

Scientology Ethics

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INTRODUCTION: THE WAY TO HAPPINESS

For their nature, human beings want happiness, do not want to suffer. Animated by this wish, everyone of us, tries to reach happiness and to free ourselves from sufferings, and we all feel we have rights to do so. In this sense, we are all equal – western and eastern, rich and poor, Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Scientologists, believers and non-believers. We are human beings, we are equal and we share the same hope to reach for happiness. Here philosophy takes the field, because man is not a creature only living in a material fashion, but also has the capability to wonder about his own existence and the ultimate aims of his life. What is man? According to Immanuel Kant, it is “the only creature” whose destination does not tally with its natural life alone, but with the realization of that “better world, he has in his idea” (Costantino Esposito, Pasquale Porro, *Modern Philosophy*, Laterza publishers, Bari, Italy, 2009, page 447).

Kant, in the beginning of his “Logics” (*Critique of Pure Reason*, It. Transl., chp. II, sect. I, Laterza publishers, Bari, Italy, 2000, page 495), states that three are the fundamental questions of philosophy: what can I know? What am I to do? What can I hope for? The first question is barely speculative, the second is practical, the third is both speculative and practical. The answer to the second question is the target of ethics which since the beginning has wondered which is the best way for man to live. So what is such best way like, but the attainment of happiness for us and for everyone else? Many philosophers also talk about “the good” or “the maximum good.” But the “good” attained and owned, whatever it is, is perhaps identified with happiness, or is it not? The question on ethics therefore has to do with happiness and involves a reflection on existence itself of man as well as his existential project. Happiness is the ideal for everyone of us; each human being is searching for it. The ascetics and the mystics of all religions, too, who by their own choice self-exclude from the world to live a life of maceration and meditation, have a “calling” for freedom. They engage in a life of ascesis in an attempt to be “happy”: happy to approach God, the Transcendent.

Knowing who man is and what he has to do to reach happiness, are the questions faced by the philosophical reflection, and especially by ethics, in every age and in every country of the world. The same saint and dominican doctor Tommaso d’Aquino in his famous treaty on “evil” had no doubt on the universality of the wish for happiness: “(...) experience brought us to ascertain that all men tend to happiness, and if this wish is so universal, it is plainly natural.” (*Questiones disputatae de Malo*, q.13, a.3; q.14, a.4). Yet from what may this desire stem? Probably it is a compensation of the consciousness of one’s limits as imposed by time and space. People need to hope, and with their hearts and minds they always cultivated a wish to set themselves free from sorrow, from deprivation and from sufferings. But this continuous research trespasses human force, does it not? Maybe it really does, if Kant himself warns us that human reason continuously tends to go beyond its own capabilities trying to understand things that go besides its boundaries (*Critique of Pure Reason*, It. Transl., chp. II, sect. I, Laterza publishers, Bari, Italy, 2000, page 490-491). One could play with words and concepts until remaining dazed, yet in front of the human condition characterized by the awareness of decay, by the suffering, the illness and the unavoidable death, either reason is forced beyond itself, or man will always see its own existence limited and in fault. It is one’s consciousness of “historicity”, conditioned by time and space, that shoves man to turn to the Absolute, to the Transcendent, to God. It is the dream to become able to quit the human condition, to “quit themselves” to be allowed to participate to a lasting happiness, to a “Completely-Something-Else”, to the world of Spirit (that is regarded to as being different from the everyday down-to-earth), to which we long for, and feel we

belong to, even with our limitations, differences and uniquenesses. This is a dream that has always impressed and continues to impress men of faith, ascetics, mystics, philosophers, artists and poets. Is this the call from a "Paradise Lost"? The reminiscence of an original perfection? There is no limit to the dream of man who, since the beginning, has imagined more dimensions than those provided by his physical universe.

It could be wondered – what moves man, who from the West to the East, feels such impulse to lay aside his fleeting individuality to become part of the Whole, whatever actual name it has. Does he do so due to some tiredness of himself as an individual who can no longer stand fighting for the maintenance of that identity that life itself forces him to keep? Or does he do so, to obey a call of his innermost nature because one cannot live but in the hope of perfection of a Transcendent Being? We could answer, that one motive would not exclude the other. They could be complementary aspects of the same human condition that legitimates both the need to "quit oneself" to long for more elevate spiritual dimensions, and the different and sometimes conflicting ways to satisfy such necessity, to interpret it, to live it, to testify it to the world in which the relationships between the individuals are established along with the organization of the human sphere with its hierarchies and its functions from which social organizations of the family, the group, the nation, etc., are brought about. It is in these associative forms that the single individual includes and performs his temporal existence; they are all forms that remain "suspended" in the sphere of the human, awaiting to be in any way specified in regards to the Absolute. In these forms and functions, ethics plays a major role. This is why religions (whatever they are) always had interest for ethics, and philosophy always had a key part in the study of the ethical principles composing the ground of man's spiritual research. Yet there is a discrimination here. Religious life, is a totalizing practice, at least in the relationship with God, with the Absolute, and contains ethics within, often as a founding factor, even though it is not limited by it. In fact, all religions in their holy books include parts concerning ethics (for instance, the Deuteronomy in the Old Testament; some sections of Saint Paul's "Letters", many verses of the Koran's suras, etc.), even if according to some thinkers the ethical importance of religion may become so heavy to comprise its main nucleus and identify with its very essence (for instance, Spinoza). Ethics in philosophy instead, although admitting the relationship with the transcendent as something possible, seems to be more oriented onto inter-subjective relationships, or at least, along the time, it was simply conceived as such.

However, let us come to analyze the word 'ethics'.

Alike many other technical terms of the philosophical vocabulary in Europe and in the West, the term 'ethics' comes from ancient Greece, too. Aristotle wrote at least two works by this title (*Nicomachean Ethics* and *Eudemian Ethics*) and maybe also a third one (the *Great Ethics*). In Aristotle, 'ethics' means 'science of *ethos*', where '*ethos*' means the customs of a people or a social group, i.e. the common "sentiments", regarding the human conduct, usually expressed by the law system and the rules of the "polis".

The word 'ethics' would derive from the ancient Sanskrit term '*svadha*' which meant 'what is situated (*dha*) in oneself (*sva*)', pointing out the customs and moral norms, (considered timeless and unchangeable, handed down by the ancestors), one was supposed to abide by. Only by following those rules could man live "happy", in the harmony of cosmic and divine law. '*Svadha*' was the "tradition" kept safe by the forefathers, inspired on the values considered absolute of the spirit (the good, the benefit and the beauty in an esthetic sense). From the Sanskrit word, through the fall of the initial consonants and the phonetic modifications, the Greek terms '*éthos*' (which is 'custom') would be born, as well as its derivation '*ethikòs*', that is 'having to do with custom'. In short, both the Sanskrit word and the Greek one, would define an actual "art of living" based on the experiences relayed by the tradition (considered holy) to its own community.

In the world of Hinduism though, the concept of "ethics" was also rendered through the word '*niti*' (from '*ni*' that means "to lead", from which "rules of conduct and behavior" useful both for the individual's and the society's good). From that word, the compound '*nitishastra*' came (where '*shastra*' has the value of 'summary' or 'treaty'), i.e. "doctrine of behavior" and "justice based on rules ratified by laws".

