

A Theoretical Framework for Conflict Resolution

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the parameters of ethnonational conflict theory. Ethnonational conflict is a widespread phenomenon. There have been many examples of such intrastate conflicts since the end of World War II. The reason for the focus on this type of conflict is that it is mostly waged in poor countries. Consequently, these conflicts tend to exacerbate the already abysmal poverty of these countries by destroying their fragile economic bases and inflicting endless misery upon generations of people. The study examines Micro as well as Macro theories of conflict. While the first emphasizes that the root causes of war lie in the human nature and human behaviour, the second focuses on the interaction of groups, specifically on the conscious level. Enemy theory is explicated, it is a fusion of developmental psychology and international relations theory and is used to explain terrorism in general. Human needs theory is also examined. This has been developed as a generic or holistic theory of human behaviour. Its basic assumption is that humans have basic needs that have to be met in order to maintain stable societies. Finally, we move from theory to practice by studying conflict resolution, track two diplomacy. This is an unofficial, informal interaction between members of adversary groups. This is in no way a substitute for official, formal, 'track one' government to government or leader – to leader relationships.

Key words: ethnonationalism, conflict resolution, conflict theories, enemy system theory, track two diplomacy

ABSTRAK

Makalah ini mengkaji ruang-lingkup teori konflik etno-nasional. Konflik etno-nasional adalah satu fenomena yang sedang berkembang di mana terdapat banyak contoh konflik-konflik intra-negeri sebegini yang berlaku sejak berakhirnya Perang Dunia Kedua. Tujuan pemfokusan terhadap bentuk konflik ini adalah kerana ianya banyak meletus di negara-negara miskin. Akibatnya, konflik-konflik ini memburukkan lagi situasi kemiskinan yang sedia ada di negara-negara ini, dan membawa kepayahan kepada generasi demi generasi rakyat mereka. Makalah ini meneliti teori-teori mikro dan makro yang berkaitan dengan konflik. Teori mikro menekankan bahawa sebab-sebab asas peperangan adalah sifat semulajadi dan perangai manusia, manakala teori

makro memfokus interaksi kelompok-kelompok, khususnya pada tahap sadar. Teori permusuhan juga ada dibincangkan; ianya adalah percantuman teori psikologi pembangunan dan hubungan antarabangsa yang digunakan untuk menerangkan mengenai terrorisme secara amnya. Kajian juga meninjau teori keperluan manusiawi. Teori ini telah dikembangkan sebagai teori yang generik atau menyeluruh mengenai perangai manusia. Andaian asasnya adalah bahawa manusia punya keperluan asas yang perlu dipenuhi bagi menjamin kestabilan masyarakat. Akhirnya, kajian ini berganjak dari teori ke praktis dengan menyelidiki penyelesaian konflik melalui 'diplomasi trek kedua'. Ini adalah interaksi tidak rasmi dan tidak formal antara ahli-ahli pelbagai kelompok yang bertelagah. Walau bagaimanapun diplomasi sebegini bukanlah satu penggantian kepada hubungan rasmi, formal dan 'trek pertama' antara kerajaan, atau antara para pemimpin.

Kata kunci: etno-nasionalisme, penyelesaian konflik, teori berkenaan konflik, teori sistem permusuhan, diplomasi trek kedua

INTRODUCTION

Ethnonational or ethnopolitical conflict may be defined as one in which one or more contenders defines itself using communal criteria and makes claims on behalf of the group's collective interests against the state, or against other communal actors. Ethnic conflict involves either irredentist, secessionist, or anticolonial movements. Ethnonational conflicts are based on three criteria:

1. that they take place within the internal boundaries of a state,
2. that one of the combatants be the government in power, and
3. that the opposition has the ability to offer sustained resistance.

