

## CHAPTER 33

### INTEGRATION AND DISSOCIATION

The creation of better and more resources through economic cooperation achieves an important increase of our capabilities to build happiness. It propels us toward a state of development where the fulfillment of economic objectives may be attainable without having to resort to modes that position individuals against one another. More than that, it may afford participants with a way to optimize the production of all resources, including emotional resources. Economic cooperation may then qualify as an important increment for a development of humanity to overcome competitive activities. Nevertheless, short of reaching ultimate, more comprehensive cooperative ideals, improved capacities to cooperatively produce means do not guarantee that we will increase or maximize the fulfillment of our needs with the means we produce. Nor does the existence of a free market guarantee that objective. The totality of individual choices in a free economy shapes the quality and quantity of means that the cooperative process produces. If our choices of goods and services that we demand from the cooperative process are not prudent, the relative productive advantages of the cooperative process will not translate into a better life for us. The misdirection of our wishes and activities may result in the misdirection of cooperative production. Capacities may be wasted on products that are not needed or that are not needed as much as other products, or the products or their fabrication processes may cause unjustifiable risk or damage.

Further, the cooperative production process may not guarantee participation in it or a technically astute use of its capacities or means. Individuals may not act prudently regarding capacities or means and destroy or lose them or leave them idle. They may lack access to cooperatively produced means because of their failure to sufficiently contribute and create value to warrant their adequate participation in cooperative benefits. Some may lack access because of personal circumstances or a lack of access to productive resources that would enable them to participate. Others may be unwilling to engage in cooperative behavior. They may prefer to pursue their objectives independently or to stay competitive and violate cooperative requirements. Even if individuals participate in cooperative production, they may persist in exclusionary efforts toward other participants or schemes to divest them of their possessions. They may undertake this willfully, or their behavior may have inadvertent competitive effects. Their pursuits may burden pursuits of other humans directly or through their environment by their processes, products, the use of products, or byproducts.

Hence, even if a cooperative economy has the capacity to produce an abundance of capable means for everybody and to enable an optimization of mutuality, this does not by itself create an optimized world. A number of important challenges remain. We must determine what means to produce and how to produce them. We must find access to the economic benefits a cooperative system offers. We must be able to pursue our needs separately to the extent this does not create competitive effects. We must decide how to best use the resources we produce. Our activities in the production and use of means bear consequences for us and for others, as their actions bear consequences for them and us. We must prevent others from undue infringement on our pursuits and must prevent our own undue infringement on others to forestall internal and external repercussions. Beyond accidental or negligent infringements, we have to contain our and other individuals' competitive instincts. We must motivate others to cooperate with us. We have to arrange our pursuits with them in ways that are most productive for our happiness. It appears that economic cooperation only addresses a portion of the issues we have to resolve in successfully arranging our coexistence and interaction with other humans. Still, it is a vital basis for instituting harmonious interaction in all other aspects of human existence. That is not only so because economic cooperation creates resources and supports and protects comprehensive mutuality but also because our arrangements can be more liberal, inventive, and effective if we possess a secure economic basis. Additionally, cooperative arrangements in maximization of economic effectiveness and efficiency may require considerable reorganization to replace competitive approaches and institutions with cooperative schemes of pursuit. The resulting mechanisms might be able to serve as a basis for organizing human interaction in noneconomic aspects of human existence.

However, the selection of cooperative manners of demeanor in economic as well as in other aspects of human affairs must be undertaken with great care. Cooperation may impart its own brand of interference because it requires coordinated pursuits. We may be expected to compromise our individual strategies for the sake of a common or at least a coordinated approach. The threat of cooperative imposition on our economic pursuits can be resolved if we can opt out of joint enterprises when we perceive a better chance to pursue the fulfillment of our needs in other joint undertakings or independently. Yet the dominance of large enterprises we would inherit from a competitive system may render it difficult to freely associate or dissociate in our economic undertakings. Even if cooperative interests achieve a cooperative redirection in the behavior of large competitive enterprises, it will be nec-

essary to eliminate their concentrated, hierarchic command structure to forestall their competitive resurgence. But a joint administration by the owners may increase organizational encumbrances on the operations of such enterprises. Further, they may be unable to meet the demands of individuals whose mind has been liberated from competitive pressures and manipulations. They might fail to evolve adequate flexibility to adjust to transformed economic pursuits. To meet the needs of their participants and customers, it may be necessary to dismantle or break up large enterprises. It may be required to replace them with associations of individual pursuits or smaller joint production enterprises that can be better managed cooperatively and that can produce goods and services in response to cooperative requirements. Large enterprises might solely remain to undertake joint research and production in areas where enterprises would otherwise duplicate efforts or in areas where a large size is necessary to generate or maintain products effectively or efficiently. In these cases, problems that arise with the separation of governance from ownership may be alleviated by organizing participants in groups that cooperatively decide on the direction of the enterprise. Where multiple enterprises join for exploration and production, such groups naturally exist. In other large enterprises that are worth maintaining in a cooperative environment, groups might be organized in correspondence to the production process or location.

A similar reorganization may be obligatory with respect to governmental forms of organization that were inherited from competitive rule. After competitive interests are deposed in the control of economic enterprises, the related competitive structures and processes of government will unavoidably become subject to replacement by a cooperative approach. The previous strategy of competitive interests to concentrate governance and to remove and withhold it from the governed will be reversed. Previous forms of government may have to be largely dismantled and superseded with forms of organization that can better respond to the needs of the population. The close correlation between governmental and economic concerns suggests that similar modes of organization may be helpful or necessary. In both areas, the mutuality benefits of traditional forms of cooperative organization among individuals suggest that we organize cooperative endeavors on the basis of smaller groups whose members are bonded to one another by a common purpose. But the disassembly of larger shapes of organization to form alliances of individuals that more closely reflect their needs poses a new threat. The resulting freedom to associate or to not associate may counteract cooperation on larger levels. The groups in which individuals may associate may become competitive against one another

or individuals. Subgroups and individuals in groups may become competitive against one another. Individuals may not be incorporated into groups and they may engage in competitive strategies as well. It would appear that a cooperative society must possess an aspect of cooperative organization that protects against these competitive propensities. Competitive impulses may continue in us in spite of the governance of them by our council of traits. We as individuals may not be able to reliably rein them in. Our instincts that exhort us to claim and appropriate resources or enable such claims may prevail in us although we are situated in a cooperative society. Yet, even if we keep our competitive instincts under control, the proximity of our pursuits with undertakings of others may lead to interferences that may have competitive effects. Besides our spatial coexistence, our substantive entanglement with other individuals may not allow the full exercise of each individual's and each group's wishes without negatively affecting other individuals or groups. The density of our placement and our interdependence may create conditions where our pursuits, if they were left unchecked, would impose on one another. Avoiding the presence of other humans as much as possible may help us to some extent to avoid conflict. But we cannot entirely or even extensively shun contact if we want to lead happy lives because we need cooperation in many aspects of our existence to fulfill its requirements and improve its conditions. We might be able to satisfy our needs as part of a limited group. However, in a technologically and economically advanced society, this or other groups of which we could become a member may not be able to fulfill all our needs. Because we must rely on a multitude of other individuals, or choose to rely on them to enhance our pursuits, we tend to be integrated with them into a common system. Even if we choose cooperative environments only for certain purposes and we stay separate as much as possible concerning remaining objectives, the correlation with other individuals for selected pursuits may create proximity, contact, interaction, and consequences in other subject areas.

As a result of the connections in our pursuits and our presence in a shared setting, we may find it hard to opt out of an entire system. Even if we possess choices, the advantages we draw from such systems may exceed the disadvantages. To obtain and maintain what we need, we may have to live with aspects that detract from our happiness. We may have to compromise. While that consideration may keep competitive tendencies by cooperatively minded individuals under control, it may also provide opportunities for competitive interests to find leverage. To preserve a cooperative system, its members will have to find an approach that can control such competitive tendencies effectively.

Noncompetitive individuals might be unwilling to compromise with competitive behavior even if they could be assured that competitive interests would stop at that compromise and not strive to expand their domain further. Avoiding confrontation with competitive interests might seem to be a wise choice at times. Noncompetitive interests might lose more than they might be able to preserve in taking a stand. Then again, if we determine that peace is a sufficiently important condition under any circumstances to warrant an adjustment of our pursuits to the wishes of others, we leave us and our happiness vulnerable to be held hostage by anyone whose wishes conflict with ours and who challenges us to retreat. If we make concessions to any person who attempts to preclude us or take what we own, there may not be much or any room left for the pursuit of our wishes. Such a stance would invite others to expand their happiness at our expense. Thus, a commitment to the preservation of peace even at the cost of merely a compromise may be excessive. The optimization of our pursuits demands that we weigh the consequences of our insistence or our resistance against the consequences of comporting with the demands of others. Yet, even if we deliberate, forces that attempt to expand their pursuits at our cost may use our calculations of a lesser evil by threatening damage on account of our insistence or resistance that exceeds the cost of retreat. Their understanding of our calculations may cause competitive forces to become increasingly aggressive and threatening to intimidate us to a degree that makes us give in. To counter that trend, we must be able and willing to present the potential of making the cost for competitive aggressors exceed the benefit they can garner from their competitive impositions. Such threats and counterthreats may result in the exercise of the threatened potential and the infliction of damage on both sides. They may result in severe setbacks in the pursuits of our objectives up to their destruction and possibly our existence. We might face the apparent absurdity that we must be willing to sacrifice our happiness and our existence to secure them. Anything short of such a commitment would indicate to competitive interests the levels of coercion they must build to have us agree to our subjugation. Accordingly, we may have to take such a radical attitude to stave off infringements.