'*Svadha*' and '*niti*' were not synonymous, even if their meanings often overlapped. '*Niti*' was part of a

system of “practical” philosophy (in a sense of *‘praxis’*, that is the human deed) deriving from the teachings of the past – to which along the time, indications added up on how to act along with norms, prescriptions and laws – necessary to orient individuals toward actions deemed positive, in order to give life a sense and realize and maintain social harmony. Something similar also appears in Aristotle’s thought, who preferred to call ethics by the name of “politics”, because he deemed that the wellbeing of the “*polis*”, subject of politics, included both the individual’s good (subject of ethics in a strict sense) and the society’s good, that of the common home (*oikos*). According to Aristotle, the “good” (*‘to agathòn’*) was not something theoretical but a concrete benefit, so ethics (or politics) should help to improve the *‘praxis’*, meaning man’s acts, in order to realize through the “virtue” the perfection which would eventually involve the conquest of happiness (*‘eudaimonia’*).

In the ancient Hinduism alike Aristotle’s thought, and afterwards, that of many other philosophers, philosophy in its “practical” (i.e. ethical or political) part, was an ensemble of knowing and knowledge (gnoseology) combined with indications on how to behave and act; which adds up to rules and prescriptions.

The word “morals” was often utilized as a synonymous of “ethics” because the Latin word *‘mos’* (genitive, *‘moris’*) which meant “custom” or “way of doing” was the equivalent of the Greek *‘ethos’*. Still today the two words “morals” and “ethics” in the common use are often considered interchangeable. In fact, by the first one should define the complex of principles which rule our behaviors and relationships, while by the second the modes of their application. Practically, “morals” would correspond to actual facts, to norms and values of the single individuals, group or community; while the word “ethics” (in addition to this meaning) would also involve the speculative reflection, rational and logical, on those norms and values. However, today in the common speech, one would rather talk about “ethics” in the English fashion, as related to different fields and professional codes of practice: medical ethics, journalism ethics, professional ethics, educational, etc.

However, in any way we name it, ethics is a science and an art. It is the art to endow one’s life with a sense and to project its future. It gives a sense, because as we saw, man longs for happiness. Man is wish. I am wish. Everyone of us is wish. And real ethics, provides man with some indications on how he can more and more improve himself, his society and the environment surrounding him. The research for a sense is fascinating, because it orients life and fulfills it. Those who reject the sense and choose a “non-sense”, slump into the destructive pessimism of non-ethicalness (I prefer this term instead of “immorality”) which turns man into a less “human” being, forgetting their spiritual essence.

Within the renewed interest coming up nowadays for the “practical” (ethical) philosophy, a huge gap in the academic area is represented by the general neglecting, due to a lack of knowledge or to some resistance to talk about it, of the so-original ethics paradigm proposed by Ron Hubbard (1911-1986). Which is a pretty strange fact, because it is an ethics system, characterized by great modernity, which pours a high attention onto the existential concreteness of the human condition in the integrity of all its dimensions.

Lafayette Ron Hubbard was born in Tilden, Nebraska (USA). A writer, philosopher, traveler, photographer and musician, Ron Hubbard was not that sort of person one could easily classify. He was undoubtedly a brilliant man, who managed to align the study of western and eastern philosophy with the passion of the researches on human mind and science. His celebrity is connected to the creation of Dianetics (1950) and Scientology (1952), an “applied religious philosophy” not limited to a purely abstract or theoretical vision of the research of Truth, but aiming at the actual improvement of man in all of his conditions and relationships with the world.

Before analyzing the ethical paradigm of Scientology, I believe a mention should be made of “The Way to Happiness”, a non-religious and non-dogmatic moral code written by Ron Hubbard in an attempt to bring about a betterment of man’s ethical dimension. Its principles do not only address the Scientologists (who accept them as part of their “moral codes”) but to all people of goodwill.

Just in the course of his research aiming at the improvement of man, Ron Hubbard, always a careful observer of man's and societies' condition, realized the need for a moral laical code, distinguishing from his religious field of activity (although the Scientology religion already had his own ethical-moral code). So in 1980 he wrote a moral code named "The Way to Happiness".

But what is the definition Ron Hubbard attributed to the word "happiness"? According to the founder of Scientology, "happiness": "is not itself an emotion. It is a word which states a condition, and the anatomy of that condition is interest. Happiness, you could say, is the overcoming of not unknowable obstacles toward a known goal" (taken from the *Dictionary of Technical Terms of Dianetics and Scientology*, Italian Edition, New Era Publications International, ApS, Copenhagen, 1985, page 226). We will understand better the meaning of some of the words utilized in the above-mentioned definition, when (in the second portion of this essay) we will analyze the ethical paradigm of Scientology. So far, it is interesting to notice that according to Ron Hubbard, "happiness" is not an "emotion" but a state or "condition" of a being tending to reach a better and more complete form of existence.

Yet again let us talk about "The Way to Happiness".

According to a specification of Scientology, "it is the first moral code entirely founded on common sense and it is the only one not of religious nature. It does not contain anything appealing to nothing but to the good sense of the reader" (*What is Scientology?*, Italian edition, New Era Publications International, ApS, Copenhagen, 1998, page 534).

Explaining its contents, L. Ron Hubbard stated: "Turning around streets and reading newspapers, it becomes plain that honesty and truth do no longer occupy the same place they did in the past. Common people and even the youngest of pupils are all convinced that a high level of morality is now out of fashion. Today, man has a number of violent weapons at his disposition, without any longer owning the moral standards to utilize them in the right way (*What is Scientology?*, as above, page 131). That code, composed of 21 articles (or "moral precepts" of behavior) immediately had a great success and was favorably accepted by social organizations and civic committees. It has been distributed in millions of copies.

Practically, each chapter of the "Way to Happiness" almanac contains and describes one rule of living that is valid for everybody besides any religious, ethnical or cultural barrier. Here are some of them: 1. Take Care of Yourself, 2. Be Temperate, 6. Set a Good Example, 7. Seek to Live with the Truth, 8. Do Not Murder, 9. Don't Do Anything Illegal, 12. Safeguard and Improve Your Environment, 13. Do Not Steal, 14. Be Worthy of Trust, 15. Fulfill Your Obligations, 18. Respect the Religious Beliefs of Others, 19. Try Not to Do Things to Others That You Would Not Like Them to Do to You, 20. Try to Treat Others as You Would Want Them to Treat You, 21. Flourish and Prosper. This code is not limited to a listing of a series of actions to be blamed and frowned upon (theft, murder, promiscuity, illegalities or other), it also advises and recommends positive actions (care of oneself, temperateness, respect for parents, aid for children, truthfulness, safeguard of environment, etc.) All the precepts are explained through practical examples of their application in everyday life. As an expression of such principles, the Church of Scientology along the years established some entities that are active in various fields of society dealing with anti-drugs campaigns, rehabilitation from drugs addiction or criminality, improvement of environmental conditions. Many other Scientology volunteers work to fight illiteracy, participate to rescue activities in the event of calamities, and also stand for human rights. The ethical method of "the Way to Happiness", apparently a simple code, is first of all empirical and pragmatic but it educates one to a really responsible freedom in terms of capability to select one's decisions.

