



Virulent Ethnocentrism: A Major Challenge for Transformational Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding in the Post-Cold War Era¹

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Introduction

The purpose of this article is to discuss the origins and prospects for reduction of virulent ethnocentrism: a deep and violently aggressive sense of the 'Other', resulting from the apparent tendency of people across time and cultural space to subdivide others into 'them' and 'us' (see LeVine and Campbell, 1972). In the Balkans, this phenomenon has resulted in one world war plus the more recent 'ethnic cleansing' of the last ten years of the 20th century.

Although it has been nearly seven years since NATO military action stopped the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina, followed by NATO-led maintenance of the '*negative peace*' (absence of hostilities), important provisions of the Dayton Peace Accords still have not been met; e.g., the return of all displaced persons and refugees to their former homes, presumably due to virulent ethnocentrism exacerbated by the atrocities committed in Bosnia between the spring of 1992 and the genocidal fall of the UN 'protected safe area' of Srebrenica in July 1995.

The more recent situation in Kosovo further highlights the apparently reconciliation-impervious nature of violent ethnic conflict, fed by virulent ethnocentrism which, in turn, has been reinforced by the conflict, including NATO's 78-day air campaign against Belgrade.

As the Balkan Wars seem to have run their course and the murderous regime of Slobodan Milosevic has been toppled by 'people power', with the FRY returning to the fold of European civilization, the time is right to pose two interrelated questions:

- (1) What are the origins of virulent ethnocentrism as expressed during the post-Cold War world, for example, in the Balkans?
- (2) What are the prospects for reducing it, such that, in the Balkans, the '*negative peace*' maintained by the NATO-led Stabilization Force (SFOR) can lead to a '*positive peace*', where the underlying causes and conditions of the violent conflict have been reduced, if not eliminated, and social justice has been significantly achieved for all concerned?

Generic Origins

As the thinkers and architects of transformational conflict resolution and peacebuilding attempt to wield their 'magic', to prevent, among other things, future Yugoslavias and Columbine High Schools, they may need to pay attention to a level of analysis that tends

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² Strictly speaking, since World War 2 can be viewed as a continuation (or 'epiphenomenon') of World War I, we could even say that, in the Balkans, virulent ethnocentrism has resulted in *two* world wars!



to be avoided for conceptual as well as ideological and emotional reasons: the *intra-psychic* level. If, as John Burton (1984) and Robert North (1990) have argued, the *individual is the basic unit of explanation at all levels*, then we had better not only pay attention to the individual, but also to all that she or he (but probably mostly *he* [see Wrangham and Peterson, 1996]) brings to those other levels: interpersonal, intergroup, interorganizational, international, interregional, etc.

Quite simply, conflicts may be raging or suppressed by the Self, or repressed by Others and, therefore, merely 'on hold' as the ethnic conflicts of the 1990s were during the Cold War. Alternatively, conflicts may be latent at the *intra-actor level* – either *intrapyschic*, *intragroup*, *intraorganizational*, *intranational*, *intra-regional*. In either case, the conflicts may – either on their own (via *transference*), and/or through outside manipulation (via the *functions-of-conflict thesis* [see Sandole, 1999]) – spill over to the external domain.

Hence, as I have argued elsewhere (Sandole, 1987), unless conflicts at the *intra-actor* level are dealt with first, then conflicts at the *inter-actor* level – good intentions to the contrary – may only worsen. To deal effectively with conflicts at the 'second [or subsequent]-order of manifestation', we may have to deal with them first at their 'first-order of manifestation.'

The question arises, of course, how do we, the 'concerned international community', do that with *complex* conflicts where something that happened in 1389 for Serbs, 1453 for Greeks, 1690 for the Irish, 1915 for Armenians, has helped shape the identity, worldviews, and definitions of conflicts of present-day Serbs, Greeks, Irish, and Armenians? For until they deal effectively with such complexity, the Serbs, Greeks Irish, and Armenians, among many others, are consigned to 'forever fighting the last war.'

This is clearly the case with the Irish, as indicated by the ominous 'Marching Season' every summer, when thousands of marches take place dealing with the outcome of the Battle of the Boyne of 12 July 1690. In this case, time is not linear, but nonlinear; indeed, even 'compressed' (see Volkan, 1997) where, much like in 'post-traumatic stress syndrome', the same 'pivotal event' – the '*chosen trauma*' (ibid.) – is played out ('re-enacted') time and time again, almost as if, each time, for the 'first time.' As Richard Rose (1971, pp. 354-355) eloquently put it:

Londonderry on August 12, 1969, aptly illustrates how time past and time present can fuse together in an explosive way. Protestants there that day were commemorating the 280th anniversary of the liberation of the besieged Protestant bastion within the old walled city from Catholic hordes surrounding it. As they looked over Derry's walls, the marchers could see that Catholics, as in Jacobite times, were present in great numbers in the Bogside just below their fortifications. Catholics did not have to turn their minds further back than the previous twelve months to anticipate what might happen next. In that period, the Royal Ulster Constabulary several times entered the Bogside in large numbers, assaulting Catholics on the streets and in their homes in ways that official

³ Interestingly, with the exception of the Irish case, the 'Other' for the Serbs, Greeks, and Armenians is the same: Ottoman Turkey. Hence, although the Ottoman Empire no longer exists, it remains an integral part of the *identities* of, among others, Serbs, Greeks, and Armenians, whose ancestors are perceived to have been assaulted and oppressed by it. That Serbs continue to refer to Bosnian Muslims (Bosniaks) as 'Turks', as do Armenians of Azerbaijanis, is further testament to the power of past events on the present and future.

enquiries could later amnesty but not excuse. The Catholics began to build barricades to prevent a recurrence of this. This recalled Protestants from ancient history to the present. The barricades were interpreted as the beginning of yet another Catholic insurrection. The approach of the police to the barricades was seen by the Catholics behind the lines as yet another instance in which Protestants sought, in the words of an eighteenth-century Irish song, to make 'Croppies lie down.' In such circumstances, *it hardly matters whether an individual interpreted events in seventeenth, eighteenth or twentieth-century terms*. In Northern Ireland, the conclusions drawn – for or against the regime – are much the same in one century as in the next (emphasis added).

Under such circumstances, therefore, when previous process interacts with, blends into, and strengthens '*conflict-as-startup conditions*', '*conflict-as-process*' is never far from the surface: a latent fire always ready to be rekindled (see Sandole, 1999, pp. 129-131). Hence, Thompson's (1989, p. 691) observation 'that Northern Irish society generates cycles of violence that escalate rapidly. The escalation is independent of socioeconomic changes and is strongly *self-perpetuating*' (emphasis added).

Muzafer Sherif's (1967, p. 29) discussion of the 'heavy hand of the past' is relevant here as well:

each child in time acquires from his cultural heritage a past in human relationships that becomes his own, in the sense that he experiences its facets as his personal tastes, preferences, likes and dislikes....

Hence, "myths, traditions, and symbols of national pride handed down from one generation to another" are among the factors conducive to modern wars between nations and groups of nations' (Cantril, 1950, p. 18; cited in Sherif, 1967, p. 26). They help to keep conflicts-as-process in an ongoing or resurrectable state.