This reasoning can make competitive environments extraordinarily violent and may lead to our individual elimination and the extinction of humanity. We may regard the violence and the damage incurred in fighting competitive infringements necessary to defend ourselves, others, and humanity against existential threats. If our need for collective survival and thriving possesses ultimate priority, a sacrifice or risk of sacrifice of individual survival and thriving may be a logical

choice in the defense against competitive threats to humanity. Similar arguments may apply in securing groups or individuals whose survival and thriving we value more than our own or the survival and thriving of others. But if situations of existential exigency do not exist, existential sacrifices and risking such sacrifices may seem unwarranted. That may be true for individual existential sacrifices to facilitate collective thriving if we esteem individual existential concerns more than some nonexistential collective concerns. Nor might we be prepared to make individual existential sacrifices to counter individual menaces that do not reach existential stature, except possibly the sacrifice of a competitive aggressor. If survival and thriving combine to form our ultimate objective, we cannot apply the logic of limitless opposition because it may cause or contribute to the destruction of this objective. Such considerations are part of the general system in which we ponder the priorities among our needs and apply cost-benefit assessments to possible strategies in maximization of overall fulfillment. To overcome unreasonable risks, we would have to be prepared to limit the escalation of our insistence or our resistance. Still, notwithstanding such considerations, humans are often inclined to give some collateral needs such as their needs for self-determination, self-realization, self-respect, justice, giving and receiving love, and acceptance an absolute preference. These preferences may represent unfavorable choices from an existential standpoint. Yet our willingness to commit to a limitless opposition if it appears required to overcome competitive exclusions, predations, and threats may prevent, stop, and contain competitive overreaching before it can coerce us to fight for our existence. By taking an uncompromising stand early, we deny competitive interests resources to gain strength and ultimately to exist. The rational success of this stance appears hard to dispute even if it has an irrational basis in our needs.

Although such a posture may appear to be justifiable and essential against unjustifiable competitive aggression, such clear settings of confrontation in the denial or curtailment of our pursuits are rare. It is more probable that we will experience competitive effects to our pursuits because our pursuits and circumstances intersect and are incompatible with those of other individuals in fundamental aspects or idiosyncratic particularizations. In such situations, differences of opinion and interests may cause each party to the disagreement to regard the other side of the dispute as the offender and itself as the party suffering infringement. Locked in a subjective point of view, each party to the conflict may hold the conviction of holding the sole legitimate position. The perceived infringement may generate a reaction that seeks to protect against, correct, and punish the purportedly offensive act.

Because each party considers its actions legitimate, a party subjected to defensive action is bound to view the response of the other as an original infringement. The impression by all of the parties that they reply to an aggression by other parties, as well as their opposing attempts to stop and roll back perceived aggression and to seek compensation and retribution for purported infringement, involve them in an intractable conflict. If a deemed infringement continues or might be repeated, they may attempt to break the intransigence of their opponents and dissuade them from further pursuing the purported aggression. For this purpose, each side may gravitate toward an overproportional response to each round of apparent aggression. Even if a response is designed to be proportional, this may not change the reaction of the other side because it is likely to view the proportional reaction to be part of an unjustified aggression. These dynamics create an overwhelming potential for the escalation of disputes into conflicts of significant and possibly existential proportions. They seem to drive all except the most openly cynical forms of competitive struggle. This potential that conflicts would spiral out of control creates a momentous motivation for individuals whose interests may conflict to devise individual and cooperative mechanisms that avoid such conflagrations.

An awareness of the risk of subjectivity and of escalation may cause parties involved in a disagreement to avoid and de-escalate conflicts to the best of their aptitudes. We may accommodate opponents because we may be able to identify with their interests and acknowledge that they are engaged in legitimate pursuits. We may accommodate such pursuits with the expectation that others will have a similar understanding and accommodate us in similar pursuits. Even if we encounter nonsimilar situations, we may determine that compromise is in our interest. Because electing to shun competition may avail us and others of the ability to participate in the benefits of a cooperative setting, we and they might be prepared to compromise pursuits. Still, to put up with the wishes of others and endure interference would only make sense if it would provide participants with a greater benefit than it costs them or if it prevents a greater damage than they would otherwise incur. Even in a cooperative society, the point of insistence or resistance would be reached where the damage that is inflicted by suffering single or accumulated interferences might curtail our happiness more than the damage we might suffer when we stand firm. The trigger point and mode of opposition may be different for each individual. They depend on the specific dynamics of factors in our mental traits, the fulfillment state of our needs, and present and anticipated capacities and circumstances. Our decision whether to accommodate or re-

sist an encroachment results from an assessment in which we weigh the costs, risks, and benefits of opposing against retreating entirely or in the form of a compromise. We may conduct such a cost-benefit inquiry every time we encounter an intrusion. Yet, over time, we might draw on memorized considerations of circumstances that made us retreat or stand firm. We might distill these into more general personal principles from which we take guidance in our pursuits. Although we might not share our cost-benefit assessments or derived principles for conflict resolution in a cooperative context, these seem less dangerous to set forth. That may be because other parties are restricted by legal standards to approach or transgress certain thresholds for our retreat and because our retreat might result in negative ethical repercussions for them even if they could effect it legally. This may only leave a relatively narrow range of variables within which individuals may or must find a solution. To prevent competitive derailments, a cooperative society frames this decisional range by more commonly accepted principles of law and morality to which the parties are held by the society.

Such a framing seems necessary because a society composed of individuals with different specific and differently modulated common needs and different individual trigger points and modes of insistence and resistance seems to be prone to unpredictability and discord. Nor might we be able to rely on the ability of individuals who are involved in a dispute, including ourselves, to act considerately even if they have the same needs. The pain of being challenged in the pursuit of needs may not allow us or others to exercise the best judgment at that moment. To avoid these issues, cooperative societies have deemed it better if behavior that disturbs the demands of cooperation and is therefore unacceptable could be previewed and stipulated anticipatorily. A preexisting agreement among possible parties to a future dispute as to how such a dispute should be resolved or how it must not be resolved might be able to decrease friction and prevent conflict to a degree that allows individuals to continue a cooperative society despite their disputes. To determine the extent of common ground among them, individuals may communicate and compare their principles. If they locate pertinent diverging principles, they may negotiate these into compromises. They may then enter informal or formal agreements that stipulate binding common principles in the form of laws and ethical rules. Their common interests to make their peaceful coexistence work and to prosper from productive cooperation motivate members of a society to overcome their differences. That will not only be reflected in the formulation of general laws and ethics but also in the remaining scope of arrangements that are subject to more particular regulation.



A cooperative system may acknowledge that members may enter into supplemental agreements to conduct their more particular affairs as long as these do not violate any commonly agreed interests. To pacify the relations of participants to such more limited agreements, cooperative systems may protect and support these agreements if they comply with the order and objectives set forth in their laws. But general and specific agreements might not cover all eventualities in which parties to these agreements could be offended by another party. Generalities in which agreements may be termed to cover variations may make their application debatable. Further, parties may not anticipate that areas beyond their agreed concerns might require regulation and may not address these. An inability to forecast all variations in which an agreement could come to bear or be challenged and the unwieldy number of such variations may motivate parties to defer particularizations of their agreements. They may also not be able to agree in all areas of potential dispute and may entrust resolution to future good will buoyed by a successful relationship rather than risk current failure to agree when the relationship has not yet been established. Even if they might be able to currently agree, they may not want to burden negotiations with issues that might never become relevant. The parties may plan for the eventuality of future disputes by stipulating procedures or substantive principles for resolution that may be designed to facilitate direct settlement if they should have disagreements. Yet, where such efforts fail, agreements or the legal framework surrounding them must create procedural and substantive provisions that decide disputes.

In general as well as more particular agreements, the contracting parties may agree on authorities whose power to pass binding decisions they acknowledge in cases of a disagreement regarding the application of agreements to particular circumstances and to close deficiencies in their provisions. This constitutes a momentous step because they yield their rights to self-determination and self-realization in these matters. However, not providing for such supplemental solutions to manage all eventualities that could incite contracting parties to find offense in one another's behavior may expose their cooperative arrangement to unraveling in competitive conflict. To escape that risk, contracting parties may surrender facets of their independence to the judgment of others. But the relinquishment of independence to a decisional authority is not solely necessary to fill gaps or ambiguities in applicable principles. Even if the contracting parties could decide beforehand on all particular rules about what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behavior and on how infractions are to be cured, merely posting these might not be sufficient. Parties might still try to escape

determinations of their department. There has to be an independent authority that subjects parties to such determinations, at least upon a claim of grievance. In addition, it might not be sufficient to announce how a particular conflict of interests is to be resolved because parties might not conduct themselves accordingly. Findings might have to be enforced. A cooperative system cannot leave determinations of rights or their enforcement to parties who have an interest in a subject matter of decision or enforcement because that may involve bias and lead to competitive conflict and escalation. To arrive at a meaningful level of stability and of noninterference, the defensive backing of particular and general agreements by a cooperative system seems to be required. Its impositions must be directed not only to suppress combat among parties in dispute. It must also strive to resolve disputes and breaches in a final fashion and to make such a resolution calculable. Because a cooperative community assumes the exclusive power to redress infractions and disables the members to react to them, it is upon that community to address the members' defensive concerns to their satisfaction. To cause its enforcement actions to be acknowledged as valid replacements of individual defensive action, the community must emulate the actions individuals would take if their responses to infractions were fully considered. It must protect them and engage in retribution and correction against infringements, albeit in a circumspect, predictable, and regulated fashion. Self-help may have to be permitted in circumstances where its defensive institutions are unable to act or to act timely. Yet, to avert the escalation of individual conflicts, such permissions would have to be restricted to closely defined emergencies and strictly controlled by subsequent review and, if necessary, adjustment. To prevent self-help, but also to give members an effective protection against the most egregious or clear infractions of their rights, a society will have to provide a police force that maintains the peace.

