

Military Anthropologia

Essays on the Global Dynamics of Warfare, Conflict
and Strategic Rationality

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Preface: Military Anthropology in Reference to the Contemporary Conflict Continuum

The relationship of anthropology to the military is ambiguous at least, and often has entailed its own dimensions of conflict. This has served to make military anthropology, as a central anthropological field of inquiry, tangential at best and perhaps “alternative,” “applied” and “fringe” at worst.

Military organization is, for whatever final sets of reasons, universal to modern nation-state society. Warfare seems universal to human society, though we can well imagine and dream of human worlds free of violent conflict and war. These military histories of war and conflict seem to have been and remain the larger anthropological realities of the human world, however ugly and abhorrent their consideration may be.

We can search the anthropological record for the ideally peaceful, essentially non-violent society, but at best we are likely to come up with few and far between ethnographic examples, and then subject to stretched and broadly interpretive parallax.

The source of human social aggression and a seeming proclivity to violence, whether a function of human nature or nurture, the proponent purview of the physical or cultural anthropologist, is in essence one of the most basic and

dichotomous, department splitting, debates evident across anthropology programs.

I have had the somewhat belated opportunity in my adult career as an underemployed anthropologist to engage systematically in the subjects relating to military anthropology.

What lessons might military anthropology teach us about ourselves, our common world, our collective identity and future, and the place of conflict and war in our world and in our common future?

One clear answer is the general and highly relative problem of relevance of our differentiated knowledge in our world. To claim that war and conflict play no part or should not play a part in our modern world, especially due to a false sense of idealism, especially such that it cannot be of central concern for the well received and respectable anthropologist, is not to condemn those interested in this general problem set, but to consign those deliberately disinterested or eschewing the problem set to the rubbish heap of irrelevant hypothetical or counter-factual histories.

While we may always suffer the risk of a major global conflagration like those of World War One and World War Two, a possibility of human systems development that cannot be ruled out by the lessons of modern history, we must critically assess the changing patterns that human social conflict and warfare may have taken in recent history.

We must then evaluate and estimate the likelihood of different forms of conflict and warfare, upon different levels of intensity and scope or scale of involvement, such that we can with some degree of confidence recommend that spending vast amounts of national resources and treasure upon maintaining large standing militaries with expensive, cutting-edge military and war-making technologies, may not in the structure of the long run be the most realistic, best and brightest or most optimal grand strategy to undertake.

On the other hand, the streamlining and integrating of multi-functional military organizations, with applied, general purpose technologies, may prove more highly adaptive at far less net cost in the long run to a broadening range of future warfare and conflict requirements.

But these requirements themselves may be defined variously by different kinds and sets of prevailing strategic interests. We cannot ultimately separate the problems of military analysis and decision-making from larger problem sets of diverse and competing national interests, political influence and differential empowerment, and shifting strategic priorities and, increasingly, global concerns that cannot be ignored for very long.

One of these concerns seems to be the problem of the global commons and that of conservation of the global environment. Another of these concerns seems to be the rise of trans-national, non-state actors or sets of interests that are

increasingly capable of playing a major strategic role within the global space, to the potentially adverse or perverse effect of everyone dwelling in that space.

In this latter regard the boundaries appear to be blurring and at times disappearing that once clearly defined and separated the military from the civilian, the combatant from the non-combatant, the foreign from the domestic, the sense of the strategic “real politik” from the sense of domestic authority, the problem of the regionally geo-political from the challenges of the global and transnational, the delineation of political and territorial boundaries that separated one nation or country from another, and the ethno-political and socio-cultural demarcations that served to distinguish one group of people from all others.

These changing definitional boundaries are a function of human systems development and an intrinsic part of the problem of human history, and these demand from us newer ways of thinking and understanding of the problem sets we must deal with, as well as innovative new ways of adapting and applying this knowledge to the basic challenges of our world, including conflict and warfare, and the adaptation of humankind in that world.

From a human standpoint, the changing world is such that there has been no time in all of human history or prehistory in which people have been more exposed than ever before to world knowledge, or more exposed to transcultural sharing and

its transformative processes in human development upon whatever level we analyze our human systems.

People are experiencing in some critical ways newer freedoms and developmental capacities and possibilities than ever known before in human history, and yet it remain uncertain how people will respond to these changing conditions and newfound possibilities, particularly if and when they are by their previous lives, cultures, customs, conventions, traditions and histories, unfamiliar with or estranged from comprehending or realizing their full potentialities.

If they are not able to directly express these freedoms and capacities, then they can at least well imagine their larger possibilities and potentialities in their otherwise restricted lives, and this too, can be the source of reactions and developmental adaptations with both good and evil consequences.

This work constitutes a collection of my most recent essays in military anthropology that seek to interweave two distinct but deeply interdependent themes. The first theme is the changing nature of the self in the modern world, as a function of a changing world, and how the modern construct of the self may be shaping the conflict dynamics of our world in new ways.

The second theme is the changing nature of the strategic and operational challenges of the modern world, and the military, its organization, structure, functions and adaptations to changing warfare patterns vis-à-vis an emerging global system.

This second theme is focused upon three main levels of articulation:

1. The microscopic level of the individual in situ, as the core atomic unit of human social systems;

2. The intermediate, mesoscopic range of social organization up to and including the nation-state and its continuously evolving military structures;

3. The macroscopic level of the grand strategic political-military contexts in which the range of levels 2 and 1 must function in the contemporary era.

The interest here, and its implicit focus, is of course the largely unexplored area in conflict theory and studies, where microscale models of self-radicalization intersect and overlap with larger scale models of social radicalization, thus defining the unclear intermediate zone in which self-involvement and interest become fused and inseparable from larger scale social influence and structural process.

These essays have been written largely as an intellectualized response to general transitions that have been on-going within the larger U.S. military, as a result of both a changing domestic climate, and as a result of changing global dynamics within which problems of strategy, war and warfare, and those of conflict dynamics plays out.

As we leave behind the era of GWOT and counter-insurgency operations that have defined the last two decades, we are

entering a new era of increasing complexity and strategic uncertainty.

This uncertainty becomes expressed as much in the lack of clear-cut goals as it is becoming expressed in terms of the ambiguity of clear-cut risks and threats, as well as in the lack of a concise and clear-cut strategic understanding of a rapidly changing world or of how to best respond militarily to this new world.

Foreword: Conflict and Culture

It can be said that when a society's culture begins to disintegrate, possibly due to strong influences of acculturation from other cultures, or to political subordination to another system, or to intra-social forces of socio-structural drift and shift in a changing regional or global environment, that such a society may be prone to fragmentation and greater conflict, and in this sense, then, culture, depending upon how it may be defined for our purposes, becomes something that, from a human systems standpoint, serves to mediate potential conflict that can be expected to precipitate in the case and context of the suspension of this mediating function of culture.

Another way of looking at this problem is to consider that culture, by default of its symbolic-behavioral sharing inter-socially, provides a common reference framework for people by which to communicate, coordinate, cooperate and even compete with one another in a manner that precludes or sublimates the resort to direct conflict.

Culture thus provides the social environment that promotes intimacy, attachment, identification and bonding, and the breakdown of cultural environments is linked to distancing, detachment, identity confusion and narcissistic regression.

A world without shared cultural parameters becomes an atomized world of default primitive warfare and interpersonal conflict. It is a world of fundamental disagreement, which becomes one of conflicting interests, but not because of differences of opinion and interests per se, but because of a lack of a common baseline forum by which cooperative or complementative relationships may be developed between people, that might otherwise obviate the need for conflictual escalation.

Culture thus becomes a medium of transaction and communication between people that facilitates constructive interaction. The potential for culture to develop into conflict interactions, generally arises either from a breakdown of the integrative functions of culture within a society, or the clash of culturally integrated paradigms between different and distant societies.

In the former instance, of intra-cultural conflict, there arises conflict of interests and identities as a result of polarizations, socio-cultural and institutional drift and goal displacement, leading to cleavage, fragmentation and polarization of society, and eventually resulting in a phenomena that can be called social schismogenesis.

We generally conceptualize this form of intra-cultural conflict as occurring at the nation-state level, as this is the predominant modality in modern history of socio-political organization of cultures. But we can understand varieties of crime and criminal

violence as a form of such intra-social and intra-cultural conflict, as well as sources of such conflict occurring upon lower levels of socio-political organization that is below the state, especially in the case of ethno-communal and ethno-cultural conflict, nowadays occurring within nation-state contexts, but fundamentally occurring due to the radical pluralism and the lack of national-cultural integration of marginal ethno-cultural sub-groups and ethno-linguistic cultures yet organized upon tribal levels.

In the latter instance, of inter-cultural conflict, we can speak of conflict that arises between different cultural groupings on the basis of competing interests (niche or territorial competition leading to conflict) vice large degrees of cultural distance and difference separating groups.

This in essence in modern history also mainly plays out in the context of nation-state political organization of societies, and translates into inter-state warfare at a national level when it comes to overlapping geo-political interests and radical differences/distances of national culture.

Both sources and forms of conflict can easily escalate into the most vicious forms of internecine social violence, whatever the root structural causes, but we generally associate wars and warfare patterns, as a specialized state of otherwise general conflict patterns, with the latter form of inter-state conflict, except in the case of civil war that splits a state into two

separate, contraposed structural entities, a true case of socio-structural schismogenesis.

We can view this question in different ways, but if we see culture as a kind of medium of symbolic communication, in which people either share more or less or fail to share, because of relative cultural distances and differences interfering with the coherence and consonance of the communication, then we can say that where the cultural distances/differences are large, the potential for conflict becomes greater because the mediating function of cultural sharing is minimized or possibly non-existent, especially in the case of broadly discrepant cross-cultural paradigms.

We understand conflict mostly as either inter-social, occurring across social divisions separating society, or else as essentially cross-cultural, when two groups, each representing a different and distinct cultural orientation compared to the other group, come into conflict or even enter into a mutual state of war with one another.

It can be argued as well that especially from situations of continuous conflict, whether it is inter-social or cross-cultural, cultures or subcultures may develop around conflict as a normalized if periodic activity, the main purpose of which is the promulgation of its cultural conflict patterns.

If we argue that state societies are composite, intercommunal and inter-social entities that arise by the functional organization of these sub-entities or groups into some kind of

complementary organic system, then the development within such state-systems of subcultures and cultures that are based upon and defined by the promulgation and management of conflict as normalized social process becomes an institutionalized and ritualized feature of the social organization.

If we stand back from this problem, we might consider the possibilities of underlying “structural” issues that may drive alternative forms of cultural conflict from a human systems standpoint.

Before we do so, we must clarify what we mean by structure, and how it might provide a kind of bridge between “culture” as something that is transacted, and “conflict” as is a modality and mechanism of transaction.

In a sense, “structure” is the relational and actional possibilities and variabilities of development available to a given system based upon its design, and giving rise to possible alternative epiphenomenal patterns of behavioral development.

Alternative structures present alternative developmental possibilities for a given system.

All complex structures are by definition underdetermined and complex, and it is this that gives rise to the evident, epiphenomenal chaos of systems development, as this development is a function of the interaction of a system with its environment. Thus such a structure for a given system is a normative blueprint of the developmental continuum and

variability available to a system at any given time during the life span of such a system.

In this regard we are referring anthropologically to the social structure of cultural systems, as this becomes particularly expressed through variable patterns of ritualized or institutionalized interaction, and the various organizational arrangements of these patterns into corporate functional systems.

We can hypothesize an underlying universal structure that is common to all human cultural systems, and if we realize that these social structural patterns tend to be embedded and to become stratified upon multiple systems levels, with systemic integration, we can speak of different structural levels at which composite cultural systems become differentiated and stratified from one another.

We do not have an exact scientific terminology in the description of the stratification and classification of different systems, nor less of the structural processes underlying this integration and differentiation, even though both cultural anthropologists and social anthropologists have sought by various theoretical methodologies to develop such frameworks of descriptive analysis.

We tend to construe social structures largely from the corporate institutional frameworks commonly found in modern nation-state societies, divided into the primary structural

divisions of political, social, economic, military, environmental (infrastructural), and religious dimensions.

For different modern nation states, we can describe a range of political structures that can be divided systematically into different subtypes of legislative, executive, judicial and administrative functions and relations as subsystems.

Some societies focus more comprehensive functional power into executive structures, and elaborate these structures across the society, even into law and judiciary and legislative functions. Others are typically more heavily focused on legislative functions and features.

Similarly, we divide modern national economies into primary resources, agriculture, various industries, financial and service structures—different societies represent different combinations of economic engagement, activity and interest.

When we examine non-state, pre-state or alternative state structures for society, we are bound to come up with different methods and principles of social structure becoming important, often in contexts where political, religious, social and economic functions and processes are both less differentiated and less integrated, and in which ritual process or institutional frameworks may be essentially multifunctional across these structural compartmentalizations, which distinctions become relevant only upon a nation-state level.

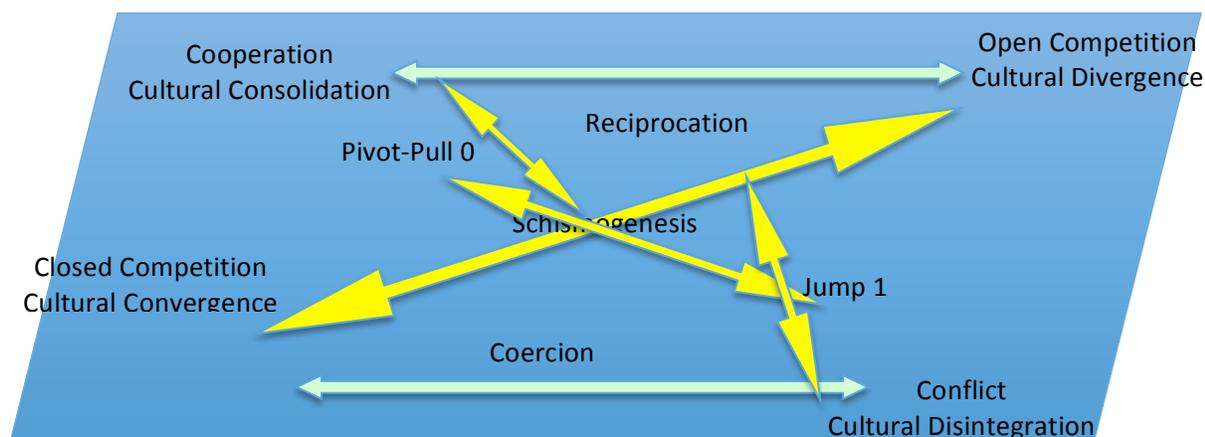
We are likely to find a greater undifferentiated influence and function of religious process and ritual in the institutional patterns of these early social alternatives to the modern state, and far less economic specialization and institutionalization.

It was probably for a very long time of human history that it was a normal and logical expectation that a king, with counselors or advisors, should make all the laws, and be the ultimate adjudicator of those laws, as well as being the ultimate source of veneration and legitimization of the authority represented by the “King’s law.”

It is important to see conflict structurally as a modality of human action, reaction and social interaction. Structurally speaking, from a systems point of view, the coincidence of conflict, particularly of violent conflict, becomes symptomatic of the functional breakdown or dysfunctionality of the cultural system, as a whole or in part, which is measured against the relative adaptive equilibrium and growth that a society experiences as a function of its cultural integration.

From this systemic point of view, therefore, we can see conflict as a function in interaction with other functions, but one alternative of a larger but finite range of alternative interactive functions (cooperation, open/closed competition, and conflict) that operate upon a certain fundamental level of human systems integration.

We can understand this interaction in terms of the model of conflict-z, as outlined below:



In

that respect we can therefore understand the near universal structural role and function that military organizations have played in state societies, and their earlier, less institutionally differentiated warrior classes, specialized auxiliaries, and cults or secret societies (sodalities) in pre-state societies, in the management and promulgation of conflict on behalf of the state.

In complex, composite, large-scale and highly differentiated modern state societies, military, paramilitary and related security organizations have become highly differentiated and elaborated, and have in general led to high levels and many areas of knowledge and task specialization within large corporate organizational frameworks.

This is directly related to the evolutionary development of military technology and the knowledge and organizational requirements related to the successful articulation of these technologies. These technologies have tied to the larger

economic and social technologies of the state and of human civilization as a global process—frequently it is technological competition in war-time contexts, so-called arms races, that have driven the most rapid innovations and technological inventions of an era.

These technologies in a sense are driven largely by a survivalist psycho-logic that our enemy, in gaining the technological-developmental edge, will be able to defeat and destroy of in war, and it has led to the dilemma of mutually assured destruction by reliance upon massive stockpiles of true weapons of mass destruction.

Now that we have in a sense reached the upper limits of our war technologies, we have little direction to turn in except in terms of the progressive refinement of those technologies towards greater precision and intelligence in functioning and deployment.

Introduction: Upon Unlearning the Lessons of Modern Military History

Modern warfare is unlike any warfare that has been known in the human past. It may resemble many modes and aspects of previous wars, and yet it is likely to continue to evolve on its own new rhythms, scales, and tempos than anything known in the past.

Before we proceed it is important to clarify our essential terms:

War is a communicated state of mutual understanding between contraposed opponents who seek through the threat and use of force to either destroy or else to compel favorable reactions from the other.

Warfare refers to the different patterns and techniques that are used and develop through military or paramilitary organization and mobilization to realize the objectives of a declared state of war.

Conflict refers to a general modality of interaction between two or more people defined by mutual attrition in a zero-sum game in which the losses of one count directly as the gains of the other. War is one form of overt conflict—other forms of conflict, overt or covert, also occur outside a formal state of war. This may include

economic conflict, intelligence warfare, nowadays cyberwarfare, informational warfare, etc.

Wars are largely historical phenomena that arise as a result of conflict—conflict as a general modality of human interaction, one among several alternative modalities of interaction, constitutes a broader range of possible phenomena of which different wars are a subset.

Different warfare patterns represent alternative forms of conflict that occur during states of war, and different wars may be constituted by different patterns of warfare and military engagement.

The so-called cycles of periodic trends in war, warfare and conflict patterns may be as much a product of our failure to learn our lessons from war, as it may be a function of either our collective forgetting or our selective remembering of these lessons of wars past.

Indeed, the basic, primitive, anthropological correlates of human warfare have probably not changed time immemorial from the earliest days of cave-dwelling humanity until today—only the means by which we have come to make war, and by which we seek to wage war, and the convoluted reasons to which we have put our war-making, have changed.

War making seems to be increasingly an impersonal activity in which the human agency and engagement in actual acts of violence is somewhat removed and put at an increasing

distance on the battlespace, often mediated through electronic information.

The basic elemental aspects of human beings at war with one another seem to have not changed in the least—humankind may have become technologically more sophisticated, and more liberated and healthier as a function of civilization, but human civilization by itself thus far has only made humankind far more destructive than anything he could have been in the past.

Much if not most of human history has been written from the standpoint of political-military history rather than from alternative standpoints (of biographical life-history, or social or cultural history.)

At least part of the reason may have been that much of human history has been written in the blood of human warfare and political conflict that has defined the rise, development and frequent fall of human systems.

The other part of the reason may have been not merely the paucity of historical evidence to write non-military, a-political histories, but the fact that most history writing and synthesis is at least second (or subsequent) person recounting, based upon records that are at best partial and at worst erroneous or non-existent.

History as narrative story-telling, as chronological drama, is as much a statement of the present and would-be future worlds,

retrojected upon past events and people who made these events, as they are a factual, filial recounting of those events and persons. It is perhaps our continuing political motives and militaristic orientations that infuse and keep alive our connections with constructed pasts as it has had anything to do with accounting and fact-keeping of an accurate historical record.

This is not to argue that military history has no value and does not play a critically important part in our understanding of human military realities. Military history is vital to our understanding of human military realities, and its sense of the past and functions and roles it played, not just in conflict, strife and conquest, but in the political and social integration of vast regions upon earth.