A proposition comes to mind at this point: The 'last frontier' is *not* 'outer space', but 'inner space'! Moreover, we may have more knowledge about 'outer' than we do of 'inner space'! Well-intentioned third parties, with between 15 and 45 hours of workshop experience under their belts, may be quite content to walk into – perhaps 'emotionally trespass' – the wretched, ravaged conflict space of, e.g., ethnic Albanians and Serbs or a divorcing husband and wife, to help them see 'reason' [?], without any awareness that Heisenberg's *Uncertainty Principle* is alive and well in the social as well as physical domain: our 'mere presence' in the parties' *turbulent*, dynamic, constantly shifting space may be enough to detonate further an already precarious situation (see Benjamin, 1990). But adherence to the theology of the primacy of the single factor (or of good intentions) does not allow us to see that.

There is a need, therefore, for a comprehensive, multilevel approach, as I have argued elsewhere (Sandole, 1993; 1998), not just for understanding but also for dealing with *complex* conflicts: where, again, everything is related to everything else! The parable of the three blind men and the elephant just will not do anymore (if it ever did!), to 'capture the totality of the beast'! We must put Humpty Dumpty back together again!

⁴ In this regard, see Wilson (1998).



'Inner space', as a *complex* problem area, comprises at least three possibilities:

- (1) *Individual*: a set of experiences and/or a physiological problem that affects one particular person's behavior in adverse ways (e.g., one of the Columbine High School shooters, Eric Harris, was on medication for a problem in this regard, plus was rejected for enlistment in the U.S. Marine Corps a week before the shootings);
- (2) *Group*: a set of experiences that affect a whole group of people in their relations with others (e.g., the returning ethnic Albanians of Kosovo as they envisage future relations with Serbs); and/or
- (3) *Universal*: something about 'human nature' that may predispose *all of us* to act in certain ways under certain circumstances. This is, of course, a reference to the '*nature/nurture*' debate that has exercised social thinkers and practitioners for years. We will discuss that option first, as part of our overall recognition that whichever of these possibilities applies in a given conflict situation, will (or should) affect the type of intervention selected.

The Role of Biological Factors in Human Behavior

In and outside the field, we tend to skirt the issue of hostile definitions of the 'Other'. Although we talk about 'images of the Enemy', such discussions tend to be framed in terms of *social constructionism*, of statements like, 'war begins in the minds of men, and it is in the minds of men that we must begin to eliminate war' (UNESCO Charter). While this is part of the problem, it is not, I would hypothesize, all of it, or indeed, even the most significant part of it.

Members of the conflict/conflict resolution community tend to be humanists, liberals, and others associated with flexible, optimistic views of human nature. We tend to agree with Albert Bandura (1973) and others that whatever humans do in conflict situations is a function of *learning*: change what they learn and change their behavior! This view (which is associated with the *Idealpolitik* paradigm) tends to ignore – on ideological, political, and emotional as well as practical grounds – the role of biology in conflict, especially violent conflict behavior. But we continue to avoid this issue at our peril.

Elsewhere (1990), I have argued that those of us who believe that biological factors play a role in human behavior, *as part of a complex constellation of multiple factors*, can now 'come out of the closet' without fear of suffering significant consequences, for perhaps being labelled as a purveyor of Nazi eugenic philosophies and political programs. I have also argued (1999, Ch. 8) that it is not simply a question of 'nature' or 'nurture', or indeed, in some simple additive sense, of 'nature *and* 'nurture', but of both *interacting* in complex ways, such that each can be affected by the other.

With that as some background to where I stand on the issue, how do I see the role of biology in human conflict behavior? Given the observations of Edward O. Wilson (1979), John Pfeiffer (1984), Joseph Montville (1988) and others, that our brains seemed to be preprogrammed to bifurcate everything, including fellow human beings into membership in *ingroups* and *outgroups*, it seems reasonable to conclude that 'nature' has invested *Homo sapiens* with this particular kind of 'hard wiring' to protect us from one another in Hobbes' infamous 'state of nature', where:

men live without a common Power to keep them all in awe, ... in that condition which is called Warre; and such a warre as is of every man against every man ... where the life of man [is] solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short (Hobbes, 1950, pp. 103, 104).

From the time when we are infants to when we are older, we are sensitive to the 'Other': I'll never forget my infant son's emotional outburst when a young plumber passed through his bedroom on the way to fix the shower, or when a colleague from Africa attempted to hold him; or a colleague who revealed to me that, although he knew it was wrong, he still felt uncomfortable in the presence of people of a certain background; indeed, he would prefer *not* to 'touch' them.

Now, clearly, learning, culture and other aspects of 'nurture' can impact significantly who we come to define as 'threatening', and how we respond to them; but the *biological predisposition* to bifurcate fellow members of the species into 'them' and 'us' nevertheless seems to be there, ready to interact with culture to create certain 'histories', certain 'facts on the ground' which become the bases of violent conflict spirals, including the genocidal ethnic cleansing that has returned to Europe in the wake of the ending of the Cold War.

Now, before going any further, one possible implication of what I have said thus far is that we could start to teach children in the schools, *not* that racism, antisemitism, and other 'isms' are 'normal', but that they are *learned*, oftentimes *dysfunctional* expressions of our *biological predisposition* to bifurcate people into friend and foe. Given that the predisposition is part of our 'wiring', i.e., originally meant to have survival value, we are sort of 'stuck with it.' We are not, however, stuck with the culturally/experientially determined referents of that predisposition; indeed, as implied, some of those definitions may be counter to our survival, either as members of ingroups or as an entire species. Hence, it would be in our best interests to work on *changing* those definitions.

Imagine classrooms at all levels, up to university level, where pupils and students are actively encouraged, by conflict resolution-trained facilitators, to 'brainstorm' the kinds of emotions they experience when they think about, discuss, or interact with members of certain groups (thereby making it exceedingly difficult to do what Fisher and Ury [1983] counsel: to separate people from issues); to brainstorm where those feelings come from; the consequences of those feelings; examples throughout the country and the world where those kinds of feelings have translated into violent conflict situations; how to work on changing those feelings; difficulties in doing so, etc.

This is a *complex* 'tall order': the feelings we experience have a natural base, they are, therefore, part of our 'human nature'; however, the culturally-defined 'targets' of those feelings are not part of our nature: they may be wrong, unfair, counterproductive and, therefore, should be – and *can be* – changed! This would be quite a challenge to bring into any level of classroom, but one that we must accept if we are to make a dent on the levels of violence that have, for example, turned the United States into the most violent country in the industrialized world, or that have brought genocide back to Europe.

⁵ Since the events and aftermath of 11 September 2001, this has become an even more urgent imperative.