Amongst the many alternatives proposed to the nowadays individualist, "fragmented" man (who has been bewildered since his childhood by the merciless drumbeat of consumerism, which sometimes is even elevated to a status of civic virtue), the booklet of Ron Hubbard points out the way one should always prefer in order to reach, and have everyone else reach, the real wellbeing and the "happiness" in this world. It is a way that augments the 'be' instead of the 'have', that grows love, respect of self and of others and of the

environment; the share, instead of the possession. According to Ron Hubbard, one needs to train in these principles with simplicity and without using religious dogmas. Those proposed by Ron Hubbard are basic principles, which reiterate – in a laical form – a sort of universal ethics gravitating to the “Golden Rule”, a hypothesis of the philosophers of all ages and of religions from all over the world. These are the principles aiming at man’s moral elevation, at the recognition of others as the same of us, but also as “the different” (an essential for the construction of an ethics of peace). So the little handbook of Ron Hubbard becomes action and the theory becomes practice (in the sense of Aristotle, ‘*praxis*’). It is a “middle course” of moral and spiritual rectitude directed to the attainment of the highest good, which is “happiness”. It is the Way of ethical action proposed as the “science” of man, as the means to give one’s existence a stronger and stronger sense. But how may ethics give a sense to one’s life? We already mentioned it: it does, because every individual “wishes” to improve as a human being and a spiritual being, so ethics will point out to him what to do and how to go about it. Of course, the search for a sense is a hard way to go, also because every fashion in which human life can be conceived, inevitably involves a question of faith. Not necessarily a question, as Ron Hubbard teaches in “the Way to Happiness”, of religious faith, but simply of faith into man at least, into progress and welfare of society.

By this handbook, Ron Hubbard encourages one to behave ethically, without asking many theological questions, because when an individual has no longer trust or esteem in himself and in others, loses the sense itself of life, fall into isolation and plummet into the rejection, rebellion, corruption, immorality, depression that can lead one to illness and even death. But man is not done for death but for life and happiness – of this, Ron Hubbard is very much conscious: “Life in an immoral society can be very hard. An individual’s survival is constantly threatened, for even the most basic human values are considered ludicrous”, and again: “Any direction a person’s life has taken, the precepts can be compared to the edges of a street: bypassing them, one is like a car driver who goes off road. The result can be the ruin of a career, of a relation, of a life. By following these precepts, an individual has the chance to reach a true, long-lasting happiness.” (*What is Scientology?*, as above, pages 534-535).

In its apparent simplicity, “the Way to Happiness” includes and summarizes many points of the ethical paradigm of Scientology, which aims at the creation of a positive conduct of man, at the elimination of harmful acts and at the teaching of a way for peace and harmony. According to Ron Hubbard, this is the only “way” that will allow man and society to “survive” and progress. And “survival” for man, as we will see, will be in the middle of his philosophical and religious consideration.

THE ETHICAL PARADIGM OF Scientology

The first decades of the last century were some of the most important for the history of contemporary thought – they saw the origination of the meta-realistic philosophy. These were the years in which Heisenberg stated the principle of indetermination and the canonic Lemaitre formulated his theory on the expansion of universe; in those years, Einstein forwarded his theory of the “unified field” and Carl Gustav Jung his analytical theory. In that period, Teilhard de Chardin issued his early works, Henry Bergson developed his concept of a “creator evolution”, Wilhelm Reich worked out his doctrine of Orgone, and the logician of mathematics Kurt Godel formulated his “Theorem of Incompleteness”; moreover, in 1927 the Copenhagen Congress took place, which saw the official birth of quantum theory. In those years, the men of science produced outright epistemological overturns in an attempt to conciliate or conjoin the immanent reality we perceive, with the transcendent principle by which it was supposedly created. Through new eyes, investigations of the world of spirit and the world of matter started to occur, with hypotheses that they were not incompatible with one another, but forming one, unique reality. From this perspective, new theories were formulated about the brain, the mind and the conscience. In this period of great intellectual excitement, the work of Ron Hubbard needs to be contextualized – he tried to apply the new scientific methods not only to psychological, mental and ethical problems of man, but also to the religious ones.

According to Ron Hubbard, the components of the physical universe that surrounds us, would be: matter, energy, space and time (from the initials of these terms, the acronym MEST is derived). The physical

universe is also defined as “kinetic” to point out the continuous movement of the forces composing it: “All the physical phenomena can be considered as energy operating in space and time. The movement of matter and energy in time is the gauge of space” (see the *Technical Dictionary of Dianetics and Scientology*, second Italian edition, New Era Publications International, ApS, Copenhagen, 1985, page 344).

In every living organism though, there seems to be something more, something we can surmise as existing in a separate and distinct form; this is something any religion and philosophy from the East to the West, tried to locate, and named in different ways: “soul”, “thought”, “spirit”, “breath”, “life energy” – the ‘*ch’i*’ of the Chinese tradition, the greek ‘*pneuma*’ or the ‘*prana*’ of the hinduist traditions, the ‘*élan vital*’ presented by the French philosopher Henri Bergson (1859-1941) or the ‘orgone’ described by Wilhem Reich (1897-1957).

The symptoms of life and death are composed of, respectively, the presence or absence of such living energy that “animates” the body. This “something” is a spiritual reality that cannot be seen, but that lets life exist; in the Scientology doctrines, it is represented through a symbol, the eighth letter of the Greek alphabet, ‘*theta*’.

According to the *Technical Dictionary of Dianetics and Scientology*, Theta is “life force, the spirit, the soul, or any other of the numerous definitions it has had for some thousands of years” (definition 1), but is also “the life force, life energy, divine energy, élan vital, or by any other name, the energy peculiar to life which acts upon material in the physical universe and animates it, mobilizes it and changes it ...” (definition 2). Moreover, it is “thought, an energy of its own universe analogous to energy in the physical universe but only occasionally paralleling electromagnetic-gravitic laws. The three primary components of theta are affinity, reality and communication” (definition 3). But theta would also be “reason, serenity, stability, happiness, cheerful emotion, persistence, and the other factors which man ordinarily considers desirable” (definition 4; all these definitions are taken from the already mentioned *Technical Dictionary*, Italian version, page 595). Definition 4 is in my opinion of an extraordinary interest to understand the value ethics has in Scientology: we in fact have the assimilation of “happiness” (which as we saw above is the target of any ethical search), to the world of the Theta, that is the world of Spirit. Happiness, eventually, would only be a “condition” of the spirit of life. From this slant, the reason becomes clear, why every human being have the research of happiness as their purpose, a sort of “vocation” to happiness. A person who does no longer pose such a research on himself, who is no longer voted to happiness, as we will see below when we will talk about the “Tone Scale”, would be deprived of his Theta, in fact would have ceased to live.

The world of Spirit (Theta) is indicated by the term “Static”, as characterized by absolute lack of movement and by complete balance. “A static is something without mass, without wavelength, without time, and actually without position” (definition 2 in the *Technical Dictionary*), but also something that “with the quality of creating or destroying mass or energy, locating itself or creating space, and of re-relating time” (definition 3 in the *Technical Dictionary*, as above, page 566). The concept of Theta, in a sense, recalls the “vacuity” (‘*sunyata*’) hypothesized by the Buddhism: the suchness (in Sanskrit, ‘*tathata*’) that postulates the absence of substantiality of phenomena but does not empty things of their contents, being their actual nature, potentially.

But even more, it recalls the nature of ancient China’s ‘*Tao*’ as the constant Principle (Law) behind the changes of things and shapes. The Tao is the spiritual source, unchangeable, that does not take action and remains unvaried, while determining and ruling all things that change in the physical universe. It is a principle not limited to the donation of life to the creatures, it includes their support, protection, ripening, making them happy as a mother with her child.