It is to suggest at least though that all of our contemporary military lessons cannot be found by military history alone, especially from the standpoint of military anthropology and when set in modern contexts of the rapid tempo of global development, and even our interpretation of much of military history might be productively framed through a broadened understanding of a comparative and critical cross-cultural understanding of human aggression and patterns of warfare and conflict.

We are living in an era of rapid change and global development, in which lessons learned in the past, and drawn from past experience, may potentially have less and less play in newly

emergent strategic situations, especially in highly dynamic social environments.

Coalitional structures upon which states will increasingly depend for military security and organization will become in the new global system more ad hoc and transitory with shifting allegiances and mixed strategic sets of interests that transcend the geo-political maps that once served as the touchstone of the international past.

While I've spent considerable time elaborating some of these models for conflict especially as they may relate to modern nation-state societies, the general contexts in which we best understand and construe contemporary patterns of modern warfare, these patterns have been employed mostly within a counter-insurgency framework of domestic conflict as this links to patterns of global terrorism, rather than to a broader set of inter-state warfare or inter-tribal conflict or primitive warfare patterns as these may have occurred especially in earlier proto-historical contexts.

Parallel Worlds and the Problem of Anthropological Unification

The Psycho-cultural Dynamics of Functional Identity Integration

Human reality is not just complex—it is super-complex in the sense that as a system it appears to be multiple parallel sub-systems functioning in reciprocal tandem with one another.

The smooth inter-functioning of these sub-systems is not something that happens naturally or genetically (though the developmental potential and basis appears anthropologically hardwired), but seems to depend upon developmental learning and socialization inputs that is something of an achievement, or a series of developmental and adjustment achievements, that occur over the course of a lifetime.

Being a life achievement of the individual, it is a developmental process that can, and frequently does, result in some sense of failure, imperfection, and incompleteness. It is also a progressive developmental process that can at times reverse itself, and that remains in ever changing modalities of relative integration and adaptation.

Many psychological syndromes or behavioral complexes can only really be understood if framed in reference to the life project that successful achievement of integration and

adaptation depends, and its relative sense of success, changing directions.

By extension, the explanation of broader-scale social phenomena and processes only become comprehensible with any degree of sufficiency if also framed within the context of understanding how these human systems of development become mapped and create their own social environments that demand an achievement of stable adaptation and dynamic equilibrium in relation to environmental change processes.

In understanding this complexity of human systems, we must understand as well that the inner psychological and largely subjectively experienced world of the individual is interlinked and interdependent with the outer social and largely objectively and behaviorally experienced world within which the individual becomes situated.

This anthropological situation of the socially referenced human being is at the core of understanding human systems and their integration, both intra-psychically and inter-socially, as well as its extension into understanding structural patterns of social organization, institutionalization and its systemic development.

The parallelism by which we must approach different anthropological realities occurs in different ways with different levels of social reality. In language, we have the parallelism between language as a spoken, interpersonal reality, as it is situated primarily within and made possible by the speech and neuro-physiological linguistic apparatus of the individual human

being, and language as a more or less formal grammatical structure, a large lexicon, and a socio-historical process of development of communication and expressive patterns of a speech community.

In culture we find a similar parallelism—we can speak therefore of the large, upper-case “Culture” that distinguishes one group of people from the rest of the world, what we assign to entire nation-states and look for among native tribes.

Then we can refer to the microscopic level of cultures as these are articulated more or less by people interacting upon a daily basis with other people, and as these patterns of daily interaction become possible by cultural apparatus of the individual, including language, which is shared, more or less, between commonly related people.

A similar parallelism exists in anthropological literature between looking at social structural patterning, either writ large in terms of formal and informal organizations of large communities or corporate structures, or else again reducible to the consistent patterns, routines, rituals and “structurations” of interaction between individuals, and across entire networks of individuals, in the daily articulation of social history.

One of the key challenges of theoretical interpretation in anthropology has been the mixing of metaphors and the overextension of modes of explanation from one level to the other, or across different areas or aspects of interpretation.

In comprehending human systems and their developmental dynamics, it is important also to develop modes of explanation that allow us to see how human systems require functions upon both microscopic and macroscopic levels, and the interaction between these levels, which, while underdetermined and thus giving rise to intermediate level patterns that may be highly variable and chaotic, nonetheless exhibits a certain systemic pattern of order and predictability.

It is the dialectics of interaction between parallel levels, each level mutually constraining the dynamic limits of the other levels that becomes interesting to consider in the formation of non-linear and underdetermined epiphenomenal patterns of human behavior within systems.

Human systems thus are multi-layered and stratified entities, which can be explained upon multiple levels of analysis. No explanation upon a single level of such analysis can be sufficient for the understanding of the entire structural order of the system.

This stratification of human systems occurs at all levels of human systems integration—such that we can speak of the complex stratification of an individual, their psyche, their language patterns, their personality and behavior, as a fundamental atomic human system.

Similarly, we can refer to the stratification of entire nation state societies and the complex national populations and communities that these societies encompass.

The key parallels that I have found of central importance in the military anthropological work I do, and of central importance for instance in the analysis and understanding of warfare patterns of terrorism, is the form of parallelism that we can describe in the anthropological or social construction of reality. These are the parallel worlds between the internalized and subjective symbolic worlds of cognition, understanding, perception, comprehension, and the externalized and objective environment of human social interaction, behavior and response patterning.

From this we describe the dynamic equilibrium of a basic learning loop that occurs between these two levels, between the behavioral environment situated externally in the social world, and the internal symbolic environment of the person as a sense of subjective self, and how the interaction between these worlds shapes both sense of self internally and a person's behavior and other's reactions to the behavior externally.

In Piaget's relevant and related model of equilibration, of the oral assimilation of new information, and the subsequent accommodation of that information to revised symbolic frameworks of reference and understanding, we find a basic learning loop as a dynamic, circular feedback process.

The argument from the so-called "psycho-logic" of the violent extremist is that this normal learning loop becomes short-circuited by means of the fragmentation and object splitting of self-identity constructs, and the resultant closing of symbolic

reference frameworks to the process of the accommodation of these frameworks to new information.

This replicates the Festinger model of cognitive dissonance as being the first reaction to unexpected or undesired news, by falling back upon what we know and attempting to assimilate and fit the new information into preconceived and pre-evaluated frameworks of understanding.

We are describing systematically thereby the process of cognitive closure of internalized structures of symbolic knowledge, and hence, a narcissistic shutting off of the integrated self, and a splitting and fragmentation of this self in negative or undesirable part-self objects, that become projected and externalized onto the larger world.

Unable to reevaluate what one knows, and how and why, and to reframe that knowledge in new ways, there is then a closed loop, auto-compensatory process of development occurring in which there is regression to what can be called Pre-Oedipal or borderline defense mechanisms (projection, externalization, splitting, fantasy ideation, etc.)

These regressive patterns create the basis for detachment and reattachment (the withdrawal and transference of libido) that leads to narcissistic complex and to the cultivation of social narcissism in group settings.

The short-circuiting therefore of the fundamental learning loop, by over-attachment to preconceived frameworks through

which behavior is interpreted and driven, by inordinate ideological attachment and psycho-social identification, preventing the reevaluation and revision of these frameworks, creates the conditions for the radicalization of the individual who feels compelled increasingly to act out on fantasy rehearsal.

This may lead to explosively dangerous consequences of mass social violence, but it may also lead as well into serial patterns of repetition compulsion and serial violence that is more highly targeted, refined and symbolically shaped. Both forms of outcome play upon and feedback into the radicalization cycles that are attached to terrorist organizations and the attraction to seeking a terrorist identity in the world.

The other parallelism of note in the social science modeling of violent phenomena and especially of mass organized violence, one directly tied to military organization and socialization, is exactly the relationship between the psychology of the radicalized individual, and the mass psychology of the radicalized group or organization, and the manner in which these two levels of radicalization may feed one upon the other and create the conditions of the escalation of the radicalization processes driving to violent extremism.

A part of this phenomenon would then become the social normalization of violent behavior as if such behavior were part and parcel of the everyday normative structures of society.

How this happens is through the induction of otherwise normal everyday people into group contexts in which social pressures induce re-identification of an individual through violent actions and with violence prone behavior, particularly through patterns of discrimination, anti-locution and projective targeting of outgroup members.

People come to attach themselves in the form of collective narcissism to a larger group such that their submerged identity and their sense of security and potential survival becomes attached to the solidarity and identity of the group as a whole.

That part of themselves they have attached to the group as a dominant sense of ego-ideal, such that their mindset and behavioral reactions can be manipulated into a state of frenzy or emergency with the belief that the group is being threatened for its survival and security, by being threatened by attack or depredation by the same out-groups that are designated as counter-reference others (seen as subhuman, evil, dangerous, polluted, etc.)

When we seek to analyze and understand the problem of radicalization in any given situation, whether it is that of self-radicalization of a marginal individual, or it is the social radicalization of an entire nation-state, in either context it becomes necessary to understand the critical feedback interactions that are occurring between the different levels of humans systems stratification, whether it is the case of the individual undergoing a symbolic transformation and

conversion of identity, or it is the case of a group that undergoes a similar transformation of cultural re-identification and structural shifting towards more dangerous institutional patterns.

Finding Ourselves in Others and Others within Ourselves

The social-emotional bridge between narcissism and altruism

Discussion in our class today with senior Soldiers that normally deals with some aspect of violent extremism drifted away from the usual direction explaining human violence or mass killing, and led instead in the opposite and quite unusual direction of trying to explain what prevents mass killing, the role of love in human society, and the critical function of genuine transference and attachment between people that precludes evil.

It was generally agreed that the beginning of Fascism in the world was the ending of the importance of the other person's suffering in the world, and the denial of the significance and importance of their subjectivity. Evil ends when genuine empathy for the suffering of others begins.

All this being said in a mutually very sincere manner, the question of the problem of attachment, of a sense of belonging and of our capacity to see others as themselves, "to walk in their moccasins," as the proverb goes came up.

Walking back from the classroom later that day, I couldn't help but to ruminate further on the question of our relative sense of

humanity, and particularly of the apparently contradictory but paradoxical relationship between narcissism (presumably the incapacity to see others in ourselves or to separate others from ourselves,) and altruism, presumably the capacity to find (and lose) ourselves in others' worlds.

The capacity to see in others parts of ourselves, and to find in ourselves parts of others, defines in large measure our anthropological sense of humanity, as social beings living in the larger world. Our ability to extend our subjective world to larger and larger circles of humanity in the world, is in large part the measure of our achieved sense of humanity.

This capacity can become malignant or benign—if benign, it becomes the source of constructive human civilization, and if malignant, it becomes the source of destruction of human civilization.

But benign social attachment and identification does not necessarily depend upon altruistic self-sacrifice, which can be as malignant as narcissistic self-detachment from the world of others, and narcissistic self-engagement in the social world, in which others become a reflection of ourselves, our own needs and identities, is not necessarily a bad thing or a source of all evil, especially if it can be articulated in relatively benign and potentially productive social formations.

The real challenge in terms of understanding the social source of violent extremism is not the relative benignity or malignancy of inter-personal social relations, which may lead either to love

or murder, but the secondary effects of these patterns of relatively benign or malignant social outcomes as they are translated upon secondary levels of different structural patterns of group formation, identity, dynamics and inter-group relations.

We end up with the somewhat paradoxical possibility of intensively and ostensibly benign inter-personal relations becoming sustained with the net consequence of extremely malignant secondary inter-group relations arising.

If we put our own suffering and trauma in a compartmented box in our daily lives, and lock the key to its lid so we do not have to talk to the demons within, then we detach ourselves from that sense of suffering, but then we thereby become detached from others with a similar sense of suffering in the world that resonates symbolically and often unconsciously within ourselves.

It leads us to the kinds of questions critically opposite of those surrounding violent extremism. What are the sources and significances of human love? I see its source perhaps in the holocaust photos of the altruistic mothers bodily holding and protecting their children last and foremost, facing the child as far away from the danger as possible when about to be executed by a Nazi henchman.

I believe human love is possible, so intensely felt and socially significant, not only because of the extremely altricial source and nature of this love, a love which takes its most natural and

basic form in a mother's love for her baby and the baby's reciprocal but completely dependent love for the mother. But it also perhaps derives from our need for bonding, attachment and belonging with others as social creatures, as well as the symbolic expression of this need through our social interaction.

The inherent and natural narcissism of the young child, especially in relation to the protective, loving parent, who would readily die defending the child's life, forms the nurturing environment within which the child grows and in turn and cyclical return learns to love the larger world beyond itself.

The narcissism of the child, if gratified and provided active and consistent social reinforcement, will lead to growth of the child's social world, such that it comes in time to include the possibilities of the narcissism of others and the accommodation of the needs and interests of others in one's own world.

Love is the capacity to find in others not only what we find in ourselves, the same sort of feelings and reservoirs of strength, but also the same foibles and innateness, and similar kinds of weaknesses and imperfections. Love is the respect, tolerance and even empathetic understanding for others' differences, and a respect and sense of their importance in spite of their shortcomings.

Love would therefore include a willingness perhaps to sacrifice one's own interests, and even life itself, for the sake of the interests and lives of others we love.

This is precisely where the Fascists get it wrong. They demand and seek total sacrifice for some ideal or ideological Cause that is larger than life itself, a calling that is superhuman, but which transcends the human social equation. This sense of total commitment to a superhuman cause derives from and leads to systematic detachment to others in the world, especially those construed as being fundamentally at odds or contradictory to the cause.

The manifest willingness to do social violence, in the name of the same cause, is then just a next step in the inevitable evolution of a fascist system.

At the bottom of this is the denial of the subjectivity, indeed, the humanity, the significance, and the importance of others, the denial of which soon becomes replaced by a callous desensitization and dehumanization of the other as an object of pure narcissistic manipulation, as something then that can be more or less simply marginalized or even killed without too strong a sense of ambivalence or remorse.

This discussion led me to consider the relationship between a willingness to die for others, altruistically, and a willingness to die or sacrifice the lives of others for blind commitment to some cause that becomes held as larger, and more important, than life itself.

It then led me to a consideration of the relationship between narcissism, in which we cannot separate our sense of self from how others may see and construe us in the world, in which our

sense of ourselves and our well-being in the world rests ultimately upon the manipulation of others' perception and reception of our own behavior. It also rests upon the preoccupation with influencing their behavioral reactions in relation to ourselves, and a genuine sense of altruism in which we may find in the well-being of others the well-being of ourselves, such that we are willing to even forfeit the latter for the sake of the former. Perhaps that is the difference between the pathway of the coward and that of the true hero, or of a thousand small deaths to a single final one.

But in a sense, it is difficult to fully or completely separate narcissism and altruism—they are not just opposites in contradistinction to one another, as they seem somewhere to join in the middle upon the same continuum.

It is even possible that extreme altruism is as bad as, or essentially becomes the same thing as, extreme narcissism, but that in the indefinite middle, they seem like inverted versions of the same thing. Is it possible that extreme selflessness becomes essentially the other side of the same coin as extreme selfishness?

A narcissistic identity is an identity that cannot have sincere, genuine object-attachment with others in the world. Such an identity therefore is defined through dependency and manipulation of others as detached objects of the self that serve the purposes of self-gratification. The self becomes

invested in the other, but not in a benign or truly loving way, but only as a projection of self-love and purely selfish interest.

Altruistic regard for the life-interests and existence of others in the world, as expressed through feelings and sensibilities of love, does not anywhere necessarily preclude a healthy sense of self-interest and self-love, especially perhaps as this may be expressed through the interests and love of others.

Selfishness is by itself not an intrinsically evil or vile orientation of character, except when its pursuit comes deliberately and systematically realized through the exploitation and expense of others.

Perhaps we may then distinguish between a parasitic form of narcissistic social engagement and self-interest, as well possibly of an equally malignant form of altruist self-sacrifice, especially for blind commitments to superhuman ideological causes, from what might be considered a more benign and possibly even symbiotic form of narcissistic self-engagement in the social as well as altruistic and altricial social engagement in the self.

Two lovers who learn to enjoy one another intimately, openly and sexually do not deny their own pleasures and satisfactions from such engagement—indeed, each serves the other's needs as altruistically as they are narcissistically served by the other, to the point where their personal gratifications from the mutual experience are pushed to the climax and fused with that of the other.

If selfish pleasure were not involved by both, mutually, the relationship would not be an expression of love but rather merely one-sided exploitation of one by the other.

Attachment to others entails risk and potential sacrifice, altruistically, for the sake of others. What is sacrificed in true love though is not a genuine, true sense of self, which becomes discovered only through the attachment to others, but given up is a false, hidden, insecure sense of self as if other than one's true self. True altruistic sacrifice by attachment to others is therefore made possible through true narcissistic self-interest derived from such social attachment.

If we stand back from this most human of equations, we come to understand that what makes one form of narcissism/altruism malignant and the other mutual and benign, even symbiotic, is whether either form of narcissistic or altruistic expression is relatively one-sided, uneven and non-reciprocal, self-serving (or completely self-denying) or else is reciprocal, mutually fused, balanced, two-sided, and serving of the social good of all.

Human virtuosity is neither complete selfishness nor complete selflessness. Human virtuousness is the social mutuality that promotes the interests of both parties, hopefully at no one else's expense. It is this proposition that itself gives growth to a growing and wider circle of social evil in the world.

In group context we come to identify mutual needs and interests, in a form of limited love that then in turn comes to

serve as the justification of the pursuit of self-interest at the sacrifice and cost of the interests of others.

What we may find difficult to do in an interpersonal manner, face-to-face and one-on-one, we may find much easier to accomplish in a group and crowd situation in which both our own identity and the separable identities of others become obscured beneath the identity and reality of the group within which we are immersed.

Sometimes, it becomes possible that relative benignity and productivity of inter-personal relationships within a group or organizational framework is constructed or maintained through the selective delimitation of inter-social relationships beyond the group, which secondary relationships may in fact become comparatively malignant.

Indeed, the capacity to adopt highly productive inter-social relations within one's own group, while maintaining highly malignant relationships with those identified as out-group members, seems remarkable from an anthropological and biological point of view.

Invariably such social splitting in the world becomes accompanied by stereotypical anthropological fallacies of symbolic distortion of the perception and conception of these out-group others in the world, somewhat as counter-reference identities—(zoomorphization, pathognomonization or “monstrosification.”)

At essence is the need in cultivating social malignancy and extremism to dehumanize others in the world, as a necessary precursor to facilitate being able to annihilate those who are thus dehumanized without our feeling a residual sense of pain or suffering.

We must look closely at systems, and understand that people within systems, like that of fascist states, who become dehumanized because in such systems people are transformed into machines, as extensions of the state in a world that celebrates, sacralizes, and makes virtuous mechanization of life.

These mechanized people then become capable of dehumanizing others. Indeed, they are often made to seek to dehumanize others, and need to do so, because by so doing it may serve to rehumanize, however partially, incompletely, fallaciously and temporarily, themselves.

I believe Colin Wilson referred to these people as the malevolent outsiders, and it is perhaps the nature of modern, fascist-style social orientation, to seek to make insiders into outsiders and outsiders into insiders.

In so doing, such a system in its structural development seeks to alienate everyone from everyone else, by definition and default as well as by design and deliberation, leading to the capacity and willingness of many people to adopt malignant social behavior rooted in systematic social detachment and non-attachment.

Accompanying the fascist manipulation, materialization and mechanization of the human spirit, with resulting systematic social dehumanization of the world, there occurs also a process of systematic and deliberate mystification and mythologization of symbolic reality, the intent of which is to turn off people's critical attitudes and brains, and to render such people incapable of thinking beyond the narrow dimensions and false illusions cultivated by such a system.

Such people who have turned off their minds, the quintessential earmark of humanity and humanness, then become extremists who, willing, as Voltaire so aptly said about extremism, to believe anything, are capable of doing anything.

Such people, being lost to their own humanity, cannot then find humanity in others, and seek to rediscover their humanity by the malignant means of the dehumanization and inhumanity of others in themselves and themselves in others.

Standing away from this discussion and its source in the classroom, we might conclude that a healthy and effective military is not defined necessarily by a denial of weakness or a willingness to blindly kill others.