A community that enforces its laws must also address causes of violations in a proportional manner to retain or build the constructive participation of violators as much as possible. It must strive to make them understand the illegitimate character of their acts and avert the impression in them that actions taken against them are offensive acts. By offering and reserving authoritative interpretations of agreements as well as the preclusion and remediation of violations of settled principles, a cooperative community may control breaches and keep members from reacting to actual or perceived infractions on their own. Assuming such functions may curb or stop competitive dynamics and reduce the hazard that interferences among members could weaken or disintegrate cooperative bonds. It may vitally stabilize cooperation.

Preventing and resolving undue interferences among members requires a cooperative system to determine the legitimacy of interests in contention with one another. If several conflicting interests are legitimate, it must decide to which degree each is permitted to proceed. Its reconciliation processes seem to be comparable to the workings of its members' councils of traits. It represents a higher level of reconciliation among members that builds on the reconciliation of needs within members. The interests of a cooperative system are composed from the intentions of its constituents to maximize the fulfillment of their needs. Members form and operate a council of members by communicating their demands, negotiating, and arriving at arrangements. The objectives of individual and of societal councils are analogous. In both instances, an assembly of all participating powers determines the import and fate of single participants. Both councils may be confronted with incompatible demands and have to adjudicate these incompatibilities to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of pursuits in the service of overall happiness. Both councils must endeavor to fulfill as many constructive needs as possible according to the ranking of priorities determined by the council. The objectives of both councils are to arrive at a balance of interests with the greatest overall benefit. In this function, a cooperative system has a greater purpose than merely to address conflicts of interest arising among members. Its mission is to devise and secure an optimized arrangement of its members' interests. It may therefore actively shape manners of pursuit that advance that overall benefit. Consequently, a cooperative system might act against the interests of particular members if this is justified by an overall gain of benefit for its members. It might curtail the pursuits of some members for the benefit of others. While this might promote the system's purpose, such interferences may negatively affect and possibly rescind the value of membership in such a system for some of the members.

Such overreaching may seem impossible if all members of a system, including members who stand to suffer overproportionally from the application of regulations, have to agree before a particular regulation can come into force or must at least agree on fundamental principles from which regulations and determinations are deduced. Then again, the concept of a community in which members contribute ideas about what is right and wrong and arrive at common rules is often a fiction. Most of us find ourselves in a preexisting society. We may be placed into a setting that aspires to cooperative principles. Yet chances are that nobody ever queries us for our opinion on regulations and that we do not consider ourselves capable of influencing these significantly. Rather, our consent is presumed because of our joining, failure

to leave, failure to object, or our partaking in the benefits of a cooperative system. Arguably, if we expressly agree or we are deemed to have consented to the regulations of a community, it may not matter that we subsequently disagree. Governance largely appears to be created to guard against incidents of our subsequent dissent. Our express or implied agreement to rules of cooperative governance is deemed to make us liable to suffer their restrictions. Holding otherwise would appear to permit us to take competitive advantage of the agreement and violate its mutuality of commitments among members. The principal directive of a cooperative system to act in the overall best interest may motivate it to engage in competitive activities against members. But if these have agreed or are deemed to have agreed to that directive, such demeanor over their objection may seem justifiable as defensive competition. If members' pursuits stand in the way of the common interest, they might be regarded as illegitimate interferences. However, despite any actual or implied agreement, such a position does not seem tenable because it violates the principles of mutuality and therefore of equality. These constitute the essence of a cooperative system. It is defined in part by the exchange of commitments by its participants to be bound by the same rules. One reason for entering into a cooperative scheme is the guarantee of protection against overreaching by one another. Another is the expectation that this scheme will enhance members' benefits by facilitating constructive mutuality, which also implies equality. Either way, they must be satisfied that they sufficiently benefit to warrant participation. Mutuality and equality are merely instrumental tenets of cooperation by which participants derive value.

The mission of a cooperative arrangement to preserve the peace among its members and to advance meeting their needs may be challenged where interests of members differ so much that they negatively affect cooperation and may lead to trouble. In managing incompatible interests, a cooperative community has two principal choices. First, it can try to suppress one or more of such interests partly or entirely to engineer an overall best result. To the extent this imposes differently on members, the system would have to compensate overproportionally damaged members to achieve an equal treatment. The resources for such compensation would have to be extracted from those who overproportionally benefit from the regulations. Attributions and reattributions may give rise to defensive competition from all affected participants against the system and to continued competitive friction among incompatible members. These adversities may undermine the system's ability to forestall a mutual overreaching and to benefit its members' pursuits. Because these efforts may not resolve underlying conflicts of

interests, a community must determine whether incurring these problems is warranted by keeping the system inclusive. Hence, the second choice is the separation of incompatible members. If dissent is pervasive, this might mean dissolution of the cooperative system. If a community can be preserved, it might benefit from discharging members whose interests hinder its optimization. Such measures might reduce conflict and increase the utility of pursuit for remaining members.

A cooperative system is eminently proficient in administering harmonic relationships among essentially identical individuals. To the extent fundamental priorities and the dynamics for circulatory priorities are similar among its members, it can assist in their pursuit. It can offer structures and processes, regulations and implementations that optimize the meaningful pursuit of these needs consistent with shared concepts of priority. Its regulations may leave room for idiosyncratic needs that do materially affect the interrelation of existential needs. It may acknowledge, support, and protect the right of members to pursue idiosyncratic needs within equal spheres of liberty. Yet a cooperative system can only engender a reconciliation among its participants successfully if it can obtain universal agreement from them on matters that delineate the equal spheres of their coexistence. That may involve more than the acknowledgment of inviolate space as a unilateral ideal. Its boundaries may frequently have to be defined as common boundaries of compromise. They may overlay and may vary because of particular circumstances or their constellations. Different ideas by members of a society about where these boundaries lie and how they are to be adjusted may render it impossible for them to arrive at a comprehensive agreement regarding their commonwealth. To enable a satisfactory level of such a commonwealth, its members must agree not only on how their coexistence should be organized. They must also decide on the principles of how they should cooperate in the production and in distribution of resources. That necessitates a certain level of homogeneity among the members as well. Some differences may be beneficial or may even be essential to sustain, improve, and optimize the overall fulfillment of needs in a cooperative system. But to the extent particularities do not benefit a cooperative system or are not acknowledged as falling within a protected idiosyncratic area, they detract from the cooperative potential of a system. To have a successful, and even more to arrive at an optimized, society, it then appears to be necessary that members can identify with one another's viewpoints and principles of pursuit. Members must therefore be able to select or create communities of individuals whose needs are sufficiently compatible, and they must be able to avoid and deselect associations with individuals who

are not sufficiently compatible with their pursuits. The persistent dissent among participants about what objectives should be cooperatively pursued, how they should be pursued, and where their mutual limits lie can give rise to an enduring productive stalemate and to various levels of conflict that can destabilize and destroy a cooperative system. If a cooperative system does not support and protect the interests of members as much as it could if some of its members would organize separately, its dissociation of incompatible individuals appears legitimate. The inclusion of participants who would depress the overall capacity of a cooperative system to produce happiness would result in a competitive imposition on participants who could fare better without them. The pressure on disagreeing members to change or adapt their behavior and the defense by these members against such impositions threaten to further impair the system. Conversely, individuals who are placed in a system that disagrees with them seem justified to deem the system's divergences and impositions that depress their ability to find happiness to be competitive as well. They would therefore have a right to dissociate themselves. The rights to fulfillment resulting from individuals' needs dictate that they must be free to participate in associations to optimize their happiness. Their cooperative needs also dictate that they must be able to associate free of the membership of individuals who would damage the fulfillment of such or other needs.

Members on both sides of a possible dissociation would have to weigh the damage of leaving an association intact against the damage that dissociation causes for them, including the possible exacerbation of conflict upon dissociation. Dissociation may cause damage because it severs cooperative relationships and may leave participants with deficiencies that might be irreplaceable or only replaceable under sacrifice and investment of resources. It may therefore generate defensive reactions. It may additionally escalate the potential of conflict because both sides may attempt to preserve or retain resources that the other claims due to their previously shared character. Because the transition from a situation of shared resources to segregated attributions may be fraught with ineffectiveness and inefficiency, dissociation may be considered as a choice that is to be avoided. Similarly, a resignation of interests in a continuing association is likely to be viewed by both sides as an inferior solution. They might prefer compromise if the resulting relationship provides them with adequate benefit compared to its absence. They may be willing to adjust some aspects of their pursuits to find an overall benefit of fulfillment in a social context. Such considerations do not only affect us if we are members of a system. They may also weigh on us if we should have a choice of entering into a system.

The inherent requirements of some of our needs and the effectiveness and efficiency advantages that mutuality promises for other needs may make remaining alone an unattractive substitute to membership in a well-managed cooperative community. But even the best-managed cooperative system may be unable to provide what we wish to derive from it because it must reconcile the needs of multiple individuals with dissimilar demands. While a cooperative system may be the best possible organizational selection for many of our pursuits, it is imperfect as long as our needs and wishes are not harmonizing with those of others on their own account. Such a state seems impossible to achieve because the presence and activities of others appear to necessarily impose boundaries on our pursuits in some respects even if they enhance others. This might remind us of the reconciliation conditions applicable to most of the needs within ourselves. We may be met with similar inevitabilities in our reconciliation efforts with other individuals to the extent we cannot exist or cannot exist as well without them. Still, there are significant differences. Individual traits do not have the option to dissociate, and an individual council of traits may not have the option to detach traits. These differences are frequently obscured. Although a separation by and of individuals may in general seem to us more feasible, the reality of cooperative communities may often stand in the way. Individual members may not have any better alternatives available. Further, attachments to members and practical concerns of conducting a dissociation without competitive upheaval and negative consequences that rival or exceed benefits may place dissociation as a remedy whose utility may be limited to resolve extreme incompatibilities. This may result in the enduring association of dissonant members in many cooperative societies. Because of such continuity, the interaction of incompatible needs by a council of traits and of incompatible members by a council of members might be similar. Only, members of an association have the fundamental right to have their fundamental rights fulfilled that entitles them to dissociate or to have others dissociated if an association does not adequately fulfill their needs. Their function is not to serve the association. The reverse is true. To prevent illegitimate infringements on other members' rights, all members are obligated to consent to and enable one another's dissociation.

