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**Rethinking conflict : the Cultural Approach**

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[Analytical presentation](#)

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**I. Introduction: some concepts**

**1. Conflict and violence**

A minimum of concepts is indispensable even if it is a reader's human right to come quickly to the substance.

Conflict is a complex human phenomenon and should by no means be confused with violence. Violence is to harm and hurt the body, mind and/or spirit of someone, including Self; by verbal and/or physical means, including body language. Violence leaves behind trauma, those traces – very difficult to remove, often indelible – on body, mind and spirit. Violence is an expression of contempt and hatred – "lack of respect" to put it mildly – and to be violated is an experience of humiliation. The harm and hurt of the mind and the spirit may leave behind the most important trauma. When shared with others, particularly the bereaved, in the same nation, we can talk about a collective trauma, raw material for a national culture of revenge/revanche.

In many cultures of violence trauma has a twin concept: the glory of having "won" by inflicting violence, raw material for a national culture of triumphalism. The word "war" – a series of "battles", today "operations", with glory as "victory" and trauma as "defeat" – is used, not "violence". But "violence", violation, conveys better the cruelty of the perpetrator and the suffering of the victim, and how violence breeds violence through the revanchism of trauma and the triumphalism of glory.

Although conflict may lead to violence they are totally different conceptually. At the core of a conflict, the root of a conflict there is always an incompatibility, a contradiction, between goals. Like "I want X, you want X, and we cannot have it both". Conflict is as normal as the air around us. Talk about "conflict prevention" is nonsense. Violence is what has to be prevented.

A goal is a state of affairs ("I now possess X"), with a value attached to it. A value is something to be pursued (positive goal) and/or to be avoided (negative goal). In either case conflict is always emotional. Values are backed by emotion. But in a conflict there is also a lot of cognition. Things are described, incessantly. In border conflicts like Kashmir, or Israel/Palestine, descriptions and prescriptions abound. Again, all this is natural, normal. The question is how we handle it.

Thus, there is no law of nature saying that a conflict has to move from a Phase I Before Violence to a Phase II Violence and from there into a Phase III After Violence. Violence can be prevented, like diseases; but our ability to prevent violence is still at a primitive stage. Not that long time ago the general cure for disease was blood-letting, by incision or by leeches, to bleed patients. A strong stand against blood-letting is not necessarily rooted in moralism but more in pragmatism: it does not work, something else works better. The same could apply to the blood-letting in wars, as "battles" or "operations". The moral stance is important. But the pragmatic challenge to find something that works better is even more so.

This is very far from a play with words. If conflict is confused with violence then basic, potentially fatal clashes of goals will not be detected until the first act of violence occurs, meaning that nothing will be done before there is "trouble". Governments, including the UN Security Council, tend to fall into that trap. And, equally sad, when no more violence occurs "peace" is often declared, confusing that complex state with the cease-fire of neither peace, nor war. The medical parallel is the confusion of health with the absence of symptoms like fever.

There is more to conflict than C for contradiction; there is also A for attitude and B for behavior, the ABC-triangle. Attitudes include emotions and cognitions, ranging from boiling hatred to frozen apathy where emotions are concerned; and from the simplest to the most complex where cognitions are concerned. Do they see many parties or only two; many goals or only one, like struggle for world dominion? To get me/us?

The behavior we generally focus on can range from extreme violence to apathy, like for attitudes. Apathy is often more dangerous than hatred and violence. An activist may be persuaded to channel his energy in another, more compassionate and less violent direction. A passivist has often an egocentric cost-benefit

analysis, concerned with staying out of trouble. Media focus on activists, mindless even of majorities of passivists.

The root of the conflict is the contradiction. Negative attitudes and behavior are like metastases to the root cancer. They may become prime causes in their own right, but the root cause of conflict is the same: parties that have incompatible goals. The idea of eliminating the party that stands in the way, or at least to incapacitate him, comes easily. Too easily.

We can have conflicts with fully fledged ABC-triangles:

- at the micro level: intra- and inter-personal conflict
- at the meso level: inter-group, but intra-society conflict
- at the macro level: inter-state, inter-nation (not the same)
- at the mega level: inter-region, inter-civilization (mega-state and mega-nation).

The basic principles are the same.

The liberal mistake in approaching conflict is to focus on A only, religiously or psychologically; the conservative mistake to focus on B only, clamping down on all signs of violence; and the Marxist approach to focus on C only, like the contradiction between capital and labor, regardless of costs in A and B terms.

We have to approach all three if we want conflict solution: something acceptable and sustainable. A good place to start is the root conflict, trying to solve it or at least to transform it so that the parties can live with it reasonably creatively and non-violently. If we limit ourselves to simple conflicts with only two goals, held by the same party or by different parties A and B, then there are always five possible outcomes, central to the TRANSCEND approach:

- [1] A gets all, B gets nothing (victory/defeat)
- [2] B gets all, A gets nothing (defeat/victory)
- [3] A gets some, B gets some (compromise)
- [4] A gets all, B gets all (positive transcendence).
- [5] A gets nothing, B gets nothing (withdrawal, but could also be negative transcendence, going beyond the contradiction)

An example: Ecuador and Peru have a conflict over a zone in the Andes. To obtain [1] or [2] a war is a classical instrument. To obtain [3], dividing by drawing a border, international law or war can be used (border=cease-fire line). [4] could be to do nothing (which they had done for a large part of 54 years), or to give the zone to the indigenous or an intergovernmental organizations, like the UN, the OEA. And [5] could be a "binational zone with natural park" (as proposed by this author, the outcome in 1998). The first two outcomes are extremist, privileging one party only, often associated with violence. The next three outcomes are symmetric, giving nothing, something or everything to both. They can often be combined in a "peace diagonal". The other diagonal, Compromise, or else Fight it out! (the "war diagonal") is frequently encountered. The listing above has five possible outcomes, and they can be combined. Many people (including politicians), however, may have none of them on their mind. The whole conflict landscape is foggy, no points, no paths. Only A and B. And violence erupts.

But some people have clear ideas: "to win is not everything – it is the only thing". Could be a spoilt actor (person, group, state, nation, region, civilization) very used to getting his (usually a he) will. Or to winning too many sports competitions.

"To win is the only thing" opens for a very poor conflict culture, indeed. A conflict culture privileges/preselects some conflict outcomes over others. Thus, military people are focusing, by definition, on [1] with [2] at the back of their minds; diplomats on [3] (compromise through negotiation, with [1] or [2]

at the back of their minds); merchants on [3] (compromise through bargaining with [5] at the back of their minds), and so on, and so forth. Men tend more toward the war diagonal, women more toward the peace diagonal. In general.

Different groups, and indeed different persons, have more or less peace productive conflict cultures, in other words. The mapping of groups on the 25=32 conflict cultures is crucial to understand what happens in a conflict, including in a mediation process. The parties, including the mediator (who is also some kind of party) enter with their ideas of how conflicts have to be handled, a reason why it always makes sense to ask parties to reflect on conflict in general, not only the case disputed.

Who would privilege positive transcendence, an outcome that requires much creativity? Maybe rabbis, buddhist monks, artists, engineers, architects, and women rather than men (but women are often too shy and short on self-respect to be openly creative).

General formula: first, identify the goals of all parties. Second: distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate goals. Third: bridge, go beyond, transcend the incompatibility among legitimate goals. Like politics: the art of the impossible. Then peacebuilding, violence reduction, and reconciliation; in that order. The time for violence prevention is now. The key approaches include producing, early, through deep dialogues with all parties, alternative images of sustainable, potentially acceptable conflict transformation. This should always be accompanied by massive peacebuilding, depolarizing social and mental structures. And by violence reduction. If governments know only military approaches, only after violence has broken out, then nongovernments could play a major role with nonviolent approaches. Some organizations are now planning that, flooding conflict arenas with nonviolent conflict workers.

Unfortunately, governments have a tendency to do this in the opposite order, enforcing a ceasefire ("peace enforcement" as they call it, with decommissioning of arms), organizing "peacebuilding" at the top around a conference table, arriving at an "agreement" with no organic base. No party will hand over all their arms with no real agreement in sight. The process has to start with an image of a solution to inspire optimism, hope, and mobilize for peace.

Then, if there has been violence: reconciliation. This is a very complex process governments do not know how to do, with the exception of the textbooks of Germany (and then only West Germany) and the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission. There is a healing aspect, not only individual, also to liberate revanchist and triumphalist nations from trauma and glory syndromes that may be very dangerous to either and both, as wars of revenge or follow-up. And there is a closure aspect, impossible without some conflict transformation. The formula, the winner dictates the peace is a recipe for a disaster of revenge/ revanche. Reconciliation is to violence what transformation is to conflict.

The texts at the end have much material on transformation and reconciliation. Here we shall only expand the conflict vision by adding two more types of violence to the direct violence (verbal and/or physical): structural violence, and cultural violence.

Like direct violence structural violence hurts and harms. But there is no actor intending this to happen; it just happens. Structural violence comes in three varieties:

- political structural violence: depriving people of freedom, like in frozen autocracies, or the frozen division of Koreans;
- economic structural violence: depriving people of the basic somatic needs at the bottom of the world economic system, dying at the tune of 100 000 per day of food and healing deficits;
- cultural structural violence: depriving people of their own culture, dying spiritually; at the tune of? We do not know. We shall return to this point in section 10 below.

Structural violence usually starts with major acts of direct violence, like building the wall (of shame) around

West Berlin August 1961. But after some time actors and intentions are forgotten and what remains is a highly concrete structure. The cultural variety may start with invasion/colonization, in the name of some mission, leading to conversion/exclusion/killing. After some time it all becomes institutionalized, structural.

Cultural violence are those aspects of any culture that legitimize direct and/or structural violence. The cultures of war, in other words. The specialty of the *Brahmin* (intellectuals and clerics) as opposed to the direct violence, the specialty of the *Kshatriya* (politicians, military) and the structural economic violence of the *Vaisya* (merchants). And the victims? Today above all *Sudra*, common people; among them above all women and children.

## 2. Culture, nation, state, nation-state and multiculturalism

Culture is here seen as the values/norms defining what is true, right (correct), good, beautiful and/or sacred. At the social level, however, our concern is with shared culture, such as the correct/good ways of using language, body language, eating and life-style in general, and what is sacred, religion. Those who share (most of) these four and in addition have an attachment to a geographical territory are said to belong to the same nation. There are about 2 000 of them, meaning an average of 10 nations per country in the current global system with about 200 countries. Only about 20 of them are nation-states, inhabited by (almost only) one nation. The other 180 are multinational countries. Of these 180 only one single society has managed a symmetric co-habitation of nations: Switzerland. In all the others there is one dominant nation, "more equal than the others".