During his researches, Ron Hubbard examined further, and specified, the role of the spirit as a subject and its causative relationship with the body, postulating that man as a living unit is a spiritual being. “It was him, this being, this individual, who originated everything in the world that is good, decent and creative (...) however, the word soul had assumed so many meanings in the use other religions and confessions made of

it, that it was necessary to find a new word to define exactly what had been discovered. The choice of L. Ron Hubbard was thetan, from the Greek word theta, a symbol traditionally utilized for thought and life. 'The thetan is the person himself, not his body or his name or the physical universe or his mind or anything else. It is that who is aware of being aware, the identity that is the individual. One does not have a thetan, something one keeps somewhere, separated from oneself. One is a thetan.'" (*What is Scientology?*, as above, page 150).

Again: "thetan is the name given to the life source ... It is the individual, the being, the personality, the knowingness of the human being" (definition 3 of a thetan, *Technical Dictionary*, as above, page 527).

In other words, the thetan would just be a "declension" of Theta or an inflection of it. Therefore, according to Scientology, man is not a body and does not own a soul; the human being is a soul and his body is a "function" of it. Something similar had already been issued by the neo-platonic philosopher Plotinus (204 AD - 270 AD) who in his *Enneads* (IV, 3-10), named "Soul of the World" the vital principle from which the men and the sensitive world would have been originated. According to the ancient philosopher, it would not be the soul dwelling body but the body being embedded in soul; the sensitive would be in the One or Spirit, even if, man does not seem to be always aware of this and most of times is evidently incapable to grasp the deep unity that exists in the whole reality and to lead the multiplicity of forms back to the Universal Soul.

According to the Scientology doctrine, man is a spiritual being whose existence goes beyond its single life because "the thetan is immortal and is possessed of capabilities well in excess of those hitherto predicted for man" (definition 2 of a thetan, *Technical Dictionary*, as above, page 597). In the moment of his death, that spiritual Self who had identified with a body and a form, will be born and newly become solid in another body. Death is not the end of an individual, just like birth is not its beginning.

This thesis is not new and seems to approach the teachings of certain doctrines of Hinduism (for instance those explained in the Bhagavad Gita): in fact we are not an individual wave of awareness separated from the sea of the Cosmic Conscience, but we are the ocean itself of conscience. We consider ourselves individual waves only because we ignore the real nature of Self, that is the thetan. A thetan participating to the nature of perfect Harmony which is the maximum good, can only be "good" as a consequence, so is man by its nature. Hence, for Scientology all men are intrinsically good even if sometimes they may commit evil actions which are practically outright "aberrations" of their original state of goodness.

According to the Hubbard Communications Office (HCO) Bulletin of 6 June 1969, titled Prediction and Consequences: "... man is basically good. When his level of awareness rises, he begins to be able to predict and see the consequences to himself or others of evil actions. The more he is freed and the higher his intelligence and ability rise, the more 'moral' he becomes. Only when he is beaten down below awareness as a chronic condition does man commit evil actions. It is not for nothing that soldiers have to be brutalized and stuck in the present by threat and duress to make them commit harmful actions. When a person's awareness is improved, he is also able to predict and can foresee consequences on the eight dynamics". We will examine the subject of the "Eight Dynamics" below in a specific portion of this essay.

The mission of Scientology religious ethics is to increase man's awareness in order to restore his condition of ethics harmony; spiritual salvation depends upon knowledge of self, from the relationship with others (here is another reference to ethics as '*praxis*') as well as from the sense of ownership with the entire universe. The ethic journey proposed by Ron Hubbard is not aimed at the atoning of one's guilts in the perspective of a possible future "salvation", but at the rehabilitation in the physical and spiritual world, through the understanding and application of the fundamental laws of the universe.

The ultimate goal of the Scientology religious philosophy, is to enable man to attain the awareness of his spirituality in order to rehabilitate the spiritual Self which is inherent in man. Ron Hubbard teaches that "aberrations" and incorrect conduct come up when we ignore the real nature of the thetan; but in spite of that, thanks to the discrimination by knowledge, a person can manage to grasp its existence so improving

himself, until reaching a full awareness of his spirituality. The attainment of such condition would be the source of an “expansion”, a fulfillment, a true liberty, and infinite happiness. In the Scientology doctrines, like in the Buddhism of “Cittamatra” school (in Sanskrit ‘Visnanavada’, that was reportedly founded by Asanga, as inspired by Bodhisattva Maitreya himself, in the third/fourth century b. C.) of the Mahayana tradition, a state of consciousness would exist, named ‘Amala’ (i.e.: “pure”, “immaculate” conscience) which would allow one’s mind to transform Self, that is to set oneself free from any possible obscuring (as stored in the ‘alaya’ conscience, the ‘vessel conscience’, in a sense similar to the Scientology “reactive mind”) within one’s most intimate and spiritual essence. The process would be similar to the one proposed by the gnostic religion’s demiurgy (‘*gnosis*’, etymologically means “knowledge”). Scientology sets its foundations on the personal religious experience just like the “Cittamatra” school or the gnostic religion, in order to face and sort out the contradictions of the dualism matter-Spirit and to try to reach a total spiritual freedom. But let us set mysticism apart, along with man’s potential to reach higher and higher (or “expanded”) levels of awareness, and let us go back to the Scientology ethical paradigm, which through the “rehabilitation” of man’s spiritual self, attempts to attain a definitive transforming of an individual, of society and earth.

According to the researches on man as performed by Ron Hubbard – which he codified in Dianetics, but were then shared by Scientology – a human being would consist of three parts: a body, a mind (which would be the means whereby the thetan interacts with the material world, but in a full sense would also be the Spirit become matter through a series of materialization processes), and the individual himself, the spiritual being (thetan).

The unifying factor of all universe, the major purpose of all life forms, would be that of an infinite survival. And by “survival”, they would not only intend the difference between living and dying. In Dianetics e Scientology, survival can be defined as the “dynamic principle of existence”, divided into eight urges or stimuli, the “Eight Dynamics”, sorted in a growing order of magnitude, toward a better and more complete form of existence and realization of a human being. These “Eight Dynamics” may be viewed in the form of a series of concentric circles that expand from one single circle toward the outside. They represent the envision Scientology has of our universe and practically express in graphics the growing awareness of man, as a spiritual being, to participate to all aspects of life. Ron Hubbard gave a thorough explanation of these “dynamics”, in the book *Science of Survival*, completed in 1951.

Here is a short description:

The first dynamic is the urge toward existence and survival as an individual. It is connected to ambition, to targets an individual wants to reach, to one’s home, clothing and food.

The second dynamic is the urge toward existence as sexual activity; it includes one’s family unit and the survival through children.

The third dynamic is the urge to survive through a group, a community, a society (also intended as a nation or country).

The fourth dynamic is the stimulus to survive through Humanity and mankind.

The fifth dynamic is that of life forms. It is the urge to survive as a living form. It attempts to grant, promote and defend all other life forms of the whole animal and vegetal kingdom.

The sixth dynamic tallies with the physical universe as composed by its four elements – matter, energy, space and time (MEST).

The seventh dynamic is that of spiritual life. It is the impulse to survival as spiritual beings. It includes one’s way of being, one’s capability to create, one’s ability to cause survival. The seventh dynamic is the source of life and is separated from the physical universe.

