

## THREE LEVELS OF MARKETING: RANDOM, ROUTINE, AND REFLECTIVE

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*In the past, scarce resources have led us sort ourselves as if we were many kinds of beings, mostly unreflective, instead of one. Now, our very survival depends on classifying all people as human and reflective. This maturing change is already happening because high-tech weapons are not a scarce resource and the alternative is death by terrorism. The marketplace of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will profit by showing respect for consumers as reflective human beings. This paper offers a guide to the reflective level of thought and action, showing and explaining the logical and pragmatic relations between random, routine, and reflective functioning.*

### Introduction to a Problem

The problem I will address is the interaction of marketing and its context. What good does marketing do, or fail to do, in the community and the wider world? What more can marketing be than effective routines?

The vision and skill required to reflect on a routine are far more complex and difficult to achieve than the vision and skill required to function within the routine ("the box" as routines are popularly known). Yet reflective vision and skill are vital for human functioning, and for our mutual benefit and even survival. The vision and skill to function reflectively as well as routinely can be taught and this essay will offer some tools useful for that purpose.

Something is needed that is often called "thinking outside the box," the natural habitat of philosophy. The three concepts of evolution,

postmodernism, and globalization, indicate a dynamic process rather than a static state. Globalism is a modern (and, I believe, unstoppable and vital) evolutionary trend, about which we can make worthwhile inferences from experience, and I am here to talk about what philosophy, critical thinking, and logic can tell us about marketing in a dynamic marketplace such as the world today.

I am an optimist. The world is changing, and it must change. One of the most important ways it is changing is visible to the critical eye using an appropriate model to distinguish the three logical possibilities of random, routine, and reflective thought and action. People everywhere are hearing about reflective thinking and learning to do it, to think "outside the box." They are, in a word, maturing, and they can't be stopped. They can't be stopped from hearing about it, and they can't be stopped from doing it. All

people everywhere need to learn how and why to “think outside the box,” at least some of the time.

From time immemorial, the resources necessary to survive have been scarce in most parts of the world. Families and tribes, villages and communities, everywhere society was classified and categorized for the purpose of obtaining and allocating those scarce resources. With the rise of industry and science, basic resources became far more plentiful and as a result old boundaries stretched, shifted, and sometimes disappeared. Modern nations were formed, and marketing served to promote production, distribution, consumption, and other instruments of trade such as schools.

The 20<sup>th</sup> century saw a majority of the world’s population mature from tribal identities to nations. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century a majority will mature from national identity to humanity. As we learned to think of our routines as choices instead of destinies we came to think of ourselves as humans rather than mere instruments to be used by our cultures, as beings that can choose their routines, their purposes, their lives. And we began to understand that this is the situation of all other humans as well. This is the key to the future.

The key is to appreciate the routine benefits of the social order without worshiping that order. It is to appreciate the social routine while at the same time appreciating the reflective potential of the individual. It is to treat society and culture not as divine objects automatically good in themselves but rather as evolving tools for the living of a shared life adequate for our human potential.

Marketing is a cooperative human activity and requires the trust and confidence of the participants. When we analyze thoughtless use of routine marketing we find fundamental grounds for mistrusting its abuses. Although routine marketing is reliable up to the inevi-

table point of its limitations, when technical, social, economic and other conditions change materially, it is deeply vulnerable when consumers awaken to the abuses endemic in it.

Because of this, marketers and consumers alike need to extend their vision and skills toward adapting effectively to the limitations inherent in any routine. A rational path must be found from the routine to the reflective level of living, to bring about mutual respect for both. We need to negotiate adjustments to routines rather than worshipping them.

In the long run, only the process of change itself will prove trustworthy and so our trust must be not in blind loyalty to changeless routine (much less in mindless impulse) but rather in a dynamic marketplace and a self-directing consumer who shares responsibility for the marketplace itself. I foresee a fundamental change in the self-concept of the consumer the world over, from random and routine to reflective being at once critical and cooperative. In this essay I offer several classic philosophical ideas to help explain how this can be done.

### **Philosophical Perspectives on the Problem**

How do we make the reflective realm visible and meaningful? Philosophy’s job is to create rational pathways from the routine (“the box”) to the reflective level of thought and action. In this essay I will present the result of my own investigation, focusing on three words: “random,” “routine,” and “reflective.” These terms enable everyone to recognize and also to communicate with each other about the uses and benefits of each level, while also seeing their costs and limitations.