Multinationalism/culturalism is a major social phenomenon, a source of enrichment and/or conflict, particularly in a globalizing world with very high mobility, including migration, legal or not. The world is, indeed, multicultural. Almost all countries are today multicultural, even the nation-states, because of migration and the symbolic presence of other cultures like the consumerist, individualist materialism associated with the United States of America; a culture today with a global attachment.

And many persons are multicultural; like people in Eastern Spain, perfectly bilingual in Castellano and Catalan, two of the languages of the Iberian peninsula. Only one prevailed under Franco, today coexistence is possible. Or people in Papua-New Guinea with 3-6 languages as normal. We shall have more to say about multiculturalism as an approach to culture conflict later.

## 3. Surface culture and deep culture

We often have the feeling that there is something hiding underneath or behind a cultural surface, of any kind. A party to a conflict, at any level, says something about a conflict, produces a "text" in other words. The social sciences have been greatly aided by textual analysis as developed in the literary sciences, teaching how to bring in unspoken sub-texts, super-texts and contexts in the effort to understand any text.

Thus, we may read about the importance of helping Albanians for humanitarian reasons in Kosovo at the same time as an unspoken sub-text about the significance of military bases to secure oil pipelines from the Caspian to the Adriatic region is circulating. Some other place there is a super-text about the significance of NATO getting a new mission and of being NATO/USA loyal. And then a geopolitical context where control over Eurasia is fundamental.

Honesty is to verbalize publicly sub-, super- and contexts together with the texts. Honesty is also supposed to pay in the long run. However that may be; we are all in it (or not) for the long run. The state system, however, tends to praise dishonesty as the art of statesmanship. If a text from a foreign ministry should coincide with "the whole truth and nothing but the truth" it must be by chance rather than design. Texts are made by "spin doctors" to form mental images, not to tell it like it is.

But conscious manipulation is the trivial aspect of the general idea that there is something underneath. We

are more interested in the subconscious aspects, deep texts, driving the actors without their conscious awareness – because the ideas have become unreflected habits, repressed or so trivial, natural/normal that the deeper texts are not worth articulating. Too obvious.

Above conflicts have been analyzed in terms of three components as an ABC-triangle, with contradictions leading to negative attitudes leading to negative behavior leading to more contradictions. Or, the other way round. When conflicts are at their worst with deep, intractable contradictions and hatred and violence all over then there are causal flows in all directions. The word "synergy" is too tame, but that's what it is. What we are now saying is that there is a deeper layer to the ABC-triangle; we could call it deep attitudes, deep behavior, deep contradictions. As a rule all three escape formulation, because they are repressed and also possibly because they are taken too much for granted, as mentioned. But they are crucial in order to understand any conflict, and especially to be able to transcend the contradiction and transform, even solve the whole conflict. We have to come closer to them, maybe also by giving them other names: deep cultures, basic needs, and deep structures.

As an example let us take Kant's attitude, or rule, that rules should be universalizable, valid not only for me but for everybody in the same situation. A rule is an attitude that can be put in writing as a rule, a directive, about how to act in certain situations, like "never talk to people of that kind". To try to formulate in writing the rule underlying one's behavior, to see whether it can stand daylight, whether you can accept it as a general "maxim" for everybody in that situation is not a bad idea.

But even more important would be to comprehend the deep culture underlying a rule. To stick to Kant's rule, why should a rule be universalizable? Imagine that human beings are divided into civilizations and each civilization, in turn, is divided into nations; all of them viewing important issues their own way. In some human life is more sacred than in others. Kant was of the opinion that a person who takes somebody's life has no right to live his own – he favored capital punishment for murder – and exposed the rule to the universalizability test. No problem with the German, Christian, Occidental. But in Buddhism element all life is one and sacred. Is Kant's deeper message not that life is sacred but that universalizability is sacred? And if universalizability is Western does that mean that the deepest message is that the West is sacred, universally valid, as the civilization up front for all humanity, and for that reason he universalizes universalization?

The line between surface culture and deep culture is far from clear, nor does it have to. All artifacts in a museum belong to the surface culture. So do all texts. Hidden texts (sub-, super-, contexts) are also artifacts, only hidden. Monuments are artifacts. But not the deeper messages, like the fact that so many monuments are dedicated to the man on horseback. This makes the male warrior or statesman highly visible, and not to the most significant of all events; a woman giving birth to a new human being, to life. By the same token there seems to be no monument dedicated to a family, mother and father, children, just being sweet, loving to each other. In this there is a deep message, carried just as much by the positively present monuments as by the negatively absent monuments. Some things, states of affairs, are more celebrated than others. See such monuments, and not-see others, some million times, and the deep text about who matters arrives. Better than by schooling.

Deep cultures are of course hypothetical, like deep personality for persons. The test is their predictive/explanatory potential. If we can establish a profile for the deep culture of a nation and make precise predictions about conflict behavior, then we have a key.

The two giants in deep human understanding, Freud and Jung, had a division of labor: Freud explored attitudes underneath individual attitudes, Jung the attitudes underneath collective attitudes (both did both; like Jung's work on "the shadow" – the attitudes we do not want to recognize in ourselves – and Freud's work on monotheism). We refer to these attitudes "underneath" as the individual and collective subconscious precisely because they are not verbalized.

There is nothing mysterious in the "collective"; it refers to deep attitudes shared by many members of a group. They share impressions, imprints, not any collective "soul". What we mean by the deep culture of a group, defined by gender, generation, race, class, nation, civilization or territorial belongingness (a state, region) is its collective subconscious: deep culture = collective subconscious.

But does that not associate, even identify, the deep culture with, possibly, the mentally pathological? Yes and no. There are pathological deep cultures with severe collective consequences in world politics where nations are acting themselves out on each other (see sections 5-8 below for a theory, section 4 for a case study).

But the deep culture can of course also be healthy (see section 16). Of course the ideas of pathological/healthy differ. Thus, in Western psychiatry lack of sense of contradiction, and lack of clear borders between Self and the Rest serve as indicators of disorders. Both ideas, *tertium non datur*, and atomism (with clear borders between the parts) are rooted in Western deep culture. To Daoist deep culture everything is contradictory and dynamic; in Buddhist deep culture all parts of the universe are interpenetrating. What is healthy to one is pathological to the other. When unreflected the deep culture has the last word. Hence its power over us.

## II. Deep culture and conflict: use, abuse, misuse

### 4. A case study: Castile-Catalonia-Basque Country

We shall start with a case study of the primary importance of deep culture in shaping attitudes and behavior; consequently to be considered in any serious conflict work. We shall compare autonomy conflicts involving three nations with different deep cultures in the Iberian peninsula. They are Castile, Spain centered on Madrid; Catalonia centered on Barcelona; and Euskadi = Basque Country:

- the autonomy/independence conflict between Catalonia and Castile;
- the autonomy/independence conflict between Euskadi and Castile.

Our concern is the impact of deep culture on conflict culture. If, for instance, the deep culture already has taken a stand, and even a strong stand, on which of the five outcomes in a conflict over two incompatible goals is/are preferred/privileged, then that is certainly of basic significance for prognosis of therapy.

The parties will then be driven toward that or those outcome(s) even without being conscious of what happens because it is subconscious, and without any protest because that subconsciousness is shared by all or most of them.

As the two conflicts have Castile in common, let us start at that point, with Castilian deep culture.

The thesis is that the deep culture of Castile will privilege the two extremist positions with a winner and a loser, and is weak on withdrawal, compromise and transcendence (the "peace diagonal"). That does not necessarily imply violence even though that particular conflict culture is compatible with violence. This is a typical aristocrat deep culture with roots in the feudal Middle Ages with duels and tournaments and battles, and indeed not found only in Castilian Spain alone. It is very prominent in many parts of Europe.

But there are other ways of dominating (*Dominus* = Lord) than by the sword. One method is to enact the conflict verbally, using a court as the arena since the juridical deep culture also privileges the extremist positions (A is guilty, B is innocent); with a small escape valve for "the case is dismissed" (withdrawal).

A third approach would be to use money, buying a victory, also known as corruption. Still another way of appointing a winner is through a vote where simple arithmetics liberates the parties from the laborious task of finding a compromise or a transcendence (but with "the matter is postponed" as a withdrawal possibility).

And then yet another factor, very important in Castile: charisma, the power rooted in the radiation of a personality, often upgrading that person to a *don* (given that Don Juan is indicative of a special type of radiation). The *don* enters a room. He is met with silence. Seated at the table, people present their views. Slowly all attention focuses on him. He is the last speaker, his is the last word, the summary, the conclusion. Many of them live in Madrid.

Regardless of the method or mechanism used: the conflict is decided by deciding who is the winner.

Where does this come from? Perhaps we can even talk about a deep deep culture, a basement under the basement, with a strong bonding to the number "2" and a strong faith that God/Justice is talking through the outcome, with a clear voice are located. That clarity will disappear in the paleness of the compromise, the cowardice of the withdrawal and the creativity of any transcendence.

If God had wanted transcendence then He would not have given His Spanish subjects so many forms of confrontation. He would have shown that transcendence, maybe already in His act of Creation. Instead he gave Spaniards the ability to express His will by winning.

But do Spaniards believe in such things today? They may do so without any consciousness because the basement under the basement is even less accessible. The faith in "2" (outcomes) may survive the faith in God and be carried by the faith in Justice. *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*, the French say, the more it changes, the more it remains the same. "2" is like a rat jumping the sinking ship of aristocrat duels long time ago: not jumping into water to drown but to find another ship. That rat "2" has been living in the court rooms for quite some time now: guilty vs innocent; only those two.

But there is another and powerful carrier of this deep culture in Spain in general: the *corrida*, bull fight, with two actors, *Toro* (the bull) and *Matador* (the killer). And only two outcomes. *Matador* kills almost always, and *Toro* is driven to the butcher. Very rarely *Toro* gets *Matador* on the horns, and he is driven to the hospital. *Toro* and *Matador* withdrawing, sitting down, eating or smoking grass, would be cowardice. Compromise, only till *Toro* is wounded, may be good enough for people like the French and the Portuguese.

Transcendence as a suicide pact *Toro-Matador* is morbid. But negative transcendence in the sense of *Toro* and *Matador* together attacking the judge, or the public, is interesting. Hardly very realistic, however. A heretic proposal, from a Norwegian observer?

