

Armed Conflict Versus Global Sustainable Development as Functions of Social Change

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Abstract

This paper offers a futures analysis of armed conflicts and its detrimental impact on the three pillars of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental. It draws on macrohistory to contextualize war along its socio-political and psychological drivers and explores alternative options for conflict resolution. The macrohistory perspective offers an alternative view of armed conflict, as a vehicle of social change, due to its disruptive action on stagnating social conditions. War, as a feature of the dominator society, is a barrier to sustainable development. Hence, to enable global sustainable futures, the Causal Layered Analysis suggests plausible routes towards a partnership society.

Keywords: War, armed conflict, sustainable development, Rio+20 document, peaceful conflict resolution, macrohistory, dominator model, partnership society

Introduction

Armed conflicts appear to be major obstacles to sustainable development. In spite of concentrated efforts of a large number of individuals and institutions to end wars, armed violence does not seem to be abating. It is poignant that, “world courts or world assemblies of national delegates have not proven sufficient as a bulwark against the use of almost unregulated warfare as a conflict resolution mechanism” (Galtung, 1978, p. 483).

Apart from their detrimental material effects, armed conflicts have considerable under-reported psychosocial effects such as a loss of history and identity. Throughout history, a large number of cultural heritage sites of high value were flattened by wars. Just in the past few years

widespread wars in the Middle East damaged 4000 year old historic sites such as Babylon, Ur, as well as large sections of Baghdad (Stone, Bajjaly, & Fisk, 2008). Even Damascus, often claimed to be the oldest continuously inhabited city in the world, dating back to 9000 BC is a victim of substantial destruction (Burns, 2007). Thus, wars are not only destroying potential sustainable futures but they are also wiping out large portions of history and are displacing populations worldwide.

Consequently, wars create additional strain on limited financial resources by creating a need for humanitarian work. As if there was not enough misery already with proliferating illness and poverty in large parts of the world, the 97 million volunteers and staff of the International Red Cross, Red Crescent and Oxfam are called to respond to a large number of conflicts worldwide. These organisations are helping victims to cope with the aftermath of armed conflicts currently proliferating in Ukraine, Iraq, Syria, Gaza, Sudan, the Central African Republic and elsewhere (Butcher, 2014; Starnes, 2014). The financial resources devoted to this task are 'stolen' from the next generation and from sustainable development.

Definition of core concepts

Sustainable development (SD) - as a well-defined concept - has emerged from a series of conferences and summits, aimed at tackling global issues in 21st century such as poverty, increasing inequality, environmental degradation, and deterioration of health and wellbeing. The first UN conference on Human Environment was held in Stockholm in 1972 (Paul, 2008). This conference led to the establishment of The UN Environment Program (UNEP) and the founding of national environmental protection agencies at the national level (Drexhage & Murphy, 2010). Ten years later, the 'Stockholm+10' conference held in Nairobi, proposed the establishment of the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED). In 1987, the efforts of the WCED led to the publication of the prominent report "Our Common Future", better known as the "Brundtland Report" (Pisano, Endl, & Berger, 2012; United Nations, 1987). The report briefly defines SD as, "Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (United Nations, 1987, p. 43)

SD continues to be a broad concern at the global scale (Creech, 2012). The latest UN Conference on Sustainable Development, also known as "Rio+20", held at Rio de Janeiro in 2012, delivered a document called "The Future We Want"; proposing that 26 thematic areas and cross-cutting issues should be considered to achieve SD (United Nations, 2012). More recently, a current update of the Millennium Project outlined the tension between peace and conflict as one of the 15 global challenges to be addressed collaboratively by governments, universities, and NGOs worldwide (The Millennium Project, 2014). The document calls attention to the need for the establishment of shared values and new security strategies to reduce ethnic conflicts, terrorism, and armed conflict.

Armed conflict is defined by Wallensteen & Sollenberg (2001) as contested incompatibility between two parties, of which at least one is a government of a state, and which results in at least 25 battle-related deaths in one calendar year. This description is similar to the definition of war, which is a high intensity armed conflict with 1000 or more fatalities (Uppsala Universitet, 2014). For the sake of simplicity, this study will refer to both wars and armed conflicts as *armed conflict*.

Social, Economic and Environmental Impacts of Armed Conflict

Armed conflicts and the extent of their negative effects on SD were examined on July 10, 2014 by an expert panel at a conference held at the *Office of Sustainability* of the Amirkabir University of Technology, Tehran. The panels consisted of 12 experts from areas of education and sustainability, energy, environment and water, population, planning, climate change, science and technology. The participants of the conference analysed the 26 areas of concern contained in the Rio+20 document (United Nations, 2012), in the context of the three pillars of SD (economic, social and environmental). The results of the conference revealed significant impact on the majority of the thematic areas (Table 1; Table 2).