'Wired'

When I first saw Fritz Lang's classic film, *M*, with Peter Lorre in the title role, playing a serial murderer of children, I could not completely grasp Lorre's dilemma when, toward the end of the film, under siege by townspeople, he declares, '*Ich will nicht, aber ich muss!*': 'I do not want to, but I must' [*kill!*]

Years later, when I came across Paul MacLean's (1975, 1978) *triune theory of the brain*, comprising three analytically distinct but operationally interrelated brains – the *reptilian*, *limbic*, and *neocortical brains* – my intuitive understanding of the dynamics of the behavior of the homicidal pedophile became clearer. According to MacLean, under stress the reptilian and limbic brains – sources of repetitive movements and affect ('fight or flight') – can overtake and overwhelm the neocortical brain – source of abstract thought, problemsolving, etc. – such that '*feeling*, and not *seeing* is believing!' In other words, 'cognitively', Peter Lorre's character knew that what he was doing was wrong, but, 'emotionally', he could not help myself. This lack of synchronization between the neocortical and reptilian/limbic brains, with the latter in the ascendancy, MacLean refers to as *schizophysiology*.

All this cohered with a distinction Kenneth Boulding had made years ago (1956) between *cognitive*, *evaluative* and *affective* images, with the cognitive dealing with our beliefs, evaluative with the values we attach to our beliefs, and affect with the emotional energy mobilized (perhaps by our *homeostatic* processes) to defend highly valued beliefs under assault. In other words, Maclean's schizophysiology occurs when, in Boulding's terms, the affective level overwhelms and overtakes the cognitive and evaluative levels.

What has all this got to do with transformational conflict resolution and peacebuilding? Well, in which of Maclean's three brains, or at which of Boulding's three levels of images would we imagine Vamik Volkan's (1991, 1997) 'chosen traumas' to reside? Alternatively, after someone has been brutalized and traumatized by a searing experience, or has been touched emotionally by the story of such an experience by a grandmother, and subsequently, via 'transference', experiences a series of recurring replays of the experience, as occurs in post-traumatic stress syndrome, what processes do we think might be involved? More importantly from a conflict resolution/conflict transformation point of view, which processes – indeed, which theories – seem to be relevant to helping traumatized persons caught up in 'time collapse' to 'let go' of what Sherif (1967, p. 29) calls the 'heavy hand of the past'?

We have here a paradox, a conundrum: on the one hand, people who have been brutalized by an experience that continues to define who they are, their perceptions and behavior, are, in a way, 'possessed' by that chosen trauma which resides at the affective [reptilian/limbic] level; yet, on the other hand, those of us who attempt to be helpful are dealing with them at the cognitive [neocortical] level. We talk to them, train them, including role plays, facilitate their processes and all this occurs at the cognitive level, rarely percolating down to the affective level. Granted, on occasion a role-play exercise might 'set someone off', but basically what we do occurs and is experienced primarily at the cognitive level, although with some spillover into the evaluative and affective levels as well.

So, the *research* and *practical* problem is: how can we in the peace and conflict studies fields influence the affective level, particularly the chosen traumas collected there, when our main tools are cognitive?

There is evidence from psychology and psychoanalysis that we can impact the emotional level by re-arousing the emotional response to the initial experience and, then, via our cognitive communication efforts, attempt to change the cognitive interpretations we [or others] make of those experiences and corresponding feelings. But is this not a bit 'tricky'? Imagine working with a victim of rape or one who survived the genocide in Rwanda or Srebrenica by 'playing dead' with countless bodies of those less fortunate upon her. By what ethical norm can we claim justification for recreating the feelings associated with the outrage?

Then, what about those who committed the outrage, like those treated by French physician (and revolutionary!) Frantz Fanon (1968), members of the French military who tortured Algerians during the Algerian civil war? There are those who do not believe they did wrong, but who might nevertheless be experiencing post-traumatic stress syndrome. Reflective of greater *complexity*, there are those who know they did wrong but still define people like those whom they have tortured and/or killed as less than human, who are troubled by that as well as by the fact that they have behaved terribly toward such people. How do we deal with them?

Is it a simple case of bringing oppressor [e.g., rapist] and oppressed [e.g., rape victim] together, like NBC journalist Jane Pauley did some years ago on her Monday night program, with the rapist still in jail for life? What are the ethics involved here, especially since the arousal of feelings in one or both cases might lead to further negative implications? But, perhaps surprisingly, in Jane Pauley's case, the rapist as well as the rape victim appear to have gotten something out of the session.

In any case, for some, this is the problem with *restorative justice*? How can we possibly justify not sending the perpetrator of atrocities to the gallows, or at least to life imprisonment with no possibility of parole [*retributive justice*]? Lots of questions, and few answers....

Enter the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC): painful, frustrating, upsetting, surreal; but yet, it may have been better for South Africans to experience that approach to justice instead of that which is going on simultaneously in Rwanda. What *theory* can we distill here that might help South Africans and others – Bosnians, Cypriots, Irish, Sri Lankans, Israelis and Palestinians, Armenians and Azeris – let go of the heavy hand of the past?

Ethnicity

Part of the 'nurture' that interacts with 'nature' is '*ethnicity*': a sense of shared culture, race, language, worldview, history, traditions. 'Ethnicity' is a component of *identity* shared with, in each case, members of an *identity group* (see Burton, 1979, 1990, 1997). Although identity can be constructed, expressed and otherwise experienced in terms of other criteria (not all of which are mutually exclusive) – such as gender, religion, class, nationality – the felt expression, satisfaction, and violation of one's need for identity through ethnicity can border on primordial intensity.



In this regard, the *need* for identity (but not its culturally-based *construction*) seems to be, like other needs (e.g., for recognition and security), a *basic human need* (BHN) common to all individuals (see *ibid.*). As such, ethnicity is a fundamental criterion in terms of which to express, satisfy, and experience violation of one's need for identity. Especially in the *Realpolitik* world, it is often in terms of ethnicity (and related criteria such as religion and nationality) that fairly rigid, *ethnocentric* distinctions are made between *ingroups* ('us') and *outgroups* ('them'). Indeed, violent conflict and war are often played-out between such groups, leading to the construction and recording of their ethno-national histories in terms of great battles, victories and defeats, military leaders, and the like.

Accordingly, members of identity groups tend to be socialized not only in terms of who they are, but of who they are *not*, indeed, who has been out to 'get them!' In this regard, the results of interviews I conducted of senior CSCE/OSCE negotiators in Vienna in 1993 and 1997 indicate that historical memories of atrocities committed by members of certain ethnic groups against members of other ethnic groups are among the perceived primary causes of the Balkan wars of the 1990s (see Sandole, 2001).

So, it is not just the historically-based 'chosen traumas' – the collective memories of profound assault and loss associated with 28 June 1389 for Serbs; 29 May 1453 for Greeks; 12 July 1690 for Northern Irish Catholics; 24 April 1915 for Armenians – that are significant, continuing to be experienced emotionally on a regular basis in '*collapsed time*' as part of a post-traumatic stress syndrome (see Volkan, 1997, Chs. 3-4), but also each successive, 'real world' replay of the traumatic event which builds upon and reinforces the original sense of assault and loss and, therefore, grievance.

This is what makes *identity*-based conflicts so intractable. Unless these particular examples of '*conflict-as-startup conditions*' – deep-rooted historical memories of assault and loss among different ethnic identity groups – are dealt with effectively, then '*conflict-as-process*' is never far from the surface, always ready to be re-ignited under certain conditions, as is painfully clear in the Middle East, Northern Ireland, Balkans and elsewhere.