A bull fight reads like a text, and one deep text reading has been indicated: a conflict has two and only two outcomes. This is normal, natural. Life is like that. And will stay that way. But there is also another and highly compatible deep text. *Toro* has a highly visible and very often mentioned part, the *cojones*, the testicles. In the same vein, *Matador* has tight silk pants leaving no doubt that he also has something between the legs. Reading: this "either-you-or-me" fight is between men. Real men.

Some years ago a very skilful female bullfighter appeared, literally speaking on the arena; a clear transgression of that deep culture. She was harassed away fairly quickly. Had she focused on cow fighting, the boys might have acquiesced. Even with pleasure.

Then there is a third deep text: *Toro* is raw, brutal nature; black, the color of darkness, from the deeper crevices of reality, Satan's color. *Matador* is not only a man but handsome, attractive; he is force, skill, technique, style; aesthetically he is dancing a ballet of death around *Toro*. Not only man against brutes but culture against nature is being celebrated in this fatal conflict culture.

Then, Catalonia. Citizens of the same state, but with a very different deep culture where culture is concerned. Compromise is privileged, the reasonable outcome, a place in the middle for reasonable parties. The carriers of this deep culture are even more important than the bull fights: the merchants, buying and selling, bargaining, negotiating in the market to obtain the best possible bargain. Ideally this shall take place



with no coercion or threats, making both believe they are the winners, avoiding any glory-trauma mentalities. Temporary withdrawal from the process is possible.

But there is no transcendence. The dimension for negotiation to find a compromise is defined by the parties and their positions. And that dimension should be divisible so that jumping and sliding up and down is possible. Price, in freshly minted coins, is ideal. The alternative is horse trading between two goals, exchanging something indivisible for something else, also indivisible. This characterizes an entire nation. The compromise of the merchants is as normal and natural as the fight of the aristocrats. Consciousness is low in either case, except when they are confronted with the conflict style of the other party. And Madrid has to negotiate.

Are these stereotypes? To some extent, yes. But they cannot be disproved by public opinion studies tapping only the conscious. We are closer to cultural anthropology, a part of interdisciplinary conflict studies. The method is observation, participation, empathy. And above all careful, probing dialogues to gather insights in how conflict parties experience conflicts.

Then, the Basques. One simple formulation: Castile *in extremis*, more Spanish than the Spaniards themselves. Ignatius Loyola and his Compañía de Jesus (the Jesuits) were more Catholic than the Pope. Pit them against Castile and the result is given in advance: two parallel bull fights. Their heavy common history is the history about the struggle to win. In our era Franco's *España, una, grande, libre* implied bloody suppression of the Basques. And their answer was to counter the Franco-regime with car bombs, winning autonomy, but not the independence of ETA. The car bombs continued. The socialists responded with killing, using secret police, and the conservatives with polarization, isolation. Two ETA leaders got more than 1000 years in prison. A political party has been banned.

This is a culture of fighting, with violence, polarization and dichotomies, and goals like "independence" and "within the limits of the Spanish Constitution". There are no alternatives. They are tied to the two extremist outcomes. Withdrawal is excluded. Compromise is treason. And transcendence demands not only creativity, but the willingness to see something valid in both parties: blocked by the forceful grip the deep culture has on the conflict culture. People who know little about conflict often believe that a shared culture will tie them together. Depends on the culture. If violence is right under the surface, then violence committed by one is confirmation to the other, and they will live very unhappily together. Forever?

Hopefully not. But the road toward more positive handling of the conflict passes through the painful process of deep culture awareness. There has to be some awareness of the deeper dynamics steering collectivities, taking negative aspects of the collective subconscious so to speak by the neck, throwing it out. Needless to say, that goes for both sides. Probably for men more than for women.

At the same time Catalonia is sliding toward higher levels of autonomy with its two steps forward, one step back. The politician presiding over this process, Pujol, evades the perennial question by journalists, "Is the goal independence?" If he says "Yes", then he enters the other conflict culture; if he says "No" he surrenders an important bargaining card. Withdrawal from that conflict is clever.

Between Basque Country and Catalonia there is a tiny country, Andorra, for centuries ruled by an unlikely duo: the King/President of France, and the bishop of Seo de Urgel on the Spanish side. Today the country is an independent member of the United Nations. The culture? Catalan, of course. Small steps. No bombs. A model for the Basques? As a result, no doubt yes. As a method: more problematic. All that negotiation, renouncing on a clear victory triumphantly marching into San Sebastian (Donostia) at the end, is very much at variance with a deep culture demanding more bombs.

One country, three nations (at least). The Tortoise Catalonia will arrive at high autonomy before culture-trapped Achilles Basque. Difficult to speculate so far into the future, but it could harbor a Madrid facing a

Barcelona not as its equal but as its superior; Madrid trapped in a stupid double bull-fight. Ideas of national autonomy seem never to die. Leaders may be killed, movements may be crushed. But the idea of being ruled by one's own kind will survive, strongly anchored, as it is, in the deep culture of any nation.

## **5. The CGT syndrome: Chosenness-Glory-Trauma**

Let us now start furnishing this "basement" referred to as the collective subconscious. Conflict culture is certainly steered, to a large extent from that deep culture basement. In the deep culture = collective subconscious we find Jung's archetypes, like atoms of subconscious meaning; an example being the "two-ness" frequently referred to above. Archetypes may combine into molecules of higher complexity, "syndromes", bundles, and "super-syndromes", more like protein molecules, again to stick to the organic chemistry metaphor.

One such frequently encountered syndrome is the strong belief in being a Chosen People (C), with a Glorious past and/or future (G), but at the same time a people suffering from countless Trauma, (T). This adds up to the CGT syndrome, among the most problematic in macro and mega-conflicts.

At the level of the individual this would be a person with a mandate from God, with glory waiting in the future, deeply marked and marred by trauma, real or imagined, inflicted by Others. There is a certain inner logic in this: he who has God's markings on his forehead is predestined to something Great. But he will also evoke enormous Envy in evil others, wanting to get him.

At the personal micro level such a person clearly suffers from megalomania and paranoia, and will be psychiatrized under the rubric of narcissism/paranoia. But at the state macro level this national, collective pathology is often classified as patriotism, as love for the mother/father-land, and be much celebrated. Put up more flags.

As deep culture this confronts us with enormous problems. A state run by a dominant nation with this kind of baggage in its deep culture has strong drives to subjugate others, a major factor behind Western colonialism. And, how will such nations relate to each other?

## **6. The DMA syndrome: Dualism-Manicheism-Armageddon**

A answer lies in a short version of the Abrahamic religions: There are two forces in the world, Good and Evil; irreconcilable. Contradictions must, as by law of nature, end with a final battle, Armageddon. That conflict culture excludes such endings as withdrawal, compromise or transcendence as meaningless. The final battle is inevitable. See to it that Good prevails over Evil.

"Irreconcilable" spells "either-you-or-me". The decision mechanism is in the violence; not in court case, corruption, voting, charisma. Fundamentalists in all three religions, and their secular successors, will block all efforts to expand the conflict culture so as to include the peace diagonal.

The DMA syndrome has other equally destructive consequences.

Polarization in two blocks that have only good to say about themselves, and only evil to attribute to each other, is common when a conflict gets protracted and is over such important goals as basic needs. Polarization facilitates the exercise of violence because it dehumanizes Other, making it easier to kill. But polarization also makes violence more palatable. Violence committed by the Evil confirms one's own goodness, even if violence is humiliating and expresses contempt. Equipped with a blossoming DMA syndrome the party is already pre-polarized. If both suffer from DMA they can use the DMA on each other. They become autistic, seeing problems/violence as coming from Other and never attain the reciprocity of seeing it as also coming from Self.

DMA blocks any real understanding of Other. If Other is merely Evil, why try to understand his goals? Rather reveal his evil nature, never give him a voice, a face. If that makes him desperate and violent he only proves what we already know: he is evil.

The Fundamentalism Super-Syndrome: CGT + DMA + Projection is based on the two syndromes identified so far:

- [1] Chosenness. The idea built into the national narrative that the nation is chosen by transpersonal forces, such as Yahweh for the Jews and the successors, God and Alla'h.
- [2] Glory. The basis is usually a myth combining a glorious past with a glorious future once the problems of the more dubious, even ignominious, present have been overcome.
- [3] Traumas. The shocks, mythical or not, suffered by a nation, leaving deep wounds, festering in the collective subconscious, to be drawn upon, particularly by leaders with similar wounds.
- [4] Dualism. The tendency to divide everything, like world space states and nations, into two parts, with sharp borderlines.
- [5] Manicheism. The tendency to attribute only Good qualities to Self and only Evil qualities to Other. God vs Satan; take sides.
- [6] Armageddon. The tendency found in the abrahamitic religions to envisage a final battle between God/Good and Satan/Evil.
- [7] Repression/Projection. A psychological syndrome repressing, denying, the bad qualities of Self (such as excessive violence in thought, speech and action), attributing them to Other.

This is the definition of fundamentalism used in this deep culture theory. Like "terrorism", "fundamentalism" is a term usually reserved for Other. Self is seen as moderate/proportionate, rational, Good. Fundamentalism polarizes, dehumanizes, verminizes Other and bolsters Self. Fundamentalism provides ideal legitimation for use of even extreme violence, say, against defenseless civilians by bombing from above (state terrorism), or from below (terrorism), numbing both terrorists to the suffering of Other. This is the drama enacted for our eyes for some time now (before 9/11).

## **7. The ECW syndrome: Expansion-Contraction-Waiting**

The basic thesis is simple. We assume deep cultures with expansion and contraction (rise and fall) as archetypes, at the individual/personal and collective/national levels; usually not conscious (verbalized), but subconscious (verbalizable, not verbalized). Expansion/contraction is considered normal/natural, like up and down, well and ill. Existence is wavy, undulating. There is a Self, individual or collective. Expansion breaks the boundary, goes beyond, pierces, encapsulates. Expansion is centrifugal. Its twin, contraction, is centripetal, centers on some inner, irreducible nucleus, leaving the outer border of the Self behind, like in old age. The next step is death.

This assumes a state of affairs from which to expand, some Self within designated borders. The imagery also points to two stages of contraction: from expansion down to the border, and then further down from the border inward. The corresponding stages of expansion are obvious: turning outward from the innermost self to the border, and then from the border beyond.

