

# *Anthro-Ontology and the Three Eyes*

*Essay by Dr. Marc Gafni*

## *Table of Contents*

Anthro-Ontology and the Three Eyes .....	1
First Principles and First Values Are Based in Anthro-Ontology, <i>Not</i> Natural-Law-Style Universal Epistemologies.....	5
Anthro-Ontology and Evolving First Principles and First Values Take Us Beyond the Naturalistic Fallacy.....	8
The Anthro-Ontological Method Can Be Specified and Evolved.....	10
The Three Anthro-Ontological Methods of the Eye of Consciousness—Each with Seven Steps .....	14
Three Methods.....	14
The Seven Steps .....	16
We Must Recover and Renew the Eye of Value.....	18

At the core of CosmoErotic Humanism—in contradistinction for example to the Kingship model of God that dominates much of classical organized religion, or the flatland reductionism *not* of authentic empirical science but, rather, of the dogmas of scientific materialism—is the realization that *Reality is Eros*. Eros, as we have noted, is not a one-dimensional force of allurement. If it was, Cosmos would disappear in a split-second. Rather, Eros is the precise balance between allurement and autonomy—attraction and repulsion—fusion and fission.

It is this kind of First Value and First Principle that animates our words when we write, *we live in an Intimate Universe*—or what we sometimes refer to as *a CosmoErotic Universe*. Eros seeks intimacy. Indeed, the plotline of Reality is the progressive deepening of intimacies. Evolution is the Love Story of the Universe—The Universe: A Love Story.

This *gnosis* of First Principles and First Values, however, is disclosed to us not through natural law, which would then be subject to the *naturalistic fallacy*,<sup>1</sup> nor through what is classically termed *a supernatural intervention of revelation*. We do not turn *first* to nature. Nor do we turn to the caricature of a small local God, owned by one nation or religion.

Rather, we turn inward. And here, we invoke the Anthro-Ontological Method. At the core of Anthro-Ontology is the realization that *not only do we live in Reality, but Reality lives in us. We not only live in an Intimate Universe, but the Intimate Universe lives in us.*

The far-reaching implication of this realization is that our own clarified interiors—as humans (= *anthropos*)—disclose a deeper truth (*ontology*) about the nature and structure of Reality itself. That means that the Eros—or Love—that throbs at the core of our being is not isolated or local. Rather, the qualities of clarified Eros that live inside us participate in the largest qualities of Evolutionary Love, as intrinsic to Cosmos.

These First Principles and First Values of evolution are both the ground and the *telos* of Cosmos.

It is within the context of this *telos*—these evolving First Values and First Principles—that the Reality of Cosmos unfolds.

In this context, there is no contradiction between freedom and necessity, or between contingency and elegant order and design. Eros is full suffusion and presence, and full freedom—living in dialectical relationship—which is the core nature of the Eros that animates

---

<sup>1</sup> *The naturalistic fallacy* is the claim that, because nature is a certain way, we ought to behave that way, as well.

Cosmos. Radical presence, which animates, suffuses, seduces, invites, and even subtly directs us, lives dialectically with contingency, freedom, and surprise—with the possibility of possibilities inherent in every moment.

As our close colleague, the philosopher and scientist Howard Bloom, expresses it, from the perspective of exterior science, *opposites are joined at the hip*.

Indeed, this notion of paradox—*opposites joined at the hip*—has been articulated by us, together with Howard, as itself being one of the First Principles and First Values of Cosmos. In the Eros of Cosmos, we directly experience ostensibly designed, elegant order and *telos*—dancing with contingency and freedom.

You can access this quality—anthro-ontologically—directly in your own experience.

Consider a truly great conversation between close friends, unfolding over many years, which is almost a sacred process.

The nature of such conversations is never pre-planned. There is no formal itinerary, no designated or designed program. They are filled with radical surprise. They are defined by contingency.

At the same time, they are not in any sense random or arbitrary. Indeed, they are filled with elegant order and inherent design. Pieces, strands of conversation, and themes weave themselves together into a larger whole that would have taken months of painstaking planning had they been pre-ordained or written out as a script. And it is doubtful that such pre-design could yield that level of elegance, nuance, and depth. Such conversations are ultimately meaningful and often disclose depth and originality in an always surprising and often shockingly beautiful fashion.