Thinking “outside the box,” that is, outside routine guidelines, is an essential part of our human nature, and something all people have

to do from time to time. It is something philosophers are supposed to do for a living. It creates a problem, however, because people "thinking outside the box" who have nothing but what's in the box to guide them have no routine guidelines to follow, which can be confusing. The antidote to this kind of confusion is a set of reflective guidelines which apply to sets of guidelines themselves, all of them, a context for thinking about the very idea of context.

When people are forced to make decisions about what routines to choose, those routines themselves will not tell them all they need to know about which choice to make. Routines reveal much about their own benefits and costs, of course, but they have nothing to say about alternative routines or about the context within which they are found and used. Some process needs to be mapped out by which individuals can shift their perspectives from inside to outside the box without sacrificing the valuable contents of the box.

From "outside the box" the location and movement of the box itself is easier to see. Only from "outside the box" do the unintended and sometimes disastrous consequences of being in the box become visible.

In particular, from "outside the box" our present economic, social, and cultural systems can be seen not as definitions or as destinies determined by immutable historical processes nor as the will of some divine power, but rather as part historical accident and part experiment.

Moving "outside the box" is what is happening in the world, and what needs to happen. The walls are coming down. Near-instantaneous communication is possible everywhere on or near earth. The same science and technology that made 3.1 billion people witnesses to the moon landing in July, 1969, has torn down the walls that separated tribe from tribe and

person from person since before human history began. From satellites to FAX machines, computers and telephone lines, information is for the first time free of hierarchy and authority: everyone can learn everything. They can travel, too, and see for themselves the vitality and joy dwelling in cultures other than their own. The *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* is gone. All ideas are everywhere.

It started a long time ago. Socrates of Athens is reported by Plutarch to have described himself as a citizen of the world. The same point was made by the charismatic founders of the world's great religions. Their vision was of a single tribe united by some version of the so-called "golden rule" of reciprocity to others, where the word "others" included all who could choose their own purposes and plans, that is to say, all human beings.

Alas, the vision of the founders was corrupted into mere copies of ancient factions, with the added fault of supernatural and thus unquestionable justification. Although empires with similar aspirations to world unification have risen and fallen, only in the 20<sup>th</sup> century have substantial gains been made, albeit at truly terrible cost. From the European Union and the Olympics to the United Nations and the World Trade Organization the peoples of the world are affiliating with each other voluntarily, not under supernatural threat or pressure but rather out of awakening, pragmatic wisdom, profit, and occasionally out of sheer enjoyment of diversity.

This gradual progress is to be expected. We are, after all, new at the business of being human, and there are many obstacles to our advance. But there is abundant evidence of our capacity to grow much further than we have done so far. Humanity in its infancy has created democracy, science, technology, and World Cup Soccer: just imagine what we will do when we grow up! Those 3.1 billion people worldwi-

de, more than half the population of the entire planet, who saw live tv coverage of the first manned landing on the moon, saw that we – we *humans*, not just Americans – had done something together and might do more. That moment in 1969 – July 20<sup>th</sup> in the U.S. – may have been the first time in history that a majority of the human race grew together and surpassed tribe and family.

In tragic contrast to this new view, much of traditional routine marketing is based on a *hypothetical* image of the consumer as a routine and random being, working predictably and shopping impulsively. This is of course a reasonable description of immature people, but since the accuracy of this hypothetical image depends on finding in consumers a minimum of reflective thought and action, the system is likely to fail to promote reflective thinking and may in fact even stifle the maturing process for the sake of increased sales.

It is traditional to make assumptions about human nature. Two such assumptions are dominant. The liberals among us assume that human beings are benign creatures of good will that need only to be guided wisely and then set free to work wonders. Conservatives, on the other hand, assume that human beings are brutes capable of nothing but evil if not restrained by external force and training. I happen to be a liberal, but I read the newspapers and I do wonder.

What we need to recognize is that these are assumptions that cannot be proven true or false but only assumed one way or another. Philosophy must offer an alternative to assumptions of any kind, and that is what I think I have managed to create. In the format I propose, my categories cut across the categories of both liberals and conservatives, and are based on adequate logical and empirical foundations. I believe I can ask you to look and see for yourself. I appeal to familiar experience.