Since so much nature expands and contracts with the rise and fall of temperature, expanding through spring and early summer, then contracting, waiting through the winter makes nature a metaphor that have inspired this archetype. Another obvious example is genital: female expansion-contraction, and male rise-and-fall. The tropics overexpanded into desertification, the polar regions overcontracted to the point of glacification. Christianity, with its highly expansionist missionary command (Matthew 28:18-20), settled in the temperate zone, with concepts of "overextension" and "below its potential".

Some theses about the dynamics of ECW cycles:

- [1] The normal history of much of space is the enactment of national expansion-contraction archetypes; with a mission;
- [2] The turning from expansion to contraction may be quick; the turning from contraction to expansion may take much more time;
- [3] The first turning spells defeat, the second turning can be seen as a stay in the waiting room/recovery home of history;
- [4] The present political generation stores in the collective conscious the part of the cycle experienced in its own lifetime;
- [5] What happened before is sedimented in the collective subconscious of the nation as layers of glory=expansion, trauma=defeat/contraction, and waiting/recovery ("middle ages");
- [6] The collective subconscious programs the nation for the reconquest of what was lost;
- [7] To make out of the waiting/recovery room a bene per se is treason because it diverts energy from a possible reconquest;
- [8] The collective subconscious is more capable of producing consensus than the collective conscious, not inviting objections;
- [9] The distant-but-not-too-distant peak invites more consensus as it can be kept in memory without too much disturbing detail;
- [10] The more expansion and peaks in the same geographical direction the more consensus for the next expansion/mission;
- [11] The collective subconscious is a program awaiting ripe time;
- [12] Time is ripe when the Self feels strong enough relative to the Other to enact the program; resume the mission;
- [13] A nation feels strong enough to exit from the waiting room when the collective, conscious and subconscious, motivations, the capabilities, and the right circumstances coalesce;
- [14] The less the collective subconscious has been verbalized and contested, the more likely the re-enactment of the mission;
- [15] Victims are hated/feared: one day he may come back and do the same to us as we did to him;
- [16] Archetypes reside in the gut-brain, ratio in the head-brain;
- [17] Archetypes are mobilized when emotions are high because of a crisis, the situation is complex, a quick consensus is needed;
- [18] Crisis=danger (the old victims) + opportunity (they are weak);
- [19] Blessed be the nation with no such archetype;
- [20] Blessed be the nation too small to enact such archetypes.

A nation has a niche, like China, *Zhong Guo*, Middle Kingdom, encircled by the Tundra, the Sea, the Himalayas and the Gobi desert, like in the character for guo. The Tundra is badly marked, hence a Wall; the totality constitutes a circle. Outside are the four kinds of Barbarians (North, East, South and West); doing what Barbarians do, lurking, warring against each other, lurching. The territory is constant, the wagons are circled, the configuration is centripetal, pointing inward. Any mission is inner-directed =development, today.

Other nations go beyond the niche, the borders, with normative, contractual and/or coercive power; as ideas, goods/services, force. There is always a mission. The archetype is expansionist; the configuration is centrifugal, pointing outward, radiating. More archetypes enter: the defeat, the waiting/recovery, the traitor who deviates from the mission, the renaissance, being born again to resume the mission, or an updated, similar mission: the return. There is a feeling of adequacy, *es stimmt, eccolo*. The world is right again, after having been off its hinges. The Age of Greatness, Storhetstiden, has been restored, after the Dark Ages.

We then assume the collective subconscious to mirror history, but in a highly simplified form. History is reduced to archetypes; the historical narrative uses the archetypes as stepping stones, interspersing times (years), places (sites), and names. Complexity, Angst, horror, all such things are forgotten; hidden by

archetypes.

The Italian *Rinascimento* used classical symbols, Mussolini's expansionism used renaissance symbols. A metaphor: *la torre pendente* in Pisa. There is a sunny side, expansion, a dark side, contraction, the dark ages, cold. As history winds its way upwards looking down establishes synchrony with past period in the same phase, enacting the same old archetypes.

Wise people issue warnings or intone jubilations as the case may be, "this is exactly like when -". They are right. History does repeat itself as long as archetypes, the gut brain, does most of the steering. That condition is easily met with the passing of time so that the agonies of expansionism and defeat have been forgotten.

What to do in the meantime? The neighbors are watching; your expansionism has been their contraction before their expansionism became your contraction. They watch for signs that you will get at them again. Modesty is called for not to alert them unnecessarily.

In the meantime there are several possibilities.

First, make the best out of contraction. Contraction means suffering, beyond losing power and having others turn their force, wealth and ideas against you rather than the other way round, as you certainly preferred. If the focus were on force the suffering may have been direct, immense, lasting. A feeling may have emerged that this is our destiny. Resonance with other contraction phases in the nation's history is deep. Chosen by God, no doubt, but for what? *Eli, Eli, lema sabachtani?* "My God, my God why hast thou betrayed me?" Could it be because my mission is suffering, that expansionism was but a parenthesis, an excursion, that contraction was normalcy?

The competition between Poles and Jews in Poland, symbolized by the Christian crosses outside Auschwitz, can be seen in this light: who suffers more is more Chosen. Suffering becomes meaningful, an act of God, an act even of love, like sacrificing His only Son.

However, with expansion as even an more normal normalcy the gutbrain archetype may take over. Archetypes are ideal for consensus-building when there is a crisis: emotions at a pitch, history is accelerated, quick consensus is needed. And, as we all know, crisis = danger + opportunity. Opportunity to be born again.

## 8. The 3C thesis: Crisis-Complexity-Consensus

Let us now formulate a basic thesis about the relation between culture and conflict, relating deep culture and conflict culture. Under normal conditions these crude, sometimes grotesque, archetypes and syndromes in the deep culture are of little or no significance. Under normal conditions people use their head brain to process stimuli (information) rationally, weighing for and against, examining the arguments and data supposed to confirm or disconfirm.

Inside a mature person this takes the form of an inner dialogue among conscious thoughts, weighing for and against. And thoughts, as opposed to flashes, premonitions, emotions, as subvocal speech, can be verbalized, articulated.

In a group of people, like the proverbial committee, this may take the form of an outer dialogue, a shared search for an answer. Sometimes some people may articulate one position and other people another position and the dialogue degenerates into a debate, a verbal battle to appoint a winner, a loser; but no transcendence.

As a general rule: what is conscious can be verbalized.

But let us now change the circumstances. Let us introduce a crisis, emergency or whatever term we want to use where quick decision/action is needed. There is no time for explicit, conscious, verbalized (subvocal or vocal) articulation. We start talking about instincts and intuition, in other words of bypassing the head brain, with its consciousness and vocalism.

Let us then introduce conflict complexity which can be measured by adding or multiplying the number of parties and number of goals thus, in the UN Conference on the Law of the Sea UNCLOS in Caracas 1974, both were 150, meaning 22.500 combinations. The crisis leaves no time for systematic, rational simplification.

Let us then introduce the group level, say in the form of a committee, for instance in the form of foreign ministers or heads of state deliberating what to do when the cases explored attain crisis level. Crisis spells polarization and polarization spells consensus; there will be no inner split "the enemy can play on". But the need for consensus mutes opposition or diverging views, even to the point that they are not even subvocally articulated.

Exactly in this situation the deep culture, operating through what me might call the gut brain, can act as a stand-in, an under- study for the head brain. "Iraqis are trouble-makers", "Serbs are trouble-makers", "Muslims are fundamentalists" will serve as landing points for the three syndromes mentioned, CGT, DMA and ECW, always attributed to Other, never to Self. That they are struggling for regional, even world hegemony is taken for granted, as nice examples of projection. Iraq's points about border regulation, oil quotas, prices, currency rates are brushed aside as propaganda. Serbia's rejection of living under Zagreb, Sarajevo and Pristina (with pro-Nazi and pro-fascist regimes killing Serbs during the Second World War), and the conflict between Titoists and Tchetniks likewise. "Greater Serbia" will be projected upon them as the goal.

And they, on their side, do exactly the same, brushing aside all texts about democracy, human rights and humanitarian action in favor of assuming Western struggle for world hegemony. The deep culture rejects texts in favor of subtexts, supertexts and contexts, forgetting that each of the four may carry elements of sincerity and together mirror the real world adequately.

This is the role of culture in conflict, under 3C conditions: gut-brain substituting for head-brain; deep culture irrationality driving out, defeating rationality. Use, abuse and misuse.

## **9. Are there therapies for pathological deep cultures?**

This is not the space or place to explore this basic topic at the frontier of peace studies, not to mention peace practice. But we can start by indicating an approach that is very promising even if difficult to follow through in detail, straight from Freud/Jung:

- First step: realize that just like at the individual level there are subconscious forces driving us, and particularly in crisis, when the situation is very complex, and action is demanded;
- Second step: realize that to master these forces, in the shape of assumptions, deep attitudes, we have to be conscious of them, and may have to know more about how our collective subconscious is shaped;
- Third step: realize that to change these deep, subconscious assumptions much, and even collective work is indispensable.

A joint exhibition putting the artifacts of two cultures next to each other is a good display of a deep culture of tolerance, but does not change the deep texts of the artifacts. They have to be brought into the open through dialogue; and the carriers explored. And – the carriers may have to be changed. Thus, some examples of missing monuments to life and love in everyday life have been mentioned: imagine they dominated the city-scape. It would matter.

Take another example. Look at the street names leading to Arc de Triomphe in Paris. Imagine that instead of battles and marshals they were named for major approaches to peace, such as democracy, human rights, peace movements, war abolition, global governance, peace education/Victor Hugo, peace journalism, nonviolence, conflict transformation. As daily reminders. It would matter.

Imagine that the media paid attention to how pathological deep cultures are enacted, not only at the personal level (evident in some statesmen like a Hitler), but at the collective level. Imagine they had the knowledge, insight, skill to suggest peaceful, creative alternatives. It would matter. It would make a difference.

### III. Culture and conflict: the TRANSCEND approach

#### 10. Intercultural conflict: four approaches

Generally, intercultural conflict is between a dominant culture and a "minority", often indigenous or immigrant, culture. Cultures, particularly the deeper, less conscious aspects, encode, program persons. Two or more cultures will imprint different rules, e.g., in the areas mentioned above, leading to conflicting attitudes and behavior. The identity of a person is defined by culture. More than one culture means cross-pressure, possibly identity crisis.

Thus, two different epistemes, Western linear, causal thinking and Oriental "it all hangs together" (*engi*) make the world look different. To the former the war in the Pacific was caused by the attack on Pearl Harbor; to the latter the whole Pacific region was filled with contradictions leading to the Pacific war. A conflict between two truths? A truth crisis?