Hence, the ultimate challenge for peacebuilders in each case is to discover or invent ways to deal with the past as a *necessary* (but clearly not *sufficient*) condition for the parties to 'let go' of the 'heavy hand of the past' and collaboratively develop a constructive future based on *common* security: not an insignificant task given that the parties' identities are based, in part, on their deep-rooted, historical memories of victimhood and corresponding, reinforced *virulent* ethnocentrism.

Understanding Identity Conflicts (I): Insights from Kuhn

For a number of years, I have taught research methods to undergraduate and graduate students, in each case assigning a book that has initially perplexed and confounded them: Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1970). Students continually ask, 'Why are we reading a book about the history of natural science – about physics! – in a core course of a program in international relations or in conflict resolution?'

In my ('nondefensive') efforts to explain Kuhn's relevance to conflict and conflict resolution, at the international or any other level, I usually start out by informing the

students that Kuhn is relevant, first and foremost, to the Philosophy of Science, especially to *epistemology* and *ontology* –i.e., *how* and *why* we perceive *what* we perceive – which is an essential first step to any course on the 'nuts and bolts' of research design and implementation. To facilitate that discussion, I present a number of 'vignettes' from Kuhn that seem to explain what he is all about. *Vignette number 1*, for instance, deals with the following scenario (Kuhn, 1970, pp. 50-51):

An investigator who hoped to learn something about what scientists took the atomic theory to be asked a distinguished physicist and an eminent chemist whether a single atom of helium was or was not a molecule. Both answered without hesitation, but their answers were not the same. For the chemist the atom of helium was a molecule because it behaved like one with respect to the kinetic theory of gases. For the physicist, on the other hand, the helium atom was *not* a molecule because it displayed no molecular spectrum. *Presumably both men were talking of the same particle*, but they were viewing it through their own research training and practice. Their experience in problem-solving told them what a molecule must be. Undoubtedly their experiences had much in common, *but they did not, in this case, tell the two specialists the same thing* (emphasis added).

So, what seems to be going on here? Sometimes, students will suggest that the physicist and chemist are using two different frameworks to assess the 'same' thing, which, given their different scientific trades, should not be all that surprising. Nevertheless, for one scientist – one 'high priest of truth' (see K. Boulding, 1956) to say that a single atom of helium is, and the other to say that it is not, a molecule, seems more complex than what one might expect from a mere difference in interpretation.

Hence, *vignette number 2* (Kuhn, 1970, p. 132):

...in a famous debate between the French chemists Proust and Berthollet[, the] first claimed that all chemical reactions occurred in fixed proportion, the latter that they did not. *Each collected impressive experimental evidence for his view*. Nevertheless, the two men necessarily talked through each other, and their debate was entirely inconclusive. *Where Berthollet saw a compound that could vary in proportion, Proust saw only a physical mixture. To that issue neither experiment nor a change of definitional convention could be relevant*. The two men were as fundamentally at cross-purposes as Galileo and Aristotle had been (emphasis added).

Vignette no. 2 is a more serious epistemological challenge than vignette no. 1 because experimental data have been mustered to support the otherwise irreconcilable views. Proust and Berthollet are not merely quibbling over theoretical definitions but also over corresponding *empirical data*. 'Still', one might argue, given different frameworks, even the 'same' data might be assessed differently. But, by two French chemists, sharing roughly the same cultural and professional space at the same point in time?

So, for further insight into Kuhn's message, and relevance to conflict analysis and resolution, we go on to *vignette number 3* (Kuhn, 1970, pp. 62-64):

In a psychological experiment that deserves to be far better known outside the trade, Bruner and Postman [1949] asked experimental subjects to identify on short and controlled exposure a series of playing cards. Many of the cards were normal, but some



were made *anomalous*, e.g., a red six of spades and a black four of hearts. Each experimental run was constituted by the display of a single card to a single subject in a series of gradually increased exposures. After each exposure the subject was asked what he had seen, and the run was terminated by two successive correct identifications.

Even on the shortest exposures many subjects identified most of the cards, and after a small increase all the subjects identified them all. For the normal cards these identifications were usually correct, *but the anomalous cards were almost always identified, without apparent hesitation or puzzlement, as normal*. The black four of hearts might, for example, be identified as the four of either spades or hearts. *Without any awareness of trouble, it was immediately fitted to one of the conceptual categories prepared by prior experience*. One would not even like to say that the subjects had seen something different from what they had identified. With a further increase of exposure to the *anomalous* cards, subjects did begin to hesitate and to display awareness of anomaly. Exposed, for example to the red six of spades, some would say: That's the six of spades, but there's something wrong with it – the black has a red border. Further increase of exposure resulted in still more hesitation and confusion until finally, and sometimes quite suddenly, most subjects would produce the correct identification without hesitation. Moreover, after doing this with two or three of the *anomalous* cards, they would have little further difficulty with the others. A few subjects, however, were never able to make the requisite adjustment of their categories. Even at forty times the average exposure required to recognize normal cards for what they were, more than 10% of the *anomalous* cards were not correctly identified. *And the subjects who then failed often experienced acute personal distress*. One of them exclaimed: 'I can't make the suit out, whatever it is. It didn't even look like a card that time. I don't know what color it is now or whether it's a spade or a heart. I'm not even sure now what a spade looks like. My God!' (emphasis added).

To the rejoinder that playing cards with reversed colors and shapes are not about life-threatening events – meaning that many of us would also not notice the *anomalous* cards – how do we explain the '*acute personal distress*' suffered by those who did not correctly identify the *anomalous* cards? How do we explain the apparent *cognitive dissonance* (Festinger, 1962) experienced by even one of the architects of the experiment? According to Kuhn:

My colleague Postman tells me that, though knowing all about the apparatus and display in advance, he nevertheless found looking at the incongruous cards *acutely uncomfortable* (emphasis added) (Kuhn, 1970, p. 64, fn. 13).

What is going on here? Is it the case, as I have argued elsewhere (Sandole 1984), that irrespective of *substance*, we all have *needs for predictability, regularity, and stability* that, when violated – even by something as otherwise trivial as reversed playing card colors and shapes – will cause us to experience dissonance, i.e., *acute personal distress*?

Let's go on to *vignette no. 4* (Kuhn, 1970, p. 112), derived from experiments conducted by George M. Stratton (1897) at the Hanover Institute during the 19th century:

An experimental subject who puts on goggles fitted with *inverting lenses* initially sees the entire world upside down. At the start his perceptual apparatus functions as it had been trained to function in the absence of the goggles, and the result is *extreme*

disorientation, an acute personal crisis. But after the subject has begun to learn to deal with his new world, his entire visual field flips over, usually after an intervening period in which vision is simply confused. Thereafter, *objects are again seen as they had been before the goggles were put on. The assimilation of a previously anomalous visual field has reacted upon and changed the field itself*. Literally as well as metaphorically, the man accustomed to inverting lenses has undergone a *revolutionary* transformation of vision (emphasis added).

But, the 'man accustomed to inverting lenses has undergone a revolutionary transformation of vision' only to continue to see as he had *prior* to putting on the inverting lenses; i.e., he has changed in order to recover the *status quo* – which, in effect, means no change at all! What does this say about Kuhn's concept of *paradigms* which lies at the heart of vignettes 1-4?

