The Practice of Governance, Social Compartmentalization and Fragmentation of Desires

La práctica del gobierno, la fragmentación social y la fragmentación de los deseos

Abstract: This article aims to relate natural teleology to the practice of governance. To do so, it presents the phenomenon of social fragmentation and evaluates it—following A. MacIntyre—as a negative aspect of contemporary social (dis)order due to the moral and psychological disintegration it promotes among ordinary people. Such disintegration leads to conflict and confusion between desires and goods. Among the causes of fragmentation, analytical philosophy and the social theory of existentialism stand out and, at their core, the abandonment of natural teleology. Institutional governance is not immune to fragmentation, so the author suggests that a perspective that explicitly integrates natural teleology in the practice of governance may have practical implications in decision-making and can constitute a significant, albeit partial, contribution to achieving social and moral cohesion.

Keywords: Governance, Fragmentation, Desires, Moral Identity

Cómo citar este artículo:

Resumen: Este artículo pretende relacionar la teleología natural con la práctica del gobierno. Para ello, expone el fenómeno de la fragmentación social y lo valora, con A. MacIntyre, como un aspecto negativo de la sociedad contemporánea debido a la disgregación moral y psicológica que promueve en los agentes comunes. Tal disgregación supone un conflicto y confusión entre deseos y bienes. Entre las causas de la fragmentación, destacan la filosofía analítica y la teoría social del existencialismo y, en el fondo de ella, el abandono de la teleología natural. El gobierno de las instituciones no es ajeno a la fragmentación, por lo que la autora sugiere que una perspectiva de gobierno orientada explícitamente por la teleología natural puede tener implicaciones prácticas en la toma de decisiones y constituir una aportación significativa, si bien parcial, al logro de la cohesión social y moral.

Palabras clave: Gobierno, Fragmentación, Deseos, Conflicto, Identidad Moral
I. INTRODUCTION

The relationship and differences between practices and institutions continues to be an aspect of interest and research for social and political philosophy. In the MacIntyrean institution-practice pairing, speaking in broad and debatable terms, two aspects of this relation stand out. On the one hand, the mutual dependence between institutions and practices, since the institutions offer—or should do so—the structure for the good exercise of the practices. A second feature of this institution-practice pairing is the tension among them when the institution’s goals differ from the goals of the practice they host. In other words, the tension between institutions and practices stands out when institutions prioritize the goods of effectiveness, hindering or preventing the goods of excellence or internal goods, specific to practices. We consider this tension comes from a conflict of ends, which we call a teleological conflict. It is a tension that is not limited to the institutional level but falls on the individuals who participate in the practices by leading them to personal compartmentalization, which means the experience of incompatible goods, goals and desires.

From this outline of the institution-practice pairing, we deduce that governing is more proper of institutions than of practices. However, based on the fact that governing is a socially organized and cooperative activity, in this paper consider governing institutions as a practice, which suggests that government as such is a practice with its own internal goods. This perspective of governance as a practice offers a way to harmonize institutions and practices—in the case they are conflicted—through the consideration of natural teleology. This perspective opens the door to a moral contemplation of the internal goods of governance and provides a means to evaluate and address the harmful fragmentation that affects individuals in fragmented societies, influencing their moral agency.

According to Macintyre, social practices decisively influence the orientation and formation of desires. Desires, in turn, matter because of their relationship to the achievement or failure of a life (MacIntyre, 2016: 1).

However,

“It is a characteristic of the social order that we now inhabit that many of us, most of the time, lead highly compartmentalized lives, moving […]

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1 See Beadle, R. (2017) for practices in business ethics.
from conformity to the set of norms governing one area of our lives to the often very different set of norms governing another area”. (MacIntyre, 2016: 202).

In this article, we argue that an internal good of governance is the teleological-natural ordering of ends, directed to a large extent to counteract compartmentalization and, in doing so, contribute to a unified understanding of compatible moral commitments. We will address this argument as follows: first, we’ll present MacIntyre’s contribution to the notion of fragmentation and it’s causes; second, we will make explicit the relationship between social fragmentation and fragmentation of desires; the relevance of this point relies on the moral confusion that conflicted desires convey; in the third and final section we will elaborate on governance as a teleological practice to counteract social and moral fragmentation. The conclusion points out to a practical application of a natural teleological stance in governance –and in management in general– as relevant for a good-oriented governance.