Or, much more important: according to one culture everything can be owned; ownership, dominion, accruing to he who claims it first, possibly he who saw it first – the discoverer (hence the deeper significance of the Western concern with "discovery"). And then, according to other cultures without this concept from the legal culture of Roman law, things are not owned but used by people together, *res comunis* (which to the West means that nobody owns it, *res nullius*) – waiting to be owned by the first claimant.

Or, even more importantly: according to one culture something is either true or false, good or bad etc., *tertium non datur*. According to other cultures there is always something false in the true, something good in the bad and so on. Imagine a conflict with two antagonists: the former culture will give of them right, the second will search for compromises, both-ands, neither-nors.

There are generally four approaches to multiculturalism.

The first approach is intolerance, taking the extreme form of killing biologically or socially (marginalization) other cultures; or imprinting on them the culture of the invader/colonizer/empire builder. Nothing compares to Western imperialism in its extreme asymmetry, imposing language, body language and religion, barely assimilating some spices and dishes into their own culture. The idea of possessing the only valid faith, as in the Papal Bull of 4 May 1493, *Inter Caetera*, set the tone; handing over territories discovered (and to be discovered) to the Spanish Kings.

The dominant culture demands a dominant monopoly position for its code, which may imply culturocide for the minority culture. They may give up deep codes and explicit idioms, forget their own language by the second generation, their body language (seen as uncouth), stop eating own dishes, convert to mainstream faiths.

Or, they may be forced to marginalize, or self-marginalize: withdrawing to enclaves in the country, relegating their culture to sacred times (the holidays of their minority nation) or sacred places (of burials, for instance), or the sacrum of their private homes. They may push their own culture into the deeper recesses of the mind; treasures to be guarded in secret, like Jews hiding in Catholic Spain. History shows trails of

prejudice, discrimination, persecution. And of peoples trained in switching from dominant culture in public space to their own in private and inner, space.

The more the dominated have to deny their own culture the more do they become walking corpses, suffering from collective post-traumatic stress disorder. The symptoms, for instance among Amerindians and Hawaiians, include alcoholism, drugs, obesity and other signs of inattention to body, high risk-taking, short lives.

The second approach is tolerance, better than intolerance, but only a passive peaceful coexistence, essentially signaling that "I am so generous that I tolerate that you exist". This opens for a world of (dominant) nation-states that tolerate each other; better than imperialism with a cultural component. And it opens for human rights inside the states, protecting "minorities". The formula facilitates a transition from a multicultural world to multicultural societies. But not good enough in a world where different cultures will have ever broader and deeper contact.

Let us stop for a moment and reflect on where what has been said so far brings us in terms of conflict transformation.

If intolerance leads to being denied, or giving up, one's own culture, taking on the dominant culture, then obviously the latter prevails. The dominant culture has won. Some skewed compromises may be carved out as small niches for one's own culture.

Under tolerance that compromise is complete: all cultures are equal. But only one single country has arrived at that stage, and mainly dividing the country into four cultural regions (German-, French-, Italian- and Rhetoromanisch-speaking). Each part, however, is mostly monocultural in public space.

But general conflict transformation theory has two more outcomes to offer: negative and positive transcendence. Negative transcendence, "neither-nor" means that something else, like a national, standardized language drives out conflicts between local tongues, vernaculars, dialects. Another example is secularism driving out bitter conflicts between Catholics and Protestants.

And positive transcendence, the "both-and"? That would be the transcend approach, using the third approach below as a process aiming at the fourth approach as a transcending outcome.

The third approach is dialogue, based on mutual respect and curiosity like "how wonderful that you are different from me, then we can learn from each other and maybe develop something new!" This is not debate, which is a form of warfare with verbal means, to show that the other side is false/wrong/bad/ugly/profane. A major step forward for a multicultural society with the parts seeing each other as sources of mutual enrichment. Not frequent. But this active peaceful coexistence is clearly a jump forward.

And yet there is a fourth stage opening for a transition from a multicultural society to multicultural persons. Clearly this means the active coexistence of more than one culture inside one person, not only inside a society.

Each aspect of culture gives rise to its own fourth stage: multilingual persons, at home in more than their "mother tongue", at least passively (reading/understanding, not writing/talking); multibodylingual persons, mastering more than one body language; multiculinary persons, enjoying more than one culinary idiom; multireligious(/ideological) persons, receiving their guidance and deep identity from more than one religion/ideology.

This gives us another perspective on multiculturalism: as an infinite resource for enrichment if other cultures are really taken on, not only tolerated. Conflicts must be handled not only nonviolently to avoid violence, but also creatively for joint enrichment. Exclusion and marginalization may lead to violent acts of



commission, against Self and Other, in extreme cases to suicide and homicide, even war. But missed opportunity to use creatively the resources of all cultures, dominant and subjugated, letting oneself be guided by more than one culture is a serious act of omission, a major opportunity cost.

## 11. On human and social capacity for multicultural transcendence

However, what is the human capacity for multiculturalism?

Let me present two case studies from everyday life, even from my own life: as a husband in a multicultural, Norwegian-Japanese, Eurasian marriage raising our two children, and as a resident in a spot on earth with a high level of multiculturalism: Hawai'i, in Mid-Pacific; unfortunately at the expense of the Hawaiians.

The first story starts with our son, approaching 3 years of age, screaming: "Snakk ikke engelsk til meg, snakk norsk!" (Don't talk English to me! Talk Norwegian!) I had repeated something in English, thinking naively that he could pick up both languages.

But I had learnt a lesson. He had no concept of "Norwegian" and "English" as such; to him they were "Father's language" and "Mother's language" (Japanese is better to children in a Japanese setting). Two languages no problem, if Father talks Father's and Mother Mother's. Some order, please, some traffic rules.

As we traveled around the world for various tasks they picked up French, German, Norwegian, whatever, easily. But the rule was that the language came through a "significant other". A deep bond, a friend, a beloved teacher. The language was part of that person. Learning becomes a question of tuning in to the right person for the right language, till you master the tongue and can converse freely with anybody. Upper classes used a "gouvernante" (maid, *au pair*) for that purpose. Other classes learn from work, like our maid in Uganda, proficient in seven African languages.

Out of this came a polyglot son who at the age of 22 could conduct negotiations for an important NGO in five languages. He has some Italian on the side, perhaps more rudimentary, being the outcome of a summer school rather than early-age bonding. And a daughter, who also went to Japan to pick up Japanese from her family and from a summer school rather in addition to significant others. But summer schools are filled with joy and affection; maybe they learn mainly from other students? As a law graduate she can put it all to use, also for UN organizations.

What language did the two talk with each other? They took the color of the environment, like chameleons: they talked French in France, German in Germany, English in the USA and so on; tough on friends who stopped by for breakfast. They also needed the polishing only schools and hard work can offer. But the groundwork for multilingual life was laid, as described.

Five general conclusions for multilingual competence:

- [1] Children and adolescents have a very high capacity for learning, even mastering languages, with no clear upper limit;
- [2] Languages flow along the bonding, making learning from significant others easier than school learning, except when there is bonding to the teacher or to class-mates of that language;
- [3] Each significant other should talk the same language to the child: unity of person, unity of language, no ambiguity;
- [4] Do not worry too much about mistakes, repeat sentences slowly and correctly, without too much focus on what was wrong;
- [5] Give the child the chance to come back to significant others for refresher courses; such roots are deep.

To become multilingual/polyglot is even simple in a world where nations inter-marry and live around each other; ever more.

The second case is Hawai'i. Extraordinary cultural diversity and symbiosis: Hawaiian, US continental, European (Portuguese!), Pacific peoples (particularly Samoans), East Asians (Koreans, Japanese, Chinese), Southeast Asians (Vietnamese, Filipinos).

Even if many no longer talk their languages of origin, they have preserved cultural competence to a considerable extent, for instance with regard to the rites of naming, marriage and burial. All kinds of culinary languages, cooking, are spoken in public, in restaurants, as well as in private homes. And they communicate that "linguistic" competence, serving and eating multiculturally.

There is harmony in the sense that violence rarely, if at all, seems to be rooted in cultural sentiments. Of course there are patterns of prejudice and discrimination in such a complex society. But one thing is certain: relative to other societies around the world the cases are few and far between. And the Hawaiian sovereignty movement is so far devoted to nonviolence.

Five general conclusions for multicultural competence:

- [1] People at any age have a high capacity for learning and mastering the essence of other cultures if they want to do so;
- [2] Cultures flow along ties of vicinity and affinity, neighbors and friends, much better than through school learning;
- [3] The communicator must be competent in that culture and stick to it: unity of person, unity of culture; no ambiguity;
- [4] Do not worry too much about mistakes, rather, repeat the action correctly without too much focus on what was wrong;
- [5] Create the chance to come back to that neighbor/friend once in a while for a refresher course; such roots are deep.

Basic codes are transmitted and compared with homologous elements in other cultures: we pray with folded hands to the Lord, they meditate in the position of the Lord Buddha. Basic is curiosity and respect, seeing cultural dialogues as a source of mutual growth. A little competence is better than no competence at all; and the perfect easily becomes the enemy of the good.

In Hawai'i enough cultural competence is expected to say proper names by and large correctly, have respect for the sacred times and places of Other, know how to eat and enjoy major dishes in other cultures, handle fork/knife and chopsticks correctly (and ketchup vs soy), know how to enter (or not enter) the rooms of Other, how to sit (or not to sit). Be soft, do not push your own idiom too hard, be open to Other voices and ways; and be them all.

Thus it is entirely possible to be multilingual, even multicultural at the individual level, not only at the community level. It is immensely enriching; like living several parallel lives. Some immersion is needed, in the significant other. Schooling is a pure substitute for those, but certainly has a role to fill.

However, one point cannot be stressed enough: competence is not the same as knowledge. Competence is a skill. You can enter a dialogue with Other, like when for the first time you ask "what time is it?" in a foreign language, and you get the precise hour! Knowledge is to know that phrase; a good beginning, but not more. Skill is using that phrase, acting accordingly, setting your watch. Multiculturalism requires inputs, but the rewards are high.

You have to work a little, but mainly as action dialogue. The person with the culture you want to understand deeply might practice the old adage, don't tell'em, show'em. S/he talks, you imitate. S/he eats, you share the meal. S/he walks in a less staccato way, more like a car with the suspension intact, you imitate and find yourself absorbing better cracks, stones, etc. S/he practices another religion; you join, you bow, you kneel, you stand up like others do. Gradually you are in that culture because the culture is in you, finding its place

in addition to your own.