Paradigms – collective belief-value systems (see Sandole, 1993; 1999, Ch. 6) – are, like Boulding's (1956) *images*, significant because they constitute internalized 'lessons learned' that are relevant to our *survival*: biologically, psychologically, socially, or in any other sense. They are not, therefore, easily surrendered, nor, as Kuhn argues (1970, p. 65), should they be. Indeed, we should *dogmatically* adhere to our paradigms until it is clear that they are no longer relevant to our survival.

Implicit here is the notion that paradigms are related to the physiological concept of *homeostasis* (see Cannon, 1939): the built-in tendency of organisms to maintain themselves, their survival, over time, especially in the face of threats (e.g., Kuhn's *anomalies*; see below). In this sense, paradigms bridge the complex divide between 'nature' and 'nurture': although *learned*, and therefore *socially constructed* for individuals and groups of individuals, paradigms are embedded in a complex interplay of *cognitive [belief], evaluative [value], and affective [emotion] images*, such that a threat to the paradigm is an assault on the person. Hence, paradigms are what Boulding (1962) refers to as *inner core values*: things that possess us instead of things that we possess. In effect, we have learned the lessons of survival, what 'works' for us in a variety of situations. We have learned what it takes to fulfil our *basic needs for identity, recognition, and security* (such as the needs for predictability, regularity, and stability) (see Burton, 1997).

Although, in principle, what is learned can be *unlearned*, once we learn (or *socially construct*) the lessons of survival, in practice it is difficult (though not impossible) to supplant the old with the new. Consider the challenges involved in detecting *anomalies*. As background to this discussion, I present the elements of Kuhn's epistemological theory:

- (1) *Preparadigmatic Period* (characterized by *conflict* to determine which system should prevail);
- (2) *Paradigmatic Dominance*:
 - (a) *Metaphysical Rules*: Definition of legitimate subject matter;
 - (b) *Theoretical Rules*: Definition of legitimate explanation of behavior of subject matter;
 - (c) *Instrumental Rules*: Definition of legitimate techniques for conducting research on the subject matter; and



- (d) Methodological Rules: Definition of legitimate problems in need of solution and criteria of validation;
- (3) *Perpetuation of the Paradigm*:
 - (a) Education and
 - (b) 'Normal Science';
- (4) *Threats to Paradigmatic Dominance: Anomalies*
 - (a) Novelties of Fact=Discoveries and
 - (b) Novelties of Theory=Inventions;
- (5) *Failure to Assimilate Anomalies: Crises*; and
- (6) *Responses to Crises*
 - (a) Strengthening of Existing [Status Quo] Paradigm or
 - (b) Replacement of Existing by Alternative Paradigm: *Scientific Revolution*.

Once a paradigm has come to dominate the perceptions and corresponding behaviors of a group of practitioners, we have a *Weltanschauung* or *worldview* for that community, detailing its legitimate subject matter and units of inquiry (the *metaphysical* rules of paradigms); legitimate explanation for the behavior of its subject matter (*theoretical* rules); legitimate techniques for conducting further research on the behavior of the subject matter (*instrumental* rules); and legitimate problems in need of solution for the community of practitioners, plus criteria of validation (or answers to the question, 'What is Truth?') (*methodological* rules; see Kuhn, 1970, Chapter IV, especially pp. 40-42).

'Normal Science' is the process by which the paradigm extends itself, by applying its legitimate techniques of analysis to legitimate problems in need of solution, concerning the legitimate explanation of the behavior of the legitimate subject matter. 'Normal science' is, therefore, paradigm-bound, paradigm-embedded. In this sense, 'science' is very cumulative, linear, building-block-oriented. So is the process of education by which neophytes are inducted and socialized into the community of practitioners.

'Normal Science' is meant to facilitate the fine-tuning and revision of the paradigm, leading to ever more discoveries that are compatible with the paradigm's parameters. Although not intended to lead to deviations from paradigm-based expectations – *anomalies* – normal science does nevertheless increase the probability that such deviations will be found. And here lies a paradox: although with advancing maturity, a community of practitioners should *logically* (*prescriptively*) be able to spot anomalies more easily against a background of sharper, paradigm-based expectation, *psychologically* (*descriptively*) they find it more difficult to do so. Why?

To facilitate answers to this question, I make use of my *Four-Worlds Model of the Perceptual-Behavioral Process* (see Sandole, 1987). Based upon Sir Karl Popper's work (1972), I envisage that all humans can be impacted by stimuli from either of two *extrasomatic* domains, *World 1*, the natural world, and *World 3*, the human-made world. Once stimuli from either of these two worlds detonate the 'discharge potential' of, say, a person's visual sense, then we have *information* being *encoded* through his central nervous system in one of his two *endosomatic* domains, his *World 4* – his biological/physiological world – where information is travelling from neuron to neuron via synaptic connection, up to the brain where it passes through *World 2*, his mental world – consisting of the various cognitive and evaluative components of his various internalized *paradigms* (with connections to their underlying, *World 4* affective components) – for *decoding* into at least four elements of the *definition of the situation* or *perceptions*:

- bare sensation;
- recognition and identification;
- analysis and explanation; and
- interpretation.

Now, assuming that what is 'out there' in either the natural and/or human-made worlds, gets 'in there', via the biological/physiological world into the mental world, for translation into something perceptible, what determines whether he or she will 'see' anything at all, let alone what others might see as well? Well, we know from our *vignettes* that the paradigm-embedded structures and contents of their mental worlds determined what the chemist and physicist saw, what Proust and Berthollet saw, what the participants in the Bruner-Postman playing card experiment saw. What kinds of paradigms – collective belief-value systems – might have that same effect in the field of conflict and conflict resolution?

Elsewhere (Sandole, 1993; 1999, Chapter 6), I have explored answers to this question by detailing four major paradigm systems that can be operative in the domains of interest to conflict analysts and conflict resolution practitioners: *Realpolitik*, *Idealpolitik*, *Marxism*, and *Non-Marxist Radical Thought*. The first two are familiar to students of international relations (see, e.g., Carr, 1939; Waltz, 1959); the third is certainly familiar to students and critics of Marxism alike; while the fourth reflects my attempt to use *basic human needs theory* (BHNS) as a basis for developing a paradigm especially relevant to conflict analysts and conflict resolution practitioners.

While any individual in the 'real' (i.e., 'complex') world may reflect different weightings of all four of these paradigms,

- (1) those weightings may shift over time and space depending upon the relationships between the situationally impacted cognitive, evaluative, and affective dimensions of the person; but notwithstanding that,
- (2) some persons may be more reflective of any one of these worldviews than others. Accordingly, Realists might not be able to 'see' what Marxists 'see', and so on; or may have difficulty perceiving what an Idealist or NMRT analyst can detect (and vice versa).

Accordingly, identities based on different paradigms – different worldviews – inclusive of different ethnicities, religions, *different ethnocentrisms*, and the like, are, by definition, *in conflict with each other*; moreover, they do not lend themselves easily to change: perhaps a third party's 'worst nightmare'!