Understanding the right of dissociation and what it involves requires deeper consideration of the negotiated agreement character of a voluntary association. If mutually agreed conventions comport with the wishes of individuals who are subjected to them, they merely serve as expressions of their will and as operation manuals for implementing and maintaining what the participants want. Yet aspirations that

are recorded in conventions may often not reflect the ideal pursuits of participants. Instead, they may constitute compromises that take away from participants' pursuits in an exchange for securing benefits. Many agreements are entered to ease tension among the participants rather than for the pursuit of constructive objectives. They grant participants results they deem preferable to conflict. But agreements for purposes of cooperative production also usually contain compromises. In either case, the participants give up one thing to obtain another. Agreements memorialize compromised manners of pursuit. Their exchange nature implies a requirement of binding participants to their assertions. Each participant commits to act cooperatively because all other participants agree to such performance as well. A violation of the agreement extinguishes that contingency. It further constitutes an offensive competitive act. To uphold the mutual commitments of agreements, these are typically liable to enforcement under stipulated or implied terms. The possibility of enforcement is conceived to keep participants compliant even if their intent changes. Without enforcement, agreements would be mere nonbinding suggestions that parties could abandon at will. To avoid that outcome, agreements must obtain the authority of laws in a society even if their applicability might be limited to only parts of it.

The right to enforcement seems to take precedence over a right to dissociation. To encourage the establishment of cooperative agreements, their participants must be secured against violations. Where a party has already fulfilled its side of the bargain, counterparts must be held to either complete their performance according to the agreement or, where that is not possible, to place the party that has provided value in a situation as if the exchange had been completed. It might seem that even if no value has been received yet, a party that does not perform its part must be held liable in this way, whereby the nonbreaching party would either perform its part or take a deduction of the performance it would have had to render. A breaching participant cannot leave counterparts that have performed or are prepared to implement their part without proper recourse. The underlying reason for recourse in both cases is that parties rely in their pursuits on the performance by other parties founded on such parties' promises and have a right to rely on these promises because they have complied or are prepared to comply. However, while reliance damage must be remedied, parties to agreements must retain their right to dissociate. Unless their violation would cause damage of a kind that could not be compensated or damage that they could not compensate, they must have the right to not go forward with their fulfillment obligations. The justification for such a proposition is based on the participants' fundamental right to pur-



sue their needs to the greatest possible extent. Although that right is inherent in these needs and their corresponding rights, it can also be represented as a fundamental right to self-realization. That right is vitally assisted by our fundamental right to self-determination. Because these rights cannot be fully developed without a right to free association and dissociation, such a right is fundamental as well. The threat and actuality of nonassociation or dissociation might appear competitive because they can deprive other participants of the benefits of cooperation. Nevertheless, relationships with individuals cannot be described in terms of access or property rights. Because cooperative ventures are instruments of individual pursuits, participants have a right to escape competitive impositions of such ventures on their pursuits. The priority of fundamental rights precludes the subjection of others against their will. Such subjection is not even legitimate if parties once agreed to terms entitling others to rely on their continued participation, provided they compensate the damage caused by such reliance.

Under the standard of reliance damage, a breaching party can only be held liable to the extent relying on performance has disadvantaged the nonbreaching party. To the extent the nonbreaching party has already performed, its reliance has entirely matured and warrants compensation. But reliance as the reason for obligating parties under an agreement loses legitimacy where nonbreaching parties receive definitive notice that performance will not be forthcoming and they can subsequently avoid damage by taking alternate courses of action. If a nonbreaching party can engage in activities upon a breach that would place it in a position it would occupy if the breach had not happened, or to the extent it can approximate such a state, a breaching party is not liable. The only exception is liability for the cost of the nonbreaching party to reach or approach such a state. To be entitled to compensation, a nonbreaching party has to put forth prudent efforts to reduce its damage upon breach. An escape of breaching parties from liability appears least likely in contexts that require cooperative activity to address immediate needs. It appears more probable if the parties engage in a continuing relationship and arrangements can be made to transition that relationship if it should fail into alternative provisioning.

The balancing of the right to rely against the right to dissociate involves a cost-benefit assessment. We are only entitled to go forward with a dissociation if we can compensate the damage it causes. Apart from that restriction, it is only beneficial to proceed with dissociation if alternative arrangements remain sufficiently superior after we subtract the damage dissociation causes to us and others. Our assessment may turn us against a dissociation. But the repercussions of not being

able to dissociate due to circumstances that do not allow dissociation or that remove its benefits reach further than a low effectiveness or efficiency of associations in which we would continue. The deviation of interests in parties who are held to a cooperative scheme by the threat of repercussions produces a potential for competitive conflict. The antagonists might be those who seek to implement or preserve cooperation and those who would rather seek a different kind of or no cooperation, or participants who are also trapped in an arrangement without a permitted and practicable alternative. These situations in which members become competitive adversaries are not compatible with the idea of cooperation as a mutual service for the advancement of all participants. By enforcing cooperation, a cooperative undertaking would be transformed into an instrument of competitive oppression, even if this oppression is defensive in its preservation of participants' rights to rely on promises. The accumulation of damage from a compelled continuation of an arrangement may exceed the damage caused by separation, particularly if participants act competitively against one another. Parties cannot be permitted to obtain dispensation from their obligations by disruptive behavior. Such a reaction to a ban or the nonfeasibility of dissociation constitutes a violation of the agreement. It gives rise to compensatory claims, or claims for performance where a failure to perform is not compensable by its nature or the breaching party is unable to compensate it. To the extent a party breaches an agreement without immediate compensation capacity and fails to give the promised performance, compensation claims would continue until they are satisfied. A culpable failure to satisfy compensation claims as well as a failure to comply with performance obligations would have to be punished by a society to preserve the right of reliance in agreements.

While a right of dissociation from agreements may then prevail, the potential repercussions from a dissociation have to be considered before individuals commit to agreements. It appears advisable to sidestep agreements that we or other parties are susceptible to violate because the ensuing separation involves distress and damage even under the best conditions. Moreover, we must particularly avoid agreements from which we or others could not or not neatly dissociate. Although it might appear feasible sometimes to not bind ourselves unless we are certain that all participants will perform their promises, we often may have to incur some risk to advance ourselves. Also, there may be no viable or only less appealing alternatives to entering into or maintaining agreements with injurious effects or potentials. Further, there may be areas where workable alternatives are available but burdens of dissociation are so high that it loses most or all of its advantages.

Smaller groups and individual members in partitions are usually more likely to experience the brunt of dissociation. Their cooperative connections are usually more severely affected and may not or not immediately be replaceable. The complete change and possibly unfamiliarity of their human and nonhuman environment may encumber them with extraordinary insecurities and challenges of transition. Dissociation might even expose them to existential threats. They may not be able to survive, let alone thrive in segregation. Although they may not develop sufficient satisfaction from a common endeavor, their dissociation may impose a greater damage on them than remaining in it. Memberships in various personal and tribal contexts may be particularly difficult to lose because of emotional bonds and their protective and supportive mutuality. Even if dissociating members can cope with such losses, they might be overproportionally compelled or motivated to go along within a common venture until they can perceive an alternative that can sufficiently compensate for their disproportionate pain of dissociation to facilitate an overall superior outcome. That alternative, however, might never arrive. Generally, the fallout of dissociation may be easier to endure by larger resulting groups because their hardships can be socialized and benefits of cooperation among the remaining members continue. Then again, the benefits of such remaining associations may diminish as the number or the size of dissociations increases. Moreover, particular participants or sets of participants might hold crucial ingredients for an association's success or existence. Their separation might wreak overproportional hardships on the remaining members. Even where such conditions do not apply, members in larger remaining groups may go through similar emotional considerations as smaller partitions or as individuals. They may also be worried about the greater exposure of departing individuals and factions to the harm that may result from a dissociation. These concerns may not permit a community to exclude disagreeing individuals despite their dissent.

For participants in an association that are less or not concerned about detriments of dissociation for them or for others, dissociation or its threat may be a powerful instrument of competitive coercion to extort compliance by weaker or more scrupulous participants with their demands. Even where that is not the case, such weaker or more scrupulous parties may on their own accord grant concessions to maintain coherence because of their fears that less distressed individuals might leave or force them to leave. This might make the right to dissociation to pursue individual objectives a theoretical construct for many members. To curb competitive designs or effects in associations and dissociations and maintain the voluntary character of members' determina-

tions about participation as much as possible, the burdens of dissociation must be minimized. This is in the interest of all noncompetitive parties to enable them to move on to settings that permit them to increase their happiness. The fundamental existential equality of individuals demands that the consequences of dissociation must be equally divided among them, subject to reliance compensation, to prevent the illegal punishment of parties that exercise their right of dissociation or are subjected to its exercise. In addition to procedures that might provide for an equal division and attribution of benefits and detriments of separation that are immediately ascertainable at separation, equalization must also include hardships in the aftermath. Even if parties to a dissociation lose the right to partake in one another's benefits that develop subsequent to the dissociation, they are obligated to continue to support one another regarding subjects within the scope of their former agreement to equalize the negative consequences of dissociation. Continued responsibility for damage equalization motivates all participants to lower the damage to one another at all stages of dissociation. Although some damaging results that are intrinsic to dissociation cannot be avoided, the parties are encouraged to cooperate in minimizing these and to prevent dissociation through prior cooperation.