II. THE PHENOMENON AND CAUSES COMPARTMENTALIZATION ACCORDING TO ALASDAIR MACINTYRE

In How Aristotelianism can Become Revolutionary (2008a), MacIntyre refers to four characteristics of the institutional structures within which most contemporary practices are carried on, the first of them, compartmentalization. By compartmentalization, MacIntyre means two features of the current social (dis)order. On the one hand, the transition the subject makes from one sphere of his life to another, each with laws and norms in opposition to the laws and norms of other spheres. In MacIntyre’s words, all societies exhibit some degree of such differentiation, but ours carries it to an extreme so that we learn early in life to make these transitions easily and for the most part without noticing them (MacIntyre, 2016: 202). In this situation, the flexibility as a skill to adaptability to the social order is highly valued, and the fragmentation of the moral life constitutes a social requirement.

On the other hand, compartmentalization refers to the artificial division between the individual and the roles he represents, substituting identity and

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2 MacIntyre, 1996: 23-24: Compartmentalization, fragmentation and the unity of moral life. Text not published. In private correspondence MacIntyre has confirmed his authorization to cite this work (11 April 2023).
inner moral unity for compliance with rules\(^3\) or ways of living that respond predominantly to external and circumstantial factors. Rozuel\(^4\) considers the separation of the self from the social roles as an alienation, Kenji (2014) as a dehumanization, and Thomas as a flaw in personality development\(^5\).

The causes of compartmentalization are twofold in MacIntyre’s writings, the social and the philosophical (MacIntyre, 2007, Chapter 15). The social causes derive from how modernity partitions human life into a different and disconnected segment, each with its own norms and modes of behavior. Work is divided from leisure, private life from public, the corporate from the personal; both childhood and old age have been separated from the continuum of human life. And all these separations have been achieved so that it is the distinctiveness of each and not the unity of the life of the individual who passes through those parts in terms of which we are taught to think and to feel (MacIntyre, 2007: 204).

As philosophical causes of compartmentalization, analytical philosophy and the social theory of existentialism stand out. Analytical philosophy may impact fragmentation as it entails an atomistic interpretation of action and analyzes complex situations and processes based on their simplest components, losing the sense that these simple parts belong to a larger unity. Existentialism, on the other hand, influence into fragmentation, in the separation it promotes between the individual and the roles he plays, mentioned in the previous paragraph.

Now, the description and analysis of fragmentation’s causes leave out this essential aspect: the agent’s role in incurring or avoiding compartmentalization and to what extent individuals can resist such influence. It may seem that, given certain circumstances, people replicate the ways of the society in which they live without an alternative. However, an approach like that is entirely foreign to the MacIntyrean perspective. He affirms that those forms of division of the self seem to find a place when the Aristotelian explanation of human ac-

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3 Duff, 2018 argues that MacIntyre’s treatment of what is distinctive of politics - rules - is deficient, and this represents an important problem in MacIntyre’s thought. On the other hand, MacIntyre (1998b) seems to be aware of the lack of attention he has given to the relationship between virtues and norms, a widespread deficiency in current moral philosophy.

4 See Rozuel, 2009 for more about the self-concept on fragmented situations and rationalization as promoter of alienation.

5 Thomas, 2013: 7. He proposes that compartmentalization of the self is one index of a fragile self that is vulnerable to self-threats and that compartmentalized self-structures may underlie a contingent sense of self-worth and unstable self-esteem.
tion is ignored, an explanation that conveys that the teleological dimension of agency guides the action and confers moral unity to the agent.

Also, MacIntyre’s proposal for the recovery of virtues in Aristotelian (MacIntyre, 1981 and 1991) and revolutionary terms (MacIntyre, 2008a) reveals that the solution and negative effects of compartmentalization extend to human agency and relate to the education of desires through Aristotelian virtues, as an aspect to which MacIntyre has dedicated extensive and suggestive literature. However, we are now focusing primarily on the external causes of fragmentation and only secondarily on distorted desires.

Social compartmentalization is a complex phenomenon that demands a theoretical explanation from different angles: the sociological, moral and psychological approaches stand out. These three aspects of fragmentation are acutely present in human lives and are negatively evaluated in research, as different studies show, although there are also moderate-positive valuations as that of Breen (2005). In this essay, we present and endorse a negative stance on this phenomenon, focusing primarily on the confusing effects of compartmentalization in moral life, to later suggest –in part three– a contribution to counteract this phenomenon.