Ethnonational conflicts that do not meet these criteria may be denoted as communal violence and regional internal wars. In this study we break intrastate conflict into ethnically, religiously, and ideologically based groups. These groups roughly correspond to what we refer to as ethnonationalists. Ethnic conflict has been a widespread phenomenon. There have been many examples of such intrastate conflicts since the end of Second World War: Korea, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Cyprus, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Cuba, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Sudan, Angola, Zaire, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Chad, the former Soviet Union and former Yugoslavia, just to name a few examples. The reason for the focus on ethnic conflict is that most of these conflicts have been waged in poor countries. Consequently, they exacerbate the already abysmal poverty of these countries by destroying their fragile economic bases and inflicting endless misery upon generations of people. In addition, there is danger

that some ethnopolitical conflicts may become internationalized, which may endanger global peace and security, and because of this methods for their avoidance or peaceful resolution becomes an imperative. This study examines the parameters of conflict theory. Of particular importance is the introduction of the Enemy System, Human Needs and Conflict Resolution theories to explain conflict. The exploration of conflict theory is important for understanding the nature of political conflict itself. In order to find solutions to the seemingly intractable problems in many parts of the world, this theoretical area needs to be fully explored. Developments in this field will hopefully guide researchers to a better understanding and help in the search for solutions. This process is threefold. First, one of finding an appropriate explanation of the nature of conflict; second, using this model to explain conflict within a specific context, and thirdly, the search for solutions.

CONFLICT THEORY

The purpose of this section is to explore the themes and schools of thought of conflict theory. This is done in order to define the scope and variety of conflict so that conflict as a social phenomenon can be put into perspective. A review of conflict theory will reveal a number of observations. First, there is a large volume of literature written about the nature and theory of conflict, especially with regard to warfare. Second, there is a lack of consensus among both contemporary and historic views of human conflict. Third, among the literature most relevant to political science theoreticians, there are several dichotomies that divide the search for a dominant paradigm.

The first dichotomy to be addressed concerns the nature of conflict. Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff outline the problem: "Social scientists are divided on the question whether social conflict should be regarded as something rational, constructive, and socially functional or something irrational, pathological, and socially dysfunctional" (1981:187). This has important consequences, particularly for conflict resolution. There is also significant polarity among theoretical approaches. There are two contending approaches: the classical and the behaviorist. The classical approach focuses on the macro level of analysis. It is primarily concerned with analysing the interaction of groups. These groups can be divided along many different cleavages: national, institutional, ethnic, class, and ideological to name but a few. The classical theoretician is concerned with the interaction of groups at the conscious level. The behaviorist focuses on the micro level, the unit of measurement being the individual rather than the group. The unconscious is examined by the behaviorist in order to understand unstated motivational factors. Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff (1981:37) illustrate the different research methodologies:

The former [behaviorist] prefers to isolate a few variables and analyze a large number of cases to determine the relationships among variables. The traditionalist [classicist], in contrast, will often wish to examine all the variables which could conceivably have a bearing on the outcome of a single case.

Conflict engenders interaction at a level more intense than that of competition. Although, as Schelling notes, conflict, competition, and cooperation are inherently interdependent, conflict occurs when competing groups' goals, objectives, needs or values clash and aggression, although not necessarily violence, is a result (Schelling 1960).

MICRO THEORIES OF CONFLICT

Among the most important assumptions of the behaviorist school are the beliefs that the root causes of war lie in human nature and human behaviour; and that an important relationship exists between intrapersonal conflict and conflict that pervades the external social order. The behaviorist school believes in the centrality of the stimulus – response hypothesis. This school seeks to establish whether humans possess either biological or psychological characteristics that would predispose us towards aggression and conflict. They also seek to explore the relationship between the individual and its existence in its environment. They wish to extrapolate, by way of inductive reasoning, specific variables regarding intrapersonal conflict and generalizations regarding interpersonal and international conflict. Among the prevalent micro theories that we will review are: animal behavior, instinct or innate theories of aggression, frustration – aggression theory, social learning theory and social identity theory.

Among the behaviorists, biologists and psychologists have used animal behaviour or ethological studies to illustrate possible corollaries to human behaviour. Humans often ignore the fact that we are part of the animal Kingdom. However, one should be wary not to directly draw conclusions about human behavior from animal behavior. Both human and animal behavior are complex phenomenon involving such motivational factors as “territoriality, dominance, sexuality, and survival” (O’Connell 1989:15). When using the animal studies method the independent variable that is studied is aggression. O’Connell maps out the parameters of human conflict by suggesting that humans engage in both predatory and intraspecific conflict. While it is unusual but not unknown for animals to pursue such a wide range of aggression, what separates human from the rest of the animal kingdom is our motivation.