And you are enriched, having added one more life to the old.

## 12. Multiculturalism and the future: ten theses

Numerous implications can be drawn from such experiences, shared by millions, for the global citizen of today and tomorrow.

[1] Like parents, like children? We have tended to take it for granted that parents have a right to raise their children in their own national culture, including own language and religion, and in the myths of their own nation; glories as well as traumas. Nobody will deny them their right to do so. But raising children only into their own nation is a form of totalitarianism and a major form of brainwashing, and will be increasingly challenged. Of the parents of tomorrow we would expect not only that they do the task of handing over their own culture, but also that they open the windows and doors to other cultures. A foreign movie, a book about another religion, inviting foreign tourists home, almost whatever form of exposure, is better than none at all. To be locked up in one idiom is not good enough.

[2] We increasingly live multiculturally. With little contact with other nations and their cultures, monocultural education could be excused; chances being that most contact would be with people from the same culture, even from the same local community. Even teaching the national (usually meaning dominant) culture was going far, literally speaking. No longer so, today. Monocultural education is insufficient preparation for life in a multicultural reality, not only at the world level but also in the local social practices of an increasing number of people. In the field of language this has been recognized. The foreigner among us, as tourist, worker, refugee has to learn our culture. We do not have to learn his, but if we don't, we miss a fabulous opportunity. And one day we may be that tourist, worker, refugee.

This is what I so often experience in East Asia: a complete stranger comes up to me and says, usually in English: "may I talk some English with you?" He is testing his book/class knowledge, and you can see the delight in his eyes when it works, when I look at my watch and give the answer to his question.

[3] Time has now come for religion and other aspects of cultures, not only languages. Just like parents, and schools, will have to give children and students knowledge of other languages than their own their task will also be to give them insight in other cultures than their own, including religions (cultures of the spirit) and ways of behaving (cultures of the body). The methods include media, meetings with people from other cultures in the local community, and travel to other parts of one's own country and beyond. Just as we appreciate the polyglot person, we should appreciate the multicultural person.

[4] Just as for languages, what is demanded is not to believe in other cultures more than in one's own. What is demanded is competence, respect, understanding; a sense of being familiar with, and at home in, other cultures. Just as we borrow words and expressions from other languages, we shall borrow from other cultures, and have always done so, in a spirit of exchange. We go out to eat other nations' food, we learn dishes and mix them with our own, we become eclectic, multigusto. We may have norms against mixing cultures in the same meal, but not against mixing during the same week.

Switzerland has actually been doing so for generations. Even if the basic staples are unmistakably German, French, or Italian there are often elements of the other two. We can only gain from such practices, sharing the delights of human creativity.

[5] To repeat: In this process of multiculturation tolerance is not good enough. Curiosity should be encouraged, and above all respect: how wonderful that you are different from me, let's learn from each other! That is precisely the message from the Hawaiian experience: don't just tolerate, enjoy! Feel how you become another person when you talk another language, feel how sharing the meal of another culture makes you a part of that culture, that culture a part of you, and all of us parts of each other.

The point is to leave the old mind-set that some cultures are better than others and enter a new mind-set of seeing all cultures as depositories of human experience. All cultures have some gifts to offer humanity. And if not all of humanity is ready to accept, to take on that gift, maybe you are? Human beings are similar so there is something to learn from all depositories. But the condition is contact, respect, curiosity, knowledge.

[6] Ideally, cultural exchange should be mutual; not only X learning about Y but also Y about X (thus, do French Swiss learn as much about German Switzerland as vice versa?). I always think of a story I heard the first day I was in Japan as a UNESCO consultant in 1968. St Francis Xavier, the great missionary, had come to Southern Japan, and the Japanese were enchanted with his stories of the life and death of Christ. They wanted to hear the stories a second day, a third day.

In the end St Francis felt time had come for the appropriate response: baptism (as pointed out in the Papal Bull mentioned above). The Japanese, however, were of the opinion that now time had come for the tables to be turned around: for the Japanese to tell their stories, and for the foreigners to listen. And in China the Italian Jesuit Matteo Ricci eventually did that.

Big cultural powers often see no need for major cultures to master minor cultures. While they find it entirely appropriate that others master their idioms, reciprocity is not called for. Succumbing to this rationale for own grandeur and laziness they deprive themselves of sources of own enrichment. They could study a minor culture within their own lands, another major culture, or a foreign minor culture. The reward is obvious: not eternal life, but parallel lives, parallel reincarnations, in other cultures.

[7] In some years the monocultural person will be regarded like the monoglot person today: human, but unfit for this world. In ever-widening circles in the world to be monoglot is like being illiterate, a condition to do something about. So the guess is that this attitude will generalize to culture. To be not only disrespectful but without any knowledge of the basics of other cultures will simply be regarded as bad manners to be corrected.

[8] Teaching other cultures, like other languages, can best be done by those who have the culture as their mother culture. The culture as seen by them, not by "our people", who will tend to teach foreign cultures, like foreign languages, with an accent. This is basic in the field of religion. Nobody except the true believer demands, or hopes for, a convert when somebody studies another religion. What can be demanded is an effort to understand other religions the way believers in them do themselves.

This is not a question of what is good or what is bad, and everybody is entitled to make comparisons; indeed, that is one of the many purposes of multiculturalism. The problem is how to make sure that one has really understood; and the guideline suggested here is to start by understanding the way they themselves understand; and then build your own understanding.

[9] The best way to learn foreign languages is by verbal dialogue=conversation; the best way to learn foreign cultures is by action dialogue. Through conversation theoretical knowledge becomes practical skills, tested at every turn of the dialogue. The same applies to culture in a general sense. "When in a Buddhist temple do as the Buddhists do"; having done that some times Buddhism creeps into the mind and the body, supplementing the knowledge derived from reading and conversation. "Learning by doing" is as applicable to culture as to anything else. And this is where museums can be dangerous: they encourage an observer, peeping-Tom attitude to other cultures. From there a path may lead via participant observer to participant. But food should preferably be enjoyed, not only be preserved in a glass jar.

[10] The goal is not one single, but several and softer cultures, for world peace. So far the discourse chosen here has been very neutral: all cultures are equally good, all cultures have something to offer, all cultures give us food for thought (and thoughts about food), all cultures can be a source of enrichment, with dialogues for mutual enrichment.

This may hold for cultures as a whole. But not all aspects of all cultures are worth learning. Rationalizations of violence, repression and exploitation are also parts of cultures.

Maybe those who dwell in a culture have become so used to such aspects that they no longer sense them? And maybe a foreigner with a fresh look may have an important task in asking questions unasked in and by the culture itself? "Do you really mean that?", the outsider may ask of the more violent parts of the Torah, the New Testament, the Qur'an. And the believer may be hard pressed for an answer that convinces himself, let alone the outsider.

Underlying this is an attitude to culture very different from the classical student of culture, as a cultural anthropologist, a theologian, an historian (of ideas), a philosopher: culture as something static to know and understand up till today, not as something dynamic that can be shaped, also by studying and mastering it. Again, the key word is dialogue, the "dialogue des civilizations", not as something carried out for mutual information, or once and for all by some key spokes-persons, but everybody on earth to participate shaping cultures fit for active co-existence. Asking not only what cultures do we have, but what cultures do we want, adequate for environment, for development and peace. In a multicultural global culture.

The history of humanity is the history of astounding innovations, some for good, some for bad, most for both. But no innovation starts from scratch. Typically something old is combined in a new way, something new is added. Why not do the same for culture? Why not be exactly eclectic, mixing dishes in new, imaginative ways. Why not combine Western linear causality and Oriental more holistic/dialectic (Daoism, Buddhism) thinking? Why not combine the two versions of the disasters happening in the Pacific area to a richer understanding? Why not build on both individual and collective approaches to property, including challenging the very concept of property?

And why not ask creative questions, like one reportedly (by Edgar Faure to the present author) explored by Chou Enlai and Edgar Faure before signing a treaty to open diplomatic relations: "What is that cuisine of which French cooking is the Western, and Chinese cooking the Eastern, branch - -. How does it taste, where is it, when, how, by whom, for whom - -"

### **13. Does "multicultural" include "multireligious"?**

But how about religion? Isn't religion different? To be multilingual is today celebrated, particularly in multilingual communities like the European Union. One language does not exclude the other. Nor does one cuisine exclude the other, even highly mono-lingual Anglo-Saxons have learnt to appreciate "ethnic cooking", often more than their own. An interesting point is the norm against mixing cuisines in the same meal. The meal should have a certain purity, like a spoken or written text. Eclecticism, mixing, is often seen as a sign of insufficient mastery.

But then why not? Why not aim for a higher synthesis, maybe via some eclecticism? Thus, until recently Japanese hotels used to have one room for Japanese and one room for Western breakfast. Today both kinds of dishes are served in the same room, leaving to each customer to compose their own, often highly individual, mix.

But the real Japanese mastery lies in being multireligious; combining the classical Japanese cultural components Shintoism, Confucianism and Buddhism. To this can be added Christianity and humanism, liberalism and marxism. "I am a Jew, Christian, Muslim, humanist, liberal and marxist" is not (yet) possible in the West. In a sense the Japanese transcend intercultural conflict in the opposite order of many others, starting with religion, then going on to lifestyles in general, with languages still lagging behind.

However, if we can combine verbal and non-verbal and culinary idioms, why not also the conflict wisdom of our religions? Thus, below is my own, highly personal formula, drawing on six wonderful depositories of wisdom to understand better how conflicts can be transformed, nonviolently, creatively. I then leave by the

side the many less felicitous, very hard, aspects of these religions:

Learning from Hinduism: Conflict the Destroyer and Conflict the Creator; conflict as a source of violence and as a source of development. The conflict worker has the third role as Preserver, avoiding violence, promoting development.

Learning from Buddhism: codependent origination, *engi*, everything hangs together, in mutual causation. Conflicts have no beginning, no end; we all share responsibility for what we did and failed to do; no single actor carries all the responsibility, no single actor carries all the guilt. Live by ahimsa: nonviolence.

Learning from Christianity: the responsibility for conflict transformation lies with individuals, like me, here-now, and our individual decisions to promote peace rather than violence. Act against the sin, *peccato*, and forgive the sinner, *peccatore*.

Learning from Daoism: everything is *yin* and *yang*, good and bad, the action chosen may have negative consequences and the action not chosen may have positive consequences; hence the need for reversibility, only doing what can be undone.