So, how might a conflict analyst and/or a conflict resolution practitioner make use of these insights from Kuhn? Indeed, can we begin to put all of the above together into something that resembles a coherent theory of transformational conflict resolution and peacebuilding? One potential response to this query is through the use of *complexity theory*.

Understanding Identity Conflicts (II): Insights from Complexity Theory

Complexity theory overlaps with *chaos theory*, *catastrophe theory*, and even *postmodernism*. In the midst of 'chaos' (increasing disorder/unpredictability



[*postmodernism*]), 'spontaneous organization' takes place, from lower to higher levels (a bottom-up approach), enhancing 'order.' *Complexity theory* deals with the 'edge of chaos': a complex balance between chaos (*chaos theory*) and order. Within this 'critical region', radical discontinuities may occur (*catastrophe theory*), due to the sensitivity of initial conditions.

Order within chaos is what *Realpolitik* attempts, but as Vasquez (1993) and others have argued (see, e.g., Sandole, 1999), *Realpolitik* enhances disorder (*entropy*), making *Realpolitik* even more compelling and self-perpetuating (e.g., generating *self-perpetuating/self-maintaining conflict processes*). Catastrophe theory, however, suggests that a complete turn-around is possible. The 'trick' is, within the critical region represented by Langton's 'edge of chaos', to turn 'social entropy' around, so that *Realpolitik* is replaced by *Idealpolitik* as the dominant framework, or, in even more 'complex' fashion, by what I call the '4+2 framework' (Sandole, 1993; 1999, Ch. 6): a 'complex' synthesis of *Realpolitik*, *Idealpolitik*, *Marxism*, and 'Non-Marxist Radical Thought' (NMRT) political paradigms, plus *competitive* and *cooperative* approaches to conflict resolution – probably the ultimate expression of the 'edge of chaos' in conflict analysis and resolution.

This is what conflict *resolution* and *transformation* should attempt to do: through 'evolution' and 'learning', work toward a 'stable equilibrium' in the *coevolution* of cooperation and competition (as in Rapoport's/Axelrod's [1989] TIT FOR TAT).

A critical balance between *Realpolitik* and *Idealpolitik* – or better yet, the prevalence of the synergistic 4+2 framework – is compatible with a basic tenet of *postmodernism*: to 'let all flowers bloom'. Postmodernism and complexity theory as well as Benjamin Most and Harvey Starr (1989), also share an emphasis on dynamic *process* instead of static content, which overlaps with my distinction between *conflict-as-process* and *conflict-as-startup conditions*, and how the latter might be overwhelmed and replaced by the former (e.g., 'self-perpetuating/self-maintaining conflict processes') as the dominant fuel which drives the engine of conflict (perhaps because of the sensitivity of initial conditions). It is 'conflict-as-process' where Rapoport's/Axelrod's TIT FOR TAT strategy can help turn the system around and, through *learning* in the *coevolution* of cooperation and conflict, maintain a stable equilibrium in the critical region of the 'edge of chaos', between *Realpolitik's* order within chaos and, at minimum, *Idealpolitik's* chaos within order.

Shifting the balance within the critical region, from the dominance of *Realpolitik* ('negative peace') to the dominance of, at minimum, *Idealpolitik*, or, ideally, the '4+2 framework' (with in some cases, 'negative peace' achieved and/or maintained as a necessary condition of 'positive peace'), and maintaining the stability of that kind of 'complexity, will, in part, be a function of having new and improved mechanisms in place

⁶ In this regard, see Holm and Sorensen (1993).

⁷ Rapoport's/Axelrod's (1984) TIT FOR TAT can be successful even in a Hobbesian world, precisely the milieu within which a Richardsonian (1939) stable Balance of Power can develop; i.e., where the product of the 'fatigue coefficients' [aB] transcends the product of the 'defence coefficients' [kI], but where long-term grievances [gh] still exist.

that are a response to Jean-Jacques Rousseau's statement that, 'Wars occur because there is nothing to prevent them' (cited in Waltz, 1959, p. 232).

Overall, then, the objective in transformational conflict resolution and peacebuilding should be to determine how to get to the 'edge of chaos' in relationships at all levels, and once there in each case, to remain there. *Complexity theory*, which is developing rapidly in physics, biology, economics, and elsewhere (see Waldrop, 1992), provides some significant insight in this regard. This includes the use of computer simulation to explore the implications of models with various startup conditions.

Likely significant contributions of complexity theory to *'complex'* conflict analysis and resolution include:

- (1) the need to design interventions into complex conflict situations, using something like the '3 Pillar Mapping' to 'capture the complexity' of complex conflicts (see Sandole, 1998; forthcoming); and then
- (2) the need to 'play out' the designs and their implications via simulation – manual, mixed or computer simulation (see Sandole, 1999, Ch. 3) – as a necessary condition of effective implementation of the intervention design.

The possibilities here are endless and the need is great, particular since the 'War on Terrorism' conducted by the U.S. and its allies in response to the events and aftermath of 11 September 2001, is basically still wrapped in the garb of *Realpolitik*, targeting through law enforcement and military measures the *symptoms* of conflict processes more so than the deep-rooted, underlying causes and conditions of those processes.

Unless the deep-rooted causes and conditions are 'attacked' as well, including the difficult, historical ones, we will have more symptoms and the continuing, compelling attractiveness of the use of *Realpolitik* responses to them. This would likely be followed by further self-fulfilling confirmation of a basically counter-productive, self-defeating Hobbesian world where, among other things, the Israeli-Palestinian reciprocal slaughter, thermonuclear war between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, and Huntington's 'Clash of Civilizations' actually appear to be *rational* options.

Dealing with Identity Conflicts (I): Nagorno-Karabakh

Clearly, 'chosen traumas' (as well as 'chosen glories') can become part of the 'heavy hand of the past' determining one's *identity* which, together with a hypothesized '*need for an enemy*' (Volkan, 1985, 1988), bifurcate the world into *ingroups* ('us') and *outgroups* ('them'), with 'them' being the ones who violated 'us' at some point in time, or at frequent points in time, the likelihood being that they will do so again (see Montville, 1993).

On the assumption that the *need for identity*, like the *needs for recognition and security*, are *basic human needs* (BHNs) (Burton, 1997), once identity based on certain traumas reflects this us-them bifurcation, it is very difficult to change. Moreover, the successive re-experience of the chosen trauma – either indirectly through recalled painful memories or directly through 'repeat performances' – further reinforces the original sense of loss and the us-them distinction, increasing the likelihood that, via transference, *current* experiences of loss will be interpreted in the light, and as reflections, of the *historical* ones. What this means is that many, including Armenians, Azerbaijanis, and Turks, may



be consigned to living forever 'in history' (see Fukuyama, 1989, 1992), unable to break loose from the past to develop their common futures.

Hence, as argued earlier, a major challenge for peacebuilders is to discover or invent innovative ways for aggrieved parties to 'let go' of the past – of their chosen traumas – so that they can *reframe* their definitions of the 'Other' as being part of a collaborative *common security system*, instead of continuing to be the 'Enemy' which is out to destroy them and which, therefore, must be destroyed itself! (Current events in Israel/Palestine come easily to mind here.)