Organized warfare was part of nature long before man arrived on the scene. The coordinated rapacity and obvious political intent with which certain of the social insects conduct aggression demonstrate that, behaviorally, there is nothing uniquely human about joining an army or fighting as part of it Yet the key difference has to do with motivation. Driver ants wage war because their genes demand that they wage war. Man,

on the other hand, invented his version of the phenomenon. It is a cultural instrument, a product of his imagination (O'Connell 1989:30).

As O'Connell contends, man engages in a broad range of conflict. This broad range is supplemented by the variety of motivators which compel him to do so. Another defining element of human conflict is the material aspect. As O'Connell suggests, "Only with the coming of agriculture, and later politics, would true warfare become part of the human experience. Then there would be something to steal and governments to organize the theft" (1989:26). Although animal behaviour studies shed some light on human behaviour, it offers only clues and not an explanation of the complexity of human conflict. It offers a good starting point, but the analysis weakens as human behavior becomes more complex than animal behaviour.

Early psychologists often postulated that there was an innate instinctual or biological mechanism which would predispose humans towards aggressions. This led to the formulation of the instinct theories of aggression. This theory combined elements of early psychological studies (Freud's death instinct for example) and social Darwinian theories regarding the fight for survival. This theory was subsequently discredited by biologists who did not believe that such a mechanism existed.

In Seville, Spain in 1986 a group of scientists met to explore the sources of human aggression. John E. Mack explains the results of the *Seville Statement of Violence*:

In the *Seville Statement* the signatories, who included psychologists, neuroscientists, geneticists, anthropologists, and political scientists, declared that there was no scientific basis for considering human beings innately aggressive animals, inevitably committed to war on the basis of biological nature. Rather, they said, war is a result of socialization and conditioning, a phenomenon of human organization, planning, and information processing that plays on emotional and motivational potentialities. In short, the *Seville Statement* implies that we have real choices and that a new kind of responsibility in the conduct of human group life is possible (Mack 1990:58).

The significance of the *Seville Statement* are the implications for the explanation, conduct, and resolution of human conflict. The *Seville Statement* gets to the core of one of the central debates in conflict theory research: are the roots of human conflict to be found within *nature* (genetic) or *nurture* (the environment). The Seville scientists have firmly concluded on the side of nurture. However, as recent discoveries by geneticists illustrate (gene mapping for instance), the debate is far from over.

Like most pioneering theories, the innate theories gave way to more sophisticated and scientific hypotheses over time. One important development of this work was the evolution of the Frustration – Aggression theory. The basic assumption of the Frustration – Aggression theory is that all aggression, whether interpersonal or international, has its root causes in the frustration of one or

more actors' goal achievement. That is to say that conflict can be traced to the unfulfilment of personal or group objectives and the frustration that this breeds. The questions that this theory raise are: does all frustration lead automatically to aggression, and can all aggression and conflict be traced to some catalytic frustration? These questions, as well as the challenge of insufficiency of causal link to aggression, and other insights into human behavior have lead to the discrediting of the Frustration – Aggression theory and the subsequent development of the Social Learning and Social Identity theories.

Social learning theory is based on the hypothesis that aggression is not innate or instinctual but actually learned through the process of socialization. This hypothesis is the contention of the *Seville Statement*. One acquires aggressive attributes by learning them at home, in school, and by interaction with their environment in general. Interaction in society helps to focus and trigger stored aggression onto enemies. This is an important concept, particularly when the conflict is ethno-national or sectarian in nature.

Social Identity Theory (SIT) was developed by psychologist Henri Tajfel, and it offers insight into the phenomenon of conflict. Ed Cairns, a psychologist at the University of Ulster, has noted the importance of this theory: "What is different and important about Social Identity Theory is that it is based on normal psychological processes that operate under all circumstances not just under conditions of intergroup conflict" (1994:5). We create our social identities in order to simplify our external relations. Further, there is a human need for positive self esteem and self worth which we transfer to our own groups. We also order our environment by social comparison between groups. The concept of *ingroups* and *outgroups* is important in this analysis. Cairns explains another important concept from Social Identity Theory:

What Social Identity Theory has helped social psychologists at least to recognize that individuals are different in groups and that it is this difference which produces recognizable forms of group action In other words what Social Identity Theory has done is outline a process which places the individual in the group and at the same time places the group in the individual (1994:9).