The eighth dynamic is the urge to survive as infinite, identified with the Supreme Being, the Transcendent, God.

The first four dynamics are connected to Dianetics’ discoveries on the mind; the next four (added successively), of a metaphysical nature, are specifically covered by Scientology. The sixth, seventh and eighth dynamics could be graphed as a triangle with the Supreme Being on its vertex, and on the basis the physical universe and the spiritual universe.

From this envision of life as an interdependence of the different dynamics (this concept seems to revisit, though with much diversity, the doctrine of the “Dependent Origin”, or the “Pratitya-Samutpada”, of Buddhism), the first definition of Scientology ethics stemmed.

That is an absolutely original, and especially ‘workable’, definition. Ethics would be “rationality toward the highest level of survival for the individual, the future race, the group, and mankind, and the other dynamics taken collectively. Ethics are reason. The highest ethic level would be long-term survival concepts with minimal destruction, along any of the dynamics”. (definition 2, *Technical Dictionary*, as above, page 215). Ethics is thus, in its optimum solution, rationality toward the highest level of survival along each of the “Eight Dynamics”.

Ron Hubbard assigns to the word “ethics” a peculiar meaning, in a sense different from those commonly used in the various philosophies or religious traditions. The ethicalness of an individual would be judged in ratio to the actions he performs toward the survival of himself and the other dynamics. Good is what is constructive for survival, evil is what opposes it.

Ron Hubbard does not go verbose about how ethics was traditionally covered by philosophers or religion men, whether or not it is a contemplative subject, what is philosophically right or wrong. According to Ron Hubbard, the point of ethics (which, let us remember, is an activity entirely based upon reason) is to grant the highest levels of survival along all dynamics. Hence ethics is not an ensemble of rules, norms or commandments, but the most authentic fruit of a deep understanding and of the internalization of the sense of life itself (as rendered in the “Eight Dynamics”). As a consequence, the concept of sin falls down, too, similarly to the teachings of other religious traditions. Sin does not exist in itself; only destructive actions may exist (then “mistakes”) against the various dynamics: against man, family, society, environment, mankind, its own spiritual essence, God himself. A portion of Scientology ethics in fact is committed to educate man to repair such mistakes. Scientology ethics is something personal; being ethical is a choice every individual, fully autonomously, may make. By this reason, according to Ron Hubbard, ethics is something different from “morals” and these two words cannot be used as synonymous. By the word “morals” in Scientology one would mean a whole system of rules of conduct agreed upon by a group, a society or a nation. It would be born after experiences accumulated from the past and handed down throughout the successive ages. Just because of this, sometimes it may turn out to be inadequate to man’s and society’s changed conditions of living, and sometimes is eventually found to be unsuitable to guarantee higher states of survival along the eight dynamics.

Here is the definition of “morals” based on the *Dianetics and Scientology Technical Dictionary*: “morals should be defined as a code of good conduct laid down out of the experience of the race to serve as a uniform yardstick for the conduct of individuals and groups. Such a codification has its place; morals are actually laws. Morals are, to some degree, arbitraries, in that they continue beyond their time. All morals originate out of the discovery by the group that some act contains more pain than pleasure” (definition. 2 of “morals”, in *Technical Dictionary*, as above, page 354).

Of course, this does not mean that Scientology does not reckon with “morals”, on the contrary a good moral code may represent an excellent basic for life in a family, in a society or in a country. A Scientologist should always abide by the ruling codes of the society he lives in, even if he has to be aware that – time going by – some of the rules of those codes may become obsolete or even turn into a burden for the individual and society itself. So even respecting the moral codes still valid, Scientology goes for its ethical ideals, aimed at promoting survival along all dynamics, knowing that those who violate their own sense of ethics, will immediately lose respect of themselves and start decaying spiritually along all dynamics.

Ron Hubbard’s ethical system with the criticism of certain morals that may become obsolete and overburdening, seems to approach the tenets of Henry Bergson with his ethical paradigm. We already mentioned Henry Bergson when we talked about the “vital dart” (élan vital) that would be visible in the

continuous becoming of beings. According to Bergson, the “becoming” is the supreme category of things, it is the beingness itself of reality, it is the “creator evolution”. Within the scene of “vital dart”, Bergson also included the subject of ethics in his famous work *The Two Sources of Morals and Religion* (*Le deux Sources de la Morale et de la Religion*, Paris, 1932). The first chapter of this book covers the moral obligation that exists in two different shapes and is a characteristic of two species of society: the one defined “closed” and the “open” one. A society is defined “closed” when every kind of activity is stiffly regulated by moral and social laws and by tight religious codes. According to Bergson, a man who lives in this kind of society “overwhelmed by laws and commandments” cannot promote his own spirituality for good. On the other hand there is an “open” and dynamical society, allowing a person’s free development. In a sense, the “open” society of Bergson embodies the ideals of Mankind in its totality of dynamics. Man longs for living in this sort of society pervaded by the “open soul” of universe expanding with all its benefits to also embrace animals, plants and whole nature. To the two different types of man, Bergson assigns two systems of morals, one “closed” and the other one “open”. The “closed” morals is that inspired to the idea of temporary punishment based on the dread, on the part of those who offend, to run into the penalties (right/wrong, prize/penitence). This is the morals of social pressure having the purpose of safeguarding power by certain social or religious groups. The “open morals” on the other hand (surprisingly close to the concept of “ethics” by Ron Hubbard) is that which is determined by the action inspired on the idea of utter dedication for the whole mankind and planet. This is the morals based on empathy and commonality. It is not that the obligation (the code of rules) vanishes in the “open” morals, rather, it transforms: “In all times – Bergson stated – there have arisen exceptional men, incarnating this open morality”: Socrates, Plato, Buddha. In other words, all those who were great disseminators of good and “who for their contemporary fellow men represented a powerful source of inspiration and love” (Henry Bergson, *The Two Sources of Morals and Religion*, Italian translation, Chapter 3, *Dynamic Religion*, pages 205-261, Di Comunità Editions, Milan, 1962).

But let us now leave Bergson and go back to the Scientology ethics.

Scientology shares with the other religions the tenet that nobody can be spiritually free if they only deal with their first dynamic. A man so oriented (also in religious research, for instance certain forms of asceticism where one only looks for his own spiritual enhancement, his “enlightenment” or salvation) who loses his sense of responsibility toward the other seven dynamics, would be a total egoist. Therefore it is necessary, before undertaking any activity, before deciding which line of conduct to follow or which decision to make (even regarding the simple day-to-day things), to analyze and consider the influence our decision would have on all other dynamics. As above, the recommended standard to follow is, a conduct that brings “the best benefit to the highest number of dynamics”. A good ethics conduct manages to align personal growth with the benefits to all dynamics, while a non-ethical action is a destroyer of other dynamics. This is the reason why the Scientologist is exhorted to straighten himself out with all dynamics. To help him in this “introspection” journey, the “ethics technology” was developed. Ron Hubbard talks about it in a fundamental textbook of his, *Introduction to Scientology Ethics*. “This chain [of reasonings, concerning ethics] continued down the ages. Philosopher after philosopher tried to resolve the subjects of ethics and justice. Unfortunately, until now, there has been no workable solution, as evidenced by the declining ethical level of society. So you see it is no small breakthrough that has been made in this subject in the last 30 years or so. We have defined the terms, which Socrates omitted to do, and we have a workable technology that anyone can use to help get himself out of the mud. The natural laws behind this subject have been found and made available for all to use”. (Ron Hubbard, *Introduction to Scientology Ethics*, Italian Edition, New Era Publications International, ApS, Copenhagen, 2007, page 5).

