized religion is complex. Religions have always evolved through contact with other faiths and through unavoidable internal arguments. Yet any serious internal challenge to the essentials of a religion is inconceivable. Deliberate modifications are actively opposed and labelled heresy. Heretics, believers in those modifications, are condemned and usually ejected. Over the centuries, schism and tension within churches recur as competing sects generated by inspired devotees try to sustain or re-vivify the original spirit of the founder of the faith.

Replacement of the religion within a society is possible but rare and associated with massive social upheaval. It occurs, for example, as one of the sequelae of conquest (e.g. the European impact in black Africa) or when near-absolute monarchs are converted (e.g. Ashoka's conversion to Buddhism). Completely new religions emerge spontaneously at times of spiritual upheaval when social life evolves to a higher level of complexity and awareness. The transition from hunting-gathering to farming, and the transition from small farming villages to cities and civilizations were just such extraordinary times. (Some say that the present development of inter-connectedness of all people on the planet and the growing recognition of our interdependence and responsibility for the planet is yet another of these extraordinary transitions.)

Although the spirit of religion battles against envy, malice and meanness, organized churches are forced to accommodate to the level of spirituality and ethical development of their members. Because whole societies have not been generally marked as yet by self-reflective awareness and spiritual depth, so religions as practised would rarely have been praised by their founders. Thinkers within the churches are only too aware of the perversions of spirituality that occur within their clergy and congregations. Much American Judaism, for example, more or less dispenses with the idea of God; and Anglican congregations have been found to defend against the purpose of their church in a variety of ways.<sup>36</sup>

Spirituality, it sometimes seems, can only be preserved by sweeping away the authority, ritual, bureaucracy and legalism of churches — and yet this fails to recognize that organized religion is a communal need.

Although people still believe in God, modern secular institutions struggle with the notion of a need for religion in society.<sup>37</sup> Secular *criticism* finds religion of any sort too pervasive and controlling — although this is precisely the qualities needed to fulfil its function. Liberal-scientific values and traditional religions seem to be like oil and water. Rationalist opponents of religions start by criticizing the way churches have

preyed on the fear and credulity of the populace, then point to the hypocrisy and corruption of priests past and present, and finally repudiate metaphysical tenets like soul and spirituality as irrelevant or nonsensical.

Faith is an identity need and organized religion seems to be the only social institution which meets that need. When religion becomes an anachronism or even anathema, movements like science or Marxism offer their own absolutes as vehicles for faith and take on the qualities of religion. But they fail in regard to the ultimate questions and do not deeply satisfy most people. The result is that the widely felt necessity for religion is met in diverse and competing ways: via traditional churches, sectarian movements, messianic cults, and New Age events. Each provides a social identity but none can ensure that this identity is naturally that of the wider community. As a result, a crucial element of social coherence is lacking.

Embracing the value of a multi-faith society, rather than being a solution to this dilemma, seems to pose new problems. It is in the nature of religions to be driven by absolutes, to have some hold over government and the legal system, and to wish to reshape both its members and wider society. An official religion, if sufficiently committed to spiritual values, may tolerate competitors, but it cannot cooperate with them at a fundamental level because each embodies a distinct value system. How the forces of chaos and evil are to be controlled in society with purely secular tools and without a common structure of rules derived from absolutes is still not clear. The result must be a loss of meaning, an inability to tolerate the sufferings and difficulties of life, and a confusion between right and wrong — a state of affairs whose consequences are entirely predictable.

An organized religion is the most powerful natural moral institution and offers the most encompassing 'given' approach to morality in a society. We have reached the limit both intuitively and logically, and so the tertiary hierarchy of the framework of experience is now completed.

## REVIEWING IDENTITY

Our aim in the chapter has been to gain clarity about what it means to be human so as to avoid excessive simplification or reductionism when designing ethical arrangements in society. We have examined distinctly different approaches to developing identity, and have found that their concerns underpin different natural moral institutions in society. These define our social identity and ensure the survival of society. In teasing out the details, it emerged that the approaches to identity

development and moral institutions form two further linked hierarchies. Each hierarchy revealed a progressive emergence from sensory-material embeddedness to contact with being and spirituality — much as in the hierarchy of purpose (Ch. 3 & 4) and the hierarchy of approaches to ethical choice (Ch. 6).

**Ensuring Survival.** If survival and proper functioning as a human being are indeed ethical imperatives, we now see that functioning well means that the person must be sufficiently: integrated (L'-I), energetic (L'-II), constructive (L'-III), genuine (L'-IV), liberated (L'-V), involved (L'-VI) and serene (L'-VII). If any one of these criteria are not met, then a person is in need and social relationships may be harmed.

We have also discovered a set of essential supplies for identity maintenance — stimulation (L'-I), concentration (L'-II), value (L'-III), respect (L'-IV), recognition (L'-V), responsibility (L'-VI), and faith (L'-VII). Each of these must be an ethical requirement, because failure to provide them is harmful and, at the extreme, means death through illness, accident, chronic self-abuse, suicide or murder. So long as a society or moral institution, or indeed any person or organization or relationship, provides these essential supplies, it will receive heartfelt support and reinforcement.