In the Eros of the conversation, the apparent contradiction between elegant design and contingent surprise disappears.

That is the nature of a genuine sacred conversation.

Conversation itself is the erotic structure of Cosmos. Conversations—exchanges of inherent design, proto-interiority, and freedom—define Cosmos from its inception.

It is in this sense that, as noted above, we join Howard Bloom in referring to Reality as *the conversational Cosmos*. All the way down and all the way up the evolutionary chain, within the conversational Cosmos, randomness and contingency are paradoxically seamless with elegant order and *telos*.

In truly sacred conversations, which are free and open, we are filled with surprise, spontaneity, and freedom, and there is also inherent *telos* and direction.

Such is the nature of the conversational Cosmos in general. It is guided by First Values and First Principles that are *not* imposed by an external caricatured God, alienated from Reality, but the inherent plotlines of the living Cosmos, which are beyond the old naturalistic/supernaturalistic split.

In effect, First Values and First Principles are the animating Eros and *telos* of Cosmos. This is what we have described elsewhere, together with Barbara Marx Hubbard, as the *telerotik Universe*. The plotlines of Cosmos include the movement toward ever-wider and deeper creativity, transformation, intimacy, love, relationship, and uniqueness. Each one of these is part of the virtually self-evident *telos* of Cosmos—that has self-actualized from matter to life to self-reflecting mind (through all the distinct levels of each) and is ever-evolving.

Clearly, *telos* is not linear. Rather, as our colleague Michael Murphy likes to say, *evolution meanders* in a general direction. A new emergent may appear, be lost, and then appear again much later in the evolutionary story. Nonetheless, there is also a general directionality moving through each evolving epoch.

It should be noted also that this is not some simple growth to goodness story. Every new level of creative love, interconnection, and power brings with it new potential pathology. [Think nuclear bombs, exponential tech, AI, machine learning, bio terrorism.] But the arc of Cosmos is clear. There is an evolution of certain broad key dimensions of consciousness and culture—even as evolution meanders, loops around, and certainly does not unfold in an absolutely linear fashion.

It is also a truism that, rooted in pockets of culture that dot our ancient past, there are explosions of *gnosis* that are forgotten or lost—sometimes only to be rediscovered again centuries later. So, we are not talking about a premodern notion of naive linear *telos*.

Nor are we talking about the kind of *telos* hijacked by one religion or nation, which sees its own triumph as the true *telos* of history. But we are talking about an undeniable sense of *telos*. Reality has moved from mud to Mozart, from bacteria to Bach, from quarks to culture, from egocentric to cosmocentric love, from monarchy and dictatorship to democracy, from caste systems to universal human rights.

It is only by continuing to evolve value in this fashion that, at this critical moment in history, we can prevent the dark shadows of exponential technologies and myriad other

existential risks, themselves rooted in the collapse of value, from either destroying us or creating a new caste system far worse than anything we might have previously imagined.

## **First Principles and First Values Are Based in Anthro-Ontology, *Not* Natural-Law-Style Universal Epistemologies**

As opposed to natural law and perennial philosophy, which often largely ignore particulars in favor of the universal, First Principles and First Values include irreducibly unique individuality and creativity.

Two of the core First Principles and First Values—part of the very plotlines of Cosmos—are *uniqueness* and *personhood*.

Uniqueness begins in the first nanoseconds of the Big Bang and ultimately evolves in the human narrative of identity that we have called *Unique Self*, *Evolutionary Unique Self*, and *Unique Self Symphony*. Awakening to your Unique Self does not mean to be in obedience to an external God but to be in alignment with the First Principles and First Values of Cosmos itself.

For example, the definition of Unique Self is something like, *you are a unique quality and configuration of the Evolutionary Love that animates Cosmos*.

In other words, Unique Self is *not* separate from the larger seamless Field of Existence. That would be what we refer to as *separate self*. Rather, Unique Self is both indivisible from the Field and an irreducibly unique expression of the Field, expressing, in conscious human form, the evolving First Value and First Principle of Uniqueness.

First Principles and First Values are not—as natural law often seemed to wrongly suggest—derived from nature directly through *the light of reason*. Basing normative claims on the contemplation of objective nature—as the critics of natural law correctly pointed out—makes these claims subject to the naturalistic fallacy: The confusion of what *is* the case with what *ought* to be the case.