In this book, Ron Hubbard does not only define ethics and morals, good and bad, right and wrong; he does not just point out the rational character of ethics (page 18) or describe the “Eight Dynamics” (pages 12-14), he also provides the correct technical directions to “rehabilitate” the ethical conduct of each person. The “ethics technology” wants to teach one to read and “gauge” the different conditions of existence, so that everyone can operate positively and in harmony (so can “expand”, according to the Scientology vocabulary) on each dynamic, thus increasing their own ethical level. The idea underlying the rehabilitation process, is

that everyone of us in spite of the mistakes made, are capable – always and by our own force – to improve.

Ron Hubbard points out 12 “conditions” of existence that represent the degree of survival of one’s dynamics, and provides the most suitable means to behave ethically. The 12 “conditions”, describe “operative” states of the being: the more one works for the dynamics the more one is ethical, the less one operates for them the less one is ethical. Hubbard analyzes these “conditions” in chapter 5 of his essay on ethics (*Introduction to Scientology Ethics*, as above, pages 95-124), to then determine the formulas necessary to “raise one’s tone”, which is to go up to higher and more ethical conditions, (*Introduction to Scientology Ethics*, as above, pages 127-146). The 12 conditions go from the lowest state of utter confusion in which the individual lives in the worst state of disorder (this is defined “state of casual movement”) to the highest that is named the “condition of power” in which nothing can endanger the survival of that who is in it. Between these two border points, all other conditions lie: treason, enemy, doubt, liability, non existence, danger, emergency, normal operation, affluence, power change. The “formulas” – that are the procedures to be implemented in order to improve one’s condition of existence and thus to operate ethically – (even if they were born to be utilized within the Church of Scientology) can be used by anybody in any given situation. Through these procedures, an individual is invited to tune with himself, with other men, with the world and with God.

To some degree, the practice of introspective analysis aimed at the increase of ethical behavior, as taught by Ron Hubbard, could be assimilated to a “journey toward happiness” developed in the 1940s by Shin Yoshimoto Ishin, a Japanese businessman practicing the Buddhist school Jodo Shinsho. This process of spiritual healing from Japan, is based on the technique of “Naikan”, that is the “Look to the Inside”, a form of meditative introspection (also self-exploration questionnaires can be utilized though) that aims at attaining a spiritual rebirth and at spreading joy and happiness into oneself, into other people and into the whole.

“Naikan” develops from the understanding of two basic concepts of Buddhism. The first is “ignorance” (*‘avidya’*) causing the suffering deriving from wish, that is in practice a gap between the way we perceive things and the way they actually are. The second is interdependence: generally and incorrectly, we think that people and things exist independently of one another and real in their individuality, too. In fact, everything is dynamic and interdependent. According to Buddhism, it is not that phenomena and things do not exist, but what does not exist is the “quality” we pose on them. In other words, when we state that something is “evil” or “nice” or “good” or “bad”, we wrongly believe that such characteristics are inherent to the phenomenon being defined; in actual fact, those are only valid for us and for who shares our code of reference (the same thing happening with moral codes). Suffering comes forth when our ideas or convictions do not tally with reality. After all, it is a cognitive problem as the “suffering” stems from wrong cognitions. The foremost cause of suffering would looked for into the mind. According to some doctrine of Buddhism (such as the one of the already mentioned “Clitamatra” school), but also in Dianetics and Scientology, the cause of suffering would lie within a particular aspect of the mind, defined by the first *‘alaya’* conscience (the ‘vessel conscience’) and by the second the “reactive mind”. Of course, these two concepts are not perfectly equal even if they are somehow aligned. In the “vessel conscience”, all the karma would accumulate as created in the current and past existences; it would be present as mnemonic traces (karmic seeds), of which man is generally unaware. In Dianetics and Scientology two types of mind are covered instead: an analytical one and a “reactive” one. The first is the one in which Theta exerts the functions of coordination and reasoning for the organism, the other – which we could perhaps define “unconscious” – may lead man into committing irrational actions independently of his will and only on a stimulus-response basis. Such stimuli would be caused by solicitations (unaware) of traces of latent memories (also karmic) often clobbering or painful, stored in the “reactive” mind. Dianetics and Scientology call these destructive mnemonic traces “engrams” and by their processes try to bring them back to the light to get rid of them and so reach the state of “clear”, a condition of “clearness” free from unconscious conditionings.

But let us go back to the introspection form of “Naikan”.

The “Naikan” therapy, through a series of questions (that in a sense, considering the way they are implemented, may be considered to be similar to the “Condition Formulas” proposed by Ron Hubbard) invites one to examine self by looking into one’s own present condition and recalling past actions (which left a trace in one’s mind, often painful). The analysis is performed observing the incidents occurred, first from one’s own perspective, then attempting to analyze them with others’ eyes. According to Shin Yoshimoto Ishin, only then, after understanding that nobody is independent or unrelated to others, will man be enabled to increase his ethicalness and consequently to modify his attitude toward other people, the society and the world. The “rehabilitation” techniques of “Naikan”, in a fashion definitely similar to Scientology, are used in Japanese jails and in the treatment of dependencies (alcohol, drugs, gambling and more). The part covered by the practice of “Naikan”, too, is focused on the eternal issue of which is the best way for man to live (that is the basic topic of ethics).

For Buddhism, like for Scientology, the “best way to live” is a gnoseological question that passes through a radical reordering of our own understanding of reality, because as covered above, suffering stems from an incorrect perception of ourselves and of our relationship with others, with the environment and the universe. The ethics of Buddhism, like that of Scientology, was born and developed to set spiritual discords straight as far as the human tendency for “desire” is concerned, and so to bring harmony back into it. Yet there is an essential difference: in Buddhism one would eventually tend to arrive with a suppression of desire as the cause of pain (which is not in itself a quality or accident of life; in other words, life is not something that has pain in it, but is pain itself), while in Scientology one attempts to set spiritual discords straight (including desire) so as to turn them into a trigger to operate harmoniously along the various dynamics.

This analysis (which is also ethical), in Dianetics and Scientology, finds its formulation in the “Tone Scale”, a “scale” from 0.0 to 4.0 which traces and codifies the emotions and spiritual inclinations from which the different qualities of action flow. According to the *Technical Dictionary of Dianetics and Scientology*, the “Tone Scale”, “plots the descending spiral of life from full vitality and consciousness through half-vitality and half-consciousness down to death” (*Technical Dictionary*, as above, page 514). The “Tone Scale” by showing the consecutive emotional tones a person may experience, explains why people behave in a given way and points out how to communicate with them to help them. But the “Scale” could also be utilized on an individual basis to go up toward better emotional and spiritual conditions. It is interesting to underline how Ron Hubbard to define these levels used the word “tone”. It is as though emotions were a musical note that vibrates harmoniously in the highest levels to then become more and more warped in the lowest. In the latter, the note is almost absent (level 0.0 is death) and there is a poorest inclination to desire. This is the world of the “useless”, of the “apathy”, of the “hopeless”, that seems not to provide any foundation for an ethical operation. The levels coming right next (“fear”, “anger”, “hostility” and other) almost completely prevent any form of liberty that is vital for an ethical living.