Therefore, social fragmentation attracts our attention because of its negative consequences on human flourishing at personal and social levels. We believe these effects can be categorized into three, yet rigid differentiations may not suit this matter. We mean the subject’s blurring of the socio-relational context in which identity develops, the difficulty in comprehending life as a whole filled with a sense of unity, and the distortion of desires, understood

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6 Regarding MacIntyre’s Aristotelianism, see MacIntyre, 2009 and Sandford, 2018.
8 We will refer to compartmentalization and fragmentation indistinctly.
9 For detailed examples, see MacIntyre, 1996, and footnote (2).
10 See for example, Berghaus, N. (2014); Blimling, G. (1981); Cottingham, J. (2010); Kalkman, J. (2022); Wilcox (2012).
11 Breen (2005) suggests MacIntyre relies on a reductive view of modernity and its effects on fragmentation. Contrary to MacIntyre, Breen considers that big-scale organizations and states can be subject to just and virtuous policies and not necessarily conduct to fragmentation.
12 MacIntyre’s rejection of compartmentalization does not deny the need for differentiating arenas of life and defines a private realm defined by strong discretionary rights. Yet, to disrupt modern compartmentalization, the need for protective boundaries must not occlude the fact that the spheres of individual, familial, and communal life are interdependent. Achieving an optimally integrated community requires the fulfilment of key elementary conditions: see Breen (2005: 491).
as a confusion between desires and the good. We will briefly discuss the first two aspects before referring to the third in more detail, in line with the objective of this essay.

As regards the context of the subject’s agency, when acting is mistakenly understood as disconnected from the self, not only does acting lose the orientation it needs, but the very moral identity of the agent becomes blurred, since it is in the self and not in the roles or social practices where moral activity must be located (MacIntyre, 2007: Chapter 15).

In a fragmented society such described, what might seem a mere external division shapes, so to speak, the self-understanding of human agency and the concept of self in which the unity of narrative that links birth, life, and death resides is gradually lost. Consequently, what is lost in fragmentation is the context of one’s life, without which the various moments and changes in the subject’s life over time become unintelligible.

*After Virtue* specifically points to Dahrendorf’s sociological theory and Goffman and Sartre’s existential philosophy as the main inspirations for this conception of the self without moral identity. *Both the Sartrian and the Goffmanesque conceptions of selfhood are highly characteristic of the modes of thought and practice of modernity* (MacIntyre, 2007: 204-205. Ibid. Chapter 3). By denying the relationship between history and action, Sartre contends there are no true stories, only retrospective reconstructions of events. Consequently, human life is composed of discrete actions that lead nowhere, lacking any inherent order (MacIntyre 2007: 214).

What has been discussed in this section thus far demands an explicit delineation of moral identity, at least in its central features. Inferred from *After Virtue*, we conclude that moral identity entails mainly actions connected to the self or located within the self (MacIntyre, 2007: Chapter 15). In other words, moral identity entails the subject as the source of his actions. It is a *self* associated with a narrative that links birth, life, and death; therefore, it must be a true narrative that carries an objective evaluative dimension due to its teleological dimension. What the narrative adds to the notion of action are the historical, sociological, and psychological dimensions indispensable for the intelligibility of human conduct (MacIntyre, 1986). This conception of the self is opposed and incompatible with the peculiarly modern, emotivist self.

These three dimensions of action would lead us to delve deeper into the concept of self and identity; however, what has been stated exposes the central
elements of the notion of moral identity affected by fragmentation. We now address a second effect of fragmentation that interests us: the difficulty of understanding one’s own life as a whole.

Thus, why is it relevant to comprehend life as an integrated whole? A straightforward answer is that only by considering life in its entirety can we genuinely understand its components. Furthermore, to advance human well-being, one must perceive oneself within the broader context of a totality that encompasses one’s historical development up to the present moment and potentially into the future. The very exercise of practical agency as an expression of freedom necessitates a self-awareness rooted in this totality of human agency perspective. Moreover, when we discuss what comprehending life means, we refer to the capacity to assess it, steer it in a new direction, or maintain its course as a unified whole:

To think of my life as a whole requires [...] to step back to some extent from my immediate present and projects and think about my past and future. How have I come to have the projects I now have and the attitudes I now have to those projects, and to many other things and people? To think about my life as a whole is to ask how I have become the person I now am, how past plans, successes and failures have produced the person who now has the present projects and attitudes that I have. And it is also to think about the future. How do I see my present plans continuing? Am I happy to go on living much as I have done, or do I hope, or perhaps intend, to change my commitments and attitudes? (Annas, 1985: 28).