Social impacts

Armed conflict has variety of negative social impacts including, quality of life, population displacement (Statista, 2013), transportation, communications, resettlement, housing, education (UNESCO, 2011), inadequacy of health care and social services, distrust, incompatibility of interests, inter-group hostility dialogue, nurturing a culture of peace (Bush, 1998), and harm to civilians, especially women and children (Adan & Pkalya, 2006; Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 2005). Armed conflict has detrimental effects on the mental health of children as well as on their whole families (Farhood et al., 1993; Walton, Nuttall, & Nuttall, 1997). Apart from obvious violation of human rights, there is destruction of civil infrastructures such as water purification systems, electricity grids, sewage disposal plants, food distribution systems and hospitals threatening public health in general (Levy & Sidel, 1997).

Negative social and economic impacts of armed conflict, including the above research, were informing entries in Table 1; which was divided into 3 levels (*yes, probable, no*) and their dual nature (*direct* or *indirect*). Social and economic aspects of SD are highly interrelated, thus Table 1 amalgamated these into a single entry: *socio-economic factors*.

Table 1. *The multifarious impact of armed conflicts on thematic areas derived from the Rio+20 document: Socio-economic factors*

Socio-economic factors	Yes		Probable		No
	Direct	Indirect	Direct	Indirect	
Poverty		✓			
Food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture	✓	✓			
Water and sanitation	✓	✓			
Energy	✓	✓			
Sustainable tourism		✓			
Sustainable transport			✓	✓	
Sustainable city and human settlements	✓				
Health and population	✓				
Employment	✓	✓			
Gender equality and the empowerment of women	✓	✓			
Education		✓			
Mining			✓	✓	
Sustainable consumption and production	✓	✓			
Disaster risk reduction		✓			

Economic impacts

The economic impact of armed conflict is profound, with negative impacts on economic infrastructures such as the supply of basic goods, banking systems, productivity and employment (Bush, 1998). Armed conflict also discourages investment (Adan & Pkalya, 2006), disrupts trade (Barbieri & Levy, 1999), and can severely damage the local tourism industry (Sönmez, Apostolopoulos, & Tarlow, 1999).

Armed conflicts divert public funds to military spending. Just in the past ten years 23 countries doubled their military spending (Perlo-Freeman & Solmirano, 2014); but only half of these countries had active conflicts during the same period (Uppsala Universitet, 2013). In 2013, the military expenditure of the US alone was more than the total GDP of 43 low income African countries in the same year (Perlo-Freeman & Solmirano, 2014; The World Bank, 2013). These figures make SD problematic not only if Africa, but also in developed countries, where social spending is less than adequate. Eisler (1998, p. 51) questions why “we always seem to have money for what is stereotypically associated with men — weapons, *war*, prisons — and never seem to have enough money for so-called women’s work — feeding children, caring for people’s health, caring for our environment?”

The Rio+20 document pays particular attention to the plight of Africa (see Table 2 – Special issues). Current political instability and armed conflicts brewing all over the African continent hinder the chances of advancing SD in Africa in

the foreseeable future. Additionally, the continent plagued by famine and massive health and environmental issues would find it hard to achieve SD due to the huge imbalance of fiscal priorities nationally and internationally. While the total GDR of the 43 poorest African countries in 2013 was less than the yearly military spending of the USA, financing and aiding sustainable development in Africa is clearly not a priority.

Environmental impacts

Similarly to the causation of wars in the past, current wars are still predominantly fought over natural resources such as water, oil, gold, and land (Gleditsch, 1998; Koubi, Spilker, Böhmelt, & Bernauer, 2014; Le Billon, 2001; Martsching, 1998; Ross, 2004; Stetter, Herschinger, Teichler, & Albert, 2011). These armed conflicts have a detrimental effect on the natural environment. Depending on the area's characteristics in which the conflict occurs (whether it is an arid area, sylvan etc.), and the weapons used, the consequences may differ. Generally, armed conflicts can damage the soil on three levels: physical, chemical and biological (Certini, Scalenghe, & Woods, 2013; Crowley & Ahearne, 2002). They also pollute the water and air and destroy the related infrastructures (Reichberg & Syse, 2000; Westing, 2012; Zeitoun, Eid-Sabbagh, & Loveless, 2014), as well as spoil biodiversity and forests (Gorsevski, Kasischke, Dempewolf, Loboda, & Grossmann, 2012; Nackoney et al., 2014).