This analysis of personal identity can be applied (with care) to relationships, organizations and societies as well. For example, a marriage, firm or society can also suffer from: an unresponsiveness to warning tensions (L'-I), attitudes of neglect (L'-II), scapegoating (L'-III), contempt for itself (L'-IV), rejection of potential (L'-V), irresponsibility (L'-VI), and lack of convictions (L'-VII).

A society's survival depends above all on its natural moral institutions: upon maintenance of a minimum of formalized etiquette to provide ceremonies which signify respect and oil interaction; on popular morality to ensure a degree of conformity in regard to common activities, especially in relation to the body; on ideals to ensure people feel attached and energized enough to strive and even to die for their society; on the social structure to provide order and give each person a position; on an ethical teaching to promote virtue and enable decent functioning; on a system of governance which can enforce rules and maintain stability; and on a religion to give shared meaning to the trials of temporal existence, enabling people to tolerate the imperfections of their society and the pain of the human lot.

**Improving Organizations.** Because even small organizations are (secondary) communities, they too require all the moral institutions in order to thrive. By

and large these are adopted from wider society, and adapted to suit the nature of the organization.

People who may be strangers must interact, so etiquette and ceremonies adapted to the needs of the organization are essential. For example, dress rules must vary in a restaurant, fashion boutique and boardroom. The firm develops its own version of popular morality related in part to the work and type of people attracted to it. Different domains — say: banking, publishing, theatre, welfare, academe, politics, ministry — foster different attitudes to such things as alcohol, sexual activity and money. Any organization must also provide its own distinctive circumscribed ideals which all can share.

The equivalent of the social structure is the designed internal structure based on posts carrying authority (rights) and responsibility (duties). Organizations should uphold and affirm the ethical teaching through developing and respecting an ethical code suited to their activities. Organizations operate within society's governance system but, as well as keeping the law, they also need their own governance, formal regulations and appeal procedures to ensure justice. Finally, although this is a rarity nowadays, it follows that organizations might well have an official religion or specific provisions for spiritual reflection. This could help ensure that ultimate values affected choices, activities, work relationships and community interactions. The excesses and destructiveness of religion would have to be severely curtailed to avoid disrupting work.

**Engendering Hope.** All the natural moral institutions are essential and powerful. However, in practice and to a greater or lesser degree, all are perceived to be faulty. (Discontent with these institutions was one of the pressures driving the inquiry and writing of this book.) In practice, the institutions seem, so often, to embody stagnation, sustain injustice, permit intolerance and ignore corruption. To deal with any form of suffering, including that generated by those very institutions which define us as social beings, we need hope.

Hope is the inner sense that we can survive and even improve matters, somehow. But where does hope reside and how can it be activated? Hope, I suggest, is not just another virtue like courage or humility which we can take or leave, emphasize or minimize. People intuitively know that hope is life-sustaining, and that hopelessness and helplessness form a lethal combination. It seems that hope must link with the hierarchy for sustaining and developing human identity.

The essential core in each approach to identity development is irremovable: that is to say we need

make little effort to be receptive, act instinctually, have bodily experiences, develop a self-concept, relate in a group, take on roles and possess a soul. But shaping and creating an identity depends on the presence and use of the growth-promoting potentials: that is to say, to thrive on life we must do things, make links (symbolize), attribute value, respond to others, insist on our individuality, use situations, and seek God. I suggest that *these growth-promoting forces embody hope*. Using them demands an effort of will and opens the possibility to a change in one's personal state.

Helplessness is life-threatening because it negates the will. Hopelessness is life-threatening because it means abandoning oneself. Together they generate a devastating disconnection from the range of identity-strengthening and growth-promoting forces at our disposal.

Hope is a property of each person, and not of a group or its institutions. A group whose mood is one of despair and whose institutions are rotten may still be capable of great things if even just the occasional person can sustain hope. This makes protecting each person and the possibility of individuality of the greatest consequence for the improvement of society. In other words, ethical design must not only deal with individual needs and community needs, it must also respond positively to diversity.

**Protecting Diversity.** In a complex society it is not easy to respond to the wide variety of groups and communities, much less deal with each single person's uniqueness. For this reason, each natural moral institution recognizes the fact of diversity and has a characteristic way of handling individual differences. A progression has been noticeable in the accounts, and it deserves a brief review here.

Formal etiquette views differences between people as utterly irrelevant. All are expected to follow the ceremonial prescriptions without any excuse, and individual differences are largely ignored. Popular morality deals with the existence of varying attitudes to bodily matters by suppressing or overcoming them. Communal ideals accept and tolerate differences but within relatively narrow limits. The social structure, however, responds positively to individual differences and brings them under control by classifying and institutionalizing them. The ethical teaching fully recognizes and values differences and guides their informal handling. The governance system assumes that there are differences between people and that they need protection. It seeks to ensure that these differences are properly handled via formalized and enforceable rules and procedures. Organized religion values and sustains

individual differences while expecting them to be transcended by recognition of a profound commonality.