According to Annas, human beings can view and evaluate their life comprehensively, rather than solely across isolated events, in the course of global questions about their life. Such inquiries help develop one’s teleological-moral structure because pondering one’s life as a complete entity naturally leads to reflection on one’s ultimate purpose. It is a question that ordinary people of average intelligence with some leisure time will, at some point, ask by reflecting on their lives and wondering whether they are as they should be or if improvement is possible (Annas, 1995: 27). Even though there may be a wide range of answers, the question is essential for finding a telos in action. MacIntyre refers to these inquiries as “Aristotelian questions” (MacIntyre, 2008a: 3), but the significance lies in the question’s value.

However, formulating and answering Aristotelian questions is difficult precisely due to the absence of a teleological framework within most contem-
porary practices’ institutional structures. Once again, a fragmented view of the social context and oneself hinders or greatly complicates these questions, let alone their answers, precisely because the context does not allow for an appreciation of a connection that provides unity to the whole.

The artificial division between the subject and the roles he plays (see page 3), in which the socio-relational context of the self is perceived as unitary, with an internal life and a biography evaluable as a whole, disappears (MacIntyre, 1992: 194-195), and the moral agent loses sight of the natural link between the is-ought binomial that could adequately guide moral action. Also, the artificial separation of social spheres, as well as the division between the subject and his roles, “teaches” him to think and feel according to the distinctive character of each role or segment of life and not from the unity of his individual life that passes through his various roles (Bellardinelli & Cimino: 242). So, a unified context matters because of its relationship with self-knowledge and moral self-understanding.

Philosophers as Kant, Mill and Aquinas consider moral life as a unity too, even if they give notably different accounts of that unity. According to MacIntyre, none of them understands the requirements of the moral life to consist only in the performance of a series of discrete acts. The moral life has a direction, one dictated by the character of the summum bonum (MacIntyre 1996: 24). Without this direction, the agent becomes an emotivist self (MacIntyre, 2007: 34), confused about the order and relationship between their desires and good.

III. COMPARTMENTALIZATION AS A CAUSE OF FRAGMENTED DESIRES

If we analyze what has been said so far, we can infer that the obstacles to developing moral identity and questioning global questions are difficulties with a common, mainly external causes, that is, social fragmentation. However, this would be a partial and incorrect interpretation of MacIntyre, who has emphasized the need of desires’ education and the virtuous functioning of social practices as essential components for moral development. Thus, the education of desires is an aspect essentially linked to moral identity and to the global understanding of life as a whole, so we dedicate to it a separate section in line with the centrality that desires have progressively taken in the moral phi-
losophy of the author of *After Virtue*. By desire, we mean the driving force and motivation for action.

According to MacIntyre, the social order (or disorder) influences desires in two fundamental ways. First, desires find their objects “within lives structured by needs, activities, responsibilities, and enjoyments of individuals, families, and other groups”. So, we will know how these aspects influence desires only if we learn how they are marked by fragmentation (MacIntyre, 2016: 129). Second, social practices educate or distort desires depending on the goals the practices pursue and the means they implement to reach them. When practices pursue virtuous ends, the agent may learn to reason and rationally desire them. This is so since desires cannot be ordered or educated without a *telos* (MacIntyre, 2008a: 285).

Since desires find their objects within lives structured by individuals, families, and other groups’ needs, activities, responsibilities, and enjoyments, we will only understand how these aspects influence desires if we learn to think adequately about those aspects (MacIntyre, 2016: 129). Thus, a society in which activities, responsibilities, needs, amusements, etc., are marked by fragmentation will very likely shape agents’ desires into fragmentation too, unless they are agents who have acquired moral virtues. Fragmented desires mean they are disoriented concerning genuine goods, or we could call them also conflicted desires.

However, when referring to the relationship between conflicting desires and fragmented social practices, a complex circular cause-effect relationship is established, which we do not intend to clarify here even if that were possible. Instead, following the objective of this essay, we aim to expose how social practices have a decisive influence on the situation of desires, so that in compartmentalized societies, agents are continually seduced and solicited by desires that are corrupting (MacIntyre, 2008a: 4):

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13 In personal correspondence, MacIntyre indicates which of his works directly address the role of desires in morality: “In my own books there are incidental remarks in *After Virtue*, chapter 12: 149, and in *Dependent Rational Animals*, chapter 8: 83-92, but the important discussions are of course in *Ethics in the Conflicts of Modernity*, 1.1-1.6, 3.4 and 3.5, and 4.6-4.10” (Aug 1st, 2019). See also MacIntyre’s, 2004, 2008b, among others.