Dehumanization may serve at times a necessary function in effective targeting of military violence, but an especially modern and civilized military organization does not necessarily want a soldiery willing to simply, obediently die or cast away their own lives for a blind cause. Nor does it necessarily want or need blind killing machines.

The modern military wants effective Soldiers who can perform altruistic social functions, mutually productive, not necessarily in a completely self-sacrificing manner, but possibly in a selectively self-serving and self-preserving manner.

The modern military wants necessarily neither dead heroes nor slowly dying cowards, rather the military needs those who can learn to selectively fight and intelligently run away to live (and fight) another day.

Self, Object, Ego, Identity, Persona and the Other Upon Psycho-Social Stratification, Integration, Construction and Fragmentation of Anthropological Reality

The anthropological relativity of human reality is that for our entire lives we never really or fully escape our own headgear or the filtering, pre-structuring and constructive effects this fundamental human situation has upon our perception, cognition, connotation or behavioral response, much less upon our development and life-cycle. Nor can we either fully account for or completely discount the indirect influence this subjectively oriented relativity of our knowledge has upon others and what others may have upon us in the course of our lives.

Subjectively or objectively construed, whether internally cast or externally situated, this relativity and the realities of its symbolic-behavioral limitations upon our anthropologically constructed realities, can be said to be in a sense stratigraphically layered in our psyche. Thus we may talk about not just the unconscious, the preconscious and the conscious, but for each of these, we might also refer to multiple sub-layers as well as numerous configurations and “compartments” upon each of these sub-layers or layers.

Within which layers and through which strata our sense of reality becomes constructed and is made either adaptively coherent to our prevalent behavioral situations, or becomes rendered mal-adaptively dysfunctional somehow within that noetic environment.

If I were to put a label to this process, I would call it open construction (one almost always aimed at incomplete closure) and the result of these diverse constructive processes is the “struct” of a relatively consistent personality profile (character) of an individual vis-à-vis the social world that individual participates within.

We have in our contemporary era a fortunate legacy of significant intellectual contributions across a plethora of human-based sciences, including psychiatry, psychoanalysis, psychology, sociology and anthropology, as well as the critical insights and frameworks from other social sciences (political, economic, social, environmental, behavioral, biological, etc.), upon which to build some kind of depth understanding of the realistic possibilities of comprehending the psychic and behavioral complexities of human reality.

While it would be premature to push for the claim of the universality of such hypothetical constructs, it would not be too soon (possibly too late) to aim for theoretic-methodological generality that might be considered from a human scientific standpoint paradigmatically robust and even comprehensive. If I had to fit a name to this larger paradigmatic conceptual

scheme, it would be “the anthropological construction of human reality based upon cultural selection.”

If we look deeply into the mirror, we perhaps find the fiction of a single whole, integrated person looking back at us.

Analytically perhaps, we might find actually a collection of “part-persons” who are really, paradoxically, starring at the same image in the mirror, with the illusion that all these part-people are seeing the same thing at the same time.

This fiction of wholeness is perhaps a necessary psychological illusion that we must usually seek to maintain about our own reality. The paradox of this illusion is that when other people look at us, they are probably, usually, not seeing also the same thing, but rather perhaps see the resonance of different part-person’s that compose us at different times and in different circumstances.

Deep dives into psycho-analytic research and literature, with occasional forays into social-psychological and possibly “social psychiatric” perspectives (to include psycho-biographical and psycho-historical as well as psycho-cultural interpretive accounts) offers up a kind of picture of the dynamic personality of an individual, built by evolution to be dynamic, but also constrained through this evolutionary development to be vulnerable to certain challenges of integration, fragmentation, and potentially regressive developmental fixation, in the course of one’s life.

From a primordial evolutionary perspective, we must relate this fundamental “human situation” to the early evolution of what can be called the distinctive anthropological trait complex that accounts for the sophisticated capacities and potential integration of human language, intelligent cognition, and the socio-cultural construction of reality.

A key aspect of this developmental trait complex (which includes bipedality, thumb opposability and dexterity of the hand, the pharyngeal-lingual complex, the enlarged frontal regions of the cerebral cortex, year-round menses and reproductive receptivity, etc.) seems to have been the long-delayed post-partum altricial development and dependency of the infant human being, and the degree to which social interaction and effective environmental stimulation plays a role in this prolonged period of developmental maturation.

It is this prolonged, delayed post-partum development of the individual human being in anthropological-cultural situ that perhaps makes possible the deep layering, or the depth psychology, of the development of human personality, and also, that makes possible the complex “multi-person” integration of the individual as a progressive but not unlimited range of “possible becoming” (or alternative anthropological constructs) in the course of a life-cycle.

To develop a kind of analytical schema of this developmental scaffolding and spiraling of the human personality, from at least neo-natal infancy to adulthood to old age, we can posit the

gradual deposition of key, critical psycho-social constructs, in a sense one on top of the previous layers, but during which the accretion of subsequent superficial layers on top (in the ongoing present) creates the continuous restructuring and rearrangement of the underlying content and its relative, subjective context.

It must at this stage be remarked that it is perhaps the wonderful plasticity and astronomical complexity of the human brain, and the concomitant flexibility and multifaceted nature of the human mind, that has made this an evolutionary possibility.

The main deterministic order of this psycho-analytical schema is suggested in the title of this text. The “self” is the entity most directly tied to the original, organic and biological being of the individual, and it becomes the first construct of infancy to manifest itself behaviorally and adaptively within its effective environment.

We can argue different timelines and pathways of this development of a sense of self for most human beings, but we must understand that it is in its most primitive, primordial sense there from the beginning, even in the womb, and that it forms at the rudimentary, baseline levels of the personality remaining as such through the entire life time, quite frequently springing to the surface through the other, subsequent layers, and usually mixing with these other layers in a dynamic manner.

At some point, a process that might be best termed “differentiation” and symbolic distancing of the self begins to occur, such that the self becomes separate as a “struct” of personality from the larger object world with which it has interacted up to the point of this differentiation.

The basis of this differentiation has been psycho-analytically described as deriving from the internalization of these objects as a part of the enlarged and differentiated sense of self, permitting the self from separating from the environment of object relations as a baby separates from the womb by the cutting of the umbilical cord. By such internalization processes, the young self comes out into the world as an increasingly independent object of the world.

Emergent in time, as a course of several years of infantile development, is what can be called the nascent reality principle, and the sense of ego that emerges as a rational mediator between the object world, or the larger world filled with objects, and the inner self-world that becomes filled with corresponding other-objects.

We speak then of the emergence and increasing sophistication of ego, especially by mechanisms like schools, reading and education, that permits the maturing child to deal increasingly with initiative and in a semi-independent way in their technologically sophisticated world. With this also is the latent emergence of a sense of identity that is a kind of “construct” that situates ego and the underlying self-object relations into a

relatively stable and prototypically recognized form in the context of the enlarging social world of which the young child, now becoming an adolescent, gradually emerges into.

This is the stage, in which identity constructs come to take over and contextualize the ego-struct that we refer to as the adolescent transition from primary socialization to what might be called derivative secondary socialization in which increasingly the young “adult” becomes an independent social actor in an ever enlarging social world, across increasing numbers of social sub-worlds.

Once the “adult child” has come out in the public world, there is a clear partition between what might be called the private and the public spheres of one’s construction of reality. It is a partition or boundary of human systems that becomes mediated through intermediate structures that can be called personal and inter-personal interaction patterns, from which we expect the emergence of some kind of a persona that builds upon and becomes the social expression of the identity construct in relation to the ego-struct.

Once “personas” emerge as the product of the interaction of identities and ego-constructions, there occurs a sense of parallax of possibly discrepant realities, one an outer world in which identity is primarily located, and the other an inner world that resonates and responds in an underdetermined manner with this dynamic outer-world.

There is a fundamental challenge that in the sociology of knowledge has been referred to that of symmetry, or balance, of the identity construct as this is expressed through alternative possible personas, and the ego-struct as this may become composed of alternative combinations of self-objects in relation to “object-selves.”

This might also be called the fundamental problem of anthropological reality in the social dependency of the construction of that reality, what might be called the challenge of creating and maintaining a sense of congruence not only between inner and outer worlds, but between the external objective world as this is inhabited primarily by the “other” (and the other self, or alter-ego) and the subjective inner world as this is the haunt of the self.

The other might be called the persona of the object as the object is based upon the construction of significant other people in the world, while the self-persona might be called the persona of the self as this is dynamically mediated through ego-structs (working defense mechanisms maintaining adaptive self-equilibrium).

Relative congruence becomes the challenge of maintaining dynamic equilibrium of the ego-struct between these alternative personas of other objects and other selves as these continually invade and intrude upon our world and our sense of reality, esteem, vitality, need, security, in that world.

These anthropological constructions of personality are not just that of cognition, memory, and behavioral response and relation, but they are more importantly also and simultaneously the constructions of value, meaning, affect, emotion, feeling, and sense of well-being that can invade and affect the physical body and one's real sense of organic health.

Upon all levels of the psyche, as the internal ghost of the machine, sense of knowledge, of percepts, concepts and truth, are fused with subjective evaluations that link the individual organically to the world and the individual's knowledge and psycho-cultural patterns behaviorally to the body, as well as to the larger body politic of the "social self." In this kind of analytical schema, we can find possibly the human systems baseline of operation of cultural selection mechanisms in the anthropological construction of reality.

The challenge of the construction of personality in society cannot be separated from the question of the socio-cultural dynamics of that society, and in its potential developmental stratification, we find with that construction not just the deposition of major layers of "structs" of a social set of part-persons, but the potential for the fragmentation and compartmentalization of part-selves, part objects, part-egos, part identities, and part personas and part others upon all levels of a sedimented personality.

From these multiple stracts of personality we can provide almost infinite pathways of becoming and a large range of alternative pathways of being.

The presence of alternative stracts of personality, especially within our unconscious, presents our current construction of personality with an continuous and ineffable challenge to provide a stability and consistency of behavior while retaining a consonance with our adaptive environments, and not to allow these alternative stracts to suddenly rise to the surface, or to generate subconscious conflict, anxiety and dissonance that interferes with our sense of being in the world.

Every struct may be a part-whole, may be itself incomplete and unfinished, and may represent a repressed or rejected part of our own personality construction.

This construction itself may be a somewhat loose and fluid concatenation of multiple stracts upon different levels, subject to breakdown, conflict, and the experience of discrepant realities when one struct suddenly replaces another as a component element of personality.

Deeper more primitive stracts that may be compartmentalized residues of previous, possibly intense experiences, may often threaten to emerge at the surface and to present itself upon higher layers of personality organizing, resulting in confusion of personality across multiple levels of organization and dynamic interaction.

It is not difficult to imagine scenarios occurring in which this confusion of levels of personality construction results in inappropriate and even destructive behavior.

It is important in my view that when we reference such reified concepts as “structs” or fragments of “self” or “object” or “ego” or “identity” or “persona” or “other” and we seek some kind of meaningful relationship between these concepts and with human behavior.

It also seems important that we construe these “things” more as various and relatively enduring aspects of human behavior as a periodic process within a larger developmental continuum, one that is primarily symbolic. It is a form of symbolic behavior and various levels and forms of symbolisms that have an organic basis and root in the human being, affecting physiology and behavior, and that bridge us and our bodies and souls to a larger social world of the collective body.

The symbolic nature of the construction of personality, which might be seen as something of a psychological fiction that we build for and around ourselves in relation to larger constructions of the social world, is a perspective largely implied in psychoanalytic interpretation, but rarely explicitly addressed, especially as a central feature of the structure of human behavioral process.

Symbolization tends to be explained as a fairly specific and linguistically-based process, and much of human behavioral response, especially that which seems implicit, spontaneous

and intuitive, and that which is functionally oriented towards adaptive behavior (eating, cooking, working, etc.,) is rarely regarded as something fundamentally and primarily symbolic.

It is difficult to regard a hammer used to drive and pull nails as a symbolic object, but whenever a person picks up a hammer with the intent to nail something together, or pull things apart, that tool becomes not just a symbolic object in the hand, but as such, an extension of the symbolic sense of self.

For that moment the individual becomes a “hammerer” and if we were to ask such a person what that might mean, what associations with previous experience of hammering or carpentry, etc., we are eliciting a kind of “construction” of an identity that has some kind of significance within a larger social context.

The symbolic significance of the hammer in the hand or of the act of hammering may seem unconsciously backgrounded to the functional purposes to which it is put, but in a basic sense the hammer, as a human being, has no other way of relating to, thinking about, or using the hammer except as a symbolic object, an extension of his own bodily construct, and hence a part of the self, as this is especially expressed in social space and time.

Hence, if such a person comes through experience and skill to pride himself in his hammering abilities and its implicit competencies, that individual will seek to do an efficient and accurate job of nailing.

We thus can speak not only of the stratigraphy of psychological symbolism, in the organization of experience and in the constructive behavioral efforts toward a cultural reality.

We can also speak of a kind of symbolic differentiation of this experience and behavior in the course of human development, moving from infantile behavior that is primarily pre-symbolic, in a graded manner, by increasingly sophisticated and relative symbolizations, into an adult configuration of personality, relatively stable yet flexible, that can be called fully symbolic.

If we see anything with mental illness, especially perhaps with diffuse schizophrenia, it is a breakdown of the personality through the dysfunction and disintegration of the symbolic constructive process, which expresses itself in the failure of social relational identity or reality, the basic failure of communicational rapport and disconnection with reality testing, as well as in the fragmentation and disintegration of underlying symbolisms of the self.

If this analytic model speaks with any significance to the underlying and implicit structure of human personality in the course of its underdetermined, non-linear and open-ended development, we must understand the dilemmas of a symbolic structure of our intelligence and its adaptive mediation with our world.

While symbolisms are fuzzy and sticky, relative constructs of meaning, they tend to fuse together, and without secondary processes of symbolic dialectics, or the variable marking of

symbolic contrast and contradiction, similitude and distinction, relation and difference (“I versus/ thou,” or “me and (or not) you”), we become lost in a sea of symbolic relativity and relational identity.

In short, symbolization works psychologically, and especially as this extends into socially defined realms, if it allows us to build and maintain systemically what might be called symbolic boundary formations both around and within ourselves, which boundaries or walls are selectively porous and able to effectively and dynamically mediate relational identities back and forth between inner and outer realms of experience.

We have inherited intellectual models of human personality and behavior as something that by adulthood becomes developmentally stabilized and characterologically set.

If we seek the delineation of the underlying symbolic structures of such personality and behavior, we end up dissolving a sense of the whole human being, with some overarching sense of consistency of character and continuity of behavior pretty much from birth to death.

We have the image of a large tree, that as it slowly grows larger, lays annual rings around rings, and the trunk having a stable configuration, with a branching structure that emerges somewhat chaotically but becomes set with time, marking a definitive structural configuration that is unique to each individual tree, whatever the type of tree it may be.

The difference perhaps between this structural model of a tree and the structural model of the development of the human personality as this becomes expressed through behavior, is that possibly human development and its behavioral expression becomes much more open-ended and dynamic.

Though with age the range of adaptive flexibility and alternative configurations may become narrower and narrower, there is a sense that even in old age the individual may undergo a fundamental psychological change for better or worse, that leads to a fundamental alternation of that person's personality structure and its behavioral patterns of response.

Certainly if you transplant such an adult human being from one socio-cultural context to a completely new and foreign one, as you would uproot a tree and relocate it to an entirely new geographic setting, you would be forcing that person, of whatever age and range of remaining adaptive flexibility, to reroot and to undergo an adaptive transformation of personality, one that is primarily symbolic but expressed behaviorally, with adaptive consequences relative to the settings of that behavior.

In a sense, in constructions of personality, a person is forced under such drastic circumstances of such a total environmental regime change, to reinvent oneself from the ground up, and to create newly adaptive configurations of personality while on some level maintaining a continuity and linkage with past experiences and previous constructions.

The capacity for people to do this seems remarkable, and it is therefore not also very surprising if the human requirements of symbolic adaptation are often overwhelming and frequently result in psychological breakdown and failure of the personality construction.

The task of the therapist then is a daunting one in such cases—to assist the patient in reconstructing a more adaptively successful orientation of personality--a disintegrated personality may become well past the limit of sufficient rehabilitation or reconstruction.

We can see in the requirement as a life project of achieving and sustaining a sense of symbolic integration of reality, with the rise of disintegration, the shift from a construction of reality that is based upon the sense of wholeness that is the synergistic property of its integration, to a sense of totality of the boundary by which one desperately seeks to retain a sense of a self that is otherwise fragmenting and falling apart, and that becomes the hallmark of a totalitarian developmental orientation, as a regression to an earlier sense of the self that is rooted in one's past and in one's early childhood experiences and constructs.

Totalitarianism thus, psychologically considered and subjectively experienced, is the place of symbolic refuge when disintegration of one's symbolic constructions of reality begin to set in, due in the main to their failure in the project of developmental adaptation in the larger world.

It is the place that normal people retreat to in order to retain a minimal sense of unity and integrity, at the sacrifice of the holistic integration of reality, and it is the place that abnormal, psychopathological people cling to neurotically and in a borderline manner, to prevent and forestall further psychopathic disintegration.

Self-Symbols

We map ourselves upon a larger world, and the world maps itself into us, through the use of symbolism. A symbol is not so much a thing as it is an event and a process, a part of our being, or rather becoming in the world—a process we might call the symbolic construction of our reality.

The symbol thus is the act of linking our inner sense of ourselves with the outer sense of the world, and in the process, fusing these senses into a single construct. This symbolic basis of human behavior is evident in the behavior of even two-year-old children, when they can match an abstract image to a thing, remotely, and to a sound that is the name of the thing.

This symbolic enactment in turn creates the fusion, the integration of reality, which is in essence fleeting, but it also leads to the possibility of confusion, which is the opposite of an integrated reality construct. It can lead to transfusion, which is the bleeding over of meaning from one construct into another.

Human behavior is in essence symbolically representational behavior, constituting the basis of human knowledge, and human brains are neurologically wired and encoded and biologically evolved to perform this complex form of behavior on a routine, automatic basis. This symbolic behavior is the stuff which dreams are made of, and it runs autonomously

whether or not there is an overarching sense of “self” that can be said to consciously guide such behavior.

Our conscious self may be said to be a symbolic construct, a complex entity built of diverse cognitions, memories, perceptions, emotions, actions and behavioral responses, all tied, more or less, into a single sense of integrated whole. We can somewhat tritely say that the self then is the synergy of the human organismic system, symbolically integrated in behavior, that maintains a delicate equilibrium with its environment.

This equilibrium depends upon the behavioral-symbolic integration of a person, socially and environmentally, such that there occurs the kind of symbolic fusion of the objective constructs of reality that are out there in the world, particularly the complex constructs of other people, with the internalized and therefore subjective constructions of the self in terms of the symbolic structures making up the self-system.

There is always by definition a relative goodness of fit between internalized constructs and behavioral worlds to which these constructs are externally linked, and this sense of relative fitness requires a constant sense of readjustment and reconfiguration to maintain sharp objective focus of reality.

This entails as well that the symbolic construction of reality is never perfect, and is, in a sense, always at least a few steps or seconds behind the changing event horizons of one’s world, struggling to catch up and to keep in focus and correct orientation. It might be said that a healthy symbolic sense of

self experiences a high degree of adaptive symmetry and fitness with the environment, and a high level of symbolic consonance in one's social world.

In a sense, such a healthy self maintains a resilient "gyroscopic" sense of adaptive equilibrium. It may be said by contrast that an unhealthy sense of self is unable to achieve such gyroscopic equilibrium, especially over a longer-term frame of reference, or across multiple adaptive contexts, and hence experiences a wobble effect of chronic disequilibrium.

We understand then the cognitive basis of much mental illness in terms of the disequibration effects of a symbolic sense of self that cannot achieve its state of dynamic integration, and that instead experiences of disintegration or what has been referred to as the fragmentation of the self, and hence, the splitting off of the symbolic constructs of reality, from one another.