The words “ethics” and “morals” come to us from the Greek word *ethos* and the Latin word *mores*, both of which originally meant *whatever is usual and customary* in that place. These two ancient languages also gave us, however, the modern English words *zealot* and *fanatic*, which refer to people who worship the *ethos/mores* rather than using it to share lives adequate for human habitation. Zealots and fanatics were regarded then, as they are regarded now, as immature and dangerous not only to themselves and other individuals but to the social order. Maturity requires and allows us to recognize that any routine is an experiment, built in finite time by individuals with finite information, energy, and insight. The testing of the routine determines whether it works, and history tells us that no human experiment has ever worked for long without great amendment and repair.

The basic reality is routines. Is there any question whether there are routines? You have experienced these things for yourselves: you have observed the existence of routines. Very well, then we have empirical grounds for this claim; it is not merely an assumption.

Now, what logical choices do we see with respect to any given game? Experience suggests there are three. First, we can play the game, that is, we can operate in the context whatever it may be, or operate in some other context which is more complex or less, but which happens to serve our purpose better than the original. In a word, we can act *routinely*, in which case our actions will be productive and predictable to those who know the game.

Next, we can act independently of the original game and of any other, that is, we can operate with no plan in mind. We can act impulsively, capriciously, on a whim, on the basis of the toss of a coin. In this case our acts will not be predictable, and typically they will not be productive. They will be, in a word, *random*.

Third and finally, we can act with regard to the original game or some other; that is, we can operate *reflectively*. Our actions will still be largely predictable since they are connected to a routine and to the purposes which the routine was chosen to serve. These three alternatives are the only logical possibilities.

The question now is, do these three options in fact happen? Do people sometimes behave randomly? That is, are they impulsive and unpredictable? I think this is obviously the case, appealing to familiar experience: some of our actions are unpredictable even to us. What about routine? Do people behave predictably fairly often, and do they often do so with no clear awareness of what they are doing? In such cases the behavior in question is routine but unreflective. People make games of their routines, often as *pastimes*.

What about reflective action: do people ever choose the games they play? Do we create games? Of course we do! All routines must have been created or else they would not have happened, and each of us has created many routines that help us make sense of life and get our work done. Each of us has measured our plans against the purposes they were designed to serve. Each of us knows the difference between a good plan and a bad one: the good ones *work*.

Philosophical (or “reflective” or “critical”) thinking is a vital tool for survival whether in specific enterprises where reflective thinking enables the players to scan the horizon, develop perspective, and adapt to ever-changing conditions both external and internal, or in the entire world and all of the people who live in it as workers, as consumers, as citizens, as growing human beings. In the following analysis I will relate random, routine, and reflective thought and action to the domain of marketing.

Marketing is a human activity which my dictionary calls the “aggregate of functions involved in moving goods from producer to consu-

mer.” I note in passing that simply to call the results of production “goods” is to commit an effective act of marketing, but my main point is that marketing can be carried out at any one of three logical levels of organization: random, routine, or reflective. The least organized is random.

Random marketing chaotic and unpredictable. It is like the propagation of seeds by most plants: the seeds are broadcast in no specific direction by such vectors as wind or the digestive tracts or coats of passing animals. If enough seeds fall on fertile soil the species survives; if not, not. Much advertising is like that: from billboards to Internet “spam” messages are placed in many locations but in no particular location, with the expectation that some sufficient percentage will find and inspire an interested buyer. If enough messages reach interested buyers, the product survives; if not, not.

Random advertising ferrets out novel and unexpected buyers. This is one of the chief virtues of random action in general: it can create *new* results. On the other hand, I am told that random advertising almost always costs too much for the revenue it produces. It tends naturally to generate confusion and conflict. Random marketing will include, of course, much more than just advertising. Just imagine consumer research, product development, pricing, distribution, and every other part of marketing, all of them done randomly. The result may well be exciting and surprising, but it will be largely unpredictable chaos.

Routine marketing is action according to plan. It is predictable. People can be trained to do it well. To use Thomas Kuhn’s famous term, there is a shared paradigm for performance. I have lived long enough to know that routine makes the world go round; it provides a comfortable, predictable, and profitable shelter from the chaotic storms of life, a fortress against countless adversaries. As I expect to

show in a very few moments, I understand that routines have many important virtues. First, however, I need to make a distinction.

There is a crucial distinction, familiar to all of us in other contexts, that must be made in dealing with any routine. We have three choices where any routine is concerned. First, we can ignore it, and act randomly. This option has already been discussed. Second, we can be fanatical and treat the routine as a definition, an end in itself, an object of absolute commitment, an object of worship. Third, we can be mature and treat the routine as an instrument, as a tool, a utensil, a means to some further end or ends.