Rather, as we describe them, First Principles and First Values are derived anthropologically. We don't enter the depth of nature, as an objective Reality outside of us. Rather, we enter the depth of our inner nature. Meaning, First Principles and First Values are derived from the contemplation of our own clarified interiors. The mysteries are *first* located

within us. First Values and First Principles live in interior space—cross-culturally and cross-temporally—across space and time.

First Principles and First Values do not appear in a frozen snapshot of Eternity—or an objectified image of nature. Rather, First Principles participate in both being and becoming—Eternity and evolution. First Principles are eternal in the sense that they are beneath time and space. They are a fragrance from the timeless time and the placeless place. And First Principles and First Values also evolve within space and time.

For the simplest example, let us return once again to the example of love: There is no society that does not express the value of love and caring. *And* love evolves.

Many less evolved societies place some arbitrary boundary on love. Love only applies to these people and not to those people. The evolution of love, however, is validated by enormous amounts of now integrated cross-cultural research. There is a broad base of empirical research in developmental psychology that points out how love evolves—from what we might call *egocentric* to *ethnocentric* to *worldcentric* to *cosmocentric* love.

Many people still have a direct moral experience of, for example, ethnocentric racism, which claims that only Whites, or only Blacks, or only Muslims, or only Germans, are worthy of love—limiting love to a particular nation or race. On the other hand, those who hold worldcentric consciousness have a direct moral experience that ethnocentric limitations on love are problematic, that they are significantly less evolved, and less reflective of the First Principle and First Value of Eros.

Moreover, love evolves *not only* into ever-wider circles of inclusion, but *also* into ever-more profound qualities of passion, potency, and purpose, as well as ever-deeper levels of openness, intensity, subtly, and nuance. That is what we mean when we say that *the value of love itself evolves to include ever-wider and deeper expression*.

According to our method, as we explain more below, once we have accessed the First Value and First Principle of *Eros* in our anthro-ontologically clarified interiors, then, we turn to nature, the biosphere, and the physiosphere, to see where and how *Eros* appears.

Said slightly differently, in terms of the three Eyes, we *first* turn inward, to the Eye of Consciousness, and we *then* turn outward, deploying the Eye of the Senses and the Eye of the Mind.

And it turns out that Eros—or Love—is everywhere: From the allurements that moves subatomic particles to bond as atoms, to the strings of amino acids held together through

complex patterns of intimacy, to gravitational fields, to the Eros that suffuses the world of the plants, the birds, and the bees, to sexual selection, which Darwin understood as love, all the way through the animal world, and this sentence could go on for many pages.

Reality, both in the world of matter and life, is suffused with Eros. That Eros is the same erotic force that lives in intimate communion all the way down and all the way up the evolutionary chain, culminating in the cultural, political, and economic creativity of humans.

Eros has a common definition that cuts across matter, life, and mind. This is the core Eros equation that we have referenced throughout this writing. And it can be discerned by all three Eyes in all of their forms.

Of course, the formal method, which we have recounted here, of first turning inside and then turning to the exterior world, is not neat and formulaic, nor is our actual experience, nor the nature of Reality itself.

Indeed, as Jeffrey Kripal and many others have pointed out in their description of doubleness and binary splits, while scientifically critical—we would not navigate Reality well without Aristotle’s law of the excluded middle<sup>2</sup>—formal logics and non-fuzzy categories can never be exhaustive. Interior and exterior are *not* absolutely split. They are far more mutually enacted than we might think. And our perception of their reality is trialectically<sup>3</sup> enacted as well in the space in between all three Eyes.

This is what Hegel was referring to when he talked about *thesis*, *antithesis*, and *synthesis*. There is a *third* that lives beyond the old binary pairs. The binary pairs are well deployed in science and cannot be effaced or overridden. At the same time, what William James referred to as *radical empiricism* shows us that the binary pairs do not adequately explain either the facts or the empirical experience of Reality.

---

<sup>2</sup> In logic, the *law of excluded middle* states that for every proposition, either that proposition, or its negation, is true. The earliest known formulation of this principle is found in Aristotle’s text *On Interpretation* (see, e.g., here: <http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/interpretation.mb.txt>), where he states that, of two contradictory propositions, one must be true, and the other false.