It is said that the basic foundations of mental health are established quite early in infancy and childhood, being in essence laid down by the onset of the Oedipal latency period. We can indeed find different developmental models of early childhood socialization, and many of these models are known to constitute the core of psychoanalytic theory as the basis of the interpretation of behavior.

From a psychiatric standpoint, these models, as they evolved in the history of psychoanalytic thought and clinical interpretation, have by and large not been treated as mutually

exclusive, but rather as significant additions to a larger paradigm of normal versus pathological human behavior and an understanding of the sources of this behavior in human development.

Thus, theoretical interpretation (psychoanalytical theory) only began with Sigmund Freud, but did not end with Freud. It extended and differentiated through Freud's colleagues, through second generation neo-Freudians, as well as through Melanie Klein and others who in terms of object relations theory broke away from the conventional mainstream of Freudian psycho-sexual analysis.

It extended as well from the contributions of insight by new theories and alternative systems of interpretation of the Rorschach, of other projective techniques like Murray's Thematic Apperception Task, of social bonding and attachment theory, of the primitive and pathological self, etc.

The human self has become a complex and wonderful entity most often at center stage in human history and often driving the development of human civilization. This has taken the historical prototype of the mystic, the artist, the prophet, the demagogue, the heretic and the proverbial outsider.

The sense of self, often driven internally by symbolic constructs deposited, sometimes becomes mapped out in a grandiose and exceptional manner across enlarged social spaces.

Some people seem to develop a strange sense of charismatic charm and manipulative capacity to influence significant numbers of other people who, by fault of their direct interactions or indirect associations and attachments, take on many of the personality characteristics of the sense of that charismatic individual's identity they have mapped to in the course of their lives.

In this respect, the availability of broadcast media can magnify this process and its results in the larger-scale constructions of social realities or worlds that are at best spurious and at worst fallacious.

The modern state has learned the value of the control over the media for the sake of the propagandistic control of information and the manipulation of knowledge in the management, mobilization and control of large, massive formations of people, and in the contexts of the modern nation states, we can speak thus of the emergence of the mass human being, with a sense of self-identity that is a thorough by-product of media manipulation.

We can then also refer symbolically and semiologically to the lost, anti-heroic sense of self identity, as a social construct, in contrast to the spurious self that is by and large the construct of a larger, leviathan social order, that may well be missing in our modern lives and that defines the core sense of alienation from we all suffer upon a continuous basis, and against which at times we feel a deep-seated need to push back and rebel.

We find ourselves then, often in spite of our modern affluence, to be saddled with a profound and chronic sense of insecurity and loss, with a deep-felt need to rediscover some genuine sense of core self that exists independently of the world that we are bound within.

Some people seek symbolic reconstitution of their self-identities through escape and withdrawal from the mainstream world, only to find themselves in marginal worlds more lost and isolated from others than before.

Others seek it through rebellion and rejection of the world, and the adoption of anti-symbolic constructs that are nevertheless directly tethered to the very constructs that they rage against.

Others seek alternation and experimentation in new identity constructs, adopting new symbolic raiment that are completely different from what they have ever worn before.

When we reference symbolic raiment, we mean it in both a figurative and a literal sense, as we wear ourselves in our choice of clothes and colors, in how we organize our worlds and our lives, and how we seek to portray ourselves to the world through our actions and deeds.

Perhaps nowhere in the modern world has the history of the self, personal biography, become more evident, more socially enlarged and more influentially mapped into social space than in the rise of modern totalitarian dictators who come to control

the lives of millions of people through media manipulation and the fostering of hero cults of personality.

The modern dictator as totalitarian is one who is symbolically resting upon the contagious power of the masses and the crowd mentality, and is one who pushes back both on democratic liberalism as well as conservative elitism.

For the dictator, the archetype of the citizen is the mindless, conformist bureaucrat and the military minded former NCO for whom everything is ultimately about rules, order and petty authority.

This is a risk that all modern nation-states seem to be vulnerable to, especially in terms of the rise of a populist demagogue who has the capacity to manipulate the world around them to their own advantage.

The other side of the modern self as it maps into the contemporary world, again in a largely pathological manner, is in the rise of modern terrorism and the strange sense of abject attraction that the vision of the terrorist, as a persona of evil intent, and as a modern monster, becomes the symbolic embodiment of a social construct of the perverse and anti-social self, mapping itself into the larger sense of a socially constructed reality.

The modern terrorist as a social symbolic construct of an abject self, carries great if negative reference and significance in the world, as the embodiment of a person, a prototype who is truly

villainous and evil in the world, anti-structural to everything that is normal.

The terrorist can be construed as the embodiment of the anti-type, the antithesis of the modern action hero, who though doing good by saving the world, is accomplishing this good through the enactment of extreme social violence.

The terrorist in modern guise thus becomes the dialectical fulfillment and synthesis of the modern mythology of man and his systems that celebrate graphic violence as one of the core symbologies of the expression of psycho-social power in the modern era.

We cast about for a role model of a modern self that is truly virtuous, ideally good, worthy of emulation and mentoring. We do not find a single consistent identity type, but we find instead a multiplicity of alternative possible identity constructs through which different values and combinations of values may become embodied and expressed. We find even more possibilities of identification and alternative constructions of reality without a single set of focal archetypes or predominant symbolic modalities governing the modern world.

Social Fusion and Symbolic Objectification

Symbolic objectification is the capacity to separate ourselves subjectively from our larger world, and it speaks to the establishment of healthy, realistic object relations with the larger world within contexts of our effective environments. Our effective environments become expansive when we are able to symbolically objectify the world in realistic and meaningful terms.

We perhaps best understand symbolic objectification in the example of Helen Keller first learning to recognize the sign for a word as having a symbolic and behavioral value that links to the outside world, and to growing awareness of an outside world. Her blindness and deafness cut-off her key perceptual modalities from the larger world, effectively isolating her from that world, and in that isolation, postponing her cognitive development of a coherent and realistic worldview. She learned through her teacher to use a sense of touch as a means of communicating, as socially mediated symbolic connection, with the outside world, by which symbolization and language development could then proceed apace.

Symbolic objectification of human reality permits us to accomplish two interrelated and important steps in our social development. This objectification permits us to see and define

ourselves as independent and separate beings in a larger social world, without the merging or fusion of the social object with the self, and such symbolic objectification also permits us to identify with others and to develop a sense of the independence and separateness of others in the world, by which we can then form objective attachments, not merely as extensions of ourselves and our own needs, but as separate objects with their own needs and as identities that we can then internalize into ourselves.

Symbolic objectification, and the underlying object relations theory to which it is psychoanalytically derived, permits us to accomplish a significant feat in our socialization, the achievement of full-fledged adulthood and successful symmetrical social identification with the identity constructs our society provides for us, without a strong sense of internalized discrepancy between self and self-object as this is part of the identity construct.

This achievement in turn permits the postponement and indefinite delay of adulthood for greater and greater symbolic transformation of identity, made possible by the transference and sublimation of the driving libido into socially more sophisticated and potentially more productive complex symbolic-behavioral formations.

Advanced civil society based upon an organic structure of human systems organization cannot occur without status-role specialization and therefore with the attendant socialization

processes that permit the development of relatively sophisticated and behaviorally differentiated individuals, and of the corresponding development of sophisticated identity constructs of ego and the self, vis-à-vis the parent society.

The downside of this dependence of human systems development upon mechanisms of symbolic objectification and externalization are that these same mechanisms render people susceptible to the fallacies of reification and objectification of symbolic realities, that represent distortions or falsehoods and yet that can be received as if as potent and as true as reality itself, even if they are only de facto symbolic representations of that reality.

One of the key symbolic fallacies perpetrated in human history, and probably for much of human prehistory, has been the fallacy of the naturalization of one's own cultural world as if a necessary and fixed, absolute sense of order. Racism, essentialism and other primordialist ideologies are forthcoming from this fallacy of the naturalization, through symbolic objectification, of one's culturally constructed realities.

Thus human beings are not merely prone to organization in larger and larger social constructs, but they are also prone to seeing these larger constructs as if independent species, as if the cultural and structural patterns of these constructions of human reality were the genetic basis of identity, and that one's survival depends therefore upon the survival, perpetuity and promotion of the group.

It is not too difficult to see how, with multiple alternative groupings, each identifying itself as a separate species of cultural humanity, inherently distinct and different from the rest, that we end up with an extended pattern of cultural selection and inter-group competition, which competition can be driven by the transference of inter-personal competition within groups through organizational and institutional structures to outside groups and their members.

We can then see how easy it is to create an ideological or mythological narrative that justifies warfare and making war on these outside group members, and how one's own sense of survival, even if only a product of the symbolic transformation of reality, can only be based upon the extermination of the villainized, dehumanized and hence threatening other against which one's identity is symbolically distinguished and objectified.

We can also then see how otherwise normal and healthy individuals, when caught up within group contexts, especially as the case may be in crowd contexts, then become submerged psychologically in group processes and then how mechanisms of social fusion and symbolic objectification, relatively speaking, can work to induce them to alternative states of behavioral response and to induce them to behavior that they would not otherwise engage up if left on their own.

This is particularly the case with violent behavior and possibly with sexual behavior.

It is not a far stretch then, on the other hand, to understand how conditions might arise, such that abnormal individuals who are basically psychopathic in orientation, may be induced to behavior they would not otherwise conduct if they were in more socially normalized circumstances, when they are in relative isolation, when they are in close proximity to a potential victim, and when mitigating social circumstances tend to frustrate their expression or sublimation of behavior in other, less destructive directions.

The Stratification of Psycho-Social Structure

And the Systematic Excavation of Human Culture

If we look at any human group or grouping, or we consider any human society by whatever dimensions and scales we measure its limits and its size and patterns of social organization, we confront the dilemma of the analysis of human social structure, however poorly defined and complexly, often chaotically, explained.

The argument made herein is simply that upon some level of analysis, the stratification of self as symbolic construct comes to reflect and resonate the objective social stratification of society and its social structure. The values manifest in personality orientation become largely a function of the structural orientation of the society in which the individual is bound (different structural orientations give rise to different value and symbolic orientations of personality constructs) and these two sets of processes interact dialectically to form the basis of social structuration or social process of development. They also come to constitute the basic cultural patterns that a society adopts.

Similar to the problem of culture, especially from an American cultural anthropological perspective, we confront the problem of social structure from a British social anthropological perspective, and we are left with similar dilemmas of

delimitation and precise definition of social constructs as units of analysis, with terminological distinctions serving as systematic and explicit frames of reference.

From a British point of view of the primacy and importance of structure, Americanist culture historical anthropology has it all wrong and are sloppy in their thinking—from the American point of view of the fundamental significance of culture, especially the importance of the individual culture bearer, the British models face the fallacy of self-serving structural-functionalism.

Both terms, culture and structure, are somehow hugely interrelated and interdependent, and each term plays theoretically a critical and central role in general explanation of human systems and groups at all levels and of all forms possibly encountered.

Yet both terms are not just poorly and imprecisely defined in either any analytical-methodological manner or in any unified, paradigmatic sense, but they tend to be vaguely defined and ultimately, hermeneutically and critically, indefinable in any final or universal sense.

Both structure and culture are types of key organizational concepts that are as hugely ambiguous in foundational meaning as they are variously defined. Thus both concepts are upon some level of significance inherently fused, such that in many instances structure and culture amount to the same sets of

things being referred to, in however a vague and general manner.

One of the most common and least observed fallacies is that of seeking an Aristotelian and categorical definition of either culture or structure as something that is whole, unitary, reified as a reality external to ourselves, hence observable, recordable and potentially explainable in scientific terms.

One of the considerations underlying this general fallacy of the comprehension of human culture and social structure, and their interrelationships, difference and complementarities, is to see it as a single thing or well-integrated set of things.

If we are taking it from a topographical point of view upon a complex, multidimensional epigenetic landscape, we see them largely as little island mountains upon a complex social landscape, separated by valleys or gulfs where structure and culture become mixed, imprecise, and reduced.

I propose a model that with development of social organization, we have the rise of what may be called structurally stratified and embedded levels of culture and structural pattern.

We talk thus about multiple levels of culture and structure semi-integrated with and between one another within a given bounded human social system.

These levels all co-occur in the same space and time, and all levels may at least potentially interact with every other level,

directly or indirectly through intervening layers, and potentially across all sectors or areas of the system at any given layer.

The Global Context of Human Systems Dynamics

We must take increasing account of global frameworks of influence and interaction in our understanding of the changing structures and directions of human systems development. It is these global frameworks of influence that are providing the primary determinants of shifting patterns of human behavior and hence of functional adaptation within an emerging global framework.

It is more and more evident that global contexts are affecting and in essence driving many developmental transformations and transitions that human systems have been recently undergoing, upon every level of human systems integration, and yet we do not have a clear or systematic means for analytically assessing or for understanding the nature of this global context or the longer-term developmental outcomes of its patterns of integration.

The first proposition is that changing global contexts provide a major source of extrinsic, exogenous influence upon human systems upon whatever levels of their demarcation and delimitation, and this outside source of external influence largely functions as a key variable of independent change that can influence change reactions among many dependent variables within systems.

Whether nation-state societies or bounded social systems of whatever form seek to change to better fit within a changing global environment, the composite and cumulative changes occurring inexorably in that larger world framework are driving the requirement for such internal change, for the challenge of maintaining dynamic functional equilibrium of human systems upon all levels of integration.

This development of world systems has been the case for many decades, indeed, centuries, of human civilization, but nowhere and never has it been to the degree of global systems integration that it has achieved with the rise of the Internet as a global human technological phenomenon.

With the development and rise of a truly integrated global information system, with practically limitless channel and processing capacities, and with instantaneous worldwide transmission, we bear witness to the possibilities and potential rise of truly integrated global systems that transcend all regional or interregional contexts.

Thus, changes occurring independently of the environment of a delimited system in a larger global context can serve to shift the environmental contexts of such a system in a manner that may become beyond the control of the system to manage effectively.

It is evident as well that such external changes in the global environment can either directly or indirectly affect changing internal environments of human systems upon multiple levels

of human systems stratification, concurrently and interdependently.

This is in large measure due to the increasing autonomy of individuals empowered as a result of the cybernetic informational integration of systems.

Therefore, global changes in the world at large are affecting patterns of human systems development down to the individual level, and because individual human development drives human systems development upon all levels and in every possible way, we cannot easily guess or over-estimate the extent to which global patterns of change within and around human systems are inducing new and unprecedented changes in virtually all human systems upon all levels, the developmental and historical outcomes of which we have not yet experienced, much less fully understand in detail.

One aspect of these changing global contexts of human development appears to be the growing sense of multilateral dependence of the person, and hence of the larger social order, upon the structural means by which global contexts are created and globalized structures of development become transmitted.

In one way, the communications-computer technologies most closely associated with globalization seem to be creating greater behavioral and community independence of the person through increased unilateral dependence upon such technology, yet in another way such technologies of globalization appear to open the doorway to the cultivation of

human social systems marked by increased interdependence between the basic individual agencies composing such a system.

Furthermore, the apparent increased functional and informational autonomy and independence of the individual within such a technology based world order may actually be an artificial illusion of such informationally open technology, disguising the utter dependence of the individual upon the technology itself.

Some additional propositions for understanding the general patterns of the globalization dynamics of contemporary human systems are based upon the following considerations:

1. Hypothetically, human systems upon all levels of potential integration are developmentally transforming from essentially closed to increasingly open structures, such that analytically, for each identifiable level, we must ask what a relatively closed versus open system might look like and, more importantly, how such a relatively open/closed system, upon a larger continuum of socio-structural openness/closedness, might respond differentially to varying environmental changes.
2. In general, the drive of human systems to greater openness as a consequence of increasing technological and structural interdependence of all sub-systems within a global context of informational integration, is increasing the basic human requirement for the

realization of greater functional autonomy and behavioral independence of systems upon an individual level.

3. Larger national corporate organized human systems are shifting in different but definite new directions of institutional development as a function of this requirement for the achievement of greater individual openness and freedom, and a part of this shift has been in the general loss and weakening of any centralized sense of authority or power such systems may have previously held.
4. Within these larger corporate and inter-communal based systems, newer and more dynamic sub-systems are emerging which serve to compete with, and fundamentally challenge, the central authority structures of the overarching system, and which experience potentially greater freedom of action for its individual members within the subsystem framework of functional integration.

As a result, the overarching conventional authority structures and constructs of the nation-state are weakening in their social boundaries and losing a common focal center of gravity. Individuals who find themselves cut-off from or tightly delimited in their behavioral freedom and identity in their larger national construct may retreat into these alternative sub-

- systems as these become available to people in their developmental trajectories, essentially abandoning their previous connections within the larger framework of national society in reinforcement of new-found identities within alternative frameworks.
5. These alternative subsystems are increasingly mapping into a global systems framework that essentially transcend the limitations and boundaries used to circumscribe nation-state systems, and in so doing, provide linkages between the larger world and the inside world of emergent subsystems that represents a conduit of external and uncontrolled independent influence upon the internal development of these systems, leading generally to greater polarization and fragmentation of the nation-state society along structural and social fault-lines of cleavage.
 6. These emergent subsystems are less and less well defined by considerations of geographic proximity or contiguity or proximal collocation and are increasingly defined by matters of digital propinquity and virtual similarities or complex sub-sectional correlations of profiles and common interest. As global cultures defined more and more by technological-digital sharing and engagement come to displace local cultural attachments, the nation-state geophysical contexts that serve to unify these sets of attachments into a collective, common systemic forum within shared

spaces become less and less important or central to the challenges of human identity and development.

Individuals functioning within increasingly integrated global contexts of development, are developing in complex ways that cannot be strictly described in mono-cultural terms of national identity or in traditional terms of local cultural orientations.

We can refer thus to the development of global cultural identities that are based upon their dependence and derivative freedoms available through technological-digital integration upon a global level of human systems interaction.

We have seen through mass media in reference to this global context the many and various ways in which these newfound global identities may become radicalized to the point of extreme violence, most often for very tenuous and superficial of ideological causes.

But we can also conjecture upon the divided sense of loyalties or solidarities that might undercut one's commitment to die for one's country or to sacrifice one's self for some larger cause for which there is little or no direct attachment. Parochial and traditional collective identities appear to lack the relative contexts within the global framework that might obviate the requirements of their ideological reframing in modern contexts for radicalization to become effective.

The institutional changes incumbent upon conventional or tradition-based organizational constructs as a consequence of

these developmental transformations of human systems in global contexts entails the complex shifting of the axis of structural stratification toward increasingly diagonal and cross-cutting directions.

This invites a social complexity of radical cultural pluralism for which there are few clear cut horizontal (identity) or vertical (institutional) boundaries separating where one group identity leaves off and others may begin, short of the most common denominators of language, race, class (or caste) and ethnic identity.

It is expected from this for us to bear witness around the world to increasing evidence suggesting complex but partial and incomplete fragmentation of nation-state societies that are tied to the weakening authority and power structures of the central governments of these states as a consequence of social polarization, diagonal fragmentation, and radical global pluralism developing especially within the core regions of these states.

To what extent the presence and augmentation of diverse diaspora communities within these states may provide a contributing factor to this polarization and pluralism, leading to such diagonal stratification and fragmentation of such systems, remains to be determined.

It is expected that in most such contexts with robust democratic frameworks of enfranchisement, these patterns will be expressed primarily through partisan ideological political

forums and group grievances played out in political or judiciary or alternative religious based contexts.

We might expect to see systematic partial devolution of otherwise centralized authorities of nation-states to smaller and smaller, semi-autonomous special administrative zones or areas, and the rise of what might be called cooperative-authoritarian states that are able to maintain a stable coalitional consensus among competing authoritarian substructures, upon a central political platform.

If this can be referred to as an instance of the “greening” of the world system, then this so-called greening process must become framed within the limiting contexts and constraints of the reinstitutionalization and institutional shifting of the nation-state systems within which they will occur and become politically defined.