But which of these is the wise choice in a specific situation? Success usually requires single-minded devotion. The benefits of routine marketing are many and deserve the respectful treatment they usually get, especially by comparison with random action. And these benefits are so great they almost but not quite deserve reverence and blind devotion accorded to them by zealots. Consider the following list (I do not claim that these items are mutually exclusive or jointly exhaustive; they are illustrative):

- a. coherence across space and time;
- b. guiding expectations;
- c. coordinating diverse purposes;
- d. avoiding being "your own worst enemy";
- e. communicating with a shared language;
- f. predictability to self and others;
- g. identity and recognizability;
- h. managing surprise and stress;
- i. productivity and long range planning;
- j. defense against persuasion and manipulation;
- k. development of skills and judgment;
- l. development of useful associations (such as affective, perceptual, conceptual, motor);
- m. recognizing mistakes and other emergencies.

Each of the above items is a normal reward, so to speak, for routine or conventional behavior. Together they offer a rationale for routine that is well-nigh irresistible. I will advocate cautious resistance, but before I justify my view I want to consider each of these rationales in turn.

- a. *coherence across space and time* A major factor in the accidental production of random action is inattention to conflicts and inconsistencies between two acts performed in different places or at different times. Memory, someone once said, is what we forget with. The result of forgetting is that we adopt goals and create and implement policies that are mutually incompatible. A routine procedure for selecting goals and policies will protect against the consequences of misplaced memory.
- b. *guiding expectations* To the extent that we act in accord with a reasonable plan, we know what to expect and are less often surprised even if we are disappointed. The result is less stress and greater potential for health, equanimity, and longevity.
- c. *coordinating diverse purposes* Only people in life-threatening peril are likely to have just one purpose in mind, just one "iron in the fire." Given the multiple purposes people normally have, however, carelessly-planned action can further one purpose while impeding another, and in extreme cases can prevent the achieving of any of our chosen goals.
- d. *avoiding being "your own worst enemy"* It is something of a truism that the most powerful adversary a person can have is himself. The person himself is, after all, closest to him, and intimately connected to his thoughts, feelings, hopes, and dreams, so that if he acts carelessly his acts will be better positioned to interfere with his plans.

- e. *communicating with a shared language* A language is a routine, and learning a language or a specialized vocabulary within a language gives a person the capacity to share that routine with others for whatever purpose.
- f. *predictability to self and others* People sometimes seem resentful of their own predictability, as though they have sacrificed their humanity and somehow become mere organic robots. The plain fact is, however, that a person who is completely unpredictable is too dangerous to tolerate. And suppose that completely unpredictable person is the person himself: such a life would be unlivable.
- g. *identity and recognizability* Our identities are like brand names and serve to locate enduring entities in the form of trustworthy persons and products. Whereas we have no rational grounds to guide our expectations with strangers, we can form reasonable expectations with those we recognize and identify even if from time to time those expectations are disappointed.
- h. *managing surprise and stress* Here again, by having well-warranted ideas about what to expect the smooth flow of our action and experiences is less often surprised and disturbed by unforeseen events.
- i. *productivity and long range planning* Arguably the most significant thing we do is to make and carry out long-range plans. By connecting our present experience with our expectations by means of theory and experiment, we create whatever we may choose.
- j. *defense against persuasion and manipulation* Random people are at the mercy of any force that strikes them. Lacking any coherent plan, people who act only at the random level will destroy every plan they make and obey whatever voice is loudest and nearest.
- k. *development of skills and judgment* The kinds of skills and judgment required to function as a professional of almost any kind take years and sometimes decades to develop. This development cannot take place when the individual and his environment are constantly in flux.
- l. *development of useful associations (such as perceptual, conceptual, affective, motor)* It takes time to generate the foundations of skilled routine behavior in organisms, time to develop the mental connections between cause and effect. Routines enhance this process by providing a stable and durable environment in which these acquisitions can be made.
- m. *recognizing mistakes and other emergencies* Only a person who knows the routine will be able to recognize that a given event is extraordinary and constitutes a significant departure from that routine.

As the preceding list should make obvious, routines ordinarily have enormous value to those who occupy and use them. Given this fact it does not seem unreasonable for people to suppose that those routines have all possible value and can therefore safely be viewed as perfect, unchangeable and unquestionable. But this is only an illusion as we see when we consider how many important activities cannot be done simply by following a set routine.