Cooperation in a dissociation may greatly diminish the burdens of separation by equalizing them among involved parties. But it might not be able to forestall a differentiation of fortunes due to the fact that the association is not continuing. While some parties may move on to better circumstances, others might not be able to maintain or regain satisfaction at levels that they enjoyed during an association. Equalizing that loss may not be possible because their personal involvement might be an essential ingredient for satisfaction. Beyond that, the parties' freedom to associate dictates limits to their responsibility for one another's aftermath. Equalization obligations continue the concept of compensation of reliance damage in their scope and duration and are limited by its concept. Hence, if an agreement is limited in its terms or cancelable at any time, no breach and no reliance due to such events can exist. If parties breached the terms of the association whether by dissociation or otherwise, they would not be entitled to assistance in the aftermath, but might be obligated to grant such assistance unless the other side breached as well. Parties entitled to assistance also have a duty to reduce the damage they incur in the aftermath of a breach. Although these general rules would have to apply to any dissociation, members entering into an agreement might further curtail intentional and unintentional competitive effects in dissociation. They might incorporate in the agreement that arranges an association specific terms

of severance that minimize damage to all members and evenly attribute positive and negative effects. They might provide procedures for the severance of individuals and groups as well as for the eventuality that all members of a system seek to dissociate. While the equality of parties prohibits them from unequal attributions in dissociation, they may regulate their obligations by stipulating to the practical terms of dissociation. They might also define dissociation by defining the scope and the duration of their association. In relationships of comprehensive mutuality, reliance is by definition wide-ranging and is frequently open-ended, and equalization obligations carry on in a commensurate scope and duration. But even here, obligations must be limited by the capacity of a dissociated party to recover from the dissociation.

The possibilities of support obligations and adversities that may arise from continuing involvement with parties after dissociation may motivate parties that consider themselves at risk of being negatively affected by such circumstances to be wary of associations unless they are closely defined and expressly agreed. Even if this may not be possible on a societal level, the chances for sustainable cooperation there appear supported by ranges of possible agreement regarding common needs and related fundamental rights. If these are fully developed, derivative rules can state what is necessary to implement members' fundamental rights in association and dissociation. These rights and derivative rules apply regardless of their acknowledgment and cannot be validly altered in their essence. As a result, large expanses of matters seem to be exempted from regulation by agreement. Agreements seem to be relegated to addressing manners of pursuit that are not in contravention of reconciled fundamental rights. They might be regarded as mere restatements. Still, they might carry an important function in clarifying and defending fundamental rights and their collective reconciliation. Further, the correlation of fundamental rights might be so complicated in their application that agreements on them and derivative law may remain necessary or helpful to express them and thereby provide guidance for the coexistence and constructive cooperation of members in a cooperative system. Finally, it may be difficult for members to derive reconciled attitudes and specific applications from fundamental laws because of their individual positions and their subjective modifications of common needs. To enable a cooperative society, it may thus be obligatory that members define the scope and articulation of fundamental rights and the consequences of their violation.

A theoretical agreement concerning fundamental principles derived from the commonality of our needs may appear achievable. But reaching or maintaining an agreement on the practical application of

these principles may be difficult because of differences in personal or environmental circumstances. Even if a general accord regarding fundamental principles existed, significant differences about their relative weight and priority as well as their scope and articulation may remain. These differences may make the creation and maintenance of a comprehensive commonwealth a challenge. By insisting on an exaggerated homogeneity, a cooperative system may not be able to obtain or maintain a sufficient membership to transact its functions. Members might voluntarily enter into or continue in associations that include friction. They might lower requirements for harmony if the benefits derived in cooperation surpass the damage caused by dissension or if they see no better alternative. They might further rely on coercive effects of agreements and difficulties of change and dissociation to keep other members committed even if the benefits these derive do not warrant their continuing involvement. The management of friction in such a setting may invite competitive interests. Nonharmonized systems may permit them to unite a variety of victims under their rule and to exercise that rule through a strong governmental system that might be established to control dissent. But even without such usurpation, nonharmonized systems that rely on coercion to control disharmony become competitive. Apart from their coercive conditions, they may not offer the best solutions for their members' needs. The compromises they exact may detract from members' potential to maximize their happiness.

Entering or remaining in a cooperative enterprise only because its benefits reduce or exceed sacrifices may not afford members with a standard of fulfillment that they might describe as happy. Then again, dissent and resulting friction may follow us regardless of whether we succeed in finding or forming associations that are more favorable to our preferences of organization. Even if we find extensive congruence of views among the members concerning fundamental rights and their application, this may still not provide a sufficient basis to prevent different views. We may underestimate the difficulty of finding reconciliation even among closely aligned members of a cooperative endeavor. Some deficiencies in collective reconciliation may be due to a lack of individual reconciliation. Members may not have progressed to a state where their council of traits would conclusively determine that collective reconciliation serves the optimization of their needs. They might therefore hold adverse positions on their own behalf even if their objectives are identical. If they have advanced in the collective reconciliation of their needs, their insight may not have attained full coverage of all matters and all modes in which it can benefit their needs. Even if they have accomplished total insight, competitive impulses might still

penetrate their resolve. Moreover, finding acceptable reconciled solutions may still be complicated among members with advanced reconciliatory insight because they may approach reconciliation from positions that are partly dissimilar. The internal and external circumstances to which their needs relate may continue to create differences that may sway their positions. Differences in capacity, fulfillment status of needs, and availability of means may cause them to invoke fundamental rights with different urgencies, in different constellations, and with different particularizations. Additionally, fundamental needs that define their perceptions of rights remain subject to idiosyncratic particularizations that to the carriers of these may appear identical with their common roots or inseparable from them. In the absence of a comprehensive control by collective reconciliation in individuals, these differences make it unlikely that fundamental laws, derivative laws, specific applications, or more specialized agreements are equally acceptable to all members at any given time. Their internal and external particularities may continue to dispose members differently in defining the exercise and infringement of fundamental rights and therefore with regard to the demarcation between the permissible and impermissible.

Among similarly disposed individuals, discrepancies may regularly pertain to minor issues of interpretation. Members of a relatively homogeneous association may therefore succeed in crafting compromises or zones of autonomy that accommodate their differences while also preserving meaningful cooperation. However, as individual dispositions differ more, the resulting rifts among less compatible individuals are bound to become more difficult to bridge. It may not be possible to find practicable compromises or autonomous subdivisions that still enable useful cooperation. In such conditions, individuals or factions that possess greater power may attempt to use it to install their views as law. Differences between them and other members may make the equal application of such laws appear to be inequitable or may induce them to be viewed with different appreciation. But even if equitable compromises can be found, parties may be dissatisfied with their effects. It might not matter to them that other participants are equally constrained in their pursuits. Their impression that they are subjected to competitive impositions by a cooperative arrangement may prompt participants to seek defenses. They might resort to manipulations and subterfuges to evade its application or openly reject it in parts or completely. The temptation to expand maneuvering space under cooperative conventions or determinations arises whenever they curb or allow the infringement of pursuits. Because a cooperative arrangement contains by definition mutual impositions, there may be a persistent un-

dercurrent by members to subvert, change, or even overturn its conventions and determinations in their favor. Even if members agreed to curtail their pursuits and regardless of what the incentives for such an agreement might have been, the compromised interests that are being limited by a cooperative arrangement continue to exist. Compromised needs will not cease unless they are satisfied. Similar to how they continue to militate against the collective insight of needs in an individual council of traits, they will try to motivate an individual to act in their interest and against collective order if better judgment fails to restrict them. Members might be drawn to oppose conventions to which they always objected and did only agree because the benefits of the agreement would not have been available had they maintained that opposition at the time. Circumstances may have changed to where the relative strength of participants has changed. Even if an agreement fairly reflects compromises that participants consider to be overall justifiable at the time the agreement is entered, their evaluation may change. They may realize that an agreement never had the value they ascribed to it or an acceptable approximation. Further, areas of former agreement may become subjects of discord as participants' circumstances, insights, and needs evolve or as the adversity of a regulation emerges. Hence, even if participants support compromises when an agreement is entered, no agreement can ever be regarded as final. Competitive as well as legitimate motivations may motivate participants to dissent.

If discrepancies become too large to warrant continuation of an association, members may resolve that they can better attend to their happiness on their own, in another association, or in the same association upon the dissociation of other individuals they deem detrimental. On the other hand, the advantages of association or the disadvantages of dissociation may also motivate members to adjust terms of the association more to their liking. This creates an environment where cooperative order is challenged. That may be disquieting from the viewpoint of collective coherence but does not make such activities necessarily illegitimate. After all, cooperative organization is an instrument to advance the pursuit of participants' needs. Efforts to promote their position therefore seem to be generally valid. A cooperative arrangement might have to defend itself against offensive competition in rejection of cooperation and the mutuality it implies. However, in cases where members remain or could be motivated to become constructive members of the association they disturb, an association might benefit from offering a mechanism to explore and facilitate accommodations. Both dissenting members and members who would have to make concessions in an alteration may engage in cost-benefit assessments that



compare the conditions of continuing an association to severing it. In these assessments, they may have to incorporate the effects of changes regarding the accommodation of multiple parties and the possibility that revision requests might be incompatible. Because a change of an association's stipulations can only be legitimate if all members agree, agreements may prove to be inflexible, particularly if they have many members. Still, the possibility that members might be sufficiently unhappy to leave or to cause continuing problems by their objection and lack of cooperation might move other members to be open to changes. Permitting members to exert such pressure seems problematic because it seems to sanction competitive practices. On the other hand, it would be illegitimate to defend against threats of dissociation if their actualization is permissible. If dissociation is a fundamental right, the threat of dissociation seems to be included in this right. Similar to the offering of alternative products or the adjustment of prices to demand, the threat and actualization of dissociation are not competitive unless they involve the manipulation of another party's position. Yet, due to the preexisting relationship, the threat or actualization of ending that relationship necessarily interferes with the other members' positions. Although it is therefore possible that dissociations are pursued to exclude or exploit, such objectives would be thwarted by reliance obligations. It may not seem proper that threats of conduct that would subject a member to compensation obligations should leave a threatening member without liability. Other members might change their position to their detriment based on such threats. Only, the expression of such threats will have to be permissible without retaliation to permit members to address grievances short of having to face the potentially worse consequences that dissociation might entail. The most effective remedy against unjustified threats of dissociation appears to be that members weigh the consequences of their materialization, prepare for that event, and, if they are unwilling to accommodate such threats, to confront their authors with the repercussions of their actualization.