Group relations are, of course, at the root of the problems in many instances of conflict. At the core are relations between the minority and majority communities. Tajfel outlines the importance of stability and legitimacy with regard to majority/minority group relations:

There is little doubt that an unstable system of social divisions between a majority and a minority is more likely to be perceived as illegitimate than a stable one; and that, conversely, a system perceived as illegitimate will contain the seeds of instability. It is this interaction between the perceived instability and illegitimacy of the system of differentials which is likely to become a powerful ingredient of the transition from the minority's acceptance of the *status quo* to the rejection of it (1981:320).

Consequently, groups place importance on the perceived legitimacy within their social environments. Legitimacy is an important concept for parties engaged in conflict because they do not perceive the state to be legitimate. As Tajfel observes:

The perceived illegitimacy of an intergroup relationship is thus socially and psychologically the accepted and acceptable lever for social action and social change in intergroup behaviour In the case of groups which are “inferior”, the leverage function is fulfilled by the perceived illegitimacy of the outcomes of intergroup comparisons; in the case of “inferior” groups which are already on their way towards change, it is the legitimization of their new comparative image; in the case of groups which are “superior” it is the legitimization of the attempts to preserve a status quo of value distinctiveness whenever this is perceived as under threat (1978:76).

The micro theories have added an important dimension to our understanding of conflict. They put complex situations into workable models that stand up to empirical analysis. They are a useful asset in our attempt to impose some objectivity on specific situations. Rather than wait for the nature – nurture debate to be resolved, if indeed it can be, it is better to combine both approaches in the development of a sophisticated explanatory model. Socialization is an important concept, so are group comparisons, positive self and group identities and the perceived illegitimacy by minority communities. Once these issues are understood, explanations of aggressive behaviour become possible. However in – depth our empirical analysis on the micro level our research may be, it still fails to take into consideration all variables and attributes of conflict, particularly at the conscious level. This is where macro theory comes into play in our analysis of human conflict. In order to cover the conscious realm we turn now to macro theories of conflict.

MACRO THEORIES OF CONFLICT

Macro theory focuses on the interaction of groups, specifically on the conscious level. Early political theorists, from Thucydides and Sun Tsu to Machiavelli and Von Clausewitz, have chosen one particular element to concentrate on: power. The use and exercise of power is a central concept of macro theory of conflict. Macro theorists would agree that power comes in many forms: economic, political, military, even cultural. The common assumptions of macro, or classical theories are that the roots of conflict stem from group competition and the pursuit of power and resources. These assumptions operate on conscious motivational factors in a material oriented environment. Classical theory capitalizes on observations of group phenomenon for single events in order to study the problem in depth, and to determine the importance and relationships of many variables rather than using few variables for many cases. The predominant methodologies used are historical or case study approaches.

In the 19th century, post Napoleonic Europe was largely concerned with the *balance of power*. This concept was employed by Matternich at the Concert of Europe. While the outbreak of the First World War largely destroyed this theory, its assumptions were to be employed in the Cold War's deterrence theory. Deterrence theory rested on the assumption that a *balance of terror* due to the superpowers' nuclear arsenals would prevent conflict. Deterrence theory gave way to more sophisticated theories such as decision making and game theories.

Decision making and game theories have their origins in the 20th century model of the rational actor. The rational actor model was developed by economists to explain human economic behaviour. It presupposes that people make choices and decisions on a rational basis based on informed choices and weighing of opportunities (Downs 1957). Game theory is based on the rational actor model in that it relies on the assumption of a rational decision making process that is fundamental to the engagement of human conflict.

Thomas Schelling takes this model further to develop a sophisticated game theory. Schelling's game model includes communication, negotiation, information, and introduces the importance of irrationality into strategic thought. One of the most important contributions of Schelling is his hypothesis of the interdependency of conflict, competition and cooperation among actors (Schelling 1960). In each incident of conflict there are elements of cooperation; cooperative engagements often engender an element of conflict. This notion has become an important element in our understanding of conflict. Schelling uses game theory as an attempt to break down the complexities of intergroup relationships by using game playing to illustrate analogous situations. He uses three types of games: chance, skill, and strategic, to illustrate the corollaries to international relations – both cooperative and conflictual.

Within macro theory there is an important set of concepts that can be derived from the study of ethnic conflict. This is of importance to understand ethnonational conflict because the same concepts are applicable to sectarian conflict. Whether one defines the conflict in ethnic terms or as sectarian, it makes little theoretical difference as the conceptions for ethnic and sectarian conflict operate in the same manner. What is important is that these groups of people have categorized themselves as distinct groups and they view each other as the *outgroup* or *enemy*.