Table 2. *The multifarious impact of armed conflicts on thematic areas derived from the Rio+20 document: Environmental factors and special issues*

Environmental factors	Yes		Probable		No
	Direct	Indirect	Direct	Indirect	
Oceans and seas			✓		
Climate change			✓		
Forests			✓		
Desertification, land degradation and drought	✓				
Mountains			✓		
Chemicals and waste	✓	✓			
Biodiversity			✓		
Special issues	Yes		Probable		No
	Direct	Indirect	Direct	Indirect	
Least developed countries					✓
Small island developing states					✓
Landlocked developing countries					✓
Africa	✓	✓			
Regional efforts				✓	

Peaceful Conflict Resolution as an Alternative to Military Confrontation

The results in Table 1 and Table 2 revealed both *direct* and *indirect* impacts on SD globally, particularly in the socio-economic spheres. Given the widespread pervasive impact of armed conflict, it is essential to investigate whether, and how, armed conflicts could be prevented to secure global SD, and the very survival of all life forms on the planet.

Conflict is inherent to the human condition. Interpersonal conflict within families is encountered already in early childhood. According to Rossanno (2002, p. 305) “children are genetically motivated to secure more resources from mom than those obtained by other siblings”. This predisposition would naturally generate competition and conflict early in life, creating a need for the development of skills for negotiation. Later in life, successful conflict resolution is considered a sign of maturity. Further, in the evolution of the human race the development of language would have offered additional tools for the resolution of conflicts, rendering negotiation a viable alternative to war like behaviour (Bornstein & Bruner, 1989).

However, genetic predisposition is definitely involved in individual responses to conflict resolution, as suggested by behavioural, lesion, single-cell, and brain imaging studies for cortical-subcortical interactions (Eisler & Levine, 2002). Nonetheless, according to Eisler and Levine (2002) we are not prisoners of our genes; and the bonding, caring responses can be adopted by choice by everyone, even though the fight-or-flight response is more prevalent, especially amongst men (Taylor & Master, 2010). However, despite genetic predisposition, individual tendencies can be changed due to neuroplasticity (Doidge, 2008). Accordingly, “to support and enhance the natural caring responses of the brain” (Eisler & Levine, 2002, p. 9) it is desirable to deliver specific education in social settings, at work places, and in families.

Extensive studies by Bornstein and Bruner (1989) demonstrated the deciding role of familiarity in conflict resolution, revealing that children are more likely to resort to peaceful resolution of conflicts, regardless of the magnitude of the problem, with friends and people they know; whereas with outsiders they tend to resort to physical violence more often. One of the reasons for this outcome may be the attitude of *othering*. Othering can be defined as dehumanisation delivered by the objectifying gaze that results in subject-object and same-different hierarchies (Oliver, 2001). Conditions where individuals or countries define themselves as more than others can lead to “negative confrontational activities from school yard bullying to wars” (Milojević, 2006). Thus, the division between Self and Others as *othering*, and its associated processes such as discrimination, racism and stigmatization are barriers to a peaceful conflict resolution (Sardar, 1999). Apart from these general motivators there are additional, more specific drivers leading armies to war.

Political and Psychological Drivers of Armed Conflict

Amongst theories attempting to unravel the motivations leading to armed conflict, Van Evera’s (2001) ‘master theory’ stands out as one of the most comprehensive theories explaining the causes of war. Van Evera (2001) goes beyond the normal structural realist and systems level causes, and hypothesises that:

- (1) war is more likely when states fall prey to false optimism about its outcome,
- (2) war is more likely when the advantage lies with the first side to mobilise or attack,
- (3) war is more likely when the relative power of states fluctuates sharply,
- (4) war is more likely when the control of resources enables the protection or acquisition of other resources, and
- (5) war is more likely when conquest is easy.

Van Evera's samples of concrete instances of wars are well researched and numerous examples are given to support the hypothesis. It appears, that most wars seem to fit into one of the above categories; although there is less evidence that leaders decide to start wars because of a perceived offensive advantage, except maybe for WW I.

However, Boulding (1978) presents a more generalised theory suggesting that one of the major causes of war is imperialism (Table 3); with its desire for expansion, conquering and domination. Imperialism is a diverse phenomenon, and on top of its evident military aspect, it exerts more subtle effects in economics, politics, communications and cultural domains.