<sup>3</sup> We are of course aware that in philosophy, German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel wrote about what he called the *dialectical method*. He referred to a triad that he called *concrete*, *abstract*, and *absolute*. It was Johann Fichte, who originated the terms *thesis*, *antithesis*, and *synthesis* for the three steps in the dialectical method. This triad (German: *These*, *Antithese*, *Synthese*; originally: *Thesis*, *Antithesis*, *Synthesis*) refers to a progression of three ideas or propositions. Nonetheless, together with other thinkers, we prefer the term *trialectics* as it more immediately conveys the triadic movement of *She comes in threes*. Sally Kempton, in reviewing the manuscript pointed out to us that her early mentor Osar Ichazo of the Arica school preferred the term *trialectics* as well for apparently similar reasons.

For example, as we demonstrated above, a series of conversations over many years, animated by the implicit *telos* of First Values and First Principles, are not in any sense merely arbitrary and contingent, but neither are they formally planned and designed by an exterior agent. Rather, there is a reality structure that could be called *trialectical* or like we sometimes like to say, *Reality comes in threes*. There is a *third* that lives beyond the binary—not effacing but transcending and including the binary.

In this formal sense, the split between inside and outside, our own interiors and exterior nature, is itself inaccurate.

We already formulated one of the core Principles of Anthro-Ontology with the following sentence: *Not only do we live in an Intimate Universe—the Intimate Universe lives in us*. As we saw in our earlier discussion, this is quite literally true. The human experience of thought, for example, is in part constituted through the entire history of evolution—from quarks to subatomic particles to atoms to molecules to cells—to the entire complex organismic systems of nature that quite literally constitute us.

Universal cosmic dynamics live within us.

Nobel-prize laureate Ilya Prigogine points toward one dimension of this truth when he writes,

*Nature is part of us as we are part of it. We can recognize ourselves in the description we give to it.*

We look inside, even as we, with all three Eyes wide open, are also surveying the wider landscape of our ostensibly exterior worlds.

## **Anthro-Ontology and Evolving First Principles and First Values Take Us Beyond the Naturalistic Fallacy**

This permeability between interiors and exteriors, (and our roving three Eyes that move between inner space and outer space) characterizes Anthro-Ontology. This, of course, is very different than, for example, committing the naturalistic fallacy in drawing a conclusion about so-called *natural human behavior* from the behavior of other mammals.

For instance, the doctrine of natural law might argue for the legitimacy of ethnocentric warfare as being natural, from the fact that chimpanzees and wolves engage in intergroup



killing. This is now a well-documented natural fact of what is called *intergroup coalitionary killing*. This killing is in effect a form of war—for the sake of power and domination that takes place among chimpanzees and wolves. The fact that it exists in nature—that aggression is natural—does *not* make it either inevitable or good in the human world.

There is both continuity and discontinuity between the core levels of Reality: matter, life, and mind. Love shows up at every level, but Love shows up *differently* at each level. The aggression that shows up in the animal world, an expression of self-protection, autonomy, and communion, which are all aligned with core First Values and First Principles of Cosmos, *does not* and *should not* show up in an identical fashion in the human world. The evolution of First Values and First Principles highlights both the continuity and discontinuity of value throughout the great evolutionary story.

For example, we rightly notice the *First Principle and First Value of Eros, Love, and allurement* that animates Reality from its inception, as quarks form protons and neutrons, all the way through the extensive examples cited by Darwin, C.S. Peirce, and Kropotkin in his *Mutual Aid*, as well as the long heterodox lineage that followed them—a realization that has only recently penetrated the academy in the works of mainstream evolutionary theorists like David Sloan Wilson.

It is also self-evident that there are First Principles and First Values that live within us, which we might notice *first* in nature and *only later* locate in our own interiors, but which are not subject to the naturalistic fallacy. For example, the First Principle and First Value of Evolution, and the understanding of evolution as a series of transformations—and its application across all platforms of matter, life, and mind—is derived from a radical empiricism, a direct scientific contemplation of the natural world of the kind that Darwin so elegantly modeled.

As we notice the evolutionary impulse that exists in Reality, we realize that the movement toward transformation welling up in us participates in that same impulse. We locate our own evolution—in broad terms—within the larger Story of Evolution. We begin to realize that we are personally implicated in evolution. We are chapter and verse in the narrative arc of the Evolutionary Love Story, animated by the evolutionary impulse, whose interior is Evolutionary Love or Eros. This knowing lives within us, and can be accessed anthro-ontologically, which is why we are able to perceive it, as so many modern thinkers have.