We begin our review of ethnic conflict theory with Donald Horowitz. In his seminal work on ethnic conflict in the developing world, he describes the framework in which ethnic conflict occurs:

Finally, the state system that first grew out of European feudalism and now, in the post-colonial period, covers virtually the entire earth provides the framework in which ethnic conflict occurs. Control of the state, control of a state, and exemption from control by others are among the main goals of ethnic conflict (1985:5).

Consequently, one of the key objectives of ethnic conflict is to seek control of the state itself. Groups seek control of the state in order to ensure that their needs are met, usually to the detriment of opposing groups. This conflict over the control of the state is often perceived as a zero sum conflict. That is to say that one group's gain is another group's loss: this conflict is not win-win for both groups. While this is undoubtedly the core conflict issue in most cases in polarized states, there are also contributing issues at stake which add to the complexity of the situation. As Horowitz explains:

In severely divided societies, ethnicity finds its way into a myriad of issues: development plans, educational controversies, trade union affairs, land policy, business policy, tax policy. Characteristically, issues that would elsewhere be relegated to the category of routine administration assume a central place on the political agenda of ethnically divided societies (1985:8).

Horowitz distinguishes between ranked and unranked systems. Ranked systems are societies in which one ethnic group is in complete domination of another. Unranked systems are composed of two ethnic groups with their own internal stratification of elites and masses. Horowitz further notes:

Migration and incomplete conquest also give rise to different kinds of lingering historical grievances An indigenous group that was colonized and forced to abide the entry of ethnic strangers for colonial economic purposes may later regard their presence as illegitimate *ab initio* (1985:30).

Horowitz describes the consequences of such conflict:

When ethnic violence occurs, unranked groups usually aim not at social transformation, but at something approaching sovereign autonomy, the exclusion of parallel ethnic groups from a share of power, and often reversion by expulsion or extermination – to an idealized, ethnically homogeneous *status quo ante* (1985:31).

Another theorist of ethnic conflict who has contributed significantly to our understanding is Professor Walker Connor. Connor is concerned with the confusion over terms and concepts within the literature on ethnic conflict. He believes that observers often attribute ethno-national conflict to other, less salient elements:

In summary, ethnic strife is too often superficially discerned as principally predicated upon language, religion, customs, economic inequality, or some other tangible element. But what is fundamentally involved in such a conflict is that divergence of basic identity which manifests itself in the 'us-them' Syndrome (1994:46).

While such things as religion and economic deprivation may be important contributing factors to ethnic conflict, it is the opposition of national identities which define the conflict. Connor further underlines the importance of the depth of emotions in ethnic conflict:

Explanations of behavior in terms of pressure groups, elite ambitions, and rational choice theory hint not at all at the passions that motivate Kurdish, Tamil, and Tigre guerrillas or Basque, Corsican, Irish, and Palestinian terrorists. Nor at the passions leading to the massacre of Bengalis by Assamese or Punjabis by Sikhs. In short, these explanations are a poor guide to ethnonationally inspired behavior (1994:31).

One of the key and contentious concepts for ethnonational behaviour is that it is not elite driven, as other political phenomenon may be, it is mass driven. If this is the case, then it has important consequences for the search for solutions. For instance, a key component of consociational democracy is elite cooperation. While consociational theory may work for the Walloons and Flemish in Belgium, it will not work in Northern Ireland because there is little or no elite cooperation; and even if there was, it would not sway enough support from the masses for its success. As Connor notes: "The essence of nationalism is not to be sought in the motives of elites who may manipulate nationalism for some ulterior end, but rather in the mass sentiment to which elites appeal" (1994:161). I would argue that within the Middle East conflict is a mass and not an elite driven phenomenon. While such key figures as Yasir Arafat and others certainly have their influence on the conflict, they are restricted in their actions by what their followers will tolerate.

If elite cooperation is not the key to a solution, then the key lies elsewhere. Unfortunately there are no simple solutions to ethno-national conflict. If there were, it would have been found and applied by now in those societies which are severely divided, such as Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Cyprus, Lebanon and Northern Ireland, among others. Horowitz offers some hope through a system of power sharing; but not the type of top-down power sharing that was attempted in Northern Ireland in 1974 (the Power Sharing Executive), but from the bottom-up (Horowitz 1994:188). Political engineering is required in situations like this. Institutions must be altered or, in the case of a state with little legitimacy, replaced with new ones.