Whether or not this process of complex but incomplete diagonal fragmentation of previously robust national-systems is a net desirable or an overall beneficial outcome of global development, if it does indeed come true, remains to be assessed. We might expect both greater “multi-cultural” freedom of people and also greater social chaos and competition, as well as the greater potential for conflict emergent from such shifting patterns.

We might expect forthcoming from this general trend of the systematic and possibly chaotic devolution of national authority structures across diagonal axis of stratification and

fragmentation a marked trend for social alienation and for widespread and common place inter-positional status ambiguity, expectably to lend itself to diverse patterns of radicalization for violent extremism, criminalization, and psychological dysfunction.

The Changing Structures and Functions of Nation-State Systems

Within the Context of Globalization

The nation-state has been the historical building block of modern world civilization. This is a geo-political reality that does not appear to be going away anytime too soon, and we might argue that though many national boundaries were basically lines drawn arbitrarily upon conference room maps, most nation states have since managed to forge some at least nominal if not minimal sense of national identity and solidarity among its population baseline, to the degree at least that it fosters a credible sense of distinct and exclusive nationality vis-à-vis other distinct nationalities.

The construct of the modern nation-state as a system of centralized authority over a contiguous geopolitical area, is part and parcel of the modern world system as this has developed especially over the last couple of centuries. It has born witness to major world wars and major world depressions. It can be argued that as the world system has evolved, so also has the construct of the contemporary nation-state as part of that system also evolved, or failing to evolve, it has been replaced by a new national construct that is most clearly marked by

competitive and cooperative authoritarianism in complexly stratified systems.

The alternative has been an intermediate solution in terms of a fascist totalitarian, single-party system that can effectively consolidate patterns of authority through institutional regulation across society as a whole, coopting as much as possible alternative sources of authority for its top-down, totalistic authority construct.

Such intermediate structures in the course of national development can be seen as a practical and workable solution to the problem of building a consensus of national identity and solidarity and to the problem posed by the threat of freedom and democracy.

We see this authority construct most clearly in terms of constitutional revisions and replacements that are at the core of the government of modern nation state systems, and it is in terms of the history of constitutional amendments, revisions and replacements, that we can trace the changing structures of authority that have underwritten the development not only of the nation-state, but of that portion of humanity underwritten by the state, and the world system as well as humanity as a whole of which that state is an integral part.

We understand failure of a given nation-state to express itself in terms of a revolution or coup leading to the forceful replacement of one regime or one kind of regime with another alternative kind. We understand the fragility of any such

nation-state, its vulnerability to failure, in terms of its susceptibility to conflict and to making war.

While there is a non-critical predisposition to regard nation-states as geopolitically bounded, coherent, relatively homogeneous wholes, with distinct and definable cultural patterns, the larger reality of the nation-state system is that it has almost never been a static, fixed entity, but it has evolved dynamically as a function of historical development and processes of socio-cultural transmission and transformation.

The reification of the nation-state as a coherent, centrally composite corporate system has perhaps been as much a residual, vestigial artifact of our naming conventions by which all French people belong to France, and all Americans to the U.S., etc.

The search has been for a single defining monothetic sense of national culture, even of a national character type, by which we can understand at least the baseline of what it means to be an American versus a Frenchman or a German or a Chinese.

Our proclivity to think in national wholes, as a set of mutually exclusive entities and unities, has tended to preclude a more analytical approach to looking at nation-states as composite systems based upon the organization of diversity and the bringing together of relatively heterogeneous groups of people in common forums of interaction and participation.

This critique seems especially applicable to newer, younger nation-states still in the early throes of cultural transformation and development, often which were constructed from territorial boundaries that encompassed a broad diversity of very different ethno-linguistic groups.

But it is also a critique that can be systematically extended as well to the very larger modern developed nation-states, as well as to most other intermediate and older nation-state configurations, especially as modern diaspora phenomena and patterns of migration have been radically shifting the population baseline of many developed nations.

The ability to achieve a cultural or social consensus upon a single political platform within a common nation-state forum seems increasingly difficult to achieve and increasingly problematic from the standpoint of the multi-cultural diversity and global influences impinging upon these forums from many different directions.

But there is more behind this critique than merely a concern for relative cultural homogeneity or heterogeneity for a national-population baseline, or for the shifting demographic profiles of these baselines as a result of growth, migration, and changing patterns of health and illness.

There is more to notions of national culture, structure, identity, strategy and interests than meets the eye, and these conceptions and conceptualizations have been shifting with the changing profiles and constructs of nation-state systems such

that being a Frenchman in the age of Napoleon or an American at the time of Jefferson is not what it now means to be a French person or an American within an evolved global context.

We cannot underestimate either the vast complexities underlying, nor the composite nature of national-constructs of identity, solidarity and authority, modern nation-state systems, especially as these complexities have been a part of national development in a global context interacting with global development across multiple national contexts.

Further, it is perhaps less and less a single or unitary, coherent form of consensus that must be achieved in modern nation-state systems. It is perhaps increasingly a complex, multi-dimensional form of consensus deriving from many different variables and considerations of cross-cutting interests and values, rendered more acute perhaps due to the inherent ambiguities and uncertainties attendant to modern life, and the increasing dependence of the modern citizen of the world upon technological systems of communication, a dependence rendering them fundamentally susceptible to remote but nonetheless significant third party influence.

Rather than possessing perhaps a single main “center of gravity” for the modern national population as a whole, most modern nations appear to exhibit a more complex pattern of integration in which there is a dynamic equilibrium and precarious balance between multiple competing centers of gravity operating variously across multiple national forums.

This essay represents an attempt to evaluate the shifting patterns of national development in terms of changing national structures and shifting functions served by these structures, especially as these developmental patterns may be referenced against a larger background of global, transnational development.

The argument is made that for many nation-state systems, the structural patterns and functional purposes served by the conventional national system are shifting as a consequence of their relative integration and trajectory of development within a larger and emerging global system.

These nation-state systems remain centrally important organizing structures for the people contained within them and in part defined by them, but the functions and structural patterns of these national institutions and organizations have been shifting as a consequence of relative global integration.

In the overall pattern of global based development, the argument can be made that there has been a general trend-line of change of nation-state systems to increased structural opening, as this is defined by increasing transnational network interactions beyond its border, and by the growing size of the global footprint of nation-state economies, social systems, and military-political structures.

This general trend, a function of the increasing global scale interdependence of nation-state systems and increasing structural, ground-up integration of all nation-state systems

with many or even all other systems, has been achieved developmentally among many, especially new nations, by fits and starts, and not frequently without significant delays, periodic reversals and “failures to launch.”

The regressive feature of these patterns of “failed development” serves in the main to foster a situation of fragility and failure for these nations, attended by a central developmental dilemma for these national societies that may further interfere with and prevent development, often becoming destructive in the process, with destructive patterns also sometimes, in fact frequently in certain ways, reaching out regionally and inter-regionally to contaminate and interfere with development across multiple national and transnational contexts.

In the larger Asian context, both Myanmar and North Korea represent contemporary nation-states that for various sets of reasons have failed to launch upon a global stage, each thus presenting within the emerging world system significant risks and potentialities for conflict within the regions and larger inter-regional landscapes that they occupy.

It cannot be argued though that North Korea especially, in spite of its history of political and economic isolation, has not achieved for itself, for the sake of its very regime survival, some sense of larger global footprint, however shadowy this footprint must be as a function of its illicit, black-market orientation.

For any contemporary nation-state, that state as it was 50 or 30 or even 10 years previously is not the same as it has now become. The North Korean regime now under Kim III is not the same regime as it was under the father or the grandfather. Each major regime change invites not only structural shifts, strategic realignments and functional transformations, but it invites broader scale changes of social pattern and culture throughout the nation, along with shifting institutional and organizational structures.

We find similar shifts and changes occurring across different kinds of political systems and governmental structures. Even democratic societies that are relatively resilient and resistant to fundamental constitutional revisions and that have stable term limits and regular, periodic open elections, rely upon these institutionalized processes as the basis for systematic change and transformation of structure and function in a regular and regulated manner.

The kinds of changes in which I am most interested within the context of this essay are those kinds of changes originating externally from without nation-state systems, that serve within the larger global context to shift the contextual frameworks by which nation-states mediate between their internal and external worlds, and by which they come to redefine their central strategic priorities, authority constructs, structural functions and organizational institutions as semi-coherent and at least partially unitarian nation-state systems.

Before proceeding with this digression, it is perhaps relevant to reference several critical points:

Most modern nation-states are relatively new and recent constructs, even if they have been founded as systems upon population baselines that have much older and primogenitorial foundations and cultural roots, and even if they have been preceded by early political governance structures.

All nation-states appear to go through a developmental trajectory that involves several critical state stages. Often, such states in their early phases of development adopt transitions leading to fascist movements or authoritarian structures of society. Though these movements, if successful, can lead to totalitarian-style regimes leaning leftward or right, and can impede further opening and democratic development of the society by decades, often these governments provide a foundation for the economic organization of the society that can, especially if aligned to the global market, can provide the launch-pad for further social transformation and socio-political development of the society.

Many nation-states appear to be transitioning through multiple phases of development leading to increasing openness of their structures, as expressed economically through the development of formal market systems based upon industrial-manufacturing-processing platforms,

expressed socially through the rise of systems of universal education and the breakdown of older divisions of class and caste, and politically expressed through the rise and development of increasingly democratic political institutions.

What kinds of changes can we expect of national development in emerging global contexts of development? Many developing nation-states with relatively weak central authoritarian institutionalization, and with weak legal and judiciary systems for law enforcement, are susceptible to outside influence and domestic penetration of foreign or transnational interests.

These state systems begin to assume the primary function of serving as mediators between international, foreign and transnational interests on one side, and domestic, ethno-national and communal sets of interests on the domestic side.

In such systems, it may not be clear in many settings or contexts whether government servants are primarily serving lucrative foreign-based interests or the domestic interests of the people—more than likely they are serving primarily their own interests through bribery and corruption schemes.

In any case, it is the general consequence of such a situation that such governments in general present weak authority and constructs and received legitimacy, both externally and strategically facing to the larger world, and internally facing to the organization and perceptions of transparency facing to their own people.

The government cannot maintain an efficient boundary construct geo-politically to protect its domestic population from foreign influence and interference, nor does it have the defensive paramilitary or projective military capacity to deter such foreign threats from systematic interference.

There is then in such contexts the potential for the rise of alternative extremist social movements or criminal organizations from below, that serve to systematically challenge these weak authority structures, and their corresponding patterns of weak legal and administrative institutionalization or socialization, such that authority in time becomes inherently structurally devolved and weakened, distributed over multiple overlapping and competing sub-structures of alternative authority.

Such state governments may be generally referred to as relatively weak competitive authoritarian systems, marked by internal cleavages, pluralism, communal or sectarian conflict, and characterized by weak institutional development and the general lack of rule of law.

As such they are inherently fragile and unstable systems prone to resort to violent repressive measures to bolster up their authority structure, to control of the media, to appeal to common religious tradition or majority ethno-national identity, and prone to internal conflict escalation, to adopt harsh authoritarian-draconian measures, and to fragmentation and dispersion of authority across multiple sub-structures.

Such a government or state system faces a basic developmental dilemma. It can build its relative political stability through enhancing security, usually by falling back upon repressive security directorates and military engagement in politics, and thus also increasing its structural fragility to fragmentation and domestic conflict, or it can seek to increase social stability through the adoption of more open and prosocial development frameworks, which can reduce security and risk the prospect of widespread structural instability developing.

It may be said that in general for such states the option of creating and enforcing greater transparency under a weak legal institutional framework, a sense of transparency that would in time promote greater credibility and legal authority of the state in the mind's eye of the people controlled by the state, is generally unavailable to the state except through the adoption of harsher repressive measures that would in turn reduce the effects of rule of law by the perception of violent tyranny.

Such a weak state thus lacks the central mechanism by which to foster a common sense of national identity or solidarity, or to wed and weld the citizen's loyalty to the state, in transcendence of other cross-cutting traditional or familial loyalties within which the individual may be bound.

National identity and citizenship, founded in the perception of corruption and arbitrary power, becomes one founded upon lack of credibility and legal authority, replaced by the rule of

violence, and hence is a relationship founded upon mistrust and the worldview of limited good.

This is not any longer necessarily a general dilemma restricted to so-called weak, developing or highly fragile states, but if the possibility of increasing external influence in domestic affairs with increasing cross-border issues, with rising globalization and global systems development, becomes a common developmental dilemma shared by all contemporary nation-states, then we face the plausible scenario of the general weakening of the authority structures and rule of law across a broad plethora of previously stable and strong nation-states.

This may be especially the case with broad and dynamic shifts in global development across nation-states, as well as especially with the rise of non-state transnational actors who are able to effectively compete with national government frameworks within and across different domestic contexts.

Such relativization of conventional authority structures of otherwise powerful and well integrated states, suggests the possibility of a pattern of fragmentation of authority that is spread unevenly across a domestic landscape, effective in some contexts, but missing in many other contexts.

This suggests in turn the lack of completeness or evenness of coverage of the rule of law or its underlying authority construct across a national landscape.

If such a trend exists or may exist and therefore continues, it could lead to a form of uneven fragmentation of a society, a kind of rotting of the system from the inside out, with increasing sense of differential alienation of the individual as a citizen of the state, though no two individuals may share exactly the same profile of alienated identity from the weakened state as a whole.

We would expect in such a context both the rise and volatility of social movements, as cults, clubs or clan-style formations, but also the overall lack of major social movements or across the board social formations that would serve to section the society across broad cleavages of social difference.

Global Warfare without War

Reframing Modern Warfare Patterns within an Evolving Conflict Continuum and Alternative Conflict Paradigms

War is defined as a communicated change of emergency state relations, during which altered, in a sense anti-structural state, reliance upon destructive force and the threat of violence becomes a temporarily normalized state of affairs.

In states of war, a generation becomes socialized to mass social violence as a normal and acceptable institutional reality, and questions of life and death and of human mortality become everyday considerations rather than mostly life-long concerns of old age.

If we came from a world of the survival of the fittest, of a world without contract or states, of a war of all against all in which the collective group constituted a separate cultural species, we may be heading into a world that is becoming increasingly a possible war of everyone or anyone against each person, in which collective identities are unhooked from the requirements of individual survival or of tribal solidarity.

It becomes one in which at the same time there appears to be the emerging vestiges as least of a common and shared sense of humanity, and, by extension, of a growing recognition and tolerance of cultural differences and plural worlds.

We can argue that we remain somewhat precariously divided now between two worlds, and two worldviews and approaches, one from which we are gradually, hesitantly emerging, deeply rooted to a primordial past, and the other beyond the cave to which we are proceeding, increasingly bound through human interdependence to the fast-forwarding future, and thus tethered to the global strategic prospects of boom or doom.

We are perhaps in a future world of near total interconnectivity of people with other people, ultimately our own source of evil and our own potential worst enemy, at least in the sense and to the extent that we fail to learn the lessons of the past and apply them at present to the problems of tomorrow.

We live in a new global era in which we must prepare for the remote possibilities of nuclear holocaust or of total world war. But we also live in an era in which we must as well deal with the daily realities of small scale, intensive conflict and patterns of low-intensity warfare that appear to be dilating and diversifying in their variety, range and scope of influence, violence, destruction and interference.

Between these extremes of macroscopic and microscopic warfare and conflict patterns, there appears to be a broadening range of possibilities for social aggression and violence that can be explored and exploited by different players.

We are fundamentally challenged in this regard, not only to defend our own way of life that is becoming itself increasingly defocused, but in keeping the peace globally so that others

besides ourselves may enjoy the benefits of human development at reduced risk to its potential costs.

We face a strategic dilemma of needing to prepare for all possibilities or any outcomes within the compass of the whole round world. On one hand we need to maintain a significant, cutting-edge conventional military force, at least as an effective political deterrent underwriting both our internal and external state authority, with fullest force projection and manoeuvre capabilities possible.

On the other hand we face a future of decreasing prospects in the future of war due to the increasing interdependencies between many different people, with exorbitant costs of preparing for and making war with the likelihood of less and less capacities to conduct war in a decisive and non-attritional manner.

This plays against a background of growing systems complexity and global systems integration, hence of chaotic uncertainty, such that future-forward history becomes increasingly the lack of foresight of the unintended third or fourth order consequences of our own initiatives and response patterns.

We can speak significantly of the changing conflict paradigms by which modern warfare, versus warfare patterns of the past, are becoming defined, and these paradigms themselves seem to be shifting in new directions as a function of global development.

The total war paradigm of World War Two, with mass mobilization of all a nation's resources, a robust set of alliances, with mass conscription, and full-scale industrial production and development of entirely new series of weapons, airplanes, tanks, ships, and other war-function technologies, has long framed everything conventional (and even unconventional) to follow for national militaries worldwide, but it cannot be the same paradigm that was followed by war-making nations since the Cold War Era, which was defined foremost by limited warfare and a broader deployment of special operations upon highly targeted missions.

I am grown up in an era of the Cold War, with early childhood memories of the Cuban Missile Crises, and coming of age as a young Marine learning to work as a tank commander within a mech-heavy, medium-scale (Battalion and Regimental) combined arms framework that was new to the USMC. I've long since then had the opportunity to work with the military in the Post-Cold War era in relation specifically to terrorism and counter-terrorism.

In a sense, I've been at least nominally acquainted with both ends of the warfare continuum from the standpoint of the military requirements and interests, as well as basic challenges of organization and coordination, associated with distinctly different levels and scales of conflict and warfare.

Seeing the warfare continuum as an emerging range and diversity of alternative forms of conflict, framed by different

paradigms upon different levels of heir articulation, that on the macroscopic end may readily involve the widespread deployment of weapons of mass destruction while on the microscopic end it may engage individual, self-radicalized terrorists driving a moving van through a crowded street, with an expanding intermediate mesoscopic range of hybridized forms of conflict that may engage large-scale deployment of conventional forces alongside a broad range of paramilitary engagements and “warfare by other means” upon different levels of articulation, entails that we must perhaps rethink and potentially reframe many fundamental aspects of what is the military, what functions it serves in a changing global order, and how best and most efficiently these functions may be served.

When the contemporary costs of a single large-scale tank battle, if fought to significant levels of attrition, becomes prohibitive to the point of bankrupting a national economy, then the logic of redundancy of forces sustained at this level, with multiple armored divisions, maintained at high cost for the potential but probably diminishing and decapitalizing residual deterrence value it may have, becomes rationally suspect in the global perspective.

If alternatively structured force units can be fast forward projected and rapidly deployed with reasonable chances of success at far less cost, then the rational course of action becomes one of streamlining and downsizing force levels to efficient levels of adjustment.

One challenge of this seems to be the question of the retention of the kind of “encounter plasticity” of a smaller, direct force capable, forward-facing unit operating in a quasi-independent manner, while still operating within a larger administrative contexts that permits the coordination and joint operation of large-scale corps level forces.

Specialized forces that are generally light and lacking in heavy armaments (except for the prospect of forward targeted air strikes) face the dilemma in the contexts of their operation the eventual likelihood of unexpected problems arising that require a delay in arrival of reactionary forces sufficient to overcome the problem.

The other challenge is controlling for if not completely overcoming the larger bureaucratic structure of big armies and the built-in delays and inertias to change or to rapidly adjusting mission focus, particularly during periods of peacetime, in a manner that is forward facing and not one step behind based upon the last war of engagement.

Our instructional development relating to violent extremism and terrorism/counter-terrorism studies was focused by the U.S. military orientation and paradigm of counter-insurgency operations (COIN.)

COIN was the basic model that my students, as military intelligence professionals at various levels, generally applied, even if mostly in an implicit manner, to the problem of terrorism and related violent extremism phenomena. I tried

from the beginning of this work to adopt a broader frame of anthropological and global reference by which to define these problem sets, and I have promulgated a notion of “counter-exsurgency” (or “insurgency from without,” or COEX) as being more appropriate at least to the forms of transnational terrorism with which they were primarily focused.

The concept and framework of counter-exsurgency situates within transnational terrorism within a broader and more realistic framework for the kinds of conflict phenomena our students have been dealing with, rather than a strictly COIN-based model, and, further, the general developmental outcome of successful COEX-type conflict is the general incorporation of internal COIN patterns of conflict targeting domestic subversion and domestic political warfare patterns.