As a result, for a person in harmony with society, the institutions seem to become progressively less coercive. Coercion is maximum at the lowest two levels: etiquette is kept through direct external control, while popular morality is maintained by an external pressure. At the next two levels, coercion is internalized: the person's conscience provides direct inner control over communal ideals, while an inner pressure operates to maintain one's position within the social structure. At the next two levels, documentation is used to help people operate freely by knowing precisely what the moral framework is: the ethical teaching shapes internal control, and the governance system shapes external control. At the highest level, religion aims to be liberating by enabling all to move freely in harmony with the divine will.

**Producing Violence.** Unfortunately, people are not always in harmony with their society or the divine will. So the natural moral institutions do not seem quite so benign in practice. They pose a threat to the individual and individuality because the demand for identification tends to be backed with all the force that the social group can muster.

Violence appears to worsen as the levels are ascended — the reverse of what should be the case (in theory at least). Flouting popular morality generates greater violence than breaches of etiquette, and civil war and terrorism may be justified by conflicting ideals or persisting injustices in the social structure. Even ethical teachings are not immune: the doctrine of jihad makes total war an ethical requirement in Islam. Violence perpetrated in the name of stable government is common the world over. It is not surprising that those societies, which are dominated by notions of revenge and retribution should envisage that religious transgressions will provoke the wrath of a God. Given that a wrathful Omnipotent Supreme Being will destroy the world and condemn sinful people to eternal horrors, religious torture and persecution to prevent such outcomes seem not merely justified but almost mandatory.

From the group's perspective, individuals are too often recalcitrant. The group then feels there is no way to avoid violence. The amount of violence seems to depend on the enlightened use of the ethical teaching by the group. Although Salman Rushdie may have written blasphemous material, the execution order from Iran's ayatollah, the *fatwa*, contravenes Islam's ethical teaching according to scholars. Unfortunately, custom and social pressures have always enabled priests to incite their followers' capacity for hatred and revenge.

**Transition.** Work with values invariably touches on the identity of the person and of the social group. This is why it is so sensitive. Because the sensitive handling of diversity and uniqueness is so important, the various approaches to human development had to be clarified. Because developing and strengthening social life is a major research aim, it was essential to elucidate the identity-defining moral institutions. All efforts at improvement must recognize their nature, influence and staying power.

In the modern world, social design must take account of diversity within and between societies, a diversity which is expressed via idiosyncratic moral institutions. Even ethical teachings which seem so benign and general become inextricably inter-linked with other features of society and the religion which gave rise to them. So attempts to universalize any

natural (i.e. local or national) moral institution are liable to be experienced as an alien imposition. By contrast, *particular rules of all types may be abstracted from their moral institutions, adapted as appropriate, and offered for universal use.*

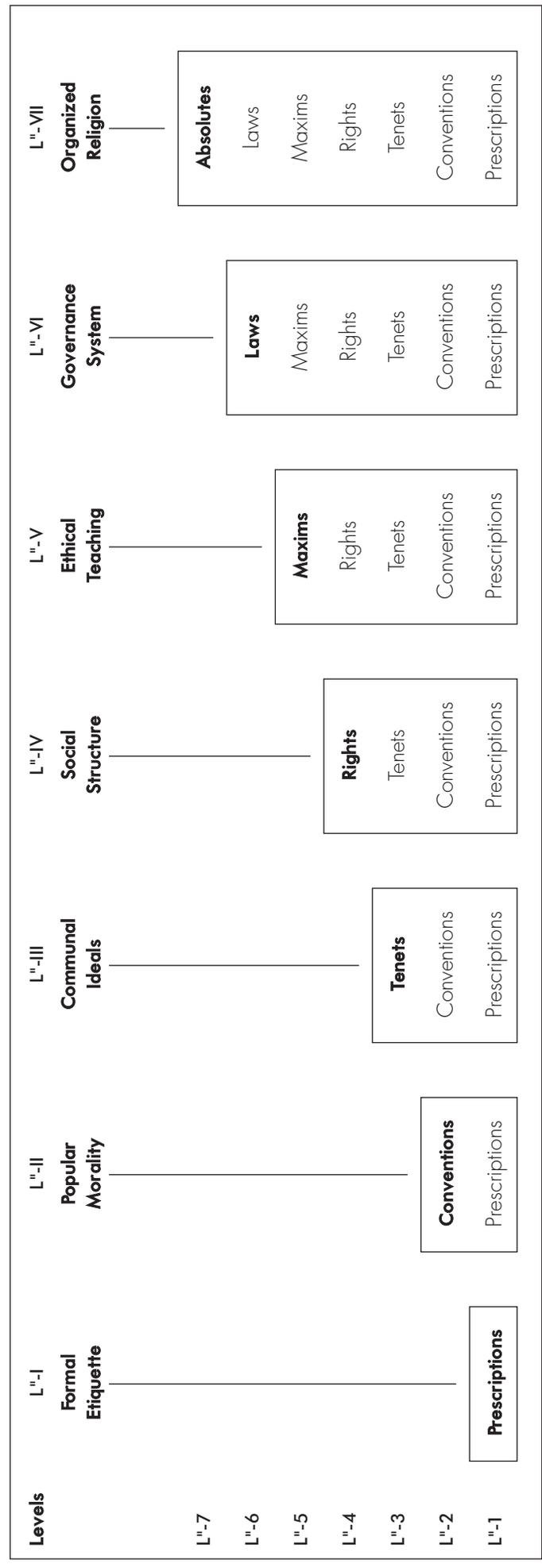
Taken alone without cultural trappings and communal identity demands, rules can be unexceptionable. Devised specifically to meet the concern at hand, rules prove to be invaluable.