Past-oriented thinking and subconscious motivations leading to war

The less obvious impetus for war often rests in the subconscious, based on constructed collective memory (Confino, 1997). Richards (1998) points out, that the decision making process is complex, since our will often originates in the subconscious; thus we are unaware of our inner motivations. Therefore, to eliminate deep seated causes of war, Gawain (1998) believes that it may be desirable to develop inner wisdom and "cultivate the relationship with that inner guidance" (Gawain, 1998, p. 283). Nevertheless, inner guidance can be obscured and peaceful conflict resolution is impossible when past grievances had been relegated to the deep recesses of the subconscious mind or the collective memory (Halbwachs & Coser, 1992). Consequently, war can flare up suddenly, justified by seemingly trivial incidents.

The Balkans is offering two cases to illustrate the above causation. One of the deadliest conflicts in history The First World War in 1914 started with the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria by Yugoslav nationalists hoping to restore the medieval Serbian Empire. The war led to the death of more than 9 million soldiers and 7 million civilians. The subsequent major political changes resulted in new and divided countries, changing the whole map of Europe (Willmott, 2003, p. 307).

Another reshuffle of borders in former Yugoslavia occurred as a result of regional wars between 1980 and 2008. According to Milojević (1999) this war was also attributable to past-oriented thinking. This type of thinking has to be treated with caution since "The past is constructed not as a fact but as a myth to serve the interest of a particular community" (Confino, 1997, p. 1387). The war resulted in a loss of hundreds of thousands of lives, millions of displaced persons, and over 20 million people suffering permanent mental distress. Waters (2014) warns that the highest level of mental distress is associated with suicidal behaviour. Consequently, due to the increasing military activity causing distress, suicide rates have been

reaching alarming proportions amongst military personnel in the past few years. In Iraq in 2009, only 149 soldiers were killed whereas 304 committed suicide. Similarly, in the 2012 wars, 349 US service men committed suicide, and 295 died in combat (Pilkington, 2013).

Fear and hatred

Milojević (1999) believes that hatred is breeding wars. She observed that according to the worldview espoused by politicians deciding to go to war the motivation is based on the beliefs that:

1. a military solution is “the” solution,
2. there are justifiable wars,
3. the destruction of environment does not matter,
4. the glorification and development of military sector is a necessity,
5. ends justify means, and,
6. the quality of human lives and human lives themselves can be sacrificed for higher aims.

Often the major justification for going to war is a real or perceived need to “defend” our country. Whether it is an outside enemy or an internal one, like the terrorists within certain countries, the usual political response is to instil fear. This in turn justifies safety measures in society by increasing surveillance, and typically results in significant curtailment of freedom for the whole population. These days even countries that are not openly in war are still involved in a ‘war on terror’. Since the 9/11 disaster terrorism studies are considered to be one of the fastest expanding areas of research in the Western academic world (Jackson, Smyth, & Gunning, 2009). Nowadays a number of major universities worldwide offer undergraduate and masters degrees in counter terrorism and security. This atmosphere of fear gives justification for construction of a repressive state, as well as validates warrior like masculine qualities in society (Milojević, 1999).

Need for a change

Human civilisation is currently facing an important question, “whether and to what extent their cultural development will succeed in mastering the disturbance of their communal life by the human instinct of aggression and self-destruction” (Thompson, 1990, p. 117). However, the prevailing pattern of regular armed conflicts cannot be prevented if there is an internal urge in humans to energise their own evolution by compulsively creating upheavals or “sublime historical events” such as bloody wars, as proposed by Runia (2014). According to Sorokin’s pendulum theory (Galtung & Inayatullah, 1997; Johnston, 1999), upheavals may be crucial to the processes of social change, and would typically occur in the era of chaos – a transitional period signifying change from one type of culture to another.

Similarly, Stavrianos (1976) argues for the necessity of a “dark age” to end outdated and non-functional social system. Thus, violent wars facilitate collapse of the old and create a space for the establishment of a new societal order. Consequently, in the case of the Roman Empire, contrary to popular belief, the final demise of the empire was not due to the Barbarian invasion, but was brought about by internal causes (Stavrianos, 1976). Thus, as much as modern wars potentially threaten the survival of our species, they may also have a useful role to play as

evolutionary vehicles to move civilisation forward.

However, according to Pinker (2012), violence may not be needed anymore; and in fact it has been gradually diminishing throughout history. He observed that violent behaviour is generally condemned in the current Western society. This trend may be due to changing circumstances, allowing our better angels to prevail, and diminishing the influence of our inner demons that lead us toward violence. This positive trend is aligned with the Spiral theory of social development (Beck & Cowan, 1996), that predicts progress to higher states of consciousness over time. However, Sorokin’s theory of socio-cultural change takes a different stance. After an exhaustive historical analysis of the past 2000 years, Sorokin (1970) concluded that, although there are ever changing phases in social systems, the number of wars in any given period remained more or less constant to present day.