This realization has inspired a profound revisioning of our Universe story, informed by recent revelations across many sciences, both interior and exteriors, as disclosed by the Eye of the Senses, the Eye of the Mind, and the Eye of Consciousness in all of its four forms.

The New Universe Story, as we have already pointed towards, births derivative narratives of identity. Ontogeny and phylogeny—Universe story and our narrative of identity—always, at least in some broad sense, recapitulate each other—they are mutually enacting narratives.

This observation of nature is *not*, however, another form of what Wilfrid Sellars famously termed *the myth of the given*. Nor is this a vast and complex naturalistic fallacy. Rather, it is an in-depth scientific set of observations, subject to all the parameters of rigorous method. The Eye of the Mind deployed by science can conclude that *Reality is evolution* and that *evolution itself*—from an exterior third-person scientific perspective—*is alive in us, as us, and continues through us, resulting in incessant creativity and transformation*.

Classical science tells us that evolutionary transformation is a First Principle of Cosmos, and this First Principle and First Value of Cosmos—evolutionary transformation—lives in us, simply because the evolutionary process itself is encoded in us.

With that knowing, we *then* turn inward—using the *Eye of the Spirit* or the *Eye of the Heart* often described and deployed by the interior sciences—and feel the evolutionary impulse, anthro-ontologically, as it animates and drives our own interiority.

## **The Anthro-Ontological Method Can Be Specified and Evolved.**

One key question remains:

*What is Anthro-Ontology?*

Or:

*How do we come to know First Values and First Principles?*

We have already alluded to the answer above, but something of its contours and methodology are required even in this brief set of telegraphic propositions we offer here.

The answer begins with another fancy term, *phenomenology*.

We begin to know First Values and First Principles through our own clarified phenomenological experience.

Or said slightly less simply, but more originally, we coined a term for a way of knowing, which is really the way humans know anything at all, including value: *Anthro-Ontology*.

Anthro-Ontology is a set of methods grounded in the elemental truth that we access the nature of Reality—including the Values of Reality—by going inside, clarifying how we know our own body, awareness, and desire.

Reality lives inside of us, even as we live inside of Reality.

This is true in a basic physical sense, that all of evolution is recapitulated in our physical bodies, from atoms to cells all the way up and down the evolutionary chain. And so is all of the evolved value living in us in some significant way.

Part of our understanding of the Intimate Universe, which we unpack in depth in our writings on CosmoErotic Humanism, is that the human being is intimate with the reality patterns of Cosmos.

This is, of course, a core premise of the classical interior mystical sciences: microcosmos and macrocosmos reflect each other.

The entire enterprise of modern exterior science makes no sense without the implicit substrate of our two epigrammatic sentences: *We live in an Intimate Universe. The Intimate Universe lives in us.*

The human scientist is able to deploy mathematical models in physics as a means to hold the whole of Cosmos in his mind's Eye. That only makes sense if we understand that the human mind intimately participates in, and evolved from, this very Cosmos which he maps. Something of the elegant order of Cosmos is within the elegant order of the human mind, body, heart.

In the interior sciences, this idea has traditionally been explicit.

But it is also implicit in mathematics and physics. It is self-evident that the process of mathematics, for example, is not akin to taking a photograph of the Universe and then having it developed according to some preexistent instructions.

Rather, we are able to access the mysteries of Cosmos because we participate intimately in those same mysteries.

Without that premise it would simply be absurd to discuss how abstract theoretical physics, in its language of mathematics, has the capacity to reflect back to us intimately accurate models of primordial history from the first nanoseconds of the Big Bang. The history of matter is made available through mathematics. Mathematical formulations live in us, even as they live in the Universe. Because matter and mathematics, and all of their history, live in the Universe, even as they live in us.

Albert Einstein spoke to this mystery and more when he wrote,<sup>4</sup>

*The very fact that the totality of our sense experiences is such that by means of thinking...it can be put in order, this fact is one which leaves us in awe, but which we shall never understand. One may say "the eternal mystery of the world is its comprehensibility."*

He goes on to invoke a word which did not fall easily from his lips.