Rules are the way forward in ethical design. The seven types are fundamental and elemental entities, akin in their significance to the seven types of purpose. We have met them here only in passing. We are now ready to explore them more directly, starting with an account of their nature and some straightforward applications within organizations and society. \*

**Master-Figure 14**

**Rules in society's natural moral institutions.**

The natural moral institutions get their character from the highest type of rule (in bold) because these shape and influence rules of lower types. As a result, the institutions become progressively more complex and powerful. See text for further details and explanation. Note that the horizontal hierarchy of the institutions lies within social being (L'-VI) and the framework of experience, whereas the vertical hierarchy lies within the legitimist approach to ethical choice (L'-6) and the framework of purpose and value. Cf. Master-Figure 16.



| Warren Kinston 1991,1993

**Master-Table 15 Properties of society's natural moral institutions.**

These form spontaneously within any complex society to foster its survival and coherence. The various rules support social being by providing the basis for identification and responsible participation. The place of these institutions in the theoretical framework is shown in Master-Figures 10 and 16. Note that these institutions operate within social being and provide a foundation for both personal and communal identity. See text for further explanation and details.

L	Types of Moral Institution	Identity Realm Link and Typical Concerns	Societys Survival Need	Main Rule Type and Focus	Ensuring Compliance: Sanction & Inducement	Approach to Individual Differences	Common Criticisms
I	Formal etiquette	Sensory: dress, appearance, dining, speech.	Ceremonial respect	<b>Prescription</b> deals with social behaviours	Direct social control of behaviour & Certainty of doing what is right.	Ignored and irrelevant	Too artificial and mechanical.
II	Popular morality	Vital: sex, aggression, work, alcohol, drugs, money.	Conformity	<b>Convention</b> deals with social attitudes	Social rejection & Social acceptance	Suppressed and overcome	Too rigid or too lax; worsens personal problems.
III	Communal ideals	Emotional: any property of a society which enables attachment.	Energy	<b>Tenet</b> deals with social values	Social opposition & Social endorsement	Accepted and tolerated	Blocks learning from outsiders; creates taboos.
IV	Social structure	Individual: claims, duties, powers, disabilities, privileges, immunities, liabilities.	Order	<b>Right</b> deals with social boundaries	Losing & Gaining benefits of membership	Classified and institutionalized	Institutionalizes injustice.
V	Ethical teaching	Relational: handling personal and social relationships.	Virtue	<b>Maxim</b> deals with social functioning	Social condemnation & Social admiration	Recognized and valued	Too demanding and unrealistic in everyday life.
VI	Governance system	Social: maintaining peace, order, justice, freedom and the common good.	Stability	<b>Law</b> deals with social enforcement	Public penalties & Public support	Assumed and protected	Too overwhelming; too corruptible; too bureaucratic.
VII	Organized religion	Transpersonal: mysteries of existence – especially evil, suffering, and God.	Meaning	<b>Absolute</b> deals with social existence	Being & Being distrusted & Being trusted	Sustained and transcended	Too pervasive; too controlling; too hypocritical.

## NOTES

1. The seven level hierarchical approach to be offered here shows evident links to the findings of other researchers. These include: Maslow's five level hierarchy of needs (Maslow, A. *Toward a Psychology of Being*. 2nd Ed. Princeton, NJ: Van Nostrand, 1968); de Mause's six stages in the evolution of child care (de Mause, L. *The Evolution of Childhood*. In: *Foundations of Psychohistory*. London: The Psychohistory Press, 1982); Meltzer's four dimensions of experience (Meltzer, D., Bremner, J., Hoxter, S., Weddell, D. & Wittenberg, I. *Explorations in Autism: A Psychoanalytical Study*. Perthshire: Clunie Press, 1975); the levels of consciousness described by a variety of authors (Wilber, K. *Up from Eden: A Transpersonal View of Human Evolution*. London: Routledge Kegan Paul, 1983; Csanyi, V. *General Theory of Evolution*. Budapest: Akademiai Kiado, 1982; Curtis, E.S. *Evolution or Extinction: The Choice Before Us*. London: Pergamon Press, 1982; Chaisson, E. *Universe*. New York: Prentice Hall, 1988); and also levels defined in the esoteric traditions. All this work has been drawn on in a general way. At the very least it supports the notion of a hierarchical system. To my knowledge, the full model as outlined here has not been previously recognized or described. I publicly presented an earlier version in Munich in 1989 at the invitation of the British Council under the title: *Being a Person: Psychoanalytic Theories and Identity Systems*.