Table 3. *Drivers of War*

SOCIO-POLITICAL	PSYCHOLOGICAL
false optimism	othering
strategic advantage	subconscious motivations
power fluctuation	collective memory
control of resources	fear and hatred
perceived ease of conquest	past grievances
imperialistic tendencies	need for change

Cultural Evolution: Matriarchal and Patriarchal Societies

Can there be plausible futures without war? According to Inayatullah (2003) the most profound way to a more peaceful world is the transformation of worldviews underpinning war like behaviour, particularly patriarchy and survival of the fittest. Furthermore, “we need a new story of what it means to be human” (Inayatullah, 2003, p. 113). In this respect, revisiting the history of our cultural origins from a macrohistory perspective may offer valuable guidance. Indeed, some prominent social scientists propose that the next phase in the history of humankind may be characterised by a more peaceful period in Western society (Eisler, 2014; Sorokin, 1991; Tanner, 1981).

In the past few decades, a new expanded perception of history seems to indicate that neither warfare nor the war of the sexes are divinely or biologically determined. According to the conventional view of our past, prehistory was a story of the “man the hunter warrior” (Tanner, 1981, p. 73), thus the emphasis was on the prominent role of males in society. According to this model, it is proposed that the first human instruments were weapons to kill animals for food or attack other human beings.

However, Eisler (1987) suggests that the first instruments manufactured and used by humans were vessels to gather food; and that women’s role as “woman the gatherer” was of primary importance in supporting and enhancing life, in a matriarchal social order. Similarly, Mellart (1978) postulates that Upper Palaeolithic images are not about “hunting magic”; rather they are symbols of the religion of “Mother Goddess” . This religious imagery can be found in Turkey’s Catal Hüyük

and Gobekli Tepe, arguably the oldest known temple dating back to 9,130 B.C., about 7000 year before Stonehenge (Bolen, 2011, p. 7). Thus, these goddess-centred cultures preceded patriarchal cultures by many thousands of years.

The most accurate account of a matrilineal organisation, where heredity and property are traced through the mother's line, was found in ancient Crete. Descriptions by Greek historians presented a society where men diverted their naturally competitive spirit to dancing, sports, creativity and a fairly liberated sexual life; rather than using their physical strength for social oppression, and concentration of private property in the hands of the strongest men, or for organised warfare (Eisler, 1987).

According to ancient Greek historian Hesiod, war was not an essential part of human nature. The Golden Age of Greece provided evidence of the far-reaching potentials of an alternative peaceful social organisation. Since the roles of males and females in ancient matrilineal cultures were complementary rather than competitive great advances in technology and abundance could be achieved in a relatively short time span (Gimbutas, 1982).

According to Hesiod, the war God Ares introduced wars to the Greek culture through the Achaeans, and later the Dorians who invaded the largely defenceless, unfortified Greece around 1200 BC (Eisler, 1987). These Indo-European nomad hordes from the North subscribed to a different system of social organisation. They valued "the power that takes rather than gives, life" (Eisler, 1987, p. 48), waging wars pledged to their male Gods; with domination as a sole objective. Consequently, the spiritual authority of priestesses was removed as patriliney gradually replaced matriliney amongst the conquered peoples of Old Europe, Anatolia, Mesopotamia and Canaan, resulting in the change of the women's status to "male-controlled technologies of production and reproduction" (Eisler, 1987, p. 91).

The patriarchal culture was socially stratified to the extreme, rendering women to the level of animals. As result, in the old Hungarian language the woman was called "asszonyállat" (asszony=woman and állat=animal), attesting to women's radically changed social status. According to the taxonomy developed by Eisler (1987) the current culture governed by males and marked by a succession of wars is a dominator society. However, domination is not exclusively a male tendency, as both the masculine and feminine quality is "part of both women's and men's shared human repertoire" (Eisler, 1987, p. 46). Thus, Eisler warns against discrimination based on stereotypes. Her *Cultural Transformation Theory* proposes a partnership society where "neither half of humanity is ranked over the other and diversity is not equated with inferiority or superiority" (Eisler, 1987, p. 28). Duality in the form of patriarchy or matriarchy gives way to balance symbolised by Yin and Yang of ancient Chinese cosmology, where "these great opposites were always seen as relational not contradictory; complementary not antagonistic" (Needham, 1976, p. 34).