Routines rest on presuppositions, on categories of thought and action that are expected to endure without change throughout at least the working lifetime of the people involved. The world, however, has never been cooperative and is becoming less so. The only constant, we are beginning to realize, is change. Hence flexibility and adaptability, based on and justified by sustained learning, are practical and even moral imperatives for us. This introduces a place for reflective marketing, which is marketing "outside the box."

Reflective marketing is, for the sake of coherence and productivity, action according to routine, but it does not stop at routine. Reflective action is associated with vision of alternative routines. Among the benefits of reflective thinking and the extraordinary, i. e., non-routine, purposes it can serve, are the following:

- a. creation and choice of routines;
- b. analysis of iatrogenic and nosocomial issues, i. e. unintended and adverse side-effects,
- c. revision and amendment of routines,
- d. comparison of routines in terms of costs and benefits (such as elegance, learnability, coherence, efficiency, utility, adaptability, fruitfulness),
- e. transition between routines (such as marriage, divorce, religious conversion, promotion, immigration, learning, retirement),
- f. correcting mistakes and resolving emergencies,
- g. coordinating and integrating diverse routines.

Each of the above is a purpose of significant human value that can only be served by reflective thought and action. Without reflective thought and action, these human intentions, goals, activities, are not possible. It is now time to consider each of these items individually.

a. *creation of routines* It is certainly possible for routines to “just happen” by accident, as habits and traditions and forest trails are often formed. In such ways do corporations evolve by accumulating such means as personnel, facilities, and policies and then casting about for purposes that can be served within the existing environment by those personnel, facilities, and policies. It is no less possible, however, for routines to be formed deliberately, as a result of planning that is not restricted to possibilities permitted by existing means in the existing environment.

b. *analysis of iatrogenic and nosocomial issues, i. e., unintended and adverse side-effects*

The word “iatrogenic” is the result of a melding of two languages, a combination of the Greek word *iatros*, meaning *cure*, and the Latin word *genus*, meaning *cause*. An iatrogenic illness, then, is one that is caused by the cure for some other illness, as when a medication provokes an allergic reaction that is worse than the condition the medicine was intended to treat. In modern terms, iatrogenic results are undesirable side-effects caused by individual events and actions, while nosocomial results are undesirable side-effects caused by the institutional or cultural environment within which those individual events and actions take place. Reflective thinking is required before such issues, which transcend routine, can even be considered, even though they can be detected by those skilled only in the routine.

c. *revision and amendment of routines* Just as routines can be created for the sake of some or all of the many purposes routines can serve, so routines can be analyzed, revised, and amended, or even replaced entirely.

d. *comparison of routines in terms of costs and benefits (such as utility, elegance, learnability, coherence, efficiency, adaptability, fruitfulness)* This is a list of some of the criteria by which a society or other routine can be judged worthy of human habitation and use. A culture that takes more than a normal human lifetime to acquire is not a culture that will survive for even one generation.

e. *transition between routines (such as religious conversion, marriage, divorce, promotion, immigration, learning, retirement)* One of the perilous risks of mere routine learning is an inability to prepare for the kinds of transitions between one routine and

another that so often occur in life, often called “awakenings.” Transitions of this fundamental nature occur to every individual: from child to adult, bachelor to husband, wife to mother, citizen to soldier, employee to employer, debtor to investor; by immigration, retirement, divorce, and in many other ways, an unreflective person will not be able to appreciate the continuity of his life and the reflective person will.

- f. *correcting mistakes and resolving emergencies* Unreflective people never make mistakes; at least, they never notice them. For an unreflective person, that fellow who made the mistake yesterday is someone else, not him.
- g. *coordinating and integrating diverse routines* Only rarely, in times of great crisis, do we have *only one* routine to follow, *only one* audience to please, *only one* purpose to serve, *only one* goal to seek, *only one* standard to meet. Far more often we are at risk of being torn apart by conflicting purposes, standards, and routines. To avoid chaos we must be able to surpass ourselves, to transcend our routines and negotiate between them.

When we shift our attitude about routines from one of commitment to one of a more utilitarian and pragmatic bent, we don't necessarily reject those routines, not at all. We simply shift from *defining* our lives by them to instead treating those routines as means to some worthy end, as tools, as instruments, as utensils we are responsible for.