It is worth noting at this stage that the identity systems map empirical reality in that they bring order to a bewildering array of therapeutic techniques and psycho-dynamic theories. People can and do use them to alter themselves and others. The framework has no relation to psychological trait theories, stereotypes &c. Nor to psychiatric nosology: schizophrenia, for example, manifests differently depending on the context provided by the systems. Nor are they 'ideal types'. The identity systems have nothing in common with the universal personality types of sociologists like Vilfredo Pareto (*Mind, Self and Society*. Vols. 1-IV. New York: Harcourt Brace & World, 1939). The sociological types of David Riesman (*The Lonely Crowd*. New York: Doubleday, 1958) are about conformity and express a cultural ethic (cf. G<sup>o</sup>-3<sup>3</sup>: Ch. 9) i.e. they express identity but are not a form of human identity.

2. The structure of experience was noted earlier in order to illuminate the inner motivations which corresponded to the distinctive forms of purpose and value. See Ch.s 3 and 4, and Master-Table 2.
3. The confusion engendered by the same words having entirely different implications according to the value system in which they are embedded is more obviously counter-productive in management than in therapy. See: Kinston, W. *Strengthening the Management Culture: Phasing the Transformation of Organizations*. London: The SIGMA Centre, 1994, p.8.
4. **Psychosomatic Personality:** These individuals manifest primacy of sensation and action together with an impoverishment of feelings. They use few emotional terms, and so feelings are not well-differentiated. Requests for a description of feeling result in descriptions of external events. Even dramatic or painful events are recounted with little emotional overtone. Affects cannot be properly local-

ized in the body, and the person seems unaware of the common automatic bodily reactions that accompany the experience of specific feelings. Outbursts of affective behaviour like crying or temper may occur, but the premonitory feeling stages are not recognized. On questioning, the individual is unable to explain the outburst other than in terms of a vague sense of upset. Thinking shows a pre-occupation with minute details of external events (which depend on sensation), but few fantasies (which depend on image). Because symbolic elaboration of events does not occur, external reality is adapted to in a simple, precise and quasi-normal way.

The above ideas are associated with the Paris school of psychoanalysis: Marty, P., de M'Uzan, M. & David, C. *L'investigation Psychosomatique*. Paris: Presses Universite de France, 1963. Also see: Nemiah, J.C., Freyberger, H. & Sifneos, P. Alexithymia: A view of the psychosomatic process. In: *Modern Trends in Psychosomatic Medicine*, Vol. 3. London: Butterworths, Ch. 20, 1976; and McDougall, J. The psychosoma and the psycho-analytic process. *International Review of Psycho-Analysis*, 1: 437-459, 1974.

Autism may possibly be an identity disorder even though biological factors certainly play a part in many or most cases. Psychoanalysts have reported that autistic children have an identity that is material and rooted in sensation, while being severely deficient in images and higher level experiences. The autistic child lacks memory and thought, and has no understanding of time; but sensory modalities, though in disarray, are evident. Only things which can be touched and manipulated seem real. Sensations, often repetitively self-generated, embed the child in the world around; but the various senses wander, each to its most attractive object, leading to mental incoherence. Things are not valued by the child and they may be replaced as long as the substitute generates the identical sensation. Contour and outline are crucial — not meaning (symbol) or function (purpose). See: Tustin, F. *Autistic States in Children*. London: Routledge Kegan Paul, 1981; and Meltzer, D. et al op. cit. [1].

5. See: *The Oxford Companion to the Mind*. (Gregory, R.L. (ed.) London: Oxford University Press, 1987) for summary articles on sensation (pp.700-701) and isolation and sensory deprivation experiments (pp. 393-4).
6. For the Alexander technique, see: Alexander, F.M. *The Use of the Self*. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1932. For dance therapy, see: Laban, R. *The Mastery of Movement*. London: MacDonald & Evans, 1958. For behaviour therapy, see: Wilson, C.T. & Franks, C.M. (eds.) *Contemporary Behaviour Therapy: Conceptual Foundations of Clinical Practice*. New York: Guilford, 1982.
7. The significance of exercise for health is well-recognized in the medical literature but awareness of the identity dimension and the importance of exercise for subjective well-being is generally neglected: cf. Gloag, D. Exercise, fitness and health: people need to be more active more often. *British Medical Journal*, 205: 377-378, 1993.
8. **Psychopathic-hysterical personality:** Prolific elaboration of fantasies, bodily preoccupations and deficiencies in the sphere of emotions and valuing are the essential features of the disorder. In hysteria, body involvement shows up classically in the form of unconscious simulation of physical

illness. Emotions in hysterics are typically superficial, exaggerated, minimal or disconnected. Another version of hysteria consists of numerous physical complaints in several organ systems, leading to multiple hospitalizations and operations without a specific medical diagnosis. These women refuse to accept psychological explanations for their condition, and have an increased incidence of relatives suffering from psychopathy and alcoholism. Psychopathic personalities show anti-social conduct and are unable to use values and emotions properly. Fantasy elaboration emerges as uncontrollable lying or impersonation. Psychopaths show a lack of ethical judgement and seem unaware and unconcerned that such judgements are being made by others. So they are unable to conform with the most basic requirements of social and interpersonal life and show repetitive criminality, vagrancy, belligerency, drug abuse, alcoholism, sexual abnormalities and suicidal behaviour, as well as physical complaints.