In sum, a fundamental change of consciousness moving beyond duality is paramount to SD. Since armed conflict is breeding on domination, othering and duality consciousness, it is incompatible with alternative futures striving for sustainable development. Thus, the skilful resolution of conflicts is a crucial step towards sustainable futures. According to Oberg (2015, p. 1) peace can be accomplished "When the conflict parties attitudes, behaviour and perceptions of the future have changed." Obviously, this "paradigm shift" is a mammoth task to be

achieved even on a local scale, let alone globally.

Causal Layered Analysis: Ending armed conflicts with the partnership model

The subsequent analysis will compare characteristics of the current dominator culture with the partnership model (Table 4), to arrive at a culture profile more conducive to the promotion and practice of SD. To ensure the possibility of a peaceful coexistence without wars it may be necessary to challenge and re-frame the old version of a hero and envision a new worldview aligned with a new paradigm. The analytic process to specify this new worldview will utilise the Causal Layered Analysis (CLA) to deconstruct the two main types of social organisations: the dominator and partnership models.

According to Bussey, “CLA is one of the most successful new tools available” in futures research (Bussey, 2008, p. 106). Already in 2003 Dator praised CLA’s originator Inayatullah for delivering, “the first major new futures theory and method since Delphi” (Dator, 2003, p. 3). CLA is particularly suitable to help visualise sustainable futures analysed in this study, since it facilitates new becomings and alternative futures (Bussey, 2014). CLA deepens and opens up spaces for “articulation of constitutive discourses, which can then be shaped as scenarios” (Inayatullah, 2007, p. 51). The comparison of the two models – the dominator and the partnership model - will deliver a scenario to map plausible sustainable futures without war.

Table 4. Causal Layered Analysis of the dominator and partnership models

LAYERS	DOMINATOR MODEL	PARTNERSHIP MODEL
LITANY	Wars & political / religious upheavals prevalent. Development with no limits, wasteful practices. Social isolation, inequity, poverty, worry, fear. Dystopia – civilisation is nearing its end.	Working together to conquer major obstacles. Planning for a sustainable future is important. Society is judged by the level of aid to the disadvantaged.
SYSTEM	Globalised economy, major corporations. Power concentrated in hands of the wealthy. Political leadership centred on winning the next election, passing short-sighted legislations.	Sustainable manufacturing practices. Politicians voted on merit, honorary position. Localised governance distributing wealth equally.
WORLDVIEW	Survival of the fittest is a natural law. Materialism, hedonism, accumulation of wealth.	Only win-win solutions bring lasting solutions. The Gaia hypothesis – the Earth is a complex interacting system that maintains the climatic and biogeochemical conditions on the planet.
MYTH - METAPHOR	My home is my castle. Money brings happiness. Live for today as tomorrow may never come!	We are creators of our own reality. The Butterfly Effect – we are all connected.

Myth/Metaphor layer of CLA reveals that the *dominator* culture’s motto is apocalyptic, and grounded in the present (Live for today as tomorrow may never come!). Perhaps there is a subconscious reference to global warming and subsequent increase in natural disasters worldwide. The environmental threats seem to overshadow the threat of war at present time. Perhaps this situation prompted Thompson to present a possible future where, “just as man was about to destroy

himself in thermonuclear war and the industrial destruction of the ecological system of the planet, natural cataclysms came and distracted him from war” (Thompson, 1990, p. 124). Thus, it would appear, that dealing with the causation of global warming is of more immediate concern in the 21st century, than the cessation of wars. After all, the deadliest of wars – a nuclear conflict is unlikely at present because of the current balance of power (Blainey, 1988; Organski & Kugler, 1981).

The vertical analysis of the dominator model, starting at the bottom layer of *myth* and moving upwards, revealed the causation of the problems presented on the *litany* level. It is obvious how the self-centred materialistic, individualistic approach to life subscribing to the ‘survival of the fittest’ motto at the *worldview* level can lead to grave consequences such as wars, social isolation, inequity, and poverty on the *litany* level. Moreover, the horizontal analysis facilitated by the comparison between the dominator and partnership models offered solutions to the shortcomings inherent to the dominator model.

The most prominent difference between the two cultures in Table 3. is that the dominator culture is largely individualistic whereas the partnership society espouses collectivistic values. In a similar vein, Galtung suggests that the new civilisation would be “imbued with a vertical and collectivist cosmology embedded in some new type of ideological synthesis” (Galtung, 1981, p. 22). This new cosmology would be aligned along a different paradigm where “material arrangements are reflected in ideas and ideas are projected into material arrangements” (Galtung, Rudeng, & Heistad, 1979, p. 329). Consequently, corporations and policy makers would work from a different perspective; re-animating old wisdom and incorporating parts of the Gaia theory in their worldview (Lovelock, 2000).