Thus, we can see the effective counter-terrorism paradigm as being primarily COEX (transnational) and parenthetically COIN. This I have written as COEX_(COIN).

If we apply a similar conceptual formula to the broader continuum of conflict, we can suggest the following descriptive formula based upon the following forms of contemporary conflict paradigm:

0. Crime
1. Low Intensity Violent Extremism (LIVE)
2. Counterinsurgency (COIN)
3. Counter-exsurgency (COEX)
4. Warfare by Other Means (WBOM)

5. Limited Conventional Warfare (LCW)
6. Large Scale Combat Operations (LSCO)
7. Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)
8. Global Environmental Conflict (GEC)

Each of these perspectives hypothetically represents a distinct paradigm of conflict as it applies in the modern era, by which various forms of politico-military strategy, serving various interests and needs upon these levels, become appropriate. Across multiple levels, in increasing scale warfare situations, these paradigms overlap and in the larger structure of the world, become interdependent.

We can look at forms of higher level conflict that encompass and are based upon the systematic extension of lower forms of conflict, and that emerge developmentally as a result of the transference to larger systemic structures the basic motivations and stressors that underlie the proclivity to conflict.

At the same time, the higher order levels of paradigm serve to contextualize and provide many of the background factors that are involved in the concatenation of the lower level articulations.

These paradigms apply theoretically to both adversaries, to terrorist and counter-part trying to prevent or defeat terrorism, and at the same time, they potentially apply to an observer's point of view in the interpretation of conflict or, alternatively, to the formulation of rational strategy.

We can then speak of nested framing and contextualization of modern warfare patterns that cross-cut the different conflict paradigms, with a general formula as follows:

- $GEC_{(WMD)}$
 - $WMD_{(LCW)}$
 - $LSCO_{(LCW)}$
 - $LCW_{(WBOM)}$
 - $WBOM_{(COEX)}$
 - $COEX_{(COIN)}$
 - $COIN_{(LIVE)}$
 - LIVE (crime)

At the same time, we can also speak of the nestable patterns of strategic operations and military organization that would reflect this meta-paradigmatic continuum. It is important to emphasize that this continuum represents a highly dynamic reality of transition and transformation between alternative conflict paradigms.

In overlaying this upon the conflict intensity spectrum, we can then analytically discuss the variable sets of reasons and hypothetical situations in which we would expect to see an escalation from one level of warfare to higher levels, or else the devolution of warfare down to lower levels.

In a global, transnational environment in which non-state actors can successfully compete and cooperate with state actors, both sets of actors gain a larger range of reasonable

conflict behavior that would be strategically available in terms of warfare and development of their war-making capacities.

Those military organizations, in modern context, that can develop strategies and organizational frameworks that effectively articulate in a highly dynamic manner across these alternative paradigmatic frameworks, in a coordinated manner, become those organizations that may effectively articulate strategies that serve the state interests.

It suggests a layered military organization and strategy, with the table of organization of units that reflect this nesting and layering of conflict paradigms, as well as the across the board integration of these multiple layers from top to bottom.

It is important to recognize at the outset though that the relative rationality of different political and strategic interests have a direct influence upon the approach to conflict and the pattern that ensuing conflict may take, particularly in terms of its escalation.

We might mount an argument for the more global or universal rationality and even morality of certain approaches to conflict and their underlying strategic purposes and objectives, while simultaneously acknowledging the cultural and normative relativity of values and priorities that different societies or groups of people may adopt.

It may be said that a more global if not universal perspective entails a relatively broader form of conflict rationality, framed

within a larger conflict paradigm defined by alternative courses of action and interaction, that tends to prevent and inhibit falling into the forms of “psycho-logic” and bounded rationality that links anthropologically to extremist orientations and development leading to mass social violence.

While I have in my most recent military incarnation worked institutionally mainly at the COEX levels and below, the question of the possible acquisition and deployment of weapons of mass destruction by terrorist organizations or terror-based states has never really left the room, and defines to some extent the primary framing background to all counter-terrorism considerations.

While the likelihood of a random terrorist organization obtaining or developing an effective weapon of mass destruction may be relatively low, the risk involved in such a development would be unacceptable and unaffordable. 9/11 represented a super-terrorist attack (defined by mega-deaths above a thousand.)

Super-terrorist attacks can be promulgated in other ways than by relying upon weapons of mass destruction, or by the development of hybrid weapons of mass destruction which is what the hijacked jet-liners crashing into the twin Trade Towers represented, and these attacks, if successful, can have strategically significant results.

The entire strategy behind effective counter-terrorism operations, especially within joint COEX-type, three letter

agency environments, is mathematically demonstrable as the disaggregation of large-scale, corporate style terrorist organizations, for the sake of rendering larger scale or super-terrorist attacks more difficult to logistically pull-off, while possible eroding to some degree the security of civilians on the street by rendering more likely smaller scale but more sporadic attacks, the cumulative consequences of which are less decisive and tend in the long run to mitigate against the long-term interests of the terrorist organization.

My engagement with the North Korea problem set has enabled me to reconsider higher levels of conflict engagement in a more systematic manner, up to and including the possibility of Weapons of Mass Destruction.

If we step back to a mesoscale focus, we take into account what might be referred to as a broad range of possible limited conventional warfare engagements, usually for the achievement of fairly specific and limited, short-term political-military objectives, and the default hybridization of an alternative paradigm of “War by Other Means.”

The DMZ separating North and South Korea present just such a hypothetical scenario of conflict that could easily escalate to large scale operations, or even to resort to use of weapons of mass destruction, in the contexts of what would originally be conceived in terms of limited warfare for the achievement of fairly narrow political objectives, like the use of rapid surprise

engagement to overwhelm southern and American allied forces, for the forced reunification of the peninsula.

The WBOM paradigm includes a broad range of alternative “closed” warfare alternatives that can also embrace COEX and smaller scale paradigms as well.

In a modern world defined by total interconnectivity and interdependence, not only between nations but between all levels of human systems across all national territories, the prospects of successful prosecution of a limited conventional war, unless severely limited, become extremely low, while the costs and risks of such war are increasing to the point of being mutually unaffordable and therefore relatively non-rational.

The threshold to jumping to a state of open warfare thus for any rational state actor upon a national level (the main level at which such warfare is a viable option) becomes prohibitive and thus an option of last, desperate resort.

It follows logically that a nation-state reluctant to resort to LCM except in very direct and restrictive contexts, would tend instead to opt for the next lower level of the alternative War by Other Means (WBOM) paradigm, that would involve reliance upon many different methods and strategies of alternative warfare, possibly including terrorist and violent extremism activities (characterized by targeted assassinations, kidnappings and hostage holding, bombings, etc.)

No rational acting nation could afford the deployment and use of weapons of mass destruction without crossing the threshold of no return, which means inviting international response and rapid escalation to total warfare reactions by offended or enemy states.

Thus, any rational acting nation (relatively speaking) could only use weapons of mass destruction as a final, ultimate option of last resort, and as primarily a defensive mechanism of deterrence.

While the possibility of the escalation of limited conventional warfare always exists in the scope of any campaign, the attendant likelihood of that escalation crossing the threshold to WMD remains relatively low on the basis of mutually assured destruction, unlike it did in World War Two when effectively only one nation held a monopoly over deployable atomic bombs.

With the possibilities forthcoming from a complex warfare continuum of a well system of nested and nestable alternative conflict paradigms, it becomes important then to consider the possible alternative modular configurations of military organization and mobilization that would best affect the capacity of a national military organization to function effectively across all conflict paradigms, simultaneously, while, if peace-seeking, attempting to minimize the escalatory and proliferation possibilities of each level of warfare engaged upon.

We can argue therefore that the bottom-up expansion of nestable conflict orientations serves the larger purpose of making possible and efficacious wider ranging diplomacy rather than military aggression or defense as a viable recourse to any possible competitive or conflict situation.

The effective use of variable levels and types of military force thus becomes a diplomatic tool to create leverage at the conference table, rather than diplomacy being used as a tool for military dominance or aggression.

Military organization can be said to be universal to all modern nation-state systems—a state without its own military organization, or that depends upon the military of other states, is a state that is neither autonomous nor capable of sustaining its own independent sovereignty.

Military organization thus serves a specific set of structural functions within modern nation-state social organization, underwriting the authority, sovereignty and legitimacy of the state, primarily externally in strategic and diplomatic means.

Proposed herein is an alternative structural configuration based upon a model of conflict interaction. Interestingly, it derives from a previous model of military organization that I derived forty years earlier as a young Marine. In this earlier model, I proposed the full integration of combined arms functions down to a brigade and battalion levels of operations (Lewis, Military Dimensions, 1980).

An extension of this previous organizational model to modern contexts is a global military framework that is able to rapidly deploy under emergency conditions highly flexible, forward-oriented and relatively lightweight units, that can be plastically upsized or down-scaled to practically any scale and scope of force engagement up to and precluding weapons of mass destruction, and by extension, become even capable of intervening in emergencies relating to global environmental conflict.

The other critical aspect of this reformulation and reframing of military organization within operational considerations of an evolving conflict continuum in a global context is that proactive, offensive operations are generally successful over purely reactive, defensive orientations, and that much contemporary conflict generated from extremist or authoritarian orientations tends to adopt aggression as an initiative, attempting to optimize and retain the element of surprise.

In this sense, the critically central role of intelligence and its shaping of the theater of operations becomes a crucial component to otherwise peaceful and pacifist, human oriented societies being able to achieve and maintain a sense of initiative and to overcome the walls of blind secrecy that become built around organizations dedicated to force, violence and the promulgation of human aggression, whether these are small terrorist groups, transnational terrorist networks, or

whether they are large-scale and overdeveloped national military organizations.

We cannot underestimate the complexities of systemic integration and differentiation of organic and organicist military organization that permits basic human intelligence, broadminded, tolerant, open-minded, educated and experienced, in the strategic sense, to become effectively translated through operational doctrine, procedures and intuitive adaptation to the articulation of effective politico-military policies.

The role and possibilities of the application of intelligent computing and the use of deep A.I. through super-computers and multi-layer neural networks in permitting rapid solution and simulation of super wicked problem sets, especially defined within the framework of advanced expert systems and anthropological knowledge engineering, in the management and systematic processing of intelligence information and generation of alternative scenarios and optimal solution sets, should not be underestimated.

Primitive versions proved a critical asset in cryptology in World War II in defeat of both the German and Japanese empires, and so much more so is the dilemma and requirement in the framework of cyber-warfare, conflict patterning and cyber-intelligence in the contemporary global system.

In this regard as well we cannot underestimate the value of systematic investment in human development of the

anthropological resources that drive the modern military machine, either upon an individual level as the basic atomic building block to the molecular structures that compose potentially self-replicating military organization, as well as upon an organic level of structural organization and indoctrination of military occupational specialties.

As a rule of thumb in this effort to reframe, I would propose the following principle—the individual warfighter, as a basic building block of any and every organizational structure, and as the lowest common denominator of military intelligence, becomes the most important asset of any military organization, such that as much command initiative, mission scope, operational capacity and freedom of action as allowable and transferable to the shoulders of the individual as possible, and as allowable within a given military organizational structure, becomes the primary measure and determinant of the operational capacities and flexibilities of military organizational structure within a contemporary conflict era.

Before proceeding with this consideration, it becomes important to first consider the last remaining conflict paradigm, which I have defined as global environmental conflict (GEC.)

Increasingly, by global systems standards, other forms of conflict will become by default defined within the constraints determined by this potentially highest paradigmatic level of conflict, which involves in a sense a constant human struggle

against environmental variables and factors underlying adaptive survival.

Warfare, especially in its more advanced and modern forms, cannot be said to be environmentally healthy or adaptive, by and large, but this is not the main concern for understanding the global contextualization of the GEC paradigm.

Defoliation in the length of Vietnam, combined with massive high altitude carpet bombing, generated long term ecological destruction that remains today in the Vietnamese countryside.

Whether it is competition for scarce and by definition limited (finite) resources, or it is the challenge of food independence and health, or it is any of the other environmental challenges facing modern human systems, all nation state systems, and all human systems in general, confront the dilemmas of structural adaptation to increasingly global environmental contexts.

This level of conflict paradigm is bound to become in the near future (within this century) a general form of conflict paradigm of increasing significance and with both direct and indirect consequences in constraining other forms of conflict, especially as continuing nation-state growth and development worldwide invites increasing global social-environmental circumscription.

In a sense GEC will not only increasingly frame all other or possible forms of conflict, and contextualize these forms of conflict from a rational, systemic and strategic frame of reference, but it is a paradigm that comes full circle with some

of the principle sociological and psychological drivers of human conflict, particularly within nation-state societies.

The structural and social factors of conflict and fragility of nation-state systems relate to the processes of social polarization and fragmentation of centralized authority constructs within nation-state societies.

Thus GEC as a baseline global context serves to frame the trend of nation-state systems within a global framework to undergo the devolution of centralized authority and focused power, and to become more susceptible to cross-cutting socio-cultural competition and potential civil conflict.

Such states become increasingly vulnerable to outside influence and interference that can be conflict-based along the lines of COEX and the subordination of COEX to WBOM transnational and international frameworks of conflict.

In the past, as in the present, focusing social attention through effective control of the mass media has served to direct potential competitive-conflict behavior toward out-groups and external targets within geopolitically defined contexts of international interaction.

This capacity for informational warfare is becoming increasingly difficult to achieve with the advent of highly individualized modes of wireless communications, and so the kinds of formulas that made the fascism possible within the World War One and World War Two time frame, and that led to the state

extremism of Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan in the larger world, seem to be more problematic in the contemporary era.

GEC factors and conflict that rises within the regional contexts of a given nation-state, cannot but have the net effects of generating social conflict internally within the state, and thus forcing the emergency state toward patterns of mass mobilization of national resources. Many GEC framed wars of the future will become global resource wars, fought upon whatever scale at which resource need and deprivation drives competitive conflict.

The basis for this system of analysis of the conflict continuum is rooted in a general paradigm of conflict as an alternative but very fundamental form of human interaction that derives, by a jump, from previous competitive interactions, shifting from a game theoretic calculus of a non-zero sum game to that of a zero-sum game.

If conflict provides a player with the option to make a jump to an alternative modality of interaction, thereby suddenly changing the rules and stakes in the game being played, either to preserve one's own dominant position or to reverse or prevent one from becoming dominated, then making available alternative modalities of conflict permits a wider range of conflict options and possibilities of outcomes, while retaining a bridge back to competitive frameworks of interaction, which in limited or restrictive contexts serves to preclude escalation and

undue attrition, that becomes the inevitable and eventual outcome of a conflict modality of interaction.

Within the nested conflict continuum, a range of choices of interactional modalities remains broadened, relatively speaking, beyond exclusive reliance upon destructive force or its threat, exists even upon the lowest intensity ends of (LIVE) conflict.

This permits a means for managing conflict effectively upon all levels of its expression through realization of viable non-violent and competition-based options other than the resort to the use of direct destructive force. We can speak of the use of other than kinetic options as a last resort upon the modern global battlefield.

Modern military organization from a grand strategic perspective is less and less about massive force projection, as the foundation of power, and more and more about highly precise and targeted use of force, at longer and longer, essentially global ranges, balanced by a wider range of value-based or value-driven options in the formula of social empowerment, not only as purveyors of force, but more as the purveyors of the kind of global security, stability and sustainability upon which peace depends.

While I've been in the past decade focused primarily upon the LIVE end of the conflict continuum, increasingly the other levels of conflict paradigm cannot be entirely excluded from the contextual interpretation of any event of mass social violence,

whether psychologically driven, socially determined, acts of God, or the product of natural disasters.

The Intelligent Military

And the Evolving Functions of Military Intelligence

In standing back from the larger picture of the contemporary world, we are perhaps at a cross-roads and a turning point from where in the past we have come from, toward a new direction in where we must be headed.

Major inter-state war as a total conflagration is now as mutually irrational as it has become mutually unaffordable and unsustainable, with no clear net or decisive benefits to be derived.

War as but a means to other ends, one of many possible next best options, thus becomes foremost a war of feint, smoke and mirrors, of mistaken impressions and mismanaged information. In short, it becomes a form of modern warfare increasingly defined by intelligence, which requirements have expanded in breadth, depth and extent, exponentially with the increasing technological sophistication of techniques and derivative methods of modern warfare.

The role of intelligence in the modern and emergent war-fighting function is not only changing and expanding exponentially, but it is becoming both increasingly differentiated in a systemic sense as well as increasingly integrational and therefore analytic-synthetic in a similar systems sense.

The increasingly systemic nature of modern military intelligence as an increasing part of the war-fighting function entails a form of intelligence that is situated foremost in a social environment and that therefore depends foremost upon effective communications to be achieved and sustained.

In a contemporary environment of globally instantaneous and scale-free communications, in which there is practically no limit to the carrying capacity of what is communicated, or to the autonomously intelligent nature of such communications, based upon their technological sophistication, then the only effective bottleneck or limitations must be seen as those of the natural and learned limited capacities of the individual intelligence agent, as well as the systemic constraints under which such an individual must operate within a larger institutional framework.

In terms of alternative battlefield conditions, these increasing requirements will become expressed not only in terms of the increasing need not to perform in a blind or opaque environment, but in the rising need for increasing actionable intelligence in detail by which any particular environment becomes defined.

This systemic sense of communicated intelligence can only be derived by several interrelated means—by the use of digital computer technologies, by the contextual interpretation of open-source information relevant to the context in question,

and by closed sourcing the individuals and people who are part and connected to the context in question.

From the context of order of battle and maneuver style operations, it includes forms of intelligence relating to intention, objective, modes and orientation of psychology, culture, human behavior, that is more and in addition to knowledge of threat units, capacities and missions.

In considering the grand strategic future, we are left with the rational relativity of human goals, interests and functional systems by which values become expressed, articulated and realized. We are also left with the essential problem of defining the essentially and non-relatively non-rational, at least as a general suspension of any sense of rational purpose or objective.

The grandest of strategies thus the course of timely course action that can out-do the alternative possibilities, that represents the solution to Von Neumann complexity, at least in a “good enough” manner. Such strategy becomes a matter of knowing and learning the key evaluative primes, and of devising the sufficient and efficacious means for realizing or preserving these primes.

In the relative landscape of the more or less strategically rational, we seek global, if not universal, standards and frameworks by which to assess, line up and decide upon effective courses of action.

At the end of the analysis we are left with a relative calculus of priorities of values, of what is most important, and thus of what follows in a practical, or available, or expedient, if not always logical, manner in the requirement of the realization of our ideals.

We have come to an intersection of military modernization and global development, especially as this development is articulated within the cyber-sphere of earth and beyond, and it becomes important to an enlightened strategic future to reevaluate the changing but centrally critical roles that military intelligence will play in that shared future.

Whereas in the past the intelligent use of force was the main priority, in the future it is perhaps a shifting formula in the forceful deployment of intelligence. Intelligence thus displaces the role and importance of the reliance upon directive force, and the force functions, increasingly manipulable, flexible, malleable, adjustable, become driven by the changing requirements of intelligence.

We have at the intersection the increasing intelligence requirements of a functional and adaptive military organization within an increasingly complex and interconnected world, which requirements suggest the need for the generalization as well as the differentiation of the intelligence function overall (the professional and experiential development of the intelligent military), but which also entail requirements of the intelligence specialization of the military warfighting function

overall, especially within a context in which that latter warfighting function itself has expanding across a wide multidimensional continuum of engagement across the conflict, competition and cooperation spectrum.

Thus we can speak of an emerging and increasing need for the intelligence engagement of the basic warfighter, whatever their rank, MOS, grade or roles, as well as the increasingly central and baseline need of the cross-operational and hybrid engagement of the intelligence specialist, not just in strictly military, uniformed defined contexts, but as this reaches out across diffuse boundaries of authority, to embrace broader civilian and non-combatant contexts.