14 For a concise presentation on virtues as organization of conflicted desires, see Hernández-González, 2022a.

15 See MacIntyre, 2008b on conflicts of desires.
We inhabit a social order in which a will to satisfy those desires that will enable the economy to work as effectively as possible has become central to our way of life, a way of life for which it is crucial that human beings desire what the economy needs them to desire. What the economy needs is that people should become responsive to its needs rather than to their own, and so it presents to them as overridingly desirable those goals of consumption and goals of ambition pursuit of which will serve the economy's purposes. Desires to achieve these goals, when they become central to our lives and to our self-evaluations, prevent us from becoming self-critical about our desires and so prevent the asking of Aristotelian questions [...]. (MacIntyre, 2008a: 4).

If the individual is predominantly responsive to the demands of a fragmented society, a conflict of desires arises, which is, in turn, a conflict of goods. Moreover, if the agent lacks a reflective attitude about his desires, his actions are guided not by evaluating the goods their desires aim but by the intensity or priority of desires themselves. Therefore, being reflective about one's desires is associated with the capacity for moral reflection, and learning to desire is inseparable from prioritizing goods: to say that something is better than another is to say that we have more or less reasons to desire it (MacIntyre, 2008b: 284). Thus, desiring virtuously means being directed toward our good, and failing to be directed in that way is a failure that requires explanation and solution. Precisely, desires matter because of their relationship with the achievement or failure of a life, with human flourishing\textsuperscript{16} and happiness. So, in conflicts of desire,

[...] what we need to learn [...] is how to distinguish between those of our desires that are desires for genuine goods from those that are not. Failures in making this distinction both distort our character formation and lead to the frustration of those desires that are most important for our human flourishing. (MacIntyre, 2008a: 3-4).

In summary, we mentioned two aspects of a compartmentalized life: the transition the subject makes from one sphere of his life to another, each with opposite and incompatible norms and laws; and the artificial division between

the individual and the roles he represents. Both aspects imprint their mark on human desires and distort them into fragmentation. This means the individual has a disunified perception of his desires and corresponding goods, which makes it difficult or prevents him from harmonizing them according to hierarchical goods or ultimate goals. What seems necessary to understand is how the social and intellectual order in which Morality finds its place involves the deformation of desire and the invention of new forms of practical reasoning [...] (MacIntyre, 2016: 69). These new forms of practical reason would be marked by vicious ends.

Precisely one of the privileged means to educate desires is through the configuration of social practices inspired by virtuous goals, since the reasoning about ends, both proximate and ultimate, can inform, redirect, and transform desires, thus providing an education on virtues (MacIntyre, 1990: 246).

This account of MacIntyre’s influence of social practices on shaping desires is arguably one of his most distinctive contributions to the theory of desire, since this idea is only implicit in Aristotle and Aquinas but is given a substantial focus in MacIntyre’s work.

IV. GOVERNANCE AS A TELEOLOGICAL PRACTICE TO COUNTERACT MORAL FRAGMENTATION

Given that one way to educate distorted desires –and consequently, fragmented societies– is through social practices that are virtuously oriented, and considering that governance is a social practice, it follows that teleologically oriented governance should be promoted. Furthermore, because governance, as a social practice, tends to replicate the fragmented patterns of the culture to which it belongs, good governance practices must incorporate self-assessment based on a teleological criterion but a natural-teleological one. Let us now clarify what we mean by governance and teleology.

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17 The means MacIntyre suggests for the education of desires are dispersed throughout various works, and we would digress from the main topic if we delve into it. However, it is relevant to mention, concerning the topic discussed here, that moral virtue-oriented practices, in their teleological dimension, are presented by MacIntyre as one of the primary means for shaping desires.