But we may be wrong if we assume that threats of dissociation must all be made for competitive purposes. They may also fulfill salutary functions for the relationship among members. They may incentivize members to reconcile unreconciled needs and to transform needs that stand in the way of reconciliation. They may further induce modifications and supplementation of the stipulated terms that may be required to maintain or improve cooperation in the original setting or to adjust the agreement to different circumstances, including developed needs and positions of participants. If participants reject such modifications and hold on to stipulated permanence, they run the risk of be-

ing passed by events and of having their cooperative contributions become obsolete or hindering the pursuits of other participants. As a result, the agreements they seek to uphold may be breached, terminated, or not renewed. The coherence and related effectiveness and efficiency of a cooperative grouping may then require a change of terms. But even reasonable change requests may meet with opposition. Dissent and possible or actual problems resulting from a denial of changes as well as the express and indirect threat of dissociation by dissenters might prompt remaining members whose position might be negatively affected by changes to curb cooperation or to threaten or pursue the expulsion of dissenters. Depending on the balance of power in an association, one or the other side may sufficiently intimidate the other to impose demands for continuity or change. The prospective consequences of differences may frighten some or even all parties. This may prompt members who desire change to be reluctant and tentative in voicing demands and to suffer inequitable terms. It may also prompt other members to give in to change demands that inequitably infringe on their interests. Such imbalances give rise to continued unhappiness that may build and may ultimately cause or contribute to dissociation even though they originated from attempts to avoid that result.

Accordingly, dissociation may have a resolving or a chilling effect on the ability of cooperative associations to adjust and to find arrangements that might preserve or enhance their benefits. Considering the inevitable injuries from dissociation and the risk that demands for change may destabilize a cooperative scheme, a deliberate measure of reluctance to upset current correlations may be a healthy stabilizing force. On the other hand, paralyzing effects that would hinder adjustments to arrangements that could optimize their effectiveness and efficiency must be curtailed. To minimize the chilling effect of dissociation, associations will have to look for and find avenues to voice and discuss requests for change without an immediate threat of triggering dissociation fears. Demands for change and their discussion give participants opportunities to gain clarity about their positions, functions, relationships, obstacles, and imbalances and to confirm or adjust their arrangement commensurate with their insights. They grant the parties an opportunity to reflect and reconcile their positions more completely than the stipulations of the current agreement. They permit participants to conduct and maintain the equitable optimization of mutuality implied in any cooperative arrangement. They indicate whether and to which extent prevailing conventions or decisions are still accepted. The discussion of suggestions facilitates change if members' positions have developed or must change to increase, or counteract the waning

of, effectiveness or efficiency in their agreement. They give the parties opportunities to formulate arrangements that prevent dissociation. If discussions describe irreconcilable differences, the insight and resolve to dissociate they help to create may shorten exposure to disharmony whose negative consequences may exceed those of dissociation. They may further benefit members by regulating the dissociation process in ways that minimize damage. Discussions between the members may not only address change requests. They also can fulfill a vital function in preventing and bringing resolution to violations of an agreement. If participants deem the stance of other participants to be potentially or actually in violation, they may call their attention to that fact in an attempt to forestall or correct and remedy their approaches. If that does not happen, aggrieved parties might proceed under the defensive avenues provided under their agreement or according to the general legal background of their system and, if they do not succeed to resolve the problem, part ways with offending members. As disconcerting as some of the consequences of discussions might be, their clarification of positions through the communication of grievances, the consideration of whether they are warranted, and the formulation of conclusions to accommodate, remedy, or separate fulfill essential functions. They allow cooperative forces to maintain and strengthen cooperation and weed out competitive tendencies and elements among one another.

However, the procedures that are fundamental to a cooperative organization do not appear to favor change because each member has the right to participate. That may be particularly a problem in the adjustment of larger associations. The functions of modifying or amending an agreement reprise those of deciding its initial arrangement. The requisite that parties must have actually or impliedly consented to an agreement to be bound by it appears to command that all its participants must consent to its modification or amendment. Because agreed terms only become relevant in their application, the consent of the entirety of an agreement's participants would seem to be required for all affairs of an association. An exception would be that individuals under consideration for dissociation or other negative treatment would have to be excluded from participating to preserve the effectiveness of such measures. If members delegate some rule making and decisions, their agents have to remain responsible to and depend on the consent of all members regarding their appointment and their continued tenure. To institute an agency that remains consistent with the members' wishes, the entirety of members has to set forth guiding substantive and procedural principles and assume supervision. Additionally, to ensure uncontroversial application of the community's directions, all members,

or in cases where negative treatment of members is at stake all members who are not then at risk for it, would have to retain the power to review and change pronouncements by less than total member assent. Hence, despite delegation, the members would remain in charge.

Notwithstanding its logic, the principle of required consent by all parties might not be followed through if a larger community is involved in the determination of obligations and rights under an agreement, its enforcement, its supplementation, or its adjustment. Insisting on the agreement by all members to all aspects of legal order may appear to be unwieldy regarding agreements that include more than a few parties. Arguably, it renders the organization and maintenance of a common undertaking unmanageable because minorities could make decisions impossible or because the pressure to find unanimous consent might lead to impositions and controversies that might easily escalate. Members may therefore decide to forgo the intractable process of reconciling all participants' opinions. They may institute decision-making agencies that are only indirectly dependent on them and thus subject them as the governed to some extent. They may seek to moderate this dependence by reserving some rights to govern directly and by preserving some rights to elect and recall agents. To prevent unanimity difficulties in the selection of agents and in direct governance, the members may reach an agreement to resolve differences through a restrained, formalized contest that is decided by majority affirmation. They may stipulate that a simple or a qualified majority of members or their delegates determines the laws and actions of a community.

Such a resolution mechanism may appear legitimate because a majority of support represents more legitimacy. Further, permitting a majority to set rules and to make decisions under them emulates what would likely occur in the event of a determination by forcible contest. It serves the function of making open competitive conflict in which a majority has a better chance of winning obsolete while preserving resources and the likely outcome of a conflict. These justifications for a majority rule may appear to improve if we insist on greater majorities. Still, we have to question whether this affords a majority, including an overwhelming majority, the legitimization to ignore the requirements for happiness of a minority, even a very small minority. Such a proposition would place any participant at risk to have any pursuit curtailed or eliminated if it is perceived to be contrary to the interests of a majority. Permitting majority rule in the pursuit of happiness has the potential of suppressing and eliminating any except the most widespread particularities in the pursuit of happiness. It may negatively impact or foreclose significant portions of pursuits from which we draw satisfac-

tion. Although we might be part of the majority in opposition to many positions that we do not share and might often prevail under its help, our positions may be victims of majority rule at other times. It seems that few individuals would be safe from attempts to abridge particularities in their endeavors. Besides that, majority rule may infringe on common interests in favor of the common interests of the majority. It may override fundamental rights of a minority to the extent these impede the interests of the majority. Hence, determining legitimacy of a legal order based on numerical preponderance seems shortsighted.

Such a rule threatens to give erroneous cooperative legitimacy to competitive courses of action. Its only discouraging requirement for competitive interests might be that they have to obtain sufficient support to build a majority. Yet, considering the manipulative prowess of competitive interests, this may be a hurdle that such interests are regularly capable of taking in a nominally cooperative society. Arguably, a majority rule might remain benign and not give way to competitive attitudes. But it is difficult to see how that could be maintained. Majority rule seems to be inherently competitive because it authorizes a majority to impose its pursuits over the objections of a minority. Majority rule introduces competitive principles into a cooperative arrangement because it overrides the requirement of a cooperative compromise. It thereby damages existing mutuality, and it encumbers the potential of mutuality beyond association lines. It represents a vestige of strategies by which the more powerful defeat and subjugate the weaker. Majority rule may therefore be as awful as the governance by a competitive elite. But competitive abuse by majority rule may be even more difficult to abolish. Its relatively large basis of support may make competitive oppression more comprehensive in its implementation and more difficult to dislodge. Competitive majorities may also benefit because they can exercise competitive strategies under the mantle of legitimacy and protection of purportedly cooperative systems. That legitimization may allow practices to be condoned by majorities and minorities that otherwise would provoke resistance in their members. Minorities may further acquiesce because of the potential that they might be able to form alliances to achieve competitive majorities and hence become winners. Requirements of qualified majorities may create a certain degree of security from a competitive takeover. They make it more likely that the consent of individuals or of groups with disparate interests is necessary to obtain the required majority and that competitive excesses might therewith be prevented. Nevertheless, qualified majority rule continues to carry the risk that such a majority may act competitively against a minority of interests that are not represented in governance.