While behavioural theories examine the individual subconscious, the classical theories concentrate on the conscious interaction of groups. Classical theory has often been occupied with the exercise of power and the use of force in intergroup relations. While classical theory is useful in explaining acts and events, it does not answer questions about subconscious motivational factors. Ethnic conflict theories are useful in explaining conflict behaviour. It illustrates the depth and complexity of emotions that are at work. What is required is a synthesis of both behavioural and classical approaches to explain the phenomenon of conflict. This will enable researchers to break through the circumscribed mid-range theories presently available. We must be able to explain such things as the intransigence of certain sections at the core of conflict as well as the continuing violence at the fringes.

A pattern of consistent variables begins to emerge. We can discern a convergence of thought on the importance of such concept as *identity* and the

dichotomy of *us-them*. This dichotomy often leads to the perception of a zero-sum conflict. Most of the analysts also stress the importance of the depth of emotions associated with ethnonational conflict. Many also observe that there has been an over reliance on materialism as an explanatory concept. Connor sums this up well:

As Chateaubriand expressed it nearly 200 years ago: "Men don't allow themselves to be killed for their interests; they allow themselves to be killed for their passions." To phrase it differently: people do not voluntarily die for things that are rational (1994:206).

Perhaps the truth is that they only allow themselves to be killed for their *needs*.

As micro and macro theories to date have been insufficient to explain the conflict in different communities then the search for a new paradigm should begin with a fusion or synthesis of both macro and micro theories. An attempt to do this is evident with the development of such theories as the Enemy System Theory (EST), the Human Needs Theory (HNT) and John Burton's Conflict Resolution Theory (CRT). These theories will be introduced and examined in the next sections.

ENEMY SYSTEM THEORY

The Enemy System Theory was developed to help explain intractable conflict and was used to explain the Cold War in the early 1990s before the collapse of the Soviet Union. It is a fusion of developmental psychology and international relations theory. This theory presents some important conceptualizations which help to create a sophisticated explanatory model of conflict. It has been used to explain terrorism in general, but it has not been widely adopted to explain the totality of conflict (Montville in Volkan 1990). It is a key assumption of this study that use of concepts from the Enemy System Theory and the Human Needs Theory offer a comprehensive and balanced theoretical explanation of conflict. It is hoped that this will further the development of a paradigm shift away from the current debate on internal – external explanations, and foster the development of a more comprehensive approach based on the fusion of micro and macro approaches to conflict theory as an explanation of the conflict.

The Enemy System Theory (EST) was developed in the late 1980s by a group of psychiatrists and international relations practitioners (former members of the American National Security Council and the U.S. State Department), as a model to explain the complexities of group behaviour, particularly with regard to antagonistic group relationships. The gist of the Enemy System Theory is the hypothesis that humans have a deep rooted psychological need to dichotomize and to establish *enemies* and *allies* (Volkan 1990:31). This phenomenon happens on individual and group levels. This is an unconscious need which feeds

conscious relationships, especially in our group lives. This is especially important with regard to the formation of ethnic or national group identities and behaviour.

Identification with these ethnic or national groups largely determines how we relate to people within our *ingroups* and with those of our *outgroups*. How the masses within each group perceive themselves and their relationship will be based on cooperation, competition, or conflict. This is also determined by historic relations between these groups. Consequently, the theory combines concepts from individual and group psychology, as well as international relations theory. As Vamik Volkan explains:

This particular approach requires a penetrating examination of how the human mind is reflected in the process of decision making by a large group. It explores the following phenomenon: the psychological need to have enemies and allies (Volkan 1988); the intertwining of the individual's sense of self and that of the group's identity with the concepts of ethnicity and nationality; and the ways in which wars, with all their logistical planning, are connected to man's primitive and unconscious impulses. In terms of large-group interaction, most of these processes are involuntary (1990:31).

Thus, the theory is predicated on the relationships between intrapersonal concerns, the individual within their environment, as well as the interaction of individuals within groups and the actions between those groups. The following concepts comprise the Enemy System Theory.