*The fact that it is comprehensible is a miracle.*<sup>5</sup>

The key point for our purpose is that science itself, and the process of the scientist, is an expression of the Intimate Universe, in which we live, and which lives in us. The scientist derives information (data)—which is a form of knowledge, or *gnosis*—directly based on that intimacy. There is a fundamental coherence between the human being and Cosmos.

Science is possible because human nature is coherent with cosmic nature.

If the human scientist were not also a cosmic human, there would be no science.

Human science works because we are cosmic humans.

Science is, in effect, a form of what we call Anthro-Ontology.

The self-reflexive human who emerges from the lifeworld of the animal reflects not only on the Cosmos in which we live but on the Cosmos that lives within.

Said more clearly: Human beings *participate* in Reality, which is why they can *know* Reality. The physics forming the structure of the Universe also form the structure of the human being. We participate in shared intimate identity with the entire Field of Value. The

---

<sup>4</sup> See Einstein's essay "Physics and Reality" (1936), reprinted in Einstein, Albert, *Out of My Later Years*, New York, Carol Pub. Group, 1995, originally published in 1950.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

Eye of the Senses, the Eye of the Mind, and the Eye of Consciousness in all of its four forms, inter-animate each other, as we perceive Reality in what is always an introspective gaze.

Thus, we might say that interior sciences are anthro-ontologically valid in the same fundamental fashion as exterior science.

The values in a mathematical equation describing a law of physics and the existence of universal human values are only possible because human nature is cosmic. The same is true of the values in the equations of the interior sciences. It is only a Cosmos built on First Principles and First Values embedded in a Story of Evolving Value that generates the interior experience of the human being, which is that values ultimately matter.

Indeed, we stake our life on our clarified values because we sense our true nature as cosmic humans, whose interiors participate in the value structures of Cosmos. That is the core of Anthro-Ontology. Infinite human subjectivity, the Cosmos in person in human form, articulates mathematics, which generates the foundational methods of science. Scientific models grasp the whole of Cosmos because the whole of the cosmic is already resonant with, attuned towards, and in some sense actually interior to, the person of the scientist.

That is also precisely the nature of value in interior science. In that sense, the exterior sciences and interior sciences, both rely on the fact (whether we know it or not) that we live in a coherent Intimate Universe, which also lives in us, and in which we, therefore, directly participate.

True interior science is not a collection of dogmatic declarations or socially constructed assertions. Instead, it results from two primary sources.

First is the common-sense innate knowing that lives universally in most humans across space and time. These common-sense sacred axioms are indeed one expression of the Eye of Consciousness. We refer to modernity's version of these fruits as *the common-sense sacred axioms*.<sup>6</sup> But of course, common sense can be deployed not implicitly, as in the common-sense sacred axioms, but explicitly to discern value.

Second, it emerges from deep processes of experimentation and clarification, based on some form of spiritual practice that transfigures the human person. The human being accesses a clarity, liberated from petty contraction, and then sees Reality transparently, as it is reflected in the deepest clarified interiors of the interior scientists themselves. These processes of

---

<sup>6</sup> We explore eight examples of these axioms in our book by David J. Temple, *First Principles and First Values of Evolving Perennialism: Forty-Two Propositions on CosmoErotic Humanism*.

experimentation involve contemplation, transfiguration, and clarification, through various methods of intense practice, are repeated world over and in all times.

To further distinguish the Anthro-Ontological Method from the common forms of the naturalistic fallacy or the myth of the given, it is perhaps worthwhile to articulate the three methods and the seven core steps of the three Anthro-Ontological Methods.

## **The Three Anthro-Ontological Methods of the Eye of Consciousness—Each with Seven Steps**

There are three primary methods of Anthro-Ontology.

And there are seven core steps that apply to gnosis derived from any of the three Anthro-Ontological Methods.

While we have already referred explicitly or implicitly to most of these in the writing above, they bear recapitulating in distinct steps.

### **Three Methods**

We have called the interior clarification that is the nature of Anthro-Ontology *Berur* [borrowing a term from the sixteenth-century Lurianic interior sciences], the clarification of our deepest heart's desire. The process of clarification (*Berur*) takes place in three distinct ways, which are the three core Anthro-Ontological Methods.

And again, these three methods range across all four expressions of the Eye of Consciousness, from the Eye of the Heart to the Eye of Value to the Eye of the Spirit to the Eye of Contemplation.