Leaders and politicians delivering the necessary changes would be of a different ilk, too. They would be democratically elected based on their education, wisdom and personal merits, not based on aggressive propaganda campaigns or money spent on advertising. They would also work for minimal remuneration, channelling their considerable life experience into wise decision making, just like the ancient Greek politicians. It is popular credence that Western civilisation is built upon the principles of ancient Greek philosophy. It may be true to some extent; however, at closer scrutiny it appears that current Western society resembles the ancient Roman customs of hedonism, personality cult, lust for fame and backstabbing. This intriguing contrast is meaningful and would be worthy of a deeper analysis, however, it is beyond the scope of this study.

From the macrohistorical perspective, “the successor period in many regards will be antithetical to the present one” (Galtung, et al., 1979, p. 353). Thus according to theories of human evolution alluding to the cyclic nature of social change the current cultural transformation would result in adaptation of worldviews similar to those of the ancient matriarchal societies, which predated the current patriarchal one. Consequently, there will be a need to create a new worldview to direct humanity toward a full partnership of men and women; as now more than ever before, there is “the need for a global sensibility” (Houston, 2000, p. 33).

According to Eisler (2014), the resulting sensible and sustainable future, would be shaped into a peaceful society without widespread poverty, oppression, insensitivity, cruelty, and despair. It would be “more than just an interval between wars” (Eisler, 2014, p. 261) – it would be an enduring interval between evolutionary phases of social systems. Similar perspective is espoused by other macrohistorians

who anticipate the next social change to deliver more peace and stability (Sarkar, 2011; Sorokin, 1991). According to Eisler's *Cultural Transformation Theory*, the resulting partnership society would avoid the duality of matriarchy and patriarchy by assuring that, "neither half of humanity is ranked over the other and diversity is not equated with inferiority or superiority" (Eisler, 1987, p. 28). Such a society would have the potential to deliver preferred futures, which include all dimensions of SD.

Scanning for Weak Signals of Worldview Transformation

The previous section established the need for worldview transformation in order to achieve preferred futures without wars. In the next step of the analysis, scanning for signs/images in print media and electronic media will be performed to determine the onset and progress of the imminent social transformation.

Borysenko (1998) attributes revitalisation of the Western culture in the 20th century firstly to the feminist movement following the publication of Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*. Later the senselessness of the Vietnam War leading to the questioning of established ideology; and the birth of the environmental movement initiated by Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* continued to rock the boat. However, the wellspring of the worldview transformation on a deeper level was the development of humanistic psychology in the mid 20th century, as well as the upsurge of interest in spirituality, meditation, and healing coupled with psychedelic experimentation from the 1960s (Grof, 2000).

Quick scan of movie industry outputs for the year 2014 reveals that visions of the future are colonised by technology as captured by science fiction movies. Reflecting the movie going public's dystopia and obsession with action, speed and technology, *Transformers: Age of Extinction* became the highest grossing movie of the year, in spite of negative reviews by film critics. The third most popular movie, *Guardians of the Galaxy* (Ching, 2014) is also the product of minds preoccupied with a complex world of machines and aliens, and their capacity to interact with or save civilisation. However, one of the most remarkable film releases in 2014 was the *Maleficent* (Stromberg, 2014). Surprisingly the movie was the second highest-grossing film of the year worldwide, although instead of robots it features a fairy called *Maleficent* - an eccentric heroin with horns.

According to Eisler (1998) the horned bull is an ancient symbol associated with the worship of the Goddess. However, with the advent of patriarchy the horned Goddess was turned into the horned devil by the male dominated Christian establishment. Other ancient benevolent symbols such as the serpent, previously highly regarded for its wisdom and healing, were also changed into a negative force by Christian iconography. Eve and the serpent were blamed for the original sin and the resulting hardship encountered by the whole of humankind. This reversal was aimed at discrediting the Goddess and give excuse for the suppression of the female half of the population.