Ron Hubbard, in his essay *Science of Survival*, states that “... at the level of 2.0 and below, destructive arbitrariness (called, for lack of a better word, “authoritarianism”) sets in and all laws made at this level and on down the scale will have non-survival results. Criminals lie in the band from 2.0 down the scale, as a generality, but most criminals are found from about 1.3 downward. ... This does not say that individuals who lie potentially along tone bands from 2.0 down are actively criminal, chronically, or that they are actively unethical, chronically. But it does say that during periods of enturbulence, they are unethical and immoral and refrain from being so only in ratio to the amount of free theta they still have available” (Ron Hubbard, *Science of Survival*, Italian edition, New Era Publications International ApS, Copenhagen, 2007, page 151).

In the successive “Tone” levels we also have “monotony”, “boredom”, “conservatism”, and – more – “cheerfulness”, “esthetics”, “strong interest”, “action”, to arrive at the highest (tone 4.0) “Serenity of beingness” where the individual is perfectly enthusiast, happy and lively. A few people are naturally on this level. According to Ron Hubbard, the “Tone Scale” represents a chronic and a acute aspect; in other words, a person may pass in a few minutes from one level to the other, or remain on one for a long time. In a sense

– and again, with due differentiation – this conception is close to another Buddhist consideration of life, that of the “Ten Worlds” (in Japanese, “Jikkai”). The “Ten Worlds” described by the metaphysical treaties of some schools of the Mahayana Buddhism (in China, “T’ien- t’ai”; in Japan, “Tendai” and the teachings of the bonze Nichiren, 1222-1282) having as their reference the “Lotus’s Sutra” (in Sanskrit “Saddharma-Pundarika Kyo”, in Japanese “Hokkekyo”) are life potentials related to each individual. In other words, they are ten states or conditions a person may show or experience from time to time in the course of his existence. Synthetically described, they can be defined as “Hell”, “Greed”, “Animality”, “Rage”, “Humanity”, “Sky”, “Learning”, “Partial Enlightenment”, “Bodhisattva” and “Buddhity”. Let us attempt to explain them better: “Hell” is a state of suffering; by “Greed” one falls prey of desires; “Animality” is the reign of instinctive, irrational reactions while “Rage” engenders disorder and conflicts. These four conditions of beingness are defined the “four bad trails” or the “trails of unhappiness”. From the condition of “Humanity” to upwards, things get better, then through the knowledge stemming from the “Learning”, man can reach the state of partial understanding of life (“Partial Enlightenment”) and later on, through continuous personal efforts, arrive with the condition of Bodhisattva that is characterized by empathy and altruism and joyfulness in helping others. In the end, one can get to the state of Buddhity that could be defined as a condition of infinite liberty and absolute happiness. Reducing the whole range of human experience to just ten stages, may seem oversimplifying and perhaps it is; many reasons brought to such categorization and this is not the appropriate moment to analyze them. However I am interested to point out how these ten Buddhist conditions of beingness, include themselves a “acute” and “chronic” aspect, too. Everyone of us could experience that, or also verify that, on the “Tone Scale” by Ron Hubbard. I believe an example will be enough to understand this point. Imagine to win a lotto, you would be happy and shouting for joy (this is the “Sky” condition in which one is temporarily rewarded by the realization of a wish), but right after, the postman delivers a letter to you with a request for an enormous tax repayment... so you fall into depression and maybe also into rage. In a few minutes, as Ron Hubbard confirmed, you jumped from a level to another, from a higher tone to a lower, degrading tone. *Science of Survival* helps us to understand in a scientific and rational way, the reasons why an individual goes down along the “Tone Scale”, and explains to us which means may help him to go back up materially, ethically and spiritually.

Time passing by, as the Church of Scientology enlarged and evolved, it developed a series of codes of rules of conduct to be applied in the various particular situations. So the “Auditor’s Code” came about, that has the purpose to maintain high professional standards not only in auditing but also in the life of every Scientologist, to a point of being defined “the model of pro-survival behavior”; the “Supervisor’s Code”, ruling behavior in classes where Scientology courses are studied and books perused; the “Code of Honor”, a list of 15 principles one can spontaneously adhere to, with no obligation, this is the code of friendship and loyalty as applied to human relationships. The “Code of a Scientologist” provides the policies to abide by in the fight for human rights and dissemination of Scientology around the world. To finish with, the already mentioned “Way to Happiness”, which after all is an actual code of behavioral rules everyone can freely adopt.

As a natural complement of Ron Hubbard’s ethics system, there is also a justice system. Practically, when an individual cannot keep an ethical conduct by himself, the group he belongs to, may take certain measures versus him. But these actions should be only utilized in an educational, rehabilitative fashion, and only until the person rebuked has bettered in his ethical sphere. According to Ron Hubbard, Justice is “the action the group takes against the individual when he fails to put in his own ethics” (Ron Hubbard, *Introduction to Scientology Ethics*, as above, page 3). Let us try to examine this subject, gleaned from a reference of Ron Hubbard (HCO Bulletin 12 July 1980, titled “The Basics of Ethics”).

According to Ron Hubbard, “the dictionary [of course a commonly used one, not the one specifically covering the Dianetics and Scientology nomenclature] defines ethics as ‘the study of the general nature of morals and of the specific moral choices to be made by the individual in his relationship with others.’ The same dictionary defines justice as ‘conformity to moral right, or to reason, truth or fact,’ or ‘the administration of law.’ As you can see, these terms have become confused. All philosophies from time immemorial have involved themselves with these subjects. And they never solved them. That they have

been solved in Dianetics and Scientology is a breakthrough of magnitude. The solution lay, first, in their separation. From there it could go forward to a workable technology for each. Ethics consists simply of the actions an individual takes on himself. It is a personal thing. When one is ethical or 'has his ethics in,' it is by his own determinism and is done by himself. Justice is the action taken on the individual by the group when he fails to take these actions himself."

As we can grab from this reference, the ideal for a non-ethical individual would be to acquire a consciousness of his own situation, to then undertake a path of ethical initiative, because "... ethics is so native to the individual that when it goes off the rails he will always seek to overcome his own lack of ethics" (HCO Bulletin of 12 July 1980). But man does not always have the force to challenge himself and start a journey of reinstatement. Yet in this case it becomes necessary to turn to justice procedures.

According to Ron Hubbard, along time, these procedures may bring one to rehabilitation: "Our justice really rehabilitates in the long run. It only disciplines those who are hurting others and gives them a way to change so they can eventually win too – but not by hurting us" (Ron Hubbard, *Introduction to Scientology Ethics*, as above, page 294). Per Hubbard, justice is never to be an end in itself or exploited for suppression or revenge, because nobody is basically evil and "man can always learn to adopt an ethical conduct and climb back to the top" (quoted in *Humanitarian – Restoring Honor and Self-Respect in The L. Ron Hubbard Series*, New era Publication International, ApS, Copenhagen, 2012, page 35).