Thus, majority vote has no place in a cooperative community. It institutionalizes the disadvantaging of minorities if they cannot assemble associations that situate them within a majority. This institutionalized disadvantaging may challenge the rationale of minorities to cooperate or to remain participants in a cooperative system. If dissociation is not a viable option, their defense against their competitive subjection summons the typical detriments of a competitive system. If we desire to continue living peacefully with individuals who disagree with us, we have to be considerate of the interests of minorities. That also applies if we desire our relationships with them to be productive. We may need the willingness of those in a minority to cooperate with us or to indulge us and not to exclude us or take advantage of us when we will be in a minority or otherwise in a weakened position. We may need them to cooperatively establish or maintain pursuits with us beyond the issues where our interests conflict. But the offense of imposing a majority's program on a minority threatens to thwart not merely present but also future cooperation. Therefore, respecting and assisting the interests of minorities advances the interests of majorities.

Yet, even if majorities impose their power in ways that reduce the damage to minorities, a decisional system based on majorities still competitively disadvantages minorities because it primarily focuses on the benefit of majorities and excludes minorities from participating in decisions in which they have a stake. To act fully cooperatively, members must abandon the idea that winning the power of decision over other members constitutes a cooperative act. But we may resist the inclusion of other interests even if we favor reconciliation. We may have difficulties in compromising with pursuits that we consider as less important, frivolous, illegitimate, or unhelpful. To make us willing to cooperate with others and to make concessions to their needs and pursuits, we may have to be convinced that their interests are compatible with ours. We may demand that their needs and the means sought in their pursuit are sound in our estimation. To conclude in this way, we may have to be able to sympathize with their needs. Further, we might have to comprehend the circumstances and available means of others. To acknowledge the legitimacy of a dissimilar point of view, we would have to be able to consider subscribing to such a view ourselves if our conditions were similar. Our assessment then depends on whether we can correlate the behavior of others with our personality and experiences. Fundamental and lasting differences in these factors make any attribution of legitimacy to viewpoints that significantly deviate from our own difficult. If we adhere to this determination of legitimacy, we may not be able to come to an arrangement with some individuals.

The sole reason for accommodation and cooperation remaining in such situations might be the threat of competitive conflict and its continuance if parties remain placed in the same setting, the specter of disorderly dissociation, or the indispensability of cooperation that makes even an orderly dissociation undesirable. These factors may be powerful reasons for some cooperation with others. However, they do not set forth a useful foundation for a comprehensive cooperative arrangement on the basis of mutuality. Although they may be effective to maintain a minimum of cooperation, they may also produce an environment in which diverging interests hold one another in check, engage in competitive struggle, and only compromise or cooperate if and as long as others pose credible threats or are indispensable. Cooperation would only be temporary because members would prepare to exclude or to exploit incompatible members and to defend against their overreaching, prepare to dissociate themselves or to dissociate others, or brace themselves against the dissociation by others. Such a setting breeds suspicion, antagonism, and impairment and fails to realize the beneficial potential of a cooperative commonwealth. It leaves incompatible divisions entrenched in their positions and holds the society of which they are parts in unproductive suspension because of their failure to resolve their conflicts of interest. If individuals only or predominantly base their propensities of association on fear or nonemotional utility, dissimilarities of individuals may be too divisive to institute or maintain comprehensive mutuality among them. Ultimately, competitive movements resulting from differences of individuals may only be contained if collective reconciliation exceeds such considerations.

To succeed, it appears necessary that a collective reconciliation incorporates emotional mutuality. Because the alienation between incompatible members may make it difficult to generate emotional satisfaction through nonemotional interaction, it may be necessary to engage empathy and the need for collective survival and thriving. These might supplant more immediate concerns of incompatibility and motivate individuals and groups to cooperate in spite of their differences. Unless extraordinary occasions flood our emotional mind with empathy for incompatible members or make us fear for them as representatives of human existence, we may not permit these emotions to supersede fundamental differences. These incompatibilities may still render a dissociation advisable. But our emotional inclusion of members who are different from us may deliver a basis for exploring whether the differences we considered unbridgeable prevail or whether a cooperative commonwealth can be established. If that is not possible, it creates an underpinning for a disengagement that minimizes mutual damages.

Incompatible individuals may be forced into remaining within the same society by consequences of dissociation that would damage them more than remaining. This may give them adequate motivation to bridge differences because the society in which they are situated offers the only opportunity to find or to create more comprehensive fulfillment through more comprehensive mutuality. If this does not sufficiently perform for them, their preparation and principles of equitable disengagement may over time permit more apposite arrangements apart from the current society. Where individuals are unable to establish a separate society into which they can transfer their affairs entirely, they might institute supplemental relationships outside the society. They might also create societal subdivisions that tend to some of their needs that cannot find satisfactory expression in their society at large. Such arrangements, however, impart a risk of aggravating existing dissonance in a society. They indicate a different identity and loyalty and might reveal remaining societal ties as contrivances of necessity that participants in such arrangements would as soon abandon. Unless the remaining members of a society are compelled to live with such a partial participation, they might insist on terminating the membership of partially disengaged members. This pressure may at times render disengagement an all-or-nothing proposition on a societal level.

In societies that manage to achieve a comprehensive reconciliation, the interchanges among members may have us draw parallels between the relationship of the resulting commonwealth to its members and the relationship between an individual to that individual's needs. We may deem proceedings among members of a commonwealth similar to the arrangements among traits within the same person because members would be unified in their objectives. A coherent cooperative system might then achieve the amalgamation of individual councils of traits to form a supreme council of members that supervises the harmony among individual needs or wishes and determines what pursuits should be cooperatively pursued and how they should be pursued. Arguably, if individuals already operate in comprehensive reconciliation, their own acumen should be sufficient. A council of members only retains a function in conditions where collective reconciliation requires supervision or reinforcement. For the time being, however, that might make it a necessary installation. To fulfill its task of coordinating cooperative behavior, a council of members must be able to impose collective preferences over those of individual members where necessary. We would have to give up sovereignty over determining our own pursuits to some extent. Even if we reserve the right to dissociate, we will have to assent to a certain governance of a society over us during our



membership. In analogy with an individual council of traits, we may permit the collective systemic mechanism to limit our behavior in the fulfillment of our needs. Such cessation of sovereignty to collective determination may appear like a logical implication of a cooperative system with a potentially divergent membership. Our agreements regarding its establishment and conduct and its existence would be illusory if we could exempt ourselves every time we would be bound contrary to our will at that time. However, because we employ our membership in a cooperative system as a means to maximize our individual happiness, we have to carefully restrict the powers of a cooperative council over us to types of incidents where cooperative administration serves the advancement of our happiness overall. Members may hence strictly define boundaries for cooperative direction, intrusion, and reattribution of resources. They may stipulate that a cooperative system must step back and can solely regulate or impose where individual pursuits including individual mutuality fail to generate an overall optimization. Even then, they may leave margins of liberty and mechanisms that allow individuals their own modalities of optimization. Even within areas of cooperation, they may choose the degree of cooperation and the cessation of individual sovereignty. They may exclude certain pursuits or aspects of pursuit from cooperative streamlining and optimization. They may maintain that particular needs or spheres of activity around certain needs or wishes stay exempted from cooperative preemption. They may eliminate complete sequences of pursuit from collective influence or preserve choices at particular junctures. They may reserve individual liberty in these areas to pursue fulfillment on their own or in cooperation with other associations of their choice. They may assert rights of individual liberties that the cooperative system must not violate, except possibly under specifically agreed exceptions. These limitations and reservations and their expression as individual rights and corresponding obligations of a cooperative system may be indispensable to stop cooperative systems from exceeding their purpose as utilities in advancing individual happiness for each member. They may also restrain effects of cooperative interaction by which some members become excluded or exploited for the benefit of other members. These rights supplement the right to dissociate in their fundamental character and their function of preserving an individual's sovereignty.

To make and keep a cooperative system desirable for individuals, the utility principle of cooperation has to be preserved in all areas where cooperative principles are permitted to apply. That would mean that the system could not disadvantage any of its members to obtain an overall desirable result. To prevent an unreasonable restriction of a

cooperative system's ability to protect and advance common interests, members may concede that the system can act in inequitable ways as long as it compensates the inequitably impacted members. The membership may sanction impositions on individual pursuits or conditions under its agreements. Moreover, it may authorize a preferential attribution of benefits. Although such a disparate treatment can be advantageous from a systemic viewpoint, it will likely represent a disadvantage from the perspective of members who are negatively affected or not equally positively affected. To preserve equal participation of members in the benefits of a cooperative system and to receive their agreement for mechanisms that can optimize overall benefit through disparate treatment, a cooperative system must equalize these disparities. Members who gain an advantage from disparate treatment would have to compensate a lesser advantage or a loss incurred by others so that resulting benefits are equal for all affected. In granting disparate treatment with compensation, we institute a way of cooperation that provides the best overall allocation of particularized means while recognizing and effecting members' fundamental equality. The equalization of gain and loss through compensation also provides a measurement for determining the overall usefulness of an imposition or preference to increase overall happiness. If it yields no overall net benefit, it is unnecessary and it constitutes an illegitimate intrusion or preference. Similar principles seem to apply if an infringement or preference is necessary to prevent or remediate damage for another member. But there is no profit in this situation that must be shared. The principle of equality demands that all members share costs of loss prevention or remediation equally and compensate one another to arrive at an equal standing. Instead of inquiring into a net benefit to justify interference, we would explore whether an overall reduction of damage occurs.

Although a compensatory mechanism empowers a cooperative system to maximize its overall benefits, activities that trigger compensation has to be applied with restrictive bias. To maximize the pursuit of members' needs in a cooperative system, the principal objective of such a system must be to leave members' pursuits undisturbed and to not interfere without a compelling reason. Even if we receive compensation, we do experience interferences with our endeavors or preferential treatment of others as competitive infringements. Living in anticipation of such infringements, being interrupted or burdened by them, and having to participate in and to be worried about related compensating procedures are impositions that might not be sufficiently compensable. To optimize individual happiness, many infringements may have to be barred even if they would convey some overall benefits and

could be compensated. A cooperative system has to confine disparate treatment of members to incidents that warrant their disturbance. It must only be allowed if the advantages clearly outweigh the injury.