18 See, for example, MacIntyre, 1999, Chapters 8 and 9, Dependent Rational Animals.

19 See Beadle and Moore, 2006 for MacIntyrean examples of fragmentation, like managers in holocaust (329). See also MacIntyre, 1996, with extensive examples.
The term “governing” is comprehensive and historically linked to various realities. It shares a common background associated with the act of directing or commanding. If we were to delve deeper into the concept of governance, we would need to explore various areas such as political and social philosophy, different forms of government (democracies, meritocracies, etc.), as well as fundamental concepts like justice, freedom, power, or equality, among others. We could also specify governance within the context of nations or institutions and, more specifically, within business organizations. Also, governance is a fundamental concept in political science and organizational theory, extending to various spheres of social cooperative organization, including sports teams and school organizations. However, a study of such depth exceeds the scope of this research. In this paper, we refer to governance in its broader sense, considering that this concept applies to the management of commercial and business institutions.

So, when we refer to governance, we mean the act, whether individual or collective20, of directing the activities of an organized group of people toward a common task, activity, or goal. Governance involves making choices, establishing policies, and taking actions to achieve specific objectives while maintaining order and compliance within the relevant system or entity. The central task of governance that we focus on in this essay relates to goal achievement. We understand this task not only as accomplishing specific objectives but also as the ongoing process of reviewing, evaluating, establishing, and redirecting these objectives in alignment with a broader good. This perspective leads us to the concept of natural teleology.

By coining the term teleology, Wolff indicated a harmonious and providential order that informs both nature and action with a purpose21. Teleology is thus a conceptual term, therefore, abstract and universal. It aims to reflect a practical quality of human actions, namely, their natural tendency towards an end that is considered good22. This tendency is a principle of action, not in a temporal sense, but in a guiding and orienting sense, as it sets a purpose for action towards the good, both the universal good (“I want to be just” or “good”) and the particular and concrete good (“this action in these circum-

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20 We use “collective action” analogically to human individual action. The subjects of actions are properly individuals, even when they act cooperatively in agreement with others to decide collective actions.
21 Knight, 2013: 93. Until then, the classical terms telos and logos had been used independently.
22 Lyttle, P. (2004) describes MacIntyre’s anthropology as an anthropology essentially linked to teleology and narrative, where the unpredictability of human life arises from its historical-social-narrative dimension, while stability and uniformity come from teleology.
stances is an act of justice that I want to perform”). MacIntyre understands Aristotelian teleology as the philosophical expression of ordinary intentional and deliberative action. The Aristotelian telos is the human end, and to act for a telos is to act for a good (MacIntyre, 2016: 86).

We consider the relationship between governance and teleology consists of the practice of a kind of governance that embraces the good of natural teleology as one of its primary internal goods to set and prioritize ends. This eminently practical dimension requires a kind of moral reasoning resulting in a hierarchical ordering of goods in a way that would not occur solely from spontaneous teleology or other non-natural teleologies. Although teleology itself, being natural, is indeed present in action, the current philosophical and cultural conditions mentioned earlier hinder a self-understanding of action and morality in teleological terms.

From the relationship between telos and the good, it follows that a teleological approach to governance necessarily entails a moral dimension, as the choice of ends involves an assessment of genuine goods. By genuine goods, we mean specific goods in accordance with human nature, which can be categorized into four broad domains which Aristotle recognized in the full range of human powers, physical, conceptual, emotional, rational, political, moral and aesthetic. These Loria expressed as biological, metaphysical, relational and habits of action or virtues (Loria, 2020: 63).

The task of inquiring what the genuine goods are is an activity that the agent does not carry out in addition to or concurrently with other activities or partial goals. Moreover, the agent carries it out precisely through them. Thus, human activity responds to a desire to recognize and satisfy the different areas of excellence. With a human goal in mind, agents discover the meaning and actions required for other activities to follow the human end.

So, it shows essential for the practice of governing institutions not only to provide the structure of the practice it houses but also to care about the quality of the telos the practices and the institution itself pursues. Caring

23 For other types of teleology, non-Aristotelian, see Knight 2013. In those teleologies, the end of the action is considered something different to the good as human flourishing.
24 See MacIntyre, 1987, 1998a and 2007 (sp. Chapter 5; Also, AV, Chapter 5).
25 MacIntyre, 2016: 28-29. The achievement of the good is oriented towards human flourishing and happiness.
26 See Beadle and Moore, 2006: 327-328; they consider utilitarian governance as opposed to teleology since utilitarianism fails in its inability to discover ends or purposes.
about the moral nature of ends entails evaluating, ranking, and pursuing goods; and identifying genuine goods makes it possible for the goals not to be arbitrary. Thus, we can affirm that what we have called natural-teleological government fosters a type of practical reasoning and professional practice that promotes the unity and moral identity of the agent.