The first method is *common-sense awareness of what you know to be true*. This is the first level of clarification. It requires pausing, focusing of attention, even if for a moment, going inside, and articulating to yourself and others the common sense that you know to be true and live by. We have called the result of such immediate reflection *common-sense sacred axioms*. This method most often invokes the Eye of Value, which discerns goodness, truth, and beauty—value itself—as well as the Eye of the Heart, which often loves spontaneously, immediately, and non-self-consciously.

The second method we referred to above as *contemplation*. We noted it as being something of a middle road between the level of clarification in methods one and three. In contemplation, we enter deeply into either a purely interior state of meditation and engage in reality consideration, or we contemplate the nature of reality and self through the study of the sacred texts from any of the interior or exterior sciences. Contemplative meditation is more reflective than trans-figurative in its nature. This naturally involves the Eye of Contemplation, but such reflection might also take place through the prism of the Eye of the Heart, the Eye of Value, or even the Eye of the Spirit.

The third method—which enacts the most profound level of clarification—is *transfiguration*. Transfiguration is an intense interior psychoactive process—think meditation, ecstatic dance, love making, fasting, or the like. In this method, if done with care and wisdom, we access a deeper level of clarified *gnosis*. This third method is classically an expression of being transfigured in Eros and ecstasy by the Eye of the Heart, or being transfigured into identification with spacious awareness by the Eye of Contemplation.

All three of these forms disclose information about First Principles and First Values of Cosmos. Often, the same information might be available at different levels of depth and clarity via all three methods.

For example, let's return to the First Principle and First Value of Uniqueness that we adduced briefly above. The realization of the First Principle of Uniqueness might be implicitly or explicitly recognized in a moment of common sense, incepted in a short pause of self-reflection around one's own self-evidently unique nature and the unique nature of every dimension of Reality.

Contemplation and study would deepen that realization considerably, as one reflected and studied the depth and quality of uniqueness—for example, as it exists from subatomic particles all the way through to the human world. In this instance, the realization that atoms are unique is not necessarily available to the average person in their immediate common-sense reflection. But a deeper examination of physical and interior cultural realities, which disclose the depth and pervasiveness of uniqueness and its evolution as First Principle and First Value, might be profoundly deepened by contemplation. Contemplation might also involve studying a text with a teacher, taking a course, reading, or meditative reflection on the topic of uniqueness.

Transfiguration would involve a profound process of awakening—what is often called *realization*—in which the person realizes their True Self, their ultimate identity with the Field

of Consciousness and Desire. The process might take place through meditation, psychedelic journeying, or other forms of the intensification of experience that are the heart of perennial practice. In the most profound form of that practice, the True Self gives way to the Unique Self, the irreducibly unique expression of the LoveBeauty, LoveIntelligence, and LoveDesire that lives in you, as you, and through you—an ecstatic sobering explosion of self-knowing, self-recognition, and often for the first time in one’s life, unique self-love.

## The Seven Steps

Once we have identified what seems to be a First Value or First Principle, using one of the three methods above, we investigate further following seven steps.

First, we seek to locate our findings relative to the core structure of human consciousness. *Is it only in your mind and your local cultural world, or does it appear across cultures around the world?* If it shows up universally in every culture around the world—as reflected both in cross-cultural wisdom literatures and popular cultural expressions—then, we may well be dealing with a First Value and First Principle.

Second, once we see that this First Principle and First Value appears across space in contemporary cultures world over, we turn to investigate if it appears across time. *Does it appear in some form in the various stages of the ancient world—premodernity, modernity, and postmodernity?*

After that (step three), we turn to nature. *Does this principle and value appear in the biological world of life?* With a value like *uniqueness*, it becomes fairly clear that it appears all throughout the lifeworld.

Following that (step four), you investigate even more deeply to see what traces, perhaps in somewhat altered form, that core Value or Principle might appear even earlier, in what is commonly called *the world of matter*.

Once you have established some level of continuity in the appearance of a First Principle and First Value across matter, life, and mind, you then (step five) go back and trace more carefully the continuity and discontinuity. Pay close attention to see how it has evolved and changed form through the successive levels of consciousness.