Two classic accounts of psychopathic personality are: Robins, L.N. *Deviant Children Grown Up: A Sociological and Psychiatric Study of Sociopathic Personality*. Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins, 1966; Cleckley, H. *The Mask of Sanity: An Attempt to Clarify Some Issues About So-called Psychopathic Personality*. 5th Ed. St. Louis: C.V. Mosby Company, 1976.

9. Freud, S. (1915) *Instincts and their Vicissitudes*. Standard Edition, Vol. 14: 117-140, London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1957.
10. A therapy based on analyzing the exchange of identity states between people has been developed by Eric Berne (*Transactional Analysis in Psychotherapy*. New York: Grove Press, 1961). Melanie Klein has developed a school of psychoanalysis based on the assumptions of this identity system (*The Writings of Melanie Klein. Vols I-IV*. London: Hogarth Press, 1975).
11. **Borderline Personality:** Some people experience extreme vulnerability to abandonment and aloneness, and find it difficult to distinguish between themselves and others. They show intense needs to be merged in a personal relationship, but fear closeness because of a lack of control over their destructiveness. They seem to lack an inner conception of an enduring containing counterpart, and so have difficulty sustaining ordinary inter-personal relationships. Destructiveness is usually overt: self-mutilation, suicidal attempts, ruinous behaviour, substance abuse. Such episodes are often triggered by separations or losses. Ideas have little hold over the personality, so contradictory and extreme emotional positions are held at different times. Words tend to be experienced as emotional complements or parts of the self, rather than as abstract conveyors of meaning. So speaking or listening may be felt to be highly dangerous. Emotions, especially anger, may escalate and alter rapidly in response to changing circumstances. So much time and energy is spent coping with the disorientation and inappropriate activities that flow from emotional storms and associated misperceptions of self and others.  
  
For a general psychiatric account, see: Stone, M.H. *The Borderline Syndromes*. New York: McGraw Hill, 1980. For a psychoanalytic account, see: Kernberg, O. *Borderline Conditions and Pathological Narcissism*. New York: Jason Aronson, 1975.
12. Non-psychoanalytic therapies are of two main forms. The first is epitomized by Carl Rogers who emphasizes empathic listening, non-judgemental reflection and unconditional positive regard (*Client-centred Therapy*. Boston, MA: Houghton-Mifflin, 1951). The second form comprises cognitive therapies in which the focus is on seeking and correcting misconceptions and illogical and maladaptive assumptions or styles of thinking e.g. Beck, A. *Cognitive Therapy and the Emotional Disorders*. New York: International Universities Press, 1976; Ellis, A. *Reason and Emotion in Psychotherapy*. Secaucus, NJ: Lyle Stuart, 1962. Psychoanalytic theorists focused on this identity system include Donald Winnicott (*The Maturation Processes and the Facilitating Environment: Studies in the Theory of Emotional Development*. London: Hogarth and the Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1965) and Heinz Kohut (*The Analysis of the Self: A Systematic Approach to the Psychoanalytic Treatment of Narcissistic Personality Disorders*. New York: International Universities Press, 1971). The technical emphasis is on narcissistic support including accepting and adapting to the patient, respecting the patient, not making emotional demands, and being with the patient.
13. See my account of shame and a bibliography in: Kinston, W. A theoretical context for shame. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 64: 213-266, 1983.
14. **Narcissistic Personality:** The person manifests a surface normality in emotional and social life, but once this is penetrated, severe disturbance is marked. There is an excessive degree of self-reference and self-centredness, an over-valuation of personal abilities, an intense need for love and admiration by others, a demandingness, and a lack of consideration for others. There is often shallowness of feeling, experiences of boredom, and a tendency to ruthlessness. The failure of intuition results in insensitivity and lack of empathy. Relationships tend to be exploitative or parasitic, with a deep depreciation and contempt of others, and a denial of dependency. Rage is released when the individual's sense of entitlement is frustrated, or when imperfection needs to be accepted. Psychoanalytic exploration typically reveals a weak and vulnerable inner self kept distant from relationships because of deep distrust and intense envy.  
  
For more details, see: Kernberg, O. 1975 op. cit. [11]; Kohut, H. 1971 op.cit.[12]; Winnicott, D.W. op.cit. [12].
15. Maslow, A. op. cit. [1].
16. In comparison to therapies based on individual being, there is more emphasis on active inner searching, improving the congruence of feeling and action, and expecting to grow through relationships. For example, see: Bugental, J.F.T. *Psychotherapy and Process: The Fundamentals of an Existential-Humanistic Perspective*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1978.
17. Freud never produced a consistent integrated model of the mind and did not address the issue of identity. His final major contribution in 1923 was the id-ego-superego model of the mind which fits neurotic personalities (L'-V) excellently (*The Ego and the Id*. Standard Edition, Vol. 19:12-59, London: Hogarth and the Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1961). His earliest contributions focused on historical events (L'-VI) and bodily tensions and instincts (L'-I and L'-II); while his other major contribution was the recognition and the

therapeutic use of psychic reality and the repressed and unrepressed unconscious (L'-III).