What is the relevance of these theoretical musings for the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh? Let me respond through a personal story. In June 1992, while the war between Armenia and Azerbaijan was still going on, I visited Armenia for the first time as part of my Institute's initial development of its Caucasus Working Group (see Sandole, 1997ab). The trip included visits to Yerevan State University – our partner in Armenia – to meet with Prof. Dr. Lyudmila Harutyunyan, chair of the Department of Sociology, plus the Rector, Vice Rector for International Affairs, and other officers of the University. We also visited Echevan, located along the border with Kazakh on the Azerbaijani side, to meet with the provincial governor Ms. Jema Ananian, and Armenian refugees of the conflict.

During the brief visit to Echevan, an Azeri offensive occurred at that point on the border, with my colleagues and I within earshot of heavy weapons fire. What impressed me the most – other than being in a country at war during a time (and at the site) of a major offensive against it! – was that Armenians defined Azeris as '*Turks!*' Moreover, they saw themselves as roughly 3 million Armenians in Armenia, with some 4 million in the diaspora, juxtaposed to some 7 million '*Turks*' in Azerbaijan and 63 million Turks in Turkey, for a total of 70 million Turks surrounding 3 million Armenians. The fact that both Turkey and Azerbaijan had imposed blockades on landlocked Armenia reinforced this sense of massive encirclement, plus the sense that the '*Turks*' were intent on completing a process they started in 1915.

So, what is the Armenian chosen trauma – the deep-rooted historical memory of outrage – that seems to be at work here as an example of the heavy hand of the past? The 24th of April is the date on the Armenian calendar that recognizes events that began on that day in 1915 in Istanbul, lasting until 1923, that Armenians worldwide view as the first *genocide* of the 20th Century. Via transference from the past to the present, Armenians view the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh as an effort by Turks to finish off the 'final solution' they started in 1915.

What is the Turkish view of all this? Officially, Turks say yes, many Armenians (but also Turks!) died in Eastern Turkey during World War 1, but nowhere near the 1.5 million claimed by Armenians and certainly not because of an official Turkish governmental plan

⁸ Interestingly, although they are 'Turkic', Azeris are not, according to Turkish Law 2510 of 1934, viewed as 'Turkish.' In contrast to, say, Albanians and Bosniaks, they are not viewed as being of 'Turkish descent and culture', and hence, there has been a 'conspicuous absence of Azeri immigration to Turkey' (see Kirisci, 2000). Nevertheless, Turkey has consistently been supportive of Azerbaijan in the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh.

to exterminate all Armenians, like Germans nearly did to European Jewry during the Holocaust of World War 2.

As evidence to buttress their view, Turks claim that, in Eastern Turkey, many Armenians – in fact, tens of thousands – were killed because Armenians joined Russians (and their Armenian kin from the Russian Empire) in waging warfare against the collapsing Ottoman Empire to carve out an Armenian homeland – a period in which total chaos reigned. It was this chaos and reciprocal fratricide, and not an ordered plan associated with official Turkish governmental edict that resulted in, from the Turkish point of view, the deaths of 500,000 Armenians, mostly from disease. In addition, Turks point to the fact that Armenians in Western Turkey were not subjected to atrocities and that the Ottoman ambassador to Britain was an Armenian. Surely, if Turkey was conducting a genocide against Armenians, its main emissary to the British Empire would not be an Armenian. As one Turkish colleague put it to me, ‘can you imagine Hitler having a Jew as his ambassador to Britain?’

How do Armenians view this Turkish interpretation of events? On the one hand, Armenians see a massive Turkish coverup of a genocide that took place nearly 100 years ago, assisted by intense lobbying of governments abroad. On the other hand, they are outraged that, all these years later, Turks cannot even acknowledge what members of an older generation did.

This absence of acknowledgement of a major defining event in Armenian history, corresponding to a dominant component of Armenian *identity*, constitutes, for Armenians, a major assault to that identity – to their sense of who they are as Armenians. Contrariwise, for many Turks, although the accusations of genocide are not against them, but their grandfathers’ generation, the accusations nevertheless constitute an assault on their identity as Turks, on who they feel they are as Turks.

So, what are the implications of all this for the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh?

My hypothesis is: for the *present* conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan to be effectively addressed, the still existing, *historical* conflict between Armenia and Turkey must be effectively addressed, if not prior to dealing with the current conflict, then certainly at some later point in time (see Lederach, 2001; Montville, 1993).

So, even though the Karabakh conflict has, since May 1994, been characterized by a fairly stable ceasefire, and Armenian President Robert Kocharian and Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev met in April 2001 in Key West, Florida – and have been meeting regularly ever since former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright brought them together in April 1999 – at some point in time, the Armenian-Turkish conflict will have to be addressed as a necessary (but not sufficient) condition for whatever Armenian-Azerbaijani agreement does emerge, to lead to a long-term, self-sustaining peace on the Karabakh issue.

Accordingly, during their next meetings, which may well result in a breakthrough, the two presidents, with the assistance of their American, French, and Russian colleagues from the OSCE’s Minsk Group Process (see *OSCE Handbook*, 2000, pp. 62-67), should concentrate on developing further:



- (1) the nature of the land exchange and other significant compromises they will have to make, plus
- (2) how they will 'sell' the agreement to their respective constituents, but agree that
- (3) a significant next step should be encouraging Turkey and Armenia to set up a *joint historical commission* to finally lay their common past to rest.

Once a major impediment to resolution of the Armenian-Turkish conflict, this last point has recently become more thinkable:

With world opinion turning against the Turkish position, some ex-government officials in Turkey are advocating a new approach: *convening a panel of scholars from around the world, including Turkey and Armenia, and giving them full access to all archives to look at the historical record*. This would benefit Turkey by taking the issue of the Armenian genocide out of the political realm, at least for awhile. The idea also appeals to Western diplomats and politicians who, more than anything else, want the issue to go away. [...] Ending this long-standing dispute will help Turkey achieve its primary national goal: winning entry into the European Union. Not ending it will put Turkey on a collision course with any number of nations that might pass Armenian genocide resolutions in the future, including the United States (Glastris, 2001, p. B4, emphasis added).

Hence, unless efforts are made to address the deep-rooted, historical conflict between Armenia and Turkey – the primary *conflict-as-startup condition* – efforts to deal only with the current Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict will be superficial, perpetually at risk of breakdown into the ordered chaos of ethnic bloodletting: renewed *conflict-as-process*.

We only have to look at events of the last 10 years in the Balkans to see the consequences of earlier applications of 'band-aids' to complex, deep wounds, as seems to have occurred during the Tito years in former Yugoslavia. Under the circumstances, all the Caspian Sea oil flowing from the Baku-Tblisi-Ceyhan and other pipelines may not be enough to withstand the gravitational pull of Armenians' unresolved chosen trauma of the past.

Accordingly, to facilitate long overdue economic development of the South Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia), as well as Turkey's entry into the European Union – with profound developmental and security implications for the North Caucasus and Central Asia – the time has surely come to lay to rest, once and for all, the matter of the Armenian genocide! *Cognitively* and *evaluatively*, a rational plea; but *affectively*, perhaps a nonstarter!

Dealing with Identity Conflicts (II): Bringing It All Together!