All members would have to have authorized the mechanisms of dissociation of members from the cooperative system and of members' disadvantage with compensation. But activating such procedures against members demands an exception to the principle that all members must agree to activities of the cooperative system. If the dissociation or compensated disadvantage of members would require the agreement of the individuals to be dissociated or disadvantaged, these individuals would obtain a veto right over critical aspects of a cooperative system. Arguably, the cooperative unanimity requirement grants a veto right to any member in any decision. However, in these exceptions, the interests of negatively affected members and the remainder of the cooperative system may be so contrasting that a member's determination in favor of overall benefit may not be possible. The intensity of the conflict of interest inherent in such decisions might approximate situations in which members are accused of having violated the members' agreement. In that event, the proper functioning of the system requires the accused individuals to be excluded from prosecuting the transgression or devising remedies. To sustain the operability of a cooperative system, its members have to approve to be excluded from participating in these three varieties of determinations. An exception is their right to assure compliance with their rights generally as well as the procedural safeguards of procedures for dissociation, compensated disadvantage, and prosecution for violations to which the members agreed or are deemed to have agreed. But even here, they cannot be accorded a determinative participation. Such decisional exclusions carry a danger of competitive imposition by the rest of the members. Given that they might be necessary to secure the functionality of a cooperative system, this risk might have to be incurred. The interests of members subjected to such exclusions might be adequately safeguarded if a decision requires the agreement of all other members.

Because the standard of unanimity is often regarded as an obstacle for the functioning of a cooperative commonwealth, many systems that claim to be cooperative change this principle to permit majorities or selected groups or individuals to make governing decisions. That affords these authorities with the potential to use their power for competitive objectives or with competitive results under the apparent legitimization of preceding consent. If such authorities become competitive, cooperative systems end. In their stead, new competitive systems arise in which governing elites victimize members. These groups

may behave similar to a tribe that acts competitively toward the outside. Only, their competitive strategies concentrate on the balance of the members that are captive to the system. Such an arrangement may become indistinguishable from a competitive system that is ruled by a group of competitors. The only discrepancy might be historical in that the power leading to competitive oppression was granted by cooperative members. A cooperative system may not only enter such a state if it falls victim to a competitive conspiracy by its governing members. It might also be converted by its insistence to include individuals into a commonwealth or to keep members within its fold without accommodating their rights. Concerns regarding coherence may arise because a cooperative system may have obtained the accession of members under false pretenses or against their will, or by manipulating or forcing the compliance of members who were born into the system and disagree with its structures or processes. They may also accrue if members who once assented to its structures and processes have reformed their stance or if the system has changed cooperative requirements beyond its authorization or takes advantage of ambiguities and violates underlying cooperative principles. If members engage in offensive competition, their suppression and punishment may be justifiable to some extent. But the system might not distinguish such individuals from those who turn competitive in a justifiable defensive reaction against the violation of their rights. In a disingenuous or a misguided genuine claim to represent cooperative virtues, it may fight all opposition.

Such a system may force disagreeing members to sacrifice their happiness for the overall wellbeing of a system whose purposes are determined by and benefit members who support its structures and processes. These determining powers might impose their competitive designs by coercion or by manipulation. But not all pressures leading to compliance may be imposed. They may be self-generated by members. The comparative advantages of a cooperative system, the uncertainty of alternatives, and habit may convince members to conform on their own accord. They may further sense a strong attachment to particular members, the community, or the surrounding setting. Emotions based on mutuality, identification, and their need to serve the collective survival and thriving may compel them to serve a community, its conventions or its ethnic, cultural, geographic, or religious distinctiveness. In spite of suffering disadvantages, members may not be inclined to forsake these associations or jeopardize them in a bid to change the system. While such attitudes may grow independently, they may also be inculcated or fostered by competitive interests that benefit from keeping members loyal to settings that detract from their happiness.

But even if competitive forces do not corrupt a cooperative system, it may not function properly. It may not institute proper or complete rules or structures and procedures for their implementation. Nor may it permit proper mechanisms for the resolution of shortcomings. The mechanisms of compensated disadvantage, protection, correction, retribution against violations, requests for change, and dissociation may be burdened by procedural obstacles. Attempts to undertake these activities may fail because of discord among members. This discord may be founded on a refusal to cooperate on individuals' own behalf or because of particular bonds with or fear of those who might be negatively affected by such procedures. They may hesitate to apply such measures unless they are confronted by irrefutable evidence that these are required. As a consequence, cooperative systems may be extensively hampered, which could in addition exacerbate their complications. To establish or maintain a cooperative system in spite of these limitations to some extent, its members may condone certain frictions among one another or explicitly approve and institutionalize competitive dynamics. The adoption of, and the failure to defend itself against, policies that are incompatible with its principles may cause a cooperative system to decline into a competitive system. Competitive interests may try to introduce, foster, and utilize debilitating discord, bonds, or apprehensions to hinder cooperative emancipation. Yet, until they assume governance of the system and potentially thereafter, competitive interests may proceed under a semblance of cooperative attitudes and practices, purportedly to assist the cooperative system to transcend its inhibitions. They may manipulate members into associating and identifying with them, transmute unanimity to majority requirements, influence processes by which majorities are determined and constituted, and institute the delegation and obfuscation of power. They may thus keep their victims unaware, under the impression that impositions are helpful or necessary to maintain a cooperative system, or forgiving or hesitant to take action where they know that not to be the case.

To prevent circumstances that compromise the benefits of a cooperative system and to keep it from becoming a vehicle for competitive interests, we must conduct associations deliberately, restrictively, and selectively. We may strive to organize our associations in a manner that conveys the benefits of cooperation while also preserving the ability of members to pursue their needs independently or in other associations where these suit them better. To maximize cooperative potential, we may confine general associations to their beneficial general functions and organize specific cooperative groups in areas of narrow compatibility regarding certain needs or topics. Cooperative commu-

nities must be prevented from imposing on or giving in to members who do not share their agreements or practices. Considering our particularities, this may lead to a state where we share a general community regarding fundamental concerns where agreement can be reached and engage in a multiplicity of specialized groups to cover particular needs or wishes. The substantive confines of such groups may prompt us to participate in multiple interest groups at the same time. Such a functional manner of organizing common ventures appears to reduce the risk that we would be ruled by a cooperative system or would find such a system inescapable. At the same time, it seems to preserve the advantages of a cooperative approach for the pursuit of our interests. The joint expertise of and pursuit with individuals who share interests are bound to make us more effective and efficient. That may be in part attributable to the coordination potential of corresponding minds. We may also benefit from binding individuals together whose similar interests might otherwise render them competitively adverse to one another. Further, the advantages of partaking in a joint effort to support or protect shared interests incentivize individuals to qualify for joining such an effort by reconciling their needs internally and externally and to adjust their needs into a mode that allows such reconciliation.

Still, we may wonder how such an approach can contribute to a more comprehensive collective reconciliation. We may question assertions that groups representing similar particular interests of members can be useful in a context where other groups may have different interests concerning the same subject matter or represent different individuals with the same, and potentially competitive, interest. If inwardly homogeneous but outwardly divergent groups interface in the context of a larger community, conflicts of interests may only be deferred to a higher, more organized level of interaction among interests without modifying their fundamental dynamics. To resolve incompatibilities, it might be necessary to construct partial or total disengagement among incompatible groups. Such segregation may produce disadvantages for all involved. While incurring such disadvantages may appear preferable to the disadvantages of competitive conflict, the challenges in the separation of incompatible interest groups may cause this resolution to be enacted with reluctance. Moreover, such a separation may be impracticable if the same individual is to participate in a variety of interest groups. With regard to multiple human interests, the groups representing these interests would have to come to arrangements in a shared setting. To assist their members effectively and efficiently, they would have to find a manner of coexistence and positive cooperation that would have to simulate the cooperative behavior that individuals

might display in their absence. Within the scope of their member representation, they would have to function as members of the cooperative system. Arguably, that function of interest groups is not only necessary to prevent them from engaging in competition. It may seem to be necessary for larger cooperative communities to exist and function. Interest groups are able to collect, consolidate, and represent the concerns of their members in matters where the common administration of the system by the totality of the individual members of a community would be challenging. The organization of interest groups may then appear to be a salutary, and possibly indispensable, means to enable a larger cooperative system. Individuals should welcome interest groups as well because they enable them to make themselves heard in a larger cooperative setting, to be represented in negotiations with a heft that is commensurate with the size of their membership, and to stand their ground against possible competitive societal strategies or effects.

However, implementing a system with cooperative associations as constituents that represent our interests and priorities is challenging. It might be hard to find cooperative ventures for our particularities in all fields where we require or could benefit from cooperation. Even if we found them, our involvement in a multitude of these separate ventures might be difficult because we may encounter boundaries of effectiveness and efficiency in our participation. Even if the benefits of organizing in interest groups are considerable, the necessary commitments for active participation in a multitude of ventures to represent our interests might dissipate our efforts and overstrain our capacities. We may not be able to personally establish and maintain all the interest groups that we require or can use. We may find it necessary or helpful to delegate the representation of us to institutionalized, separate entities. By empowering such institutionalized interest groups to act on our behalf, we may generate powerful forces in societal decision making and the pursuit of our needs. We may delegate to them pursuits requiring individual and collective reconciliation for a measured and adapted application in our interest. Yet, as members, we may not remain in sufficient control to manage the decisions and activities of such interest groups in our interest. Even our choice not to participate in interest groups or to dissociate from them may not be effective because it leaves us without an adequate voice in the decision making of a cooperative system that is dominated by interest groups. Efforts for protection and support of our interests in a larger cooperative society may then confront us with a threat of disenfranchising us of our right to control such a society and our fate in it. The next chapter scrutinizes the conditions and effects of interest groups in more detail.