18. **Neurotic Personality:** The neurotic is capable of a reasonably full range of experiences and can perceive external reality in a relatively undistorted way. However, relations are driven by wishes which are over-valued and do not link to realistic features of the situation. Because perceptions are distorted by wishes, the neurotic intuitively acts inappropriately at times. Conflicts between wishes are also a problem and the neurotic is particularly inhibited in relation to ordinary wishes which are internally judged as unacceptable. Criticising and controlling attitudes coalesce within the neurotic to form a severe conscience which generates a burden of irrational guilt. Freud's major discovery was that guilt and conflict lead to symptoms which are symbolic attempts to get both conflicting wishes and needs for punishment gratified, without either the neurotic or others affected by the neurotic inhibition or symptom being aware of what is happening. Neurotic behaviour may be tolerable in relationships but it interferes with role performance and limits social achievement.

Neurotics experience a good deal of anxiety and shame in relation to their wishes, as well as guilt. All these affects are commonly regarded as a cause of dysfunction, rather than as signals that wishes are not being properly handled. If signals are treated as a problem or threat, a 'shoot the messenger' policy is often instituted. Attempts to avoid the signals may lead to shifting between identity systems. For example, permissiveness and assertiveness have been socially promoted as ways of overcoming guilt-ridden inhibitions within relationships; but, unless mutuality and dialogue are promoted, a L'-IV identity is liable to be activated and the L'-V dysfunction will remain untreated.

19. For examples of existential therapy, see: May, R. *Psychology and the Human Dilemma*. Princeton, NJ: Van Nostrand, 1967; and Yalom, I. *Existential Psychotherapy*. New York: Basic Books, 1980. For therapies linked to radical social change, see: Agel, J. (ed.) *The Radical Therapist*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1971.
20. **Traumatized Personality:** Trauma is a disruption in historical continuity by an event which overwhelms a person and does not permit experiential assimilation or accommodation. Traumatization may occur at any stage of life, but childhood is the period of greatest vulnerability. The traumatic event feels like a catastrophe. The person cannot participate responsibly in it, and thoughts and feelings about it do not get properly registered. So a failure of identification results. The event remains within the person at a bodily level in the form of disconnected images and sensations. A sense of a hole (fault, gap, defect) in the mind results. The person's subsequent life unconsciously expresses the trauma. Catastrophic repetition always threatens to recur in the form of an accident, the unfolding of life circumstances, or through deliberate choice. A variety of anxiety and depressive symptoms may be present. Purposive functions like judgement and decision appear defective and tend to limit achievement; while the imagination is constricted for fear of experiencing anything which might recall the trauma. The aim of therapy is to recover the trauma and reconstruct the event so that it can be incorporated in the individual's personal history. This reconstruction must be developed on the

basis of evidence. It may be aided by the therapist's intuition, but it benefits from proper investigation. The person has to become convinced about what happened because a new identity must be created based on recognition of past (social) realities. These still limit what can be, but the person can at last make creative and realistic decisions.

Wider society in the West has become far more aware of and disturbed by child neglect, physical abuse, and sexual abuse in recent years. This has enabled psychoanalysts, as trapped in convention as everyone else, to start to recognize the origins of their patients' disturbances in actual traumas. See, for example, the books of Alice Miller (*For Your Own Good: Hidden Cruelty in Child-Rearing and the Roots of Violence*. London: Virago, 1987; *Thou Shalt Not Be Aware*. London: Pluto Press, 1991). Psychoanalysis can reveal more subtle forms of trauma. A coherent psychoanalytic theory of trauma and its consequences is provided in: Kinston, W. & Cohen, J. Primal repression: clinical and theoretical aspects. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, **67**: 337-355, 1986; Primal repression and other states of mind. *Scandinavian Psychoanalytical Review*, **11**: 81-105, 1988; and related papers.