According to Ron Hubbard, therefore, every person can "climb back to the top" and arrive with a full awareness of himself as a spiritual being; from this perspective, the ethical values will be restored with their most authentic character. But what are the authentic values of ethics? Let us recall what was covered above: Ron Hubbard deems that ethics is "rationality toward the highest level of survival along the Eight Dynamics", therefore the ethicalness of an individual needs to be judged in ratio to the actions he performs for the survival of himself and of the other dynamics. We have also mentioned how on the "Tone Scale" (as per *Science of Survival*) a person begins to commit destructive acts (so poorly ethical or totally unethical) from level 2.0 to below. This level could be considered to be the standard, normal or so, of man. From that level of 2.0 individuals may only choose to go up or down, to "create" or "destroy". That level of 2.0, in our physical universe, could approximately tally with a standard of "normality" or "sanity". Hence, the state of "sanity" of a person would depend on his capability to create or destroy things, not as just an "illusion" or hypothesis. Of course, that "create" or "destroy" is related to the operation of man along the "Eight Dynamics". The previous quotation is taken from a lecture Ron Hubbard held in his Philadelphia Doctorate Course (1 December, 1952). In this occasion, Ron Hubbard talked about ethics, about our physical universe and wondered (perhaps as a provocation) whether outside the Eight Dynamics, more may exist; so he mentioned the IX and X dynamics (which he associated respectively to esthetics and ethics). Ron Hubbard started his speech talking about Friedrich Nietzsche and his ethical paradigm as described in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. In that book, the German philosopher demolished the ethical order to replace it with a new one exclusively based on a principle of absolute freedom. According to Nietzsche, the "super-man" is that who accepts everything and does not oppose any rejection to what is offered to him by life: the good or the bad, the beautiful or the ugly, the creation or the destruction. According to Ron Hubbard that bad ideal, not syphilis, led Nietzsche to become crazy; the same thing might happen to everyone attempting to implement it as a lifestyle, in our universe. The reason for this, as Ron Hubbard said: "That who is only able to create but not also able to destroy, as well as that who is only able to destroy but not able to create" is not ethical, on the contrary is to be considered a crazy man who tries to go against the laws that rule our reality. The quotation is taken again from the Philadelphia lecture, already mentioned above. Only to hypothesize the possibility that someone may implement the life paradigm proposed by Nietzsche, we should postulate the existence of other systems (those for instance in which it can be surmised that a IX and X Dynamics exist) that for man would be of an unknown entity and so unimaginable. But can one postulate something outside what we can imagine? Can we imagine something that goes beyond everything our physical universe permits to us?

This subject is interesting because it opens the door to questions whether any chance exists for man to quit

himself and whether one can imagine something beyond the “system” (in this case, the “Eight Dynamics”) in which the individual dwells. As far as the first question is concerned, Ron Hubbard’s answer is ‘possibly affirmative’: this is the experience of “exteriorization”. According to the *Technical Dictionary of Dianetics and Scientology*, an exteriorization would be “(definition 1) The state of the thetan, the individual himself, being outside his body. When this is done, the person achieves a certainty that he is himself and not his body”. Moreover: “(definition 1) The phenomenon of being in a position or space dependent upon only one’s consideration, able to view from that space the body and the room as it is. That is exteriorization. One can view the body or control the body from a distance”. (*Technical Dictionary of Dianetics and Scientology*, as above, page 213). This is a spiritual experience on the edge of human possibilities, yet described by the mystics of all religions; this is the soul tour, our spiritual being detaching from the body, in the vision and in the ecstasy. However, if we accept such scenery, I believe, first of all one would need to understand the difference that exists between “perceiving self outside the body” and “transcending from self”. Maybe, examining one’s perception and consciousness of self some more, broadening little by little the borders of the system in which we are somehow “entrapped”, one may eventually acquire the feeling of being a whole with the entire universe.

I talked about the condition of entrapment and imprisonment of man within the physical universe, and “Trapped” is in fact also the title of a chapter of a famous book by Ron Hubbard (*Dianetics 55!*) in which furthermore another topic is covered, that of freedom inside the MEST universe and how an individual can attempt to set himself free from the chains of matter, energy, space and time. Ron Hubbard’s tenets seem to resume some beliefs of ancient Gnosticism: the “souls” prisoners in the physical world and their desire to get back to their Being, from which they came and where they wish to go back for an eternal life: “... Entrapment is the opposite of freedom. A person who is not free is trapped. He may be trapped by an idea. He may be trapped by matter. He may be trapped by energy. He may be trapped by space. He may be trapped by time. And he may be trapped by all of them.

The more thoroughly the preclear [i.e., someone who has not reached the state of “clear”, yet] is trapped, the less free he is. He cannot change, he cannot move, he cannot communicate, he cannot feel affinity and reality. Death, itself, could be said to be Man’s ultimate in entrapment. For when a man is totally entrapped, he is dead. It is our task in investigation and auditing to discover, for the individual and the group, the roadway to a greater freedom which is the roadway to a greater ability. The processes the auditor uses today are designed entirely to secure greater freedom for the individual, for the group, for Mankind. Any process which leads to a greater freedom for all dynamics is a good process.

It should be remembered, however, that an individual functions on all dynamics. And that the suppression of the Third or Fourth Dynamic leads to less freedom for the individual himself. Thus the criminal, becoming immorally free, harms the group and harms Mankind and, thus, becomes less free himself. Thus there is no freedom in the absence of affinity, agreement and communication. Where an individual falls away from these, his freedom is sharply curtailed and he finds himself confronted with barriers of magnitude. ... Once understanding is attained, freedom is obtained. For the individual who is thoroughly snarled in the mechanics of entrapment, it is necessary to restore to him sufficient communication to permit his ascendance into a higher state of understanding. Once this has been accomplished, his entrapment is ended. ... The individual does desire a greater freedom once he has some inkling of it. And auditing, according to the precision rules and codes of Dianetics and Scientology, steers the individual out of the first areas of entrapment to a point where he can gain higher levels of freedom – either by further auditing or by himself. The only reason we need a regimen with which to begin is to start an individual out of a mirror maze of such a complexity that he, himself, in attempting to wend his way, only gets lost”.

Ron Hubbard, with the word “auditing”, is meaning the application of specific processes and procedures of Dianetics and Scientology that “get rid of unwanted barriers that inhibit, stop or blunt a person’s natural abilities as well as gradually increasing the abilities a person has, so that he becomes more able and his survival, happiness and intelligence increase enormously”. (definition 2 of “auditing”, *Technical Dictionary of Dianetics and Scientology*, as above, page 41).

Yet – could one go beyond? Could we hypothesize more dynamics besides the Eighth? Logic would teach us, that anywhere we look, we must always follow the norms that are inherent to us, as fleeing them would mean to break the laws of physics which rule our universe. Which, honestly speaking, seems rather hard.

This matter was taken up by the logician and mathematician Kurt Godel (1906-1978) in his famous “Theorem of Incompleteness” formulated in 1931: the issues which make our system incomplete may be expressed but not solved within the system itself. How can we, within our cognitive system, attempt to solve issues that go beyond the normal logical parameters? Until we remain fastened to our physical world (Ron Hubbard’s MEST universe), even though we are spiritual beings, we will always live in a partiality, that is to say we are not going to have an exterior viewpoint from which to judge the system. The sole hypothesis we might possibly formulate, is the chance to become able to jump from a sub-system of our universe (mental, then spiritual) to another more huge (something similar to the “better world every individual has in his idea” as hypothesized by Kant). But what is this “better world” – the infinite? Paradise? Nirvana? A final solution? Or remains of the non-solution? For perhaps, it is eventually nothing that could be imagined if departing from the system itself.

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