After World War II at Nuremberg, Germany, the world community decided that blind obedience to the established (routine) order was not always acceptable. We decided that our essential human responsibility at the reflective level requires us to be aware that our routines however valuable can fail, that we may awa-

ken to find that our past routines are not going to be relevant to our future. There is an ancient but familiar image to explain our experience of this. It is the so-called “dream hypothesis.”

One of the oldest arguments in the history, going as far back as the Sanskrit word, *buddha*, which originally meant *awakened*, is a response to the question, “How can we tell that we are not now dreaming and in a state of unconscious sleep?” This argument refers to one of the most familiar and universal experiences we have, namely, the experience of awakening from a dream into a world that is in many important ways quite unlike the world we were experiencing in the dream. We all do this.

The dream hypothesis isn't really about dreams. It's about transitions. This argument is that we cannot know until we awaken that we have been asleep. But this argument is not really about sleeping and dreaming. It is about transitions, specifically, transitions of the extreme kind we experience when we awaken from dreams, and the question the dream hypothesis forces us to face is whether such transitions can occur to a person who is already awake.

The answer, of course, is “yes.” Transitions can occur to us that are as fundamental as the transition from dreaming to waking. We have only to ponder the sudden loss of a job, or a home, or a loved one, to recognize that some transitions are not mere changes within a routine but are rather changes from one routine into another. When we change careers, lifestyles, religions, nationalities; when we change our commitments, when we succeed and when we fail, it is like awakening into a new world. Sometimes this awakening is called rude: a “rude awakening” is an abrupt and unpleasant surprise.

Transitions of this kind are often indicated by the use of extraordinary terms such as “renaissance,” “being born again,” or “awake-

ning." The difference is one of kind rather than of mere degree, and the preparation needed to cope with these most extreme transitions between routines is quite different from (and far more complex than) the preparation needed to cope with lesser transitions or modifications within a single routine. When the entire routine fails, the crucial human need is for an enduring essence to be already in place and functional, that is not itself part of the vanished routine. Hence the need for the reflective self. The reflective self remains functional even when the routine self vanishes with the dawn.

The second law of thermodynamics makes a statement about the process of disintegration of routines. In thermodynamics specifically, and in the physical sciences generally, it is axiomatic that entropy, i. e., disorder, in a closed system remains constant or increases. In other words, physical systems always tend to deteriorate and disintegrate; they cool off, corrode, rust, fall apart, or break, unless energy is introduced into the system from somewhere outside that system. This maxim may be treated as defining the term "closed system," but it can also be treated as a simple statement of fact, in which case the obvious question is, "Why? *Why* do physical systems tend to fall apart?" Inquiry along this line proves fruitful, for it will be found that physical systems tend to fall apart for two distinct classes of causes, namely, internal and external. Physical systems fall apart owing to such internal causes as flawed design or material. Physical systems also fall apart owing to such external factors as other physical systems.

This interpretation of the second law of thermodynamics can be used to describe social systems as well as physical systems. Any system, that is, any routine, no matter what its size and no matter what its special nature, will disintegrate in time in the absence of active maintenance, partly owing to imperfections

and partly owing to impacts. Such active maintenance can be provided for a person's routine by that person himself, acting at the reflective level.

This applies not only to marketing teams and the corporations fielding them but also to the suppliers, vendors, distributors, and retailers; and it applies to the governments, the schools, and the communities. No matter what the routine, in the absence of maintenance the routine will fail in time. So the most elementary application of the reflective turn to meta-marketing is the provision of maintenance to the established marketing system.

There may be an illusion at work in this matter. Since a great deal of effort must be expended to maintain a routine system, this effort may provoke a heightened feeling of affiliation and commitment as well as a sense of confidence and entitlement.

Any two statements contradict each other if one affirms what the other denies. It is not difficult to believe two such statements, either, because beliefs come from an unlimited number of sources, most of them invisible. While it is entirely possible to hold contradictory beliefs without conscious awareness and without concern, the situation changes when it becomes necessary to apply those beliefs. Suppose, for instance, a client has a deep reverence for medical personnel and so is persuaded by advertising in which actors play the role of medical practitioners. Then suppose also that this client has a deep-seated aversion to members of certain ethnic groups. What will happen when the client sees a medical practitioner who is a member of that ethnic group is worse than merely disappointing; it can be stressful to the point of terror or rage.