21. The late doyen of religious historians, Mircea Eliade, concluded that faith and the sense of the sacred are intrinsic to human consciousness. See his: *Patterns in Comparative Religion*. London: Sheed & Ward, 1958; and *A History of Religious Ideas. Vols. 1-3*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978, 1982, 1985. A classic text is: Otto, R. (1923) *The Idea of the Holy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959. Also see: Tart, C. (ed.) *Transpersonal Psychologies*. London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975. A popular summary of the perennial philosophy is provided in: Huxley, A. *The Perennial Philosophy*. New York: Harper, 1970; and also Wilber, K. op. cit. [1].
22. Transpersonal psychotherapy is more a movement attempting to deal with the modern split between psychology and religion than a systematic theory. However, all transpersonal therapists seem to work explicitly or implicitly within a conception of 'the great chain of being'. See: Lovejoy, A.O. *The Great Chain of Being*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1936; Kahn, H. *The Soul Whence and Whither*. New York: Sufi Order, 1977; Schuon, F. *The Transcendent Unity of Religions*. New York: Harper 1975; Wilber, K. *The Atman Project*. Wheaton, Ill: Quest, 1980. For the work of Carl Jung, see: *The Collected Works of C.G. Jung*. (Transl. R.F.C. Hull) Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, Bollingen Series. For the work of Robert Assagioli, see: *Psychosynthesis*. New York: Viking, 1965. As an example of spiritual teachings, see: Krishnamurti, J. *Commentaries on Living: Series I - III*. (ed. D. Rajagopal) London: Victor Gollancz, 1965, 1967; and Anon. *A Course in Miracles*. London: Arkana, 1985.
23. See the evidence collected in: *The Boxing Debate*. Report of the British Medical Association, London, 1993.
24. Psychoanalytic views of the conscience are provided by Freud in *Mourning and Melancholia* (1917) and *The Ego and the Id*. (1923). (See, respectively: Vol. **15**: 243-258, 1957 and **19**: 12-59, 1961 in the Standard Edition, London: Hogarth and the Institute of Psychoanalysis.) Also see: Klein, M. & Riviere, J. *Love Hate and Reparation*. New York: Norton, 1964. Christian literature uses the term conscience in a

- somewhat different way. It comes to refer to the practice of autonomous reflection within the context of the given creed. However, the realities of the conscience as defined here hold. Priests as school-heads and school masters used to beat children regularly when this was customary. They must surely have believed it was right to do so. Most had been treated in the same way when they were children and society permitted harsh discipline ('spare the rod and spoil the child'). In other words, their consciences permitted beating, even though infliction of suffering on helpless children is not the Christian message. Autonomous reflection might have led to this conclusion and encouraged them to override their conscience.
25. Hardin, G. Earthquakes: Prediction more devastating than events. In: *Stalking the Wild Taboo*. Los Altos, Calif.: Kaufmann, 1973.
  26. Hutton, J.H. *Caste in India. 4th Ed.* Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1963.
  27. The definition of a right comes from: White, A.R. *Rights*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984, p.171. Also see: Milne, A.J.M. *Human Rights and Human Diversity*. London: Macmillan, 1986. Utilitarians generally dislike rights which get in the way of producing general benefit. The quoted comment of Jeremy Bentham, which comes from *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (1789), is typical. Those who are concerned with a moral community and its cohesion also wish to neglect rights. Hence the quoted comment of the philosopher, Alistair MacIntyre, from: *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*. London Duckworth, 1981.
  28. Waley, A. *Three Ways of Thought in Ancient China*. Doubleday: New York, 1939 pp. 71-74.
  29. Wing-Tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963. Confucianism is discussed in Ch.s 2-6; and Moism in Ch. 9.
  30. Ball, R.E. *The Crown, the Sages and Supreme Morality*. London: Routledge Kegan Paul, 1983.
  31. The framework here distinguishes, as we all must, between the governance system (L"-VI) and the government (G-6<sup>2</sup>). The governance system uses rules to indicate the precise composition and role of government. To put this another way: the function of any government is to make and implement practical and cultural or ethical decisions on behalf of society within the explicit (constitutional or legal) and implicit (conventional or customary) limits of the governance system.
  32. For example: A thoughtful proposal for the complete re-design of the institutions delivering Western democratic government has been offered by Friedrich Hayek in: *The Political Order of a Free People*. (Vol. 3 of *Law Legislation and Liberty*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982.) His aim is to overcome the present corrupt and weak behaviour of governments which is due to their over-responsiveness to well-organized pressure groups and majority opinion. Unlike many of his other contributions to issues in the public arena, these proposals on governance have had little impact and are not discussed outside academe.
  33. Montesquieu, C.L.de *Spirit of the Laws*. (ed. A.M. Cohler). London: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
  34. See: Hogue, A.R. *Origins of the Common Law*. Indiana: Liberty Press, 1966; Brand, P. *The Origins of the English Legal Profession*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1992.
  35. Smart, N. *The Religious Experience of Mankind*. New York: Doubleday, 1969.
  36. For an account of American Judaism, see: Woocher, J.S. *Sacred Survival: The Civil Religion of American Jews*. Indiana Press, 1986. For an account of problems in Anglican congregations, see: Reed, B. *The Dynamics of Religion: Process and Movement in The Christian Church*. London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1978.
  37. Opinion polls regularly show that a large majority of people believe in God. Society therefore displays a multitude of ways to handle this belief (cf. Blackham, H.J. *Religion in a Modern Society*. London: Constable, 1966). Marx's aphorism that 'religion is the opium of the masses' needs to be put alongside his statement that "religion is the general theory of this world, its encyclopaedic compendium, its logic in popular form, its spiritual point d'honneur, its enthusiasm, its moral sanction, its solemn complement, its general basis of consolation and justification." (Marx, K. & Engels, F. *Collected Works*. London: Lawrence & W., 1975. Vol I, Section I, Part I: p.607.)