Learning from Islam: the strength deriving from submission, together, to a common goal, peace, *sala'am*, including the concrete responsibility for the well-being of all.

Learning from Judaism: the truth lies not in a verbal formula but in dialogues with no beginning, no end to arrive at a formula.

Learning from Humanism: *homo res sacra hominibus*, human life is sacred, with well-being, with identity, in freedom; for all. Following the old adage, *je prends mon bien ou je le trouve*, the whole treasure of human wisdom opens up. In the Orient they have done this for ages. We have only our monocultures to lose; let no religious monoculture stop us from being multicultural. Much of the future of humanity will depend on this transcendence.

## 14. Summary and conclusion

Let us retrace our steps a little. Let us say we have 10 000 cultures, 2 000 nations (people with territorial attachment and cultures), maybe 20 civilizations (mega-nations) with deep cultures; and one fundamentalism: we are the only one.

For the sake of the argument, let us assume that we have a society where two of the world's religions, Christianity and Islam, are struggling to prevail. Many make the mistake of believing that the problem is that they are monotheistic. First of all, Christianity is not, with four deities for the Catholic/Orthodox versions and three for Protestantism (Virgin Mary plays a much lesser role). Islam and Judaism have no Holy Spirit, no Jesus Christ half-God, half-human.

But second, and this is problematic: they both claim to be the single true faith (singularism as opposed to pluralism), and they both claim to be universally valid throughout space and time (Matthew 28:18-20 and similar formulations in the Qur'an). In short they both claim validity for the whole world forever, and they have had awesome wars. Not unlike Catholicism and Protestantism the net result was some kind of border, in other words a compromise in space with countercyclical oscillations in time (when one vexes the other wanes; now Islam is on the way up).

To the conflict illiterate who knows nothing about conflicts there are two possibilities, maybe three: Christianity prevails, Islam prevails, or they divide the territory. If one prevails the other recedes into the deeper crevices of the society and/or the mind. If suppressed and forced to reject their own identity the result may be a lasting, collective post-traumatic stress disorder (PST), with serious consequences

individually and collectively.

But there are two other possibilities. A third religion, more tolerant, soothing, may take over, like Buddhism. Or people may secularize, unimpressed with the enormous self-righteousness of the hard version of both of them. And then: the both-and+.

A person, like the present author, for instance, might say some thing like this:

From Christianity I take

- the distinction between *peccato* and *peccatore*, sin and sinner
- the principle of forgiveness and love over rejection and hatred
- the individual responsibility, not hiding behind others

And from Islam I take

- zakat, give to those in dire need
- Qur'an 8:61: if the enemy incline toward peace, do thou also- -
- Sala'am - Islam - Muslim: submission to peace

And I have six guiding lights for my life. Others will make other choices and like me add choices from other sources of wisdom for better guidance. The basic point is rejection of the idea that being eclectic is forbidden. Making amalgams is forbidden. Will the guardians of this purist monopolism please get off my back.

But they were protected for a long time even by two criteria of mental disorder: the failure to recognize contradiction as an error (like in "I am a Jew, a Christian, a Muslim etc."; and the failure to draw borders around themselves (like in "I am in you and you in me because God is in us both" – the last part being more acceptable!). Such ideas well up from the deep culture.

With these five outcomes of the conflict we get many social models to choose from: one of the five alone, two of them (10 possibilities), 3 of them (also 10 possibilities), four of them (five possibilities) or zero when humanity gets tired of them all.

In the present world we celebrate being multilingual, at home in several languages. We also celebrate being multilocal, at home in several settings, even when surrounded by the unusual, quaint, exotic. We are also multivores, enjoying the foods, libations, of other cultures. All three are ways of being multicultural, found even in the most intimate of relations, multicultural marriages. But how about being multireligious – are we ready for that step?

The thesis is that very many are. We cannot preach tolerance and beyond, including respect and curiosity and dialogue, without people acquiring some taste for that "other" religion. We cannot globalize the marketplace ad infinitum without also, sooner or later, globalize our souls, even if tough on the fundamentalists, the true believers in one faith (one language? one kitchen?) only.

No doubt multiculturalism will enrich us. But will it solve intercultural conflicts, improve creative conflict transformation, make us more nonviolent? As one factor among many, yes.

States are strong, and strong states believe in the right to go to war. If they can use multilingual people as spies, they can also use multicultural people in general. On the other hand, if soft cultures can find a meeting place inside sufficiently many that can constitute a growing culture of peace. A condition is that they themselves are conscious of their own transcendence and use it for empathy and more creativity. However, being a new culture they may also be at odds with older, more traditional cultures. They may also generate new conflicts, like the Baha'i. Multicultural marriage, or being multicultural, are good but not sufficient. Add conflict skills.

But bridges they are, between monocultural bridgeheads. And their identity crisis dissolves in a higher level, transcending, identity, hopefully less arrogant.

#### IV. Cultural action for prevention and reconciliation

##### 15. Cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue

A distinction should be made between mediated, facilitated and direct dialogue, between parties to (potentially) violent conflicts.

In a mediated dialogue the parties do not meet but have dialogues with a mediator on a one-on-one basis. The mediator has to be knowledgeable and wise enough to be able to accommodate that often enormous cultural span or diversity in his heart and brain, and then engage in a second round with the parties to explore overlaps for cooperation and contradictions for transformation. If we reject the first of the four approaches in section 10 above, "intolerance", the dialogue could lead to any combination of the other three: in this field we just tolerate each other, in that field we cooperate on the basis of mutual respect and sense of mutual, and equal benefit – and in those fields we go one step further and borrow from each other, individually and collectively, building eclectic amalgams, even syntheses.

In a facilitated dialogue the parties meet, but under the soft guidance of the facilitator, proceeding more or less along the lines suggested above. The difference is that it all happens in public space, around the table.

And in the direct dialogue the parties meet without facilitator to find their own approach. They may or may not follow the outline suggested for the preceding two approaches. The direct dialogue has the advantage of sharing the process and co-owning any outcome.

If the conflict is deep and there has been violence the general advice would be to proceed in the order indicated: first mediated, then facilitated and in the end direct dialogue. The parties may not be ready for the table, the public space. They need preparation.

The present author has facilitated a fair number of Islam-West dialogues. Two questions, twice, to the parties are used as openers:

- What do you like least – in the other side? in your own side?
- What do you like most – in the other side? in your own side?

Leaving aside the self-analysis, the other-analysis turn out like:

- "We do not like Islamic fundamentalism and jihad, their holy war"
- "We do not like their just war, and their market fundamentalism"
- "We like, however, the fact that there are so many christianities"
- "We like about Islam - - - - - (silence)"

Comments: there certainly is Islamic fundamentalism (e.g. Wahhabism) by the definitions above; but *jihad* does not mean holy war but exertion, for the faith (the fourth stage, the little *jihad*, is defensive war). Many in the West are less aware of their own concepts of just war (Augustine, Aquinas), even holy war (like the Crusades). "Market fundamentalism" is better known, if not under that name, rather as "globalization" for its own sake, regardless of consequences. But the Islamic critique is less known. It is not the marxist critique of exploitation of workers (Marx was not much concerned with consumers); but of dehumanized buyer-seller relations shuffling goods/services against money with no broad, human contact.

The high level of diversity in Christianity, particularly in a Protestantism that continues protesting, as opposed to the low level in Islam (although more than meets the Western eye) is an important point, not to



be identified with state-mosque inseparability. But the real crux of the matter is the eloquent silence when Westerners are asked to elaborate what they like most. There is a component of distance, polarization, inability to see anything good.

But the major factor is a special distance known as ignorance. Muslims include Christianity, and Christianity excludes Islam.

On 27 November 1095 Pope Urban II made a call for what became known as the first Crusade in the French town of Clermont. In 1291, the Crusades came to an end. But a real declaration of peace has never been made. The Crusades stand out in history as an example of how religion is used to justify war. Collective memories and a crusade mentality persist, defining a "Gulf Syndrome" with Catholic-Protestant countries against a Muslim country with a major Crusade experience (The massacre of Baghdad 1258).

On November 26-27, 1995, a dialogue was convened at the Swiss Institute for Development in Biel/Bienne, bringing together leading representatives of the Christian and Islamic faiths: Ayatollah, professor Mohammad Taghi Jafari, Tehran; Sheikh Ahmad Kuftarou, Grand Mufti of Syria, Damascus; Nuncio, Archbishop K. J. Rauber, Bern; Metropolit Damaskinos, Bishop of Orthodox Church, Geneva; and scholars and clerics.

Pope John Paul II sent his blessings and a message to the symposium through Cardinal Angelo Sodano, Secretary of State of the Holy See: "...It is opportune to reflect on these events, in order to draw vital lessons for today. His Holiness renews the call of the Second Vatican Council which urged that a sincere effort be made to achieve mutual understanding, so that, for the benefit of all, Christians and Muslims would together preserve and promote peace, liberty, social justice and moral values .."

There was an extensive dialogue, at times quite intense, but always guided by the idea of arriving at a common platform that would not consist only of platitudes. It was actually the only event of its kind in spite of increasing significance of Islam-Christian relations and the numbers: maybe 1.5 billion Christians and 1.3 billion Muslims. The media interest was nil.

#### Communique:

"The adherents of Islam and Christianity proposed the following to members of their respective faiths and all others:

- to try to understand other religions the way their followers understand themselves, as a condition for true dialogues;
- to develop school material in history, civic education and religious education, particularly material about the two religions, acceptable to all parties;
- not to abuse the freedom of speech when speaking and writing about other religions;
- to work together to identify, develop further and put into practice an inspiring ethic of peace, liberty, social justice, family values, human rights and dignity, and nonviolent forms of conflict resolution;
- to establish permanent inter-religious councils to further mutual respect and understanding;
- to cooperate across religious borders in Bosnia to reconstruct the country;
- to discuss with people in the media more responsible, peace-promoting forms of journalism.

On this day of the ninth centenary of the call for the Crusades, we call upon Christians, Muslims and all others, to go beyond mere tolerance. We must open our hearts and minds to each other. Instead of sensing danger when somebody is different let us be filled with joy at the opportunity to learn, to enrich and be enriched, to live in peace and create peace. Like everything else the two largest religions in the world are also subject to development. While keeping the basic message of devotion let us find new ways, acts and words. It is within the spirit of freedom of interpretation of one's own religion that genuine respect for other religions can evolve. Let the next 900 years and beyond be an era of active peace built in our hearts and our

minds, and enacted in our deeds."