The logical problem is that a contradiction entails the truth of all possible statements. If I accept that two contradictory statements are both true, then according to the most elemen-

tary rules of traditional logic I have committed myself to the truth of all possible statements including the denial of all possible statements. If I cannot decide which of the two statements to reject I will find myself in a state of panic (from the Greek word *pan*, which means all: to panic is to try to move in all possible directions at once, and the result is no motion at all, no thought, no action, no belief). The result will be the appearance of apathy, of not caring; but the fact of the matter will be too much caring, in too many directions at the same time.

The medieval logician John Buridan is credited with having devised the second most famous image in western philosophy (the first is Plato's Cave). According to other scholars, Buridan described a donkey standing midway between two equally attractive bales of hay. The animal was hungry, and his impulses drew him toward both bales equally, with the result that he could not move. For, you see, he lacked a soul, that is, the reflective level of thinking which would have allowed him to design a program whereby he would, for example, visit one of the bales first and then the other. That's what we would do, isn't it? This poor animal, however, which has come to be known as Buridan's Ass, could not make a decision between two equal impulses, and so he stood between those two bales of hay and starved to death.

This turns out to be, literally, a diabolical situation, as we can see when we examine the Greek origins of the Latin word *diabolicus*, meaning devil. The Greek roots of diabolical are *dia*, meaning two, and *ballein*, meaning to throw; hence the original Greek meaning of the word diabolic was thrown in opposite directions, or, more simply, torn in two. In modern theological terms, we can correctly call this a Hell of a situation to be in, and not that we do not need to die to go there. All we need to do is lack the ability to function reflectively.

I suggested earlier in this essay that the charismatic founders of the world's great religions had in mind to create a universal tribe, a single human community, so as to eliminate conflicts between tribes that had proven otherwise unstoppable. Unfortunately, these charismatic founders cast their proposals in terms of appeals to supernatural justification. But supernatural claims are claims about a realm beyond nature, i. e., beyond all possible evidence. As such they cannot be proven true; and they cannot be proven false. They can only be believed and accepted arbitrarily, or not, according to impulse, or whim.

Arbitrary, unsubstantiated claims about the supernatural are used the world over to justify killing. Sometimes the justification is that killing someone "sends him to a better place." Other times killing someone "saves her from committing sin," or "saves her from suffering." When we want to defend our routine, or to attack some other routine, what could be more convenient than a claim to know that some supernatural being has demanded our act?

The fact that we do not and cannot have evidence about anything that is beyond the realm of evidence does not stop us from presuming or claiming otherwise. John Dewey once wrote that "neglect of context is the greatest fault that philosophic thinking can endure." His point is that unless we mark a firm distinction between the world of evidence and the world of conjecture – unless, that is, we are clear about the limits of evidence – we are liable to suppose we have access to evidence that is in fact beyond our reach, and to encourage others to adopt similar beliefs. We will then be in the grip of "magical thinking," the supposition that we have the authority over the real world that an author has over the fictional world he writes about. Consider how we might respond to the claim that the universe and everything in it – all possible evidence – was created ten minutes ago.

Well, was it? Did the universe, together with all of the evidence of age found in memory, rock, plant, and tissue, come into existence ten minutes ago? This may at first seem an absurd question, but that very absurdity is of the essence of any question about the entire physical universe within which we live, work, and, most importantly, gather all the evidence we will ever have access to.

The hypothesis here is that the physical universe, including all of the evidence we can possibly have access to, may have come into existence just ten minutes ago. How can we prove this hypothesis wrong? What evidence can we point to that will tell us unequivocally the universe is older than ten minutes?

There is none, for the hypothesis is that all such evidence came into existence at the same time as the universe. Nor, on this hypothesis, can there be any evidence that the universe did come into existence ten minutes ago or less. The hypothesis can neither be proved nor disproved. It can be challenged, but only by a contrary claim, e. g., that the universe was created *twelve* minutes ago, or some other number of minutes, years, or millennia ago.

I have now offered the rationale of religion, the concept of contradiction, the dream hypothesis, and the second law of thermodynamics, as anchors for the proposal I am making for the emerging market. I have pointed out a number of ways in which these complex concepts are already being accommodated by emerging reflective thought and action. Let me now turn to a few documents to illuminate our goal.