Though intelligence has always played a strategically critical role in the outcomes of major world events, the intelligence services and their related extensions have been regarded as organically peripheral to the central warfighting function of the military.

We are coming perhaps to a new era in which the intelligence functions become an intrinsic part of the central tasks of the military overall, around which a broadened spectrum of warfighting and related functions then coalesce and accrete in a systematic (or potentially chaotic) manner.

These transformations therefore are not just of the intelligence branches and its requirements in successful warfighting functions, but also of the intelligence function of the military overall and in general.

Baseline intelligence functions cannot only be defined through the narrow window of a computer screen that is hooked to the Internet.

They are functions that define not just the cyber-sphere, but, far more importantly perhaps, the human and anthropological intelligence requirements that define the anthro-sphere that contains the cyber-sphere and articulates within it.

A large part of the future requirements of military intelligence will be the providing of technological intelligence of complex systems of many kinds, including human systems of warfare and conflict that can only be approached through the use of super-computing frameworks, particularly as these become adapted, through the development of deep neural networks and genetic algorithms, with artificial intelligence.

This is not the expectation that the military intelligence professional needs to become a computer scientist, but it may mean that such an intelligence professional needs to understand, and possibly become trained up and experienced with the methodologies of, the anthropological and ethno-scientific requirements of knowledge engineering, particularly with the relatively unbiased techniques of ethno-semantic and ethno-cognitive knowledge elicitation.

The Citizen, the Soldier and the State

The Person, Culture and Structural Process in Conflict Management

In our triangulation of the structural functions and roles that modern military organizations play in nation-state society, we must see these processes and patterns as set against a background of the definitive structural dialectics by which a state defines citizenship and how people, more or less as citizens, then come to interact with the state, especially in terms of the role and function of the Soldier as a representative of the state and also as a derivative and counter-part to the ideal citizen.

In these dialectics, in a sense, the relationship between the citizen and the state is mediated by that between the Soldier and both the state and the citizen, while the other relationships, that between the Soldier and the state, is also mediated by the relationship of the citizen to each of the others.

It goes without saying that different kinds of states establish different paradigms defining citizenship, soldier-ship, and state-hood, that latter especially in terms of the kinds and strength of authorities and sense of legitimacy attached to a given government of the state.

The authority of the state in relation to the citizen becomes embodied in the Soldier, and the kind of Soldier, that the state produces of its citizenship. The authority of the Soldier is that which is invested by the state in relation to its citizenship. The rights, powers, freedoms and responsibilities of the citizen, therefore, that are granted by citizenship to the state, by implicit constitutional contract, is that which is indirectly defined through the type of Soldier created by the state.

Thus we can see, if this is indeed possible, that changing military definitions and organizational structures and processes, provide us a kind of barometer for understanding the changing structural relationships that define the citizen to the state.

The military archetypes that have been evident in modern history appear to occur across a complex continuum that might be simplified thus: there is a distinction between the “Democratic” soldier who is a “citizen-soldier” and whose terms of service are defined by periods of voluntarism interrupted by times of conscription, and the “Republican” soldier who is defined as a “professional” who is seen as serving the state primarily, but who is not necessarily a “citizen-soldier,” as the state is primarily defined by the governmental elite.

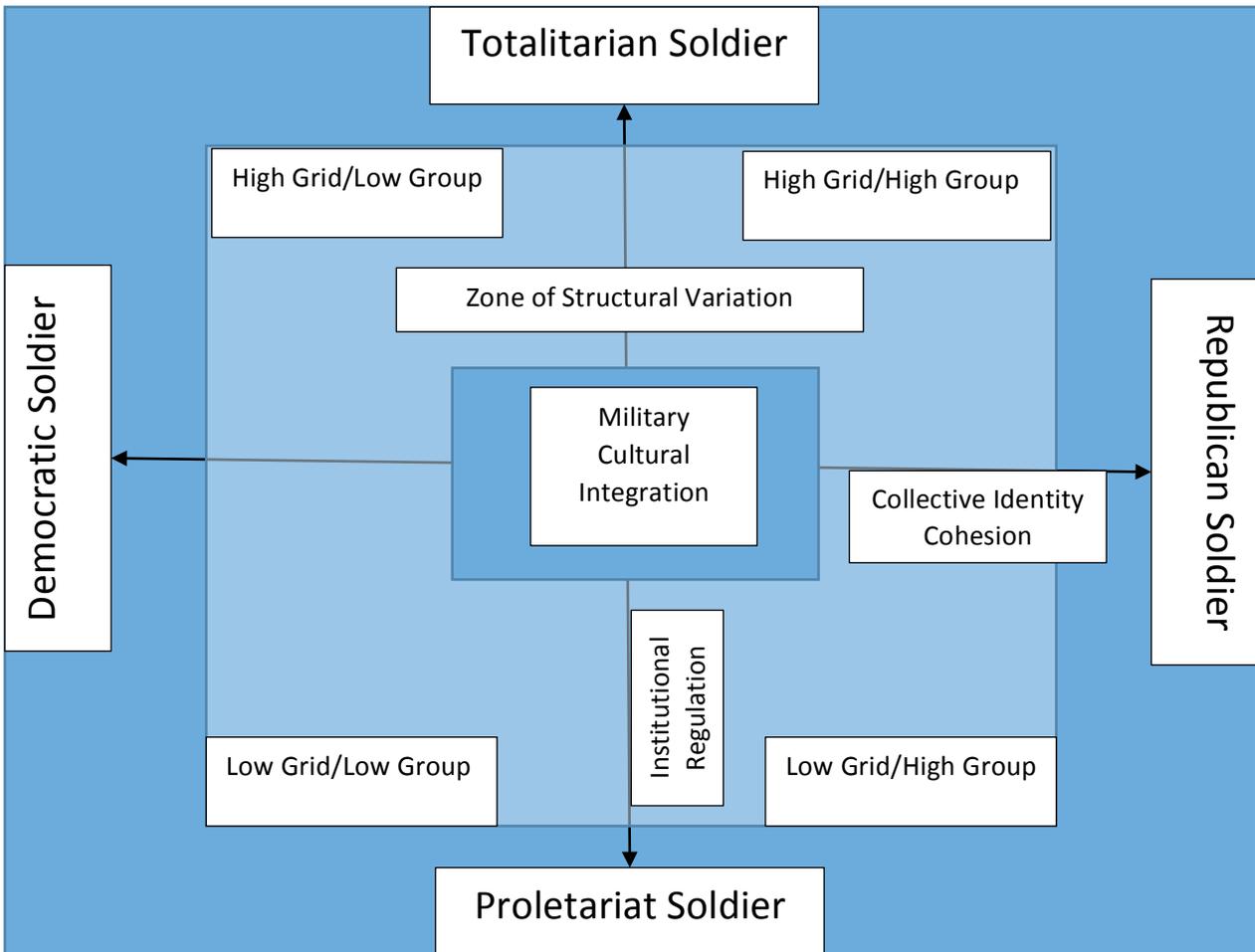
The other axis of this complex continuum then becomes “Partisan or Proletariat Soldier” who becomes defined within a socialist framework, versus a “Fascist” or “Universal or

Totalistic Soldier” who is defined by his strident nationalism solidarity, and national primordialism.

The former partisan model appears to take more of the form of militia or paramilitary, hence part-time, military engagement. The former partisan Soldier thus serves foremost the principle of the “people” while the latter “Totalistic Soldier” serves first not the people but the “ideal System” as this becomes institutionally expressed and enshrined as absolute authority.

These dimensions are probably to be found in every possible combination of Soldier-State-Citizen construct, but leaning more heavily in one direction depending upon the shaping and emphasis of one versus the other traits.

The measure of a citizen’s subservience to a state’s power will be in part determined by the kind of relationship that the regular Soldier has with the state, along a continuum of coercive authority, or compulsive servitude, and voluntary participation. This is in turn in legal society measured by terms of contract, and the capacity of the unwilling Soldier to unmake or break the contract.



This model can be placed in four-space:

We can overlay this model on top of the model of competing authorities within a state system, as these competing authorities become linked upon common axis of relative institutional regulation on one side and relative cohesion or collective identification upon the other.

We would then suggest the correlation that the Proletariat Soldier, as we have known this in modern history as being linked primarily to rebellion and to communist insurgency, with

contagious authority that derives from the mass organization and mobilization of the crowd.

The Democratic soldier would be most tightly linked to charismatic authority emanating and embodied in a single individual, while the Republican soldier is a person who is defined primarily by religious authority as this comes to define collective identity, and the so-called fascist or Totalitarian soldier becomes defined by their relationship to the protection and promotion of conventional institutional forms of order.

The reality is not as simple as this, as we cannot describe in any actual construct any perfect or ideal type, and we can talk about balanced or imbalanced multi-dimensional constructs that either integrate at the center or else differentiate across the intermediate spaces.

Instead, we can describe composite constructs that are admixtures of all forms of authority, as these are expressed in different ways by different sets of constructs.

Many of these military cultural constructs appear primarily to be developed as a result of the social, military and political history of a society's development. It becomes evident that many military formations within a state society can become bifurcated with the rise of a "military within a military" or the rise of two military organizations more or less side-by-side, which reflect perhaps some of the polarities of the national population and state.

The challenges of globalization seem in part to be that as nation-state boundaries and structures shift as a result of their structural integration within the global system, so too have the boundaries and definitions of both the citizen and the Soldier also been changing.

We run the risk of dealing with new potential threats for which we lack precise definitions, and for which we lack previous knowledge or experience by which to frame our understanding and adaptation to new forms and sources of conflict.

If we back up from this problem set, the authorities that once defined states, and the relations between the state, the citizen and the Soldier, are themselves subject to shift and challenge, and to the rise of new constructs of authority and of state structures built within a new global or transnational perspective.

Part of the issue seems to be that any longer there is no single consensus upon what the best or most shared cultural construct of authority should be, or what any such construct should necessarily look like in the structural dynamics of military functions.

Thus, in modern global contexts of nation-states, we end up with competing constructs and models of identity, and hence with weakened systems of authority for which the roles and functions of the Soldier in relation to the state or the citizen become confused.

In this regard, authoritarian and repressive systems do better than open and democratic societies in general simply because they can systematically eliminate any potential competition to their authority construct, and foist this construct coercively upon the larger population, to the relative limits of their power and its reach.

Weak, so-called competitive authoritarian states tend to lack strength and reach to effectively and consistently repress the entire population, and hence tend to do better with criminal or co-optative policies rather than by means of direct military repression.

The Soldier of such a state cannot afford to adopt a too totalitarian military orientation in relation to the people, in the context, as with large popular mass movements and rebellion, rise up in increasing numbers to overwhelm the military and subdue and subvert the government's power.

Upon Losing the Battle to Win the War (and Losing the War to Win the Battle)

Is it possible that we may learn lessons of war in one conflict only to be forced to forget them in the next war? It seems to have often been the case that the victors of one war, or even of a single battle, become the losers of the next war, or even of the next battle.

The French and British failed to learn the lessons of the industrialized battle-field of the trenches of World War One, or of the role played by their own massed armored forces in overcoming the perennial and hugely attritional stalemate of this battlefield.

The losing German side listened largely to British scholars, and took the lessons learned to heart, creating the context for hugely successful blitzkrieg in the Second World War. In more ways than one, the seeds of the latter, second war were sown by the blood and broken bone of the former first war.

George Washington had many important hard-learned lessons to pass on to Americans. He could never have imagined what America was to become in the world a singular great nation and super-power underwriting human freedom and fighting the tyranny of evil and totalitarianism.

One of the most important lessons perhaps that he had learned was how never to assume a position of strategic dominance or

superiority versus the British Army that he was then fighting on behalf of the continental congress.

Washington knew too well how dangerous was the assumption of such superiority against the best trained and better equipped British Soldiers in the world, as well as with their professional Prussian mercenary cohorts.

And yet, at the same time, he also seemed to comprehend quite well that the British were both not unbeatable but also in a strategically tenuous and potentially highly vulnerable situation on the American continent. Though dominant in tactical superiority of fighting forces and discipline of these forces, he understood that they were not invulnerable nor unbeatable.

Washington understood well, it seemed, by repeated historical example, of how to yield the field in open battle to save and nurture his beleaguered military forces, for the sake of realizing a better opportunity down the road. He seemed to recognize and take advantage of such opportunities when they presented themselves, as at the battle of Trenton, and the final strategic victory at Yorktown.

Fast forward this military history lesson to the jungles and rice paddies of Vietnam in the late 1960s, and we have an American military force, with a built-in sense of its own tactical superiority, winning almost every major engagement in the field of battle with its committed adversaries, and yet, by the end of the Vietnam War, leaving the field, if not in ignominious

defeat, then at least in a dramatic state of military demoralization, passing the torch to the ill-fated South Vietnamese government and their military forces for the defense of their indefensible “homeland.”

The North Vietnamese leadership had a clear strategic political-military goal in mind, the reunification and independence of Vietnam under the northern flag. They had a clear objective in the persecution of the war—to lose the hearts and minds of the American people, of the media-hungry public, in relation to their presence and purpose in Vietnam.

By contrast, the American leadership in relation to Vietnam, directed from the President’s Oval Office upon a daily basis, was a matter of stumbling forward on short-sighted policies and terms without a clear sense of long-term objectives except as defined by Westmoreland’s body count and the use of force-based attrition and boomeranging propaganda for winning the hearts and minds of the Vietnamese people and to alienate the people from the North Vietnamese cause.

The Americans simply did not have a long-term strategic objective to their continuing presence in Vietnam besides propping up artificially an otherwise failed South Vietnamese regime, lacking any sense of legitimacy in Vietnamese hearts and minds, and appearing to draw the line on communist revolutionary aggression in the larger world, based upon an outdated rationale of “Domino Theory.”

In fact, we fell into the blundering ways and legacies of the neo-colonial French predecessors.

By contrast to official American attitudes in Vietnam, the North Vietnamese and their Viet Cong southern counterparts were more than willing to lose battle after battle, and to suffer horrendous civilian and military attrition at the same time, in order to continue fighting the war with the ultimate objective of getting the Americans to withdraw from an unsustainable long-term conflict, and collapsing the failed and dependent South Vietnamese Republic.

If one assumes de facto one's own strategic and military superiority, one falls into the trap of thinking that one must win every battle to demonstrate this sense of superiority and advantage, even to the point of losing any sense of realistic long-term perspective about why one is fighting in the first place. One falls into the psycho-logic of having to "fight the war" through winning every single battle.

The U.S. military battle for the Pacific was another case in point. It was by all intents and purposes a campaign war that was totalistic and unlimited in its efforts to totally defeat the enemy. Even the Japanese themselves had more constrained strategic objectives than the Americans and their Allies adopted in reaction to their aggressive drive across Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific islands. They believed naively both in their own military superiority and in their strategic upper-hand, and were

convinced they could force significant concessions upon the Americans and their Commonwealth allies.

The initial battles fought by the Americans and their Allies, the fight for control of Guadalcanal Island in the Southern Solomon Islands Chain, as an immovable and unsinkable “air craft carrier,” and the fight by the Aussies and New Zealand forces in defense of Port Moresby and to prevent the passage of Japanese forces across the Owen Stanley mountains from the northeast side of New Guinea Island, were battles that were fought without the presumption of tactical superiority or strategic advantage.

The first naval battle, upon the night after the initial landings at Guadalcanal and Tulagi by U.S. Marines, fought in “Iron Bottom Sound” off the Coast of Savo Island, was a huge demonstration of the naval superiority and night-time strategic advantage of the Japanese Navy over American naval forces.

The American forces found themselves, especially in the first couple of months of fierce, tooth and nail fighting, isolated and cut-off from almost all sources of support, attacked repeatedly by increasing Japanese forces, and nightly by Japanese naval ships that found themselves operating with almost complete night-time security and freedom of maneuver.

The Japanese found themselves increasingly committed to winning battle after battle, repeated attempts which invariably ended in one defeat after another, based upon a presumption, up to and including the first battle of “Alligator Creek,” of their

spiritual and martial superiority, and upon the evidence that, prior to that battle, no banzai charge they had ever tried across the Pacific ever resulted in defeat.

By the battle of Betio Island (Tarawa) the tables had turned between the Japanese and the Americans—the Americans had by then a rising Naval strategic and tactical superiority in the Pacific, and the Japanese had come to the realization that their forces, cut-off on isolated Islands, unassisted by effective naval forces, could not hope to win. American military confidence found a new edge.

The battle of Betio Island was supposed to be a quick, one day affair across a tiny atoll island not three miles in length and barely a half mile wide at its broadest point. Naval and aviation bombardment was supposed to neutralize all hardened sites, and there was even a joke that the island, if bombarded too much, might actually begin to sink.

This overconfidence came to cost the Americans dearly on Tarawa, and on successive landings and invasions at Saipan, Guam, Peleliu, Iwo Jima and Okinawa, by which time confidence had changed into foreboding.

The historical argument has been that at least one of those later bloody island campaigns, particularly Peleliu, was, by the time of its initiation, a strategically unnecessary target in the execution of the general American war plan.

Okinawa proved, as the final major battle of the Pacific, a nightmarish premonition of what the Americans and their Allies could come to expect once they militarily invaded the Japanese main homeland islands.

The Japanese had learned the hard way that mass banzai attacks were not only needlessly wasteful of precious and limited human manpower, but were generally ineffective against U.S. military defensive lines, especially if manned by battle-tested veterans.

But they also learned that hardened sites, bunkers and tunnels, could withstand and survive repeated bombardments and blasts by the largest of American battle-ship guns and airplane bombs.

Their strategy had by attrition and loss shifted from that of quick and complete defeat of American forces wherever they were encountered, to one of maximizing the attrition on the American and allied forces in order to slow the shrinkage of the Japanese Empire just enough hopefully allow the Imperial government to reconstitute and reorganize itself militarily.

The Japanese adopting more realistic tactics and limited strategic objectives, from Tarawa forward, against less realistic tactics without the presumption any longer of military superiority or strategic advantage, ended up costing Americans dearly in terms of both lives and materiel in the prosecution of the campaign. Only effective island hopping could circumvent these losses.

The argument within this essay follows paradigmatically in principle the following points:

1. One should never assume up front and unquestionably either one's own military superiority or the de facto military inferiority of one's enemy, nor of one's own strategic advantage and hence the strategic low-ground of one's opposition.
2. One should never fight a war primarily by attempting to win all battles at all costs, in lieu of losing sight of the long-term strategic objectives of one's reasons for fighting the war in the first place.
3. If one falls into the error of logic of needing to win a battle at any cost, even in spite of changing odds and increasing attrition, then one becomes bound rationally to a process that precludes the wider and more flexible consideration of operational and strategic options.
4. An effective commander fights with both the realistic understanding of both the limitations and strengths of one's forces and their capacities, and of the dynamic and changing liabilities and potential advantages of one's strategic position vis-à-vis the enemy forces and their command.

No battle is a game of chess, and no war can be won by reference to the chess board, but all war, especially that conventionally inscribed, does have many of the set-piece components of a larger strategic-tactical chess game.

The challenge of applying this in a contemporary changing world is that the strategic and related tactical requirements of any campaign of war has become increasingly widened and diversified by the dilating nature of human conflict and the broadened arenas within the global and transnational contexts in which human warfare is taking place. Militaries worldwide are gaining technological parity in the arms race, and the presumption of relying up the technological superiority of one's weapons systems cannot be relied upon to guarantee success.

It becomes critically important to both know what it is we are fighting for, why we are at war, and not only what our capacities and our enemy's capacities may or may not be in this regard, but, more importantly, to understand how these capacities have changed as they have been redefined and generally broadened within a changing warfare spectrum and conflict continuum.

We have assumed for instance, in the North Korean context, both the superiority of American and South Korean military forces over those of the North, and we have assumed as well the strategic advantage of North Korea's relative isolation and their apparent incapacity to sustain an enduring offensive effort.

And yet in this context of potential warfare we must deal with many uncertainties and unknowns—certainly North Korea has created both a significant ballistic missile capacity, largely upon

mobile launch platforms, and they have also unknown weapons of mass destruction capacities.