Let 10 000 dialogues blossom. But then better understand that dialogue is not about being right and beat the other party but about being parties developing something new together. For that to happen there has to be an opening for that of you in me and that of me in you, taking the other party on.

This particular dialogue has been mentioned at some length as a concrete example. No doubt there are others. They are fairly easily organized. But the general advise is, as mentioned, to start with a mediated dialogue in private space, then a facilitated dialogue in public space, and then possibly a more direct dialogue in private space again, to develop more concrete cooperation.

## 16. Cultural diversity and reconciliation

The following twelve approaches to reconciliation have been found useful, no doubt there are others:

- [1] The exculpatory nature-structure-culture approach
- [2] The reparation/restitution approach
- [3] The apology/forgiveness approach
- [4] The theological/penitence approach
- [5] The juridical/punishment approach
- [6] The codependent origination/karma approach
- [7] The historical/truth commission approach
- [8] The theatrical/reliving approach
- [9] The joint sorrow/healing approach
- [10] The joint reconstruction approach
- [11] The joint conflict resolution approach
- [12] The *ho'o ponopono* approach

However, the deep culture may pre-select or -reject reconciliation approaches. This is not an unsurmountable obstacle, but there is an underlying assumption of awareness, some kind of self-therapy (section 9 above) before some approaches to reconciliation can be successfully practiced. A *ho'o ponopono* serves as illustration: A man is at sleep in his nice home. There are some noises, he gets up, catches a young boy on his way out with ten dollars. The police is called. The young boy is known to the police, obviously a "delinquent", and as they say: "Three strikes and you are out".

The place is Hawai'i. In Hawai'ian culture there is a tradition in a sense combining reconstruction, reconciliation, and resolution, the *ho'o ponopono* (setting right); known to others through cultural diffusion, e.g., to the owner of the burglarized, violated house. He looks at the boy, thinks of him twenty years in prison. And he looks at the police. "Hey, let me handle this one". It transpires that the boy's sister is ill, the family is too poor to pay. Every little dollar counts.

*Ho'o ponopono* is organized. The man's family, neighbors, the young boy and his family sit around the table; there is a moderator, not from the families/neighbors, the "wise person".

Each one is encouraged sincerely to present his/her version; why it happened, how, what would be the appropriate reaction. The young boy's cause is questioned, but even if the cause is accepted his method is not. Apologies are then offered and accepted, forgiveness is demanded and offered. The young boy has to make up for the violation by doing free garden work for some time. The rich man and neighbors agree to contribute to the family's medical expenses.

And in the end the story of the burglary is written up in a way acceptable to all; and that sheet of paper is then burnt; symbolizing the end to the burglary. But not to the aftermath. There is long and complex follow-up, headed by the wise person.

The approach is high on restorative justice, but lower than people in the West are used to on punitive justice. Here is a short list of assumptions behind this highly effective approach:

- [1] The "bad/wrong" act committed is bad not only in its effect on the victim as in terms of what it says about the whole community.
- [2] What has to be restored is not only the victim but the community as a whole. Had the community been wholesome the bad act would not have happened.
- [3] What went wrong in the community was usually not any bad act of commission but the good act they failed to do, the acts of omission.
- [4] Everybody in the community shares the responsibility for all.
- [5] There has to be a burden on the perpetrator, but so as to restore, attach, not detach him from the community.
- [6] There have to be acts of restitution and apologies to the victim; both for the bad acts committed and the good acts omitted.
- [7] The perpetrator is not seen as (inherently) "evil"; the bad act is rejected, the perpetrator is accepted (but watched).

Where the West detaches the perpetrator-victim from the community and holds the perpetrator accountable to the State and its laws in a court process (with the victim as witness), the Polynesian conflict circle is a mini-version of the whole community, bringing up any issue (the West is atomistic, the Polynesians holistic.)

Where the West mainly focuses on acts of commission, the Polynesians are equally concerned with acts of omission.

Where the West distributes guilt very unevenly (like 100% to one, 0% to all the others) the Polynesians share responsibility for "what happened" more evenly by figuring in the acts of omission.

Where the West punishes the person of the perpetrator by inflicting pain, the Polynesians try to restore the perpetrator to the community while strongly rejecting the act.

Where the West (still) has a tendency to see the author of a criminal act as criminal ("evil") the Polynesians focus on the act; like the Catholic sin/sinner distinction (in principle).

The DMA syndrome (section 6 above) gives a solid underpinning for the harsher aspects of judicial practices. But *ho'o ponopono* has no assumption of dualism but of monism, we are all in the same community; nobody is evil or chosen by the Evil; there is no final violent battle (lifetime banishment/prison, or capital punishment) but an immediate effort to restore. The wrong-doer is treated more like a patient than like a criminal. The hospital may also be sick, suffering from "hospitalitis", holding the personnel responsible.

The most difficult from the Western point of view is probably to let the act of omission count as much as the act of commission in the moral budget. This is linked (less to Descartes, more to Comte) to positivism, the focus on the positively existing, the act committed, not on the negatively not existing, the act omitted – "which can be anything". Actually not, it is usually very clear what was not done and could have changed the whole situation.

As indicated, *ho'o ponopono* tries to combine conflict transformation by changing/restoring the relation to the community, with reconciliation through healing (you are again one of us) and closure (the burning of the acts at the end). Mutual penetration is an underlying assumption, also found in Buddhism (known in Japanese as *engi*) and in the *ubuntu* of the Zulu culture. In other words, no clear line can be drawn between you and me, between perpetrator and victim, declaring one guilty and one innocent, for instance. This is another tough assumption for the West to come to grips with.

Punitive justice is compatible with the Western deep culture. But even more problematic is the Western tendency to believe that punishment acts as reconciliation, that the victim derives comfort from the suffering of the perpetrator, that justice has been done. Fortunately, there is still some cultural diversity in the world.

## 17. Recommendations and proposals

These 24 recommendations and proposals follow the numbering of the sections of this text (for rationale, see the sections):

[1a] The Ministers of Culture could launch a competition for the best books in handling conflict, with examples from different cultures, written for the general public. The books should also cover anger and violence in daily life and how to cope with it.

[1b] The Ministers of Culture could launch a competition for the best books written for children 6-12 in handling conflict, based on stories and anecdotes from different cultures.

[2a] The Ministers of Culture, with the Ministers of Education, could launch a competition for school curricula in living with and handling conflict, particularly intercultural conflict, with cases. They might like to sensitize authors of history books to highlight cultures of war, for instance based on revanchism and triumphalism, and their dangers; as well as cultures of peace underlying peaceful co-existence, also across cultural borders, and their promises.

[3] The Ministers of Culture could organize a set of dialogues-colloquia across cultures to understand better what deeper messages insiders and outsiders read into cultural texts (including music, art, dishes); for cultural self-reflection and improvement.

[4a] The Ministers of Culture could call on experts to identify major carriers of violent handling of conflict (like the *corrida*) in various cultures, for cultural self-reflection and improvement.

[4b] The Ministers of Culture with the Ministers of Sport/Youth could call a conference for the exchange and dissemination of cooperative games.

[5] The Ministers of Culture could call a conference of high level religious leaders around themes like "We are all Chosen Peoples, chosen to dwell in freedom, equality-tolerance and brother/sister-hood with each other; No People is chosen above others".

[6] The Ministers of Culture could call a conference of religions on eschatology to identify the most peaceful images of the future.

[7] The Ministers of Culture could call a conference on the futility of asymmetric, inter-cultural empire-building; comparing their decline and fall processes.

[8] The Ministers of Culture could appoint an expert group to identify dangerous aspects of deep cultures as an early warning.

[9a] The Ministers of Culture could launch a competition for monuments clearly conveying ideas of peace, for display anywhere.

[9b] The Ministers of Culture could launch a competition for street names clearly conveying ideas of peace – for use anywhere.

[10] The Ministers of Culture could call for Non-Represented European Cultures (5-6 each in France, Spain and UK alone) to compare their narratives and situations, and to make joint proposals for ever higher levels of tolerance and dialogue within the European cultural space.

[11] The Ministers of Culture might stimulate the collection of stories about how people have felt enriched by being multicultural, including being polyglot, polylocal, polyvore, polyreligious, how they became that way, and how they may function as bridges.

[12] The Ministers of Culture with the Ministers of Education could stimulate schools to invite immigrants in the community to acquaint pupils/students with other cultures as seen by those who live them; teaching a minimum of their language(s), customs, religion(s).

[13a] The Ministers of Culture could organize a setting for Japanese to tell European counterparts how Shintoism-Confucianism-Buddhism-Christianity can coexist in Japan, and inside so many Japanese.

[13b] The Ministers of Culture could launch a competition for the best multi-cultural meals, at both home and restaurant levels.

[14] The Ministers of Culture could launch an empirical study of how multiculturalism functions at the personal and social levels.

[15a] The Ministers of Culture with the Ministers of the Interior might take steps to organize Jewish-Christian-Muslim early warning, Conflict Transformation and Reconciliation Councils, at all levels; globally, nationally, regionally, locally.

[15b] The Ministers of Culture could produce an anthology of the gentlest and most peace conducive aspects of the world's major religions, as selected by believers in these religions themselves.

[15c] The Ministers of Culture together with the Ministers of Education could encourage and assist schools created for the nation state to prepare their students for the coming globalization shock, given that the Internet is already ahead of school systems. Not only the marketplace but also the brain (languages), the stomach (food) and the heart/soul (religion) will be globalized. Teachers also have to be prepared to become models, reaching beyond their states as they earlier reached beyond their local communities.

[16a] The Ministers of Culture with the Ministers of Justice could organize high level conferences to compare the pros and cons of Western due process, Polynesian *ho'o ponopono*, South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission and German school textbook approaches.

[16b] The Ministers of Culture could organize a setting for Polynesians (and others) to tell European counterparts how *ho'o ponopono* for reconciliation is carried out, and how it works.

[17] The Ministers of Culture could encourage citizens of the Member States to send in more recommendation/proposals, and award prizes for the most interesting ideas.

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Right Livelihood Award (aka Alternative Nobel Peace Prize), 1987  
Socrates Prize for Adult Education, 1990  
Bajaj International Award for Promoting Gandhian Values, 1993  
Norwegian Literary Prize Brage, 2000  
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Dr honoris causa, Universitaet Osnabrueck, 1995, peace studies  
Dr honoris causa, Universita di Torino, 1998, sociology of law  
Dr honoris causa, FernUniversitaet Hagen, 2000, philosophy  
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Profesor honorario, Universidad de Alicante, Alicante, 1981  
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