Imagine a problemsolving taskforce comprised of Turkish, Armenian, Israeli, American, and European scholars, facilitated by appropriately trained and experienced professionals (see Mitchell and Banks, 1996), the objective being to finally deal with the issue of the Armenian genocide, as a necessary condition for dealing with the Armenian-Azeri conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh. Let's also imagine that all members of the taskforce have had

access to all archives – e.g., Armenian, Turkish, German, American – dealing with the Armenian genocide.

Using the aforementioned '*Four-Worlds Model of the Perceptual-Behavioral Process*' (Sandole, 1987) as a point of departure, the facilitator, operating at the 'cognitive' level, would be helping the parties to 'experience' perceptions at various levels, e.g.:

- (1) *Bare sensation*: an ambiguous sense of *what* may be in one's perceptual field (Y).
- (2) *Recognition and identification*: a clear sense of *what* is in one's perceptual field (Y).
- (3) *Analysis and explanation*: a sense of *why* what is in one's perceptual field may be there (X).
- (4) *Interpretation*:
 - (a) The meaning of the 'what'- 'why' (Y-X) relationship (e.g., acts of frustration [X] and aggression [Y]) within a more comprehensive frame (frustration-aggression theory). And
 - (b) An exploration of alternative responses to the 'what'.

Confounding the otherwise nice, neat progression from 'bare sensation' to 'recognition and identification' are some bases for resistance to perception which operate at the *unconscious* level of the perceiving actor:

- (1) *Cognitive blindness*: the condition of not being able to perceive something in, for instance, either World 1 (nature) or World 3 (human-made) because of the absence of a corresponding concept, model, theory and/or paradigm in the perceiving actor's World 2 (mental) (e.g., the initial nonperception of reversed colors and shapes in the Bruner-Postman playing-card experiment).
- (2) *Cognitive resistance*: the condition of not being able to perceive the anomalous thing over time, presumably because the existing concepts, models, theories, and/or paradigms in the perceiving actor's World 2 (mental) fail to shift in order to accommodate it (e.g., the successive nonperception of anomalous cards in the playing-card experiment).
- (3) *Evaluative-affective resistance (EAR) 1*: the perceiving actor's experience of cognitive dissonance the longer the anomalous thing remains in his/her perceptual field, suggesting to the actor that something is not quite right with 'what is going on' around her or him but which, like in 'bare sensation', he or she cannot quite grasp the nature of. What seems to be going on here is that the actor experiences dissonance affectively as anxiety but then, defence mechanisms are activated, protecting the actor from recognizing the nature of the anomalous thing and, in the process, protecting the status quo concepts, models, theories, and/or paradigms in his/her World 2 (mental) (e.g., when some participants in the playing-card experiment indicated their confusion over what they were 'seeing': red [black] hearts or black [red] spades).

⁹ The reasons for including Israelis in such a taskforce are: (1) as direct or indirect survivors of the Holocaust, Israeli (and other) Jews would have much to offer participants in the process; and, perhaps paradoxically, (2) official Israelis tend to be supportive of the Turkish position.



Again, these three bases of resistance to the detection of anomalies operate at the unconscious level of perceiving actors. In the move from 'bare sensation' to 'recognition and identification', a well-trained, experienced, and effective third-party facilitator might be able to guide conflicting parties to shift from 'cognitive blindness' to 'evaluative-affective resistance [EAR] 1'.

But then an ethical dilemma presents itself: should the third-party facilitator actively generate further dissonance to the point that it overrides internalized defence mechanisms, in the process causing a Kuhnian *and* personal crisis on the part of perceiving actors?

Suppose Turkish and some Israeli members of the taskforce persist in arguing that, yes, thousands of Armenians were killed, but that this was not due to an official, Turkish governmental policy. By contrast, Armenian, American, European, and other Israeli members argue that all the data indicate that, while the deaths may have been confined to Armenians living in the eastern side of the country, it was certainly the Turkish government of the day that ordered the massacres. Should the facilitator 'push' the unconsciously/consciously resisting actors to experience even more 'acute personal distress' – in the process moving from EAR 1 (unconscious resistance) to EAR 2 (conscious, often hostile resistance) – to the point that they may undergo a 'paradigmatic shift' and experience the anomalous thing for 'what it actually is'?

Let's put this into the context of the current expression of the protracted Israeli-Palestinian conflict, with Israelis embedded in, and reliving and responding symbolically to the fears and horrors of the Holocaust and Palestinians locked in the grip of captivity, humiliation, persistent displacement from their land and marginalization by the international community.

Imagine a taskforce comprised of Palestinians and Israelis facilitated by American and European friends of the Middle East. Imagine also that the facilitators – nongovernmental conflict resolution professionals as well as governmental diplomats and other specialists – are encouraging the Israeli and Palestinian participants to shift from 'cognitive blindness/resistance' to EAR 1, by presenting 'objective data', such as: Israeli deaths as a proportion of the Israeli population; Palestinian deaths as a proportion of the occupied Palestinian population; elements of Israeli firepower (planes, helicopters, and tanks); elements of Palestinian firepower (small arms, homemade rockets and their own bodies attached to explosives); who surrounds and occupies whom?; who is surrounded and occupied by whom?; who controls whom?; who is controlled by whom?.

Suppose that, after such data have been presented, the facilitators surface the view that Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's recent declaration of war on the Palestinians – resulting in U.S.-equipped Israeli F-16 fighter aircraft, Apache helicopter gunships and tanks invading Palestinian refugee camps and townships to inflict sufficient pain and punishment on the Palestinians until they beg for peace – amounts to, at minimum, a counter-productive, self-defeating policy, and at most, a series of steps toward *genocide*. In other words, suppose the facilitators move the more powerful party, the Israelis, from EAR 1 (unconscious resistance) to EAR 2 (conscious, hostile resistance). Has an *ethical*

¹⁰ For insights on the role and value of emotion in third party interventions, see Jones and Bodtker (2001).

line been crossed? Does it matter if the Israelis back up, pause, and reflect on their behavior and in the process, recognize that they will never have security unless the Palestinians have security (and vice versa)?

Again, lots of questions, and few answers. But one thing is clear. The horrible acts of violence being committed against Israelis in cafes, pizzerias, discotheques and elsewhere have produced diverse responses. On the one hand, there are those who say, 'We have to kill them all, all the Arabs. Why does half the world tells us not to go to war? If we want, we could kill them in one hour' and 'Let's really let them understand what the implication of their actions is... Very simply, wipe them out. Level them.' By contrast, there are the 300-plus Israeli reservists who feel that their country's '35-year occupation ... has corrupted the nation', who refuse any longer to 'dominate, expel, starve, and humiliate' the Palestinians (see Hockstader, 2002a, p. A17; 2002b). There is also the young Israeli journalist, Ilan Goren (2002, p. B2), who talks about what his generation is going through:

confusion, loss of belief, a quiet despair born of the realization that we kill them and they kill us and nobody is any better off. ... Can anyone in the government see that wrecking Palestinian houses, invading homes, killing hundreds and degrading another nation is not only an inefficient way to fight terror, but also is immoral?

So, there is hope, and as this article has revealed, some rudimentary knowledge for realizing that hope!

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