This is not the limit of their strategic or operational capacities if they chose to launch a full-scale attack against the South.

Further, we cannot clearly assess North Korea's potential cyber-warfare capacities or their ability to influence situations and information and communication in variegated battle spaces.

North Korea almost reunified the Korean Peninsula after their surprise attack on the South in late 1950. American and allied forces had been squeezed to a small perimeter space surrounding Pusan, within which space they were barely holding on for a few weeks. There is no reason that this kind of aggressive reunification scenario could not take place once again, and this time with different results.

In a changing environment marked by the potential for global warfare and transnational conflict upon all levels of human systems integration, we need to reconsider what fighting and losing many kinds of different battles might look like, unlike what we have known or learned from our history lessons, and what kinds of possible wars and strategic objectives for going to war that may define our future.

It is not only how we are fighting a war that matters, but why we may be fighting a war in the first place. Our reasons for going to war may in many ways shape the manner in which we seek to fight that war.

The Global War on Terror may have provided a starting point for this new understanding of the shifting nature of global warfare and human conflict patterns. Our presumptions of moral superiority or strategic invulnerability of the American people, of the historical safety and security of broad expanses of two oceans, came to an end suddenly and tragically on the morning of September 11th, 2001. We had a solid profile and understanding of Osama bin Laden well before that time, which included the analysis of his intent and efforts to construct improvised weapons of mass destruction. We had the previous, almost successful bombing of the World Trade Center, which, if successful, might have been even more deadly than 9/11.

We were suddenly left scrambling to fight and defeat a menace in the world that we could hardly define. We channeled these drives into concerted efforts to defeat both the security zones of the terrorists hiding in war-torn, warlord Afghanistan, and to eliminate what we believed to be the sources of known caches of weapons of mass destruction. We could win every battle on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan, but we found ourselves mired in a kind of war we could never decisively win.

Fast forward GWOT to its next evolutionary phase, and we were left to deal with the consequences of IS who, in the contexts of Syria and Iraq, seemed to be able to lose no battle, whom we met with the idea that either they were token paramilitary “militia” to be easily brushed aside, or that the war on terror was something as unwinnable as it was strategically

vague and pointless in outcome. After overrunning and putting to flight much of the Iraqi military, they continued to win battle after battle, seemed to be unbeatable, and attracted thousands of would-be terrorists around the world to their black flag, and to publicize on world media the mass murder of hundreds if not thousands of innocent victims, with seeming impunity.

Upon the Grandest of Strategies And the Relativity of Strategic Rationality

If we are to seek a global strategy for the future, it is perhaps in terms of all of humanity, and in terms of the global system as a whole, that we must find its sense and proper proportion of strategic rationality.

This would logically derive from the argument that any regional or national level strategy or defined set of interests, would by definition become relatively rational and therefore of limited scope from the point of view of that delimited context, but short of world strategy for global warfare.

Therefore, any strategy, to be grand strategy in the modern era, by dint of the rise of global systems and the structural consequences of global systems development, must become by default worldwide global strategy, rather than regionally or nationally defined.

The challenge of course is that one cannot easily get even just two nation-states to agree upon what is a common global strategy, outside of very limited coalitional interests, without sacrifice of national interests in security or stability, much less to get most nations or regions to come to a similar consensus.

Neither by global strategy do we mean a strategy of hegemonic world domination by a single nation-state or even a single dominant alliance of nations.

The argument would derive logically that, never being able to achieve a consensus, not even by a simple majority of nation-states, then no common global system can be achieved through agreement, but only possibly by force of arms and domination. By such an argument, we either live in a world defined by world domination by a single totalitarian entity, or else we must face and suffer the consequences of world chaos.

The only counter argument we might effectively mount against this line of reasoning, must be anchored to the anthropological realities of human nature and human behavior, such that it may be possible to derive and arrive at a global system by developmental default, by means of permitting human development its most natural and logical license for development of a fully humanized system that is capable of protecting humankind from its own worst enemy, which is humankind itself.

In other words, we might imagine a singular world system if and only if it is allowed to develop as a human system that is by design human-proofed against itself. B.F. Skinner, in his work “Beyond Freedom and Dignity” alluded to this possibility, even if his methods at arriving at this ideal state is somewhat suspect, at least upon psychological and human behavioral terms, if not on methodological and scientific grounds.

To get more clearly and deeply at this problem set, we must understand that fundamentally problems of strategy in general, and of grand strategy in particular, are primarily normative type

problems, as are the questions of universal versus relative rationality. A normative problem-set is by definition a super-complex, multi-variable problem, one defined by multiple dimensions of mutual interdependence, and that therefore lacks single, puzzle-type solution sets, but that otherwise has an infinite number of alternative possibilities of solution, each generated by the influence of different decisions in the course of play.

In short, normative problems as presented especially by “intelligent” human systems are quintessentially non-linear dynamic problems of multiple interacting and interdependent variables, each influencing all the others, and being influenced differentially by each or any set of the others.

We can speak of broad synthesis and organismic integration with emergent synergetic properties. The basic atomic building block of human systems, the individual human being, is itself a super-complex system of many different, interacting subsystems, and is itself a sub-system of larger biological, social and cultural systems with which it interacts and within which context it develops in a highly nonlinear manner.

We are used to thinking in terms of finite problems with final or “absolute” correct solutions, and we are used furthermore to thinking in terms of the relativity of complexity that is founded primarily by arbitrary statements of value (“this is good, or compared to this, that is bad, etc.”) We tend to construe normative worlds or worlds normatively, in terms that are

primarily or exclusively moral, paying lip-service to the moral and cultural relativity of other's points of view.

We usually do not recognize the potential role and play of alternative normative frameworks of evaluation, which can include statistical description and prescription (the so-called law of averages); medical diagnosis and prognosis (the definition of healthy strategies of intervention versus pathological outcomes); or alternatively, arguments about what is more or less rational, or rationally bounded, in terms of outcomes and necessary steps to achieve these outcomes.

If we stand further back to examine the larger picture, we can imagine a scientific universe in which all these kinds of normative frameworks, the statistical, the medical and the rational, can actually be brought together into a common, convergent shared framework of differential conclusions, interpretations and understandings.

A medical doctor learns to practice this kind of framework upon a daily basis in the articulation of his profession, coming to understand the conjunction of statistical patterns of disease prevalence, with medical knowledge of symptomology and diagnosis, with rational decision regarding the best steps to be taken to cure the problem.

A similar argument can be mounted, exactly parallel to this analogy, that the same problem exists for the design development of human systems, and for the complex problem

of human development in general upon the many levels at which this development occurs in human systems.

Even if our scientific knowledge tends to be less precise and far more certain regarding our understanding of these human systems, the understanding of psychiatry as a medical profession in the diagnosis and remediation of human behavior proceeds exactly in this manner.

We tend not to have ready-made models or frameworks for understanding human systems and their behavior particularly for human social systems, and we tend instead to default to arguments of cultural relativity and socio-cultural determinism for the justification of cultural differentials of value and normative frameworks.

We tend to borrow in this regard quite liberally from anthropological theory and ethnographic knowledge, with a correlation in linguistics, understanding that descriptive equality of language systems, like a corresponding, parallel equality of cultural systems, without understanding or addressing the problems of moving from a descriptive to a prescriptivist orientation.

Neither are all cultures equal, especially from the developmental challenges of overall human adaptation, nor are all cultures or societies equally successful in a normative sense. Describing a society or culture in terms that it is observed to be, as it is realistically represented by our scientific language, is not the same problem of describing what such a culture is ideally

speaking, or that may be best or should be better for a people with a shared culture in terms of their potential health or developmental capacity for fulfillment.

While the latter form of prescriptivist argument and formulation ultimately entails an arbitrary decision about what may be better or best, from an anthropological perspective, particularly from the standpoint of a construct of human universals, by itself it cannot lead up systematically to a framework of knowledge with predictive, non-self-fulfilling outcomes.

The hypothetical generality of a model like Abraham Maslow's need hierarchy, the decision and assessment of what may be more or less general or universal to human systems, statistically or medically better or worse for such systems, may be arrived at through systematic analysis and rationalization leading up to informed decision-making without too much arbitration or interpretive parallax or cultural or rational relativity.

This is the case when doctors or psychiatrists, following similar standards and criteria of diagnosis, independently arrive at similar kinds of conclusions in complex cases, with a high percentage of agreement. This is characteristic of many types of expert systems of knowledge.

Again, the problem with human social and cultural realities, particularly upon nation-state levels of vast scope and complexity, is that we lack such received, agreed upon expert

knowledge to the level or degree that would make such agreement possible.

Instead, we have across the social sciences a large amount of poly-paradigmatic disagreement of acceptable conditions and standards, even in basic areas of description, and hence we have a tremendous range of hermeneutic, interpretive parallax, especially when (or if) it leads to the applied problem of prescription.

The problem and challenge of developing a human or fool proof human system at the global level of socio-structural integration, without either undue levels of tyrannical repression or else too much anarchical chaos, rests upon being able to paradigmatically define universal human nature and the most optimal requirements for human development upon an individual level, and then developing social systems from the smallest to the largest possible political entities.

This approach can be taken analytically and synthetically, in a systematic manner, to some reasonable degree, with the assumption that the limits of state and organized social empowerment are the boundaries that define the optimal conditions of individual human development, which would include the individual human rights, needs and responsibilities as these are extended to the broadest compass possible of human civic and socio-cultural freedoms, and inclusive of all of humankind.

When the Best Defense is a Good Offense

It may be argued whether or not relatively open and free societies, compared to closed and relatively authoritarian societies, may suffer a critical disadvantage when it comes to conflict and warfare.

Their freedoms, which they may seek to defend and use to justify war-making, may also make them more vulnerable to the social chaos within which conflict can readily breed, and open societies, by argument, tend to be non-aggressive and not to rely over much on their war-making prowess in the larger world (with the noteworthy exceptions of Great Britain, France and the United States, especially, which seem, in modern history, to have sought aggressively to militarily and politically maintain their “neo-colonial” hegemony in the larger world through very proactive “defensive” postures and actions.)

This is remarkably the case when such “open” states, otherwise based upon democratic and civic principles of human rights, have in the name of security and enhanced military capacity created programs that systematically curtailed or violated the very principles, such as the “black budget” programs from World War II timeframe until the early seventies.

This was particularly the case in the so-called MK-Ultra types of human and social experimentation conducted since World War II, during the same Cold War era in which we believed our

Russian and Chinese adversaries could gain a critical strategic advantage over us in fields of unknown and unexplored sciences unless we conducted our own sets of experiments in order at least to stay on par with our Cold War adversaries.

While few in the world would argue the case against an entity like Adolph Hitler and his Nazi empire, the so-called “Third Reich,” much more arguable and less clear-cut would be the case of the U.S. engagement in Vietnam on behalf of the South Vietnamese regime, or in the multiple cases of the engagement of British and French forces in “brushfire wars” throughout their former colonial empires.

It can be said that open, liberal societies that may be in principle pacifist and not war-mongering or war-making suffer an inherent strategic disadvantage of always assuming a de facto stance of being on the defensive vis-à-vis the larger and more aggressive, less free world. This has certainly seemed to be the case in relation to global terrorism, in spite of aggressive initiatives European and American states have undertaken to protect themselves and others from terrorist attacks.

It is also probably equally true that in general aggressive and war-mongering states hold an inherent advantage in being able to pick and choose their time and place for action, and in holding the initiative fundamentally against states that by definition yield aggressive initiative. This is probably especially true when such a state holds the *fait accompli* of complete surprise upon an unprepared nation.

If we look behind the scenes of international affairs and statecraft, we can understand that there may be going on at any one time innumerable efforts and counter-efforts in “covert” forms of warfare and conflict that attempt at any given time to maintain the current status quo of balance of forces and powers, or to tip the balance in one’s favor and to the disfavor of one’s adversaries, and that much of this backroom effort must be for the sake of forestalling development of future open conflict or of deescalating a tension situation away from the verge of war.

In any game of conflict, where one’s gains become somehow, directly or indirectly, counted in terms of the losses of one’s adversary’s, there is a premium and strategic-operational advantage to seizing the initiative and in adopting a basically aggressive, offensive orientation that is capable of overwhelming and collapsing the opponent’s defenses.

A purely defensive orientation, a besieged mentality, cannot by definition win the game except through the integrity and superiority of inner lines of communication. Any siege, if well conducted, cannot but win in principle if it can completely isolate and systematically eliminate a defender’s resources and overcome their defenses.

At the same time, assuming an offensive orientation, and gaining the strategic advantage through such aggressive operations, may prove to be a very risky proposition which, if

indecisively executed, can lead to unaffordable attrition or reversal of the strategic situation.

The strategic intelligence dilemma then becomes that in order for any open, relatively free and yet strong nation-state to maintain any sense of power and strategic legitimacy in the world (to deter and “defend” against potential attacks,) becomes the dilemma of maintaining an effective, dynamic defense by means of being able to assume and hold initiative in aggressive actions “short of making war” that serve the purposes of protecting one’s strategic interests in the larger world, without a critical sense of its loss in reputation as a peaceful, freedom loving society in a larger world that bears the brunt of its projective concerns and protective preoccupations with violence.

This seems to have been a major strategic dilemma that many well-intentioned, open Democratic nation-states with powerful military organizations have fallen into. These states have often come to exhibit marked patterns of disproportionate militarization, with exceptional capacities at organized force projection in the larger worlds, and with patterns perhaps of military institutional dislocation, far beyond what might otherwise be recommended for the security and scope of freedom of their society.

To claim for instance that the U.S. military policy at the time, following the Cold War era of the 1950s, made it necessary for its military engagement in Vietnam in order to defeat and hold

back the tides of global communist insurgency, has not been demonstrated by the actual subsequent history of Vietnam (or of the rest of the world for that matter.)

Vietnam became communist whether or not Americans sought to interfere and prevent it from occurring. And the Vietnam War probably cost both the Americans and the Vietnamese far more, in many different ways, than if that political transition had been allowed to happen without war or American interruption in the first place.

But there do arise times, as in World War II, when free and open democratic nation-states must defend themselves militarily from foreign aggression, for the sake of their political, national and cultural survival, and that in such times, the best way forward strategically is to seek a state of war and a strategy not of passive defense, but eventually, of active offensive aggressive action against aggressor nations.

The U.S. adopted this strategy against the Japanese in the Pacific, and the British against the Nazis and their fascist allies in North Africa, made decisive by American intervention in western North Africa, while the Russians, by sheer perseverance, after a couple of years of successive and astounding defeats at the hands of the Germans and Axis powers, were able to eventually stem the Nazi tide, seize and hold and augment the initiative against the Nazi forces, and then to gradually reverse the tide in Russia's favor.

The challenge then becomes for any nation-state that is by definition non-belligerent, defensive rather than offensive-aggressive, and pacifist rather than dependent upon war making and war mongering, to know clearly when, how and why to go to war as well as knowing the right time to take the war to the enemy in an aggressive and decisive manner. Similarly, any such state must also know when and how to curtail its civil freedoms for the sake of preserving its domestic stability and security in the face of rising social conflict.

There is no modern nation-state that is free of conflict or free of the risk of war-making by another state. All nation-states, to remain independent and free (on whatever terms they define for themselves), must develop their own military and security capacities in a manner that would serve to protect and preserve these foundational interests.

Therefore, a nation-state that is prone through its socio-structural fragility to fragmentation and conflict becomes a nation-state that is also susceptible to war, either making war as a means of controlling conflict, or becoming and being susceptible to the war-making of other nation-states because of their internal conflict.

The challenge of protecting and preserving a free and independent world therefore becomes the dilemma of seeking credible means to do so, by acceptable methods, in a moderate and non-militaristic manner that does not erode or undermine social freedom.

This is the inherent uncertainty and gray-area of maintaining the dynamic equilibrium of the golden mean between freedom and force, and between human values and the tyranny of violence.

These risks and concerns for conflict and warfare have only become elevated and enhanced as a consequence of the emerging global disorder of modern world system, especially as foreign as well as domestic non-state actors can increase their strategic and operational capacities to compete with the security forces and militaries of modern nation-states, at least in limited arenas of interaction.

It follows that in an increasingly interdependent and globalizing world system, nation-states must not only keep and maintain streamlined and effective military and security forces, but they must also seek to develop effective, efficacious coalitions and teams, both internationally and transnationally, that would permit such states a broader range of regional security and stability within a rapidly changing global environment to secure its regional-global interests abroad.

A case in point might be the hypothetical scenario of the U.S., by prior armed forces agreement, moving to overt conventional war with mainland China over the issue of Taiwanese national independence.

It is not so much the question of changing levels of interests and risks in war in a post-cold war era that were originally defined by cold war doctrine, or even of the critical disruption

of deep ties of structural interdependence between all three adversarial nations, but any such war may easily erupt and come to include other regional and global players as well, bringing Japan and South Korea to the side of the U.S., while North Korea might throw in with China against peninsular interests in Korea.

More importantly, though, all especially developed nation-states in the world would potentially suffer economic disruption and thus would have a strategic stake not only in the outcomes of a war between the U.S. and mainland China, but in its de facto initiation, and most such states would probably seek to intervene to forestall, prevent or intercede in such war.

Such states might increasingly seek to exert backdoor pressures and international and transnational influence upon all parties to prevent the kind of global fiasco that such a war would promise.

The challenge of a free and open state remaining free and open in a changing world system, in which many state and non-state interests may have a vested interest in undermining this freedom, as at least an indirect way of these interests creating systemic advantages for themselves, entails that the military and security interests of these states must learn how to better anticipate surprise and to proactively stay at least one or two developmental steps ahead of their potential adversaries as the warfare spectrum and its related conflict continuum continue to evolve.

This challenge places the role of military and related civilian intelligence at the center of strategic and operational concerns and engagements.

How do we systematically engage in fundamentally inhumane and inhumane affairs and activities without ourselves thereby becoming our own worst, inhuman and inhumane enemies, without losing our own basic sense of humanity and the greater principles for which we stand within the larger world?

This is the central moral dilemma that serves to underlie and underwrite a field like military anthropology, or its related fields of military sociology or psychology/psychiatry. And it is this underlying dilemma that has resulted in the enduring distrust and antipathy between military and social science communities.

The further complication of this fundamental strategic dilemma is that this analysis is based upon the presupposition of at least potential equally available rationality to all significant actors, and does not take into account the relative irrationality or non-rationality of actors who may be so blinded by ideological or criminal motives or so committed to violent courses of action that they end up playing by an attritional game-book of mutual loss and destruction.

A relatively non-rational actor, playing by their own rule-books, however bounded ideologically or psycho-logically, opens the world up to potential chaos, anarchy and the escalation of

violence for its own sake, for the kind of instrumental goal displacement that leads to violent escalation in the first place.

While there is no such thing as a good or clean war, there may be such a thing as a relatively just war, as well as relative justice in the execution of warfare and in the consequences of making war.

This is a sense of justice and justness that is not for ourselves, by ourselves, to decide, to justify in terms of our own rationalizations. It is rather up to the open forum, the courtroom of greater humanity, and of human history, to decide what may constitute crimes of war, crimes against the peace, or crimes against humanity.

It becomes important therefore to put and keep ourselves on the right side of the ledger, on the open side of human history on which all human power, and all power, is relative to our notions of what is right. If might makes right, it is also the larger sense of right that justifies, and therefore serves to set limits upon might.

Perhaps with the emergence of a global system, and with the newfound possibilities and potentialities of global warfare and transnational conflict, the historical case can be made that “post-modern” humanity is at a developmental cross-roads that we can either come to common agreement about shared ideals and values of humankind, or that we can end up in a world system of global anarchy and transnational disorder and chaos.

Freedom or unfreedom, however primitive or advanced, remains a central foundational choice that we can live by. One road leads ultimately to the grand tyranny of violence, the other to greater social freedom from violence (hence, deconflicted peace). If the ultimate limit of our freedoms become the unfreedoms of others, then the ultimate limits to our violence becomes as well the possible violence of others.