Finally (step six and seven), in regard to some First Principles and First Values, a different set of questions might be in order:



*Does its appearance in nature have the same core quality, even if in different form, across matter, life, and mind, or does it only show up in the world of self-reflective human mind?*

*If it appears in different forms—perhaps even under a different name—in matter, life, and mind, is there a sufficient thread between these words and forms to assert that reference is being made to the same core value?*

For example, let's take the value of fairness. We pointed out earlier that *fairness* does not appear under that name in the world of matter. But the value of *harmony* does show up in the earliest expression of existence. Upon contemplation, we realize that these values participate in a common thread. *Harmony* expresses *the right relationship between parts, the appropriate balance and distribution of energy, in which every part is in right relationship to every other part and has the necessary energy to function effectively*. We then begin to realize that *fairness in human life is an evolved expression of harmony*.

We then trace a big-picture overview of the evolution of this value, from its inception as harmony, gradually shifting to fairness at the higher levels of the lifeworld, and then fairness as it appears in the human world, gradually evolving in breadth and depth through unfolding levels of human consciousness, ultimately crystalizing as fairness that includes every human being, every dimension of every human being, and all of life in its circle of embrace.

We point out that, in effect, Anthro-Ontology is an expression of an older idea that is sourced in all the great traditions, the distinction between the Eye of Consciousness, the Eye of the Mind, and the Eye of the Senses.

The Eye of the Senses discloses empirical reality in the worlds of matter and life, that are visible through our sensory apparatus and their amplifiers—think, for example, of the Hubble telescope. But the Hubble telescope also requires the Eye of the Mind, for example, the mathematical calculations needed to interpret certain data sets that it discloses.

The third Eye, however, is the Eye of Consciousness in its different expressions, e.g., the Eye of the Heart, or the Eye of Contemplation, or the Eye of the Spirit— or what we refer to as the *Eye of Value*—which discloses, or allows one, to access the interiors of Cosmos.

Anthro-Ontology points the Eye of Consciousness in the right direction—inwards. It is the placing of attention on the inner space of human consciousness that meaning is made—not

as a social construction of reality but as the disclosure of interior value which can be accessed only on the Inside of the Inside.

## **We Must Recover and Renew the Eye of Value.**

In terms of discerning Eros at the core of Reality, a special note is required to point towards the Eye of Value. The Eye of Value is the root of the Anthro-Ontological Method. This is the idea that *the mysteries are within us*, which is seen recurrently in the writings of the interior sciences.

But it means most particularly, that what is seen through the Eye of Contemplation, the Eye of the Heart, and the Eye of the Spirit, is not merely a fiction or a figment of a socially constructed but meaningless imagination but rather, it is an expression of the evolving innate value that is the intrinsic ground and nature of Cosmos in all of its expressions.

The Anthro-Ontological Eye of Value is also the root of the common-sense sacred axioms. The common-sense sacred axioms, like evolving First Principles and First Values embedded in a Story of Value, are a result of anthro-ontological disclosure. These common-sense sacred axioms animate and guide human life through all of modernity and were, until very recently—before the onslaught of the postmodern shadow expressions—the shared axioms of value of the overwhelming majority of humanity.

They are common sense in that they are generated by the common-sense forms of sensemaking, deployed by human beings across space and time, which generate common sensemaking conclusions, hence the term—*common sense*. In other words, the common-sense sacred axioms are anthro-ontologically validated. We might call these *the self-evident reflective truths of the Eye of Value*. They are known through the first method of Anthro-Ontology—*common sense*.

They do not require the radical intensification of experience through practice that accompany some forms of contemplation and all forms of transfiguration.

But they do require an elemental clarification of desire and consciousness, a stepping out of the tyranny of survival and brutal competition, to access the deeper currents of truth that always already live within us. Simply by thinking and feeling a bit more deeply, these

truths are available. Moreover, most human beings, much of the time, chart their daily lives and decisions, based on the integrity of these truths.

Common sense, however, is not reducible to the kind of *fast thinking* that Daniel Kahneman takes as the core of human action and decision making. Common sense is not automatic, habituated, or instinctual, although it might, on occasion, have elements of each. Fast thinking can be reactive and self-protective, even as it can also be impulsive, generous, and kind. For the most part, however, fast thinking responds much more actively to negative stimuli than to positive.

Common sense, on the other hand, is actually a form of sensemaking that requires at least a minimal level of clarification and reflection.