In a recently released movie *Maleficent* (Stromberg, 2014), a gentle caring horned fairy falls in love with a mortal man who later uses the fairy's trust and strips her off her special powers by cutting off her wings to satisfy his lust for power and glory. This act of betrayal turns the fairy into a vengeful negative character, just to be transformed later by her inner capacity for unconditional love. Surprisingly, the redeeming 'true love' is not between a male and female protagonist, but between two

females, enacting a non-sexual motherly love. The movie ends by unifications of the two (fairy and human) kingdoms as Maleficent regains her full power to benefit both kingdoms. The moral of the story resembles the calling of the partnership society (see Table 3.) to forget all past grievances and work together for sustainable futures.

The most popular children's movie of the year 2014, *Frozen* by Disney, shares a number of similarities with *Maleficent*. In both movies, the original villains are turned into heroines and both encounter an unexpected twist of 'true love' of a non-romantic nature. Both of the heroines are also betrayed at one point by those who they were seemingly in love with. Thus, universal love is elevated above obsessive emotional love and new archetypes are created for our age. These archetypal images have the potential to "illuminate rites of renewal and social transformation" (Houston, 2000, p. 35).

In line with the above transformational shifts, there is also a public call from some politicians to acknowledge the role of women in society. The importance of women's role was echoed by President Obama's address at the Brisbane G20 Summit at the UQ Centre on the 15th of November 2014. Obama declared that he believed that, "the best measure of whether a nation is going to be successful is whether they are tapping the talents of their women" (ABC News, 2014). Similarly, Václav Havel, the former president of Czechoslovakia, seemed to point to the need for appreciation of female qualities, when he declared that, "the salvation of this human world lies nowhere else than in the human heart, in the human power to reflect, in human meekness, and in human responsibility" (Arien, 1998, p. 96).

Already in 1975 the United Nation's World Plan of Action acknowledged the need for the participation of women in all peace processes as a necessary condition of international peace (E. Boulding, 1995). However, it is only recently that weak signals of subtle changes became more obvious, as demonstrated in the above examples. Could it mean that after thousands of years we are subconsciously remembering and *coming home* (Renesch, 2014)?

Further signs of imminent change can be found in instances of discontent and political upheavals around the world. From the "occupy" movements to the "gentle" revolutions worldwide, ideas about alternative futures are gaining grounds. Sharp's influential book *From Dictatorship to Democracy* (2008) followed by some of the new revolutionaries proved that peaceful campaigns against established oppressive forces are possible, along the lines of Ghandi's earlier efforts. In addition to Ghandi's passive resistance, 21st century activists have modern tools to their disposal to facilitate sociopolitical transformation. In recent social movements the extensive use of the internet (Facebook, twitter and other social media) through mobile phones played a decisive role (Rifkin, 2014; Yang, 2013). However, transformation is a lengthy process with numerous pitfalls along the way, wrestling ingrained hegemony and resistant cultural traditions. Eisler alerts to the current dominator system's defiance to the shift toward the partnership way of life, which can result in "periodic regressions towards a more rigid dominator model in the guise of religious fundamentalism" (Eisler, 1998, p. 46).

The above examples demonstrate that print and electronic media, and particularly social media, can become tools of social transformation. Modern uprisings could not be possible without mobile phones and computers. The world is shrinking as the internet becomes more universally accessible, leading to, "intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole" (Sparks, 2007, p. 126).

Techno-optimists, promoting increased automation as a salvation of humankind, are prolific in the creation of popular images of the future *connected world* (Abelow, 2014). However, the future they propose rarely includes social and psychological considerations and this shortcoming may have detrimental future consequences (Huesemann & Huesemann, 2011). In contrast, Eisler's well-researched *Cultural Transformation Theory* leading from domination to a partnership system has more substance and more potential to end wars and secure preferred futures fostering SD.

Conclusion

Armed conflicts have a detrimental impact on all three pillars of SD – economic, social and environmental, as analysed through the 26 thematic areas derived from the Rio+20 document. The study also found that excessive military spending is both the cause and effect of suffering and poverty worldwide. Therefore, cessation of wars and peaceful coexistence are paramount in consideration of preferred sustainable futures. Unfortunately, it appears that so far extensive efforts at peaceful conflict resolution did not prove overly fruitful; therefore, the current study undertook analysis of drivers of armed conflict, in order to gain insight into this distinct barrier to global SD.

Apart from the obvious imperialistic urge of nations throughout history, the study identified subconscious issues, such as fear, hatred and a need for change as psychological drivers of wars. The broad macrohistory perspective delineating social change through the past few thousand years was employed to elucidate the next phase of sociocultural evolution as well as to inform inputs to the CLA. The resulting scenario resembled the partnership society introduced in Eisler's Cultural Transformation Theory. Worldview transformation was identified as the single most important pre-requisite of the transition process towards sustainable futures without armed conflict.

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