However, this objective moral assessment is impossible in an ethical framework devoid of teleology. In Chapter Five of AV, we find a breakdown of what MacIntyre considers to be the components of the prevailing morality before the Enlightenment, namely, a teleological framework consisting of three elements: “man-as-he-is” and “man-as-he-could-be-if-he-realized-his-essential-nature”. Alongside these two, there is Ethics as the science that enables individuals to transition from the first to the second state.

From this perspective, Ethics presupposes the possibility of act and potency, of human essence as a rational animal, and above all, some interpretation of the human telos. The virtues and precepts, in this framework, constitute an instruction that allows us to move from potency to act; in other words, they lead us on how to fulfil our true nature and achieve our end. Practical reason simultaneously instructs us about our proper end and how to attain it, guiding us in differentiating between failure and success. Therefore, each of the three elements in the scheme makes reference to the other two for their position and function to be intelligible (MacIntyre, 2007: 52-53).

Nevertheless, as MacIntyre argues, modernity eliminated teleology from this triple framework of morality and retained the other two, thereby condemning it to unintelligibility. It is not surprising that those who support virtue ethics begin to seek another basis for their moral convictions, nor do various forms of rationalism and moral institutionalism reappear, such as contractarianism, utilitarianism, or stoic approaches (MacIntyre, 2007: 233-234). We could perhaps assert that one of the reasons why Aristotelianism can become revolutionary (MacIntyre, 2008a) is precisely because of the recovery of natural teleology in personal and corporate ethics.

To conclude, the practical implications of viewing government through the lens of natural teleology aim to address fragmentation, which involves distinguishing morally incompatible domains and artificially separating an individual from their role. To put it positively, the contribution of governance

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27 See Chirinos (2018) on the humanization of work. We believe that their perspective aligns with a teleological-natural view of it.
practices would involve establishing a work structure that fosters unity and moral identity in the previously explained terms\textsuperscript{28}.

This task will have limits, yet it remains necessary. The limitations are twofold. First, the immediate goal of governing institutions must be the achievement of the ends of practices rather than the human telos itself. The human telos should instead be a guiding principle for the more immediate ends, ensuring that these immediate goals are in harmony and do not hinder the attainment of the broader human good. Second, learning to align one’s actions with virtuous ends ultimately depends on the agent’s free choices. The involvement of human choices in overcoming moral fragmentation implies that voluntarily adhering to virtuous ends involves a specific exercise of internal moral freedom that enables the agent to dissent from desiring the unrighteous ends of practices.

Anyhow, let us focus, in that context, on measures for a practical approach of governance aligned with natural teleology. To illustrate, we propose three general lines of action, which are subject to discussion and do not pretend to be exhaustive\textsuperscript{29}. So, the first of the three lines we suggest is that, in their decision-making, governance practices should consider the individual in their holistic dimension, not solely in their professional role. This comprehensive approach could have concrete implications, such as defining \textit{working hours} as compatible or incompatible with other aspects of the individual’s life. However, in fragmented corporations, \textit{it is not the individual as an isolated entity that matters, but rather the individual as a professor, manager, physician, or in a similar role. As a result, there is a lack of context-independent concept of the common good} (MacIntyre, 1996: 20).

From this first point, one could also determine salaries in the context of housing, food, and education costs. Alternatively, determine the establishment of collaborative and participatory processes that may allow, at least to some extent, involvement in decision-making that prioritizes individuals’ well-being beyond their roles.


\textsuperscript{29} Our objective is to establish the groundwork for a type of moral creativity that entails teleology and leads to discovering different ways of achieving goods. Otherwise, stoic forms of virtue arise, like the central Stoic tendency to believe that there is a single standard of virtue and that moral achievement lies simply in total compliance with it. MacIntyre, 2007: 233.
In this respect, MacIntyre points out how different and even opposite the evaluation of death risk in the automobile industry depends on who is evaluating the risk. The differences stand out in the different roles, like managers, drivers, physicians, families of people affected by car accidents, etc. Only when we consider good beyond the roles of the agent will we, as practical reasoners, be guided by genuine goods. Another example is the norms of truthfulness and how they vary from sphere to sphere (MacIntyre, 1996: 7, 11, 16).