One year ago in this city leaders from more than 25 countries met “to debate complex issues of culture and civilization in the contemporary world.” Out of that conference came a statement known as The Vilnius Declaration, which declared, amazingly but correctly, that “ideas of tolerance and dialog among civiliza-

tions rest on a clear awareness of human incompleteness.” The statement ended with a plea to “all governments and civil societies...to take the initiative to further a dialog between civilizations, in such a way that it can become an instrument of transformation...with the ultimate aim of furthering the common good.” Awareness of human incompleteness? Transformation? These are justifications of, and appeals for, reflective thinking.

The European Union has embarked upon a program of enlargement “to further the integration of the continent by peaceful means, extending a zone of stability and prosperity to new members.” The EU is using as its rationale a number of *reflective* arguments, such as that such a program will “produce a better quality of life for citizens throughout Europe” and “will enrich the EU through increased cultural diversity, interchange of ideas, and better understanding of other peoples,” and will also “strengthen the Union’s role in world affairs – in foreign and security policy, trade policy, and the other fields of global governance.” In addition, enlargement will make the EU “better able to combat the problems of organized crime, illegal immigration, and terrorism.”

The UN Declaration of Human Rights contains a flaw that once only serious now bids well to be fatal for the organization and for the entire human population it aims to represent. That flaw is buried in Article 26, paragraph 3, and reads as follows:

*“Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.”*

This stipulation – as abusive as it is absurd – was apparently a condition for the approval of some if not all of the governments signatory to the document. Clearly, it cannot mean that every parent has the right to demand for every child of theirs a university education and trai-

ning as a physician, for even if every child were capable of succeeding in such a program not even the richest society could afford to build and operate so many universities and medical schools.

What it means, therefore, is that all parents have a prior right to *prevent* their children from getting an education, most particularly a reflective education, even if preventing them from getting an education dooms them to inferior status, earnings, and lives, and increases their chance of being manipulated even unto death in the service of the political aims other people choose to impose upon them.

What it means, in terms currently under discussion, is that parents are guaranteed the right to prevent their children from becoming reflective critical thinkers about their traditions, government, class, tribe, religion, and family. From a logical point of view, this declaration guarantees parents the right to condemn their children to life at the random and routine level and thus prevent their children from functioning as human beings and even from ever becoming aware that this has been done to them.

## Conclusions

There may have been a time when we had no real choice but to pretend that there are different kinds of people, some more capable of

reflective thought than others (that is, more capable of humanity) and therefore more deserving of scarce resources than others. But that time has passed, and it is dangerous for us to forget that we were all that time only pretending.

We cannot afford to pretend any longer, and the reason, quite simply, is terrorism. Immature people *identify* with their routines and thus see no choice but to kill and die if their routines cannot live, but today even the poorest among us have access to high-tech weapons of mass destruction, biological, chemical, nuclear. Hence we can no longer permit anyone to be marginalized the way the UN Declaration authorized in Article 26(3). We cannot do this to any of the children of the next generation, and we cannot permit anyone else to do it in our name and service.

Immature people – fanatics, zealots – with access to high-tech weapons are terrorists who can bring down much more than tall buildings. This is true even if, as is almost always the case, they are the unwitting utensils of others. So no matter how convenient and profitable it may be in the short run to leave people immature, we can no longer afford it in the long run. But although we can neither issue nor command maturity, we might inspire it, or exemplify it, or encourage it. We can't coerce maturity, but we can teach it. The three-level model presented in this essay is a useful tool for this purpose.

## REFERENCES

Note: These are not marketing texts. They are instead just a few of the many books available that offer expanded discussions of various parts of the perspective discussed in this essay. They were helpful for me and may be helpful for others wishing more detailed guidance.

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## TRYS MARKETINGO LYGMENYS: ATSITIKTINIS, NUSISTOVĖJĖS IR RACIONALUS

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Santrauka

Autorius, plėtodamas filosofinio pobūdžio logines schemas, perkelia jas į marketingo sritį ir suformuoja originalių trijų aspektų požiūrį į marketingą. Gilindamasis į XXI amžiaus žmogaus būvį ir rinką, kaip specifinę jos išraišką, autorius daro apibendrinimą, kad prekes ir paslaugas siūlantys rinkos subjektai sėkmės gali tikėtis

tik tada, jei savo pastangas sugebės sutelkti į racionalų, mąstantį žmogų. Straipsnyje pasiūlytos racionalaus mąstymo ir racionalios veiklos gairės, kurios atskleidžia loginį ir pragmatinį atsitiktinio, nusistovėjusio ir racionalaus funkcionavimo santykį.