Second, following MacIntyre, we suggest a teleological work environment can offer employees the experiences necessary to pose and address overarching questions. Even though these questions are within a limited scope, such as the job context, this type of reflection fosters the exploration of a broader context beyond a reductionist perspective on goods. Formulating and answering global teleological questions is challenging precisely due to the absence of a teleological framework in the institutional structures of most contemporary practices (MacIntyre, 2008a: 3).

One means to encourage this among those who govern could be to emphasize long-term planning and decision-making. By considering the broader consequences and impact of policies and actions, governing institutions can help prevent short-sighted approaches that may exacerbate fragmentation. Additionally, involving employees or collaborators in decision-making, an involvement that supports the common practical reasoning of virtuous individuals, could be another approach.

Finally, teleological government implies being motivated by virtuous ends. It is a type of government in which moral agency goes beyond a rational theoretical consideration and normative language of the correct action to move on to that of good action. As governance is exercised in pursuing genuine human goods—that is, virtuous ends—institions can provide a unifying framework that prioritizes the search for common goals and motivations to help harmonize human agency 30.

For example, when workers can pursue ends detected as valuable in search of what they understand to be standards of excellence they have endorsed, then they act from their desires and are capable of measuring, by the results of their activity, the quality of its ends. Moreover, it is in this type of activity where the distinction is made between real and apparent goods, bet-

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30 Bernacchio & Couch (2015) argue that employee participation in governance practices can play an important role in developing virtue.
ween the objects of desire that the agent has good reasons to pursue and which it is necessary to give up in order to achieve excellence:

In recent virtue-ethics the ways in which reasoning about ends, both proximate and ultimate, is possible, and the ways in which such reasoning can inform, redirect and transform desires –and thus provide an education in the virtues– have received a good deal of attention. (MacIntyre, 1990: 246).

This perspective on the practice of governance as countering social fragmentation like a moral task leads to reconsidering its purposes as governance. We suggest that economic goals especially need to be reviewed, so that they do not take the role of final end. Although none of what has been said necessarily implies that profit must be sacrificed, perhaps it should be assessed in a broader context of objective human goods:

The practice of virtues [conceived as Aristotle and Aquinas conceived them] is something difficult to reconcile with functioning well in the present economic order, whether it is a time of hardship or is a time of prosperity. It is of this kind of episode that we need good empirical studies, histories of past success and failure in the life of the virtues... […] And such projects are important, not only because and insofar as they are informed by a desire to achieve the human good [...], but also because they bring into being types of community through which we are liberated from compartmentalization, from distorted desires, from inequalities, and form the lawlessness of the present order. They are important too because within them we discover the indispensability of the virtue of hope, a virtue that directs us beyond the facts of our present situations, whatever it is. (MacIntyre, 2008a: 6).

V. CONCLUSION

In this article, we have aimed to provide the basic principles for a philosophical-moral assessment of the social and anthropological phenomenon of compartmentalization or social fragmentation, when taken to an extreme, as it seems to occur in contemporary culture in most domains, is a complex phenomenon that demands attention and a solution due to its adverse effects on individuals and communities. We can summarize its threefold main consequences: a. It obscures or blurs the socio-relational context necessary for developing one’s own
moral identity. b. It hinders understanding life as a whole, full of unity, relevant for prioritizing goods and making good choices. c. It leads to confusion between desires and the good or distorting desires. At the root of the various immediate causes of the fragmentation phenomenon lies a common cause: the abandonment of natural teleology by modern thought, an abandonment that has not been adequately replaced in current moral frameworks.

Regarding the relationship between governance and compartmentalization, we suggested that the practice of governance can reproduce and accentuate or, on the contrary, counteract and mitigate fragmentation and its effects. Whether it does one or the other depends on integrating institutional goals into a broader natural teleological perspective. The specific way to achieve this will depend on the moral creativity of the science of good governance, which needs to apply moral principles to specific matters.

Now, such creativity will be inspired by a natural-teleological view, which by no means suggests that government may neglect its immediate objectives or that the distinction between different spheres should be respected; rather, it implies that those objectives should be adequately integrated into a broader teleological context. Although it is impossible to predict how moral creativity may develop, it is likely to identify some principles of a teleologically conceived government, such as prioritizing goods and involving people in identifying and desiring them. This government proposal, understood and exercised based on natural teleology to counteract fragmented societies, offers an alternative approach that opposes extreme utilitarian, deontological, and pragmatic views. It potentially involves a new conception of what constitutes a well-functioning economy and reconsidering the (relative) importance of surplus value in case of conflicting human goods.
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31 See footnote (2).


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