The first concept is that of *identity*. Humans identify themselves as individuals and as members of groups of individuals. These groups can be acquired at birth, such as race, or through association within society, such as a group of workers or athletes. Developmental psychologists have identified the human need to dichotomise. We organise ourselves and our environments into groups of two. For examples, we distinguish between I / not I, pleasure / pain, good / bad, right / wrong, and so on. This need begins at a very early age during infancy. The importance of this is that we also tend to attach 'good' qualities with what we identify as ours, and we tend to associate 'bad' qualities with those of our outgroups. Consequently, we begin to develop a sense of us and them.

There is an associated concept of the *negative identity*. This is when individuals suffer from low self esteem through narcissistic injuries. Instead of projecting negative images out, these images are saved for the self. This often results in those who suffer from negative identity turning to maladaptive groups such as criminal and terrorist organizations to try to regain their lost self esteem. People at risk for such negative identities are usually found among the chronically unemployed (particularly working class), those with little or no educational qualifications, and from home environments that are broken or abusive.

The next concept is that of *ethno-nationalism*. Ethno-nationalism is the identity of an individual to their ethnic or national group. The emotions associated with ethnic identity are usually very strong and powerful. Ethnic identities

are often seen as extended kinship identities; this gives us a sense of a wider 'family' which contributes to our sense of belonging. This organizing into ethnic groups puts these groups in competition. This competition can be either *adaptive*, such as the Olympic Games, or *maladaptive*, such as the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, Lebanon, Sri Lanka and Northern Ireland. Ethno-national identity groups play a central role in conflictual situations. When groups are under political, economic, ecological, or military stress, they can become malicious. There is a tendency to strike at outgroups when this occurs. As John E. Mack explains: "The central problem in efforts to understand enmity between ethno-national groups is the location of the *source* of the hatred or antagonism" (1990:63). The source of such enmity can often be traced to some historical animosity. This brings us to the next concept, *ethnic victimization*.

Joseph V. Montville defines the concept of ethnic victimization as the state of ethnic mind when the security of their group is shattered by violence and aggression. Further, he states that there are three important elements:

1. Experience: a cataclysmic event stuns the victim group.
2. Unjustifiable violence; human and civil rights have been violated.
3. The assault represents a continuous threat and generates a fear of annihilation of the victim group (1990:169).

These elements combine to overwhelm the victim group. Depending on the circumstances, these groups often feel that their very survival is at stake. This leads on to the next concept: the *egoism of victimization*.

The egoism of victimization, as Mack defines it is: "the incapacity of an ethno-national group, as a direct result of its own historical traumas, to empathize with the suffering of another group" (1990:125). Therefore, victimized groups do not see beyond their own pain and anguish. These groups do not take responsibility for victims created by their own action. This is a very important concept, particularly because it enables a *terrorized victim* to become a *terrorist*, with little guilt about committing violence. This concept is important for understanding the conflict for instance, in the Middle East. After a group has been wronged, it feels no compunction about committing violence against other groups. It is not difficult to see how violence escalates and spirals out of control. The egoism of victimization also goes a long way towards explaining hard line Israeli policies towards the Palestinians. The Holocaust is often used to rationalize policies, particularly when the perceived survival of the state is under threat.

Another element of this concept is the common theme among ethnonational terrorist groups that *passivity ensures the continuation of victimization* (1990:170). Therefore, in order to prevent the group from being victimized, the group, or militant elements thereof, continue their unjustifiable activities in the name of group preservation.

There are intervening elements which make ethnonational groups more susceptible to these influences. One of these is what Volkan calls *suitable targets of externalization* (1990:33). These targets are where we store images in the subconscious. They can be inanimate objects such as national flags or colours, ethnic food, music, costumes or dances, and the like. It is these stored images that are the building blocks of our ethnic identity. These targets act as cultural amplifiers. That is to say, they send out messages about who we are and what makes our group unique. These targets can send positive and negative images. The positive images are usually retained for our own groups, while the negative images are reserved for the outgroups or enemies. These subconscious negative images add to the complexity and intractability of conflict.

The next concept is the *inability to mourn*. Volkan describes mourning as the reaction to real or threatened loss or change (1990:43). There are two types of mourning: *uncomplicated and complicated*. Uncomplicated is when a group comes to terms with what was lost. They learn to cope with their grief and sorrow. Complicated mourning is when groups are under threat and cannot let go of their losses. An important effect of this is that groups often try to regain what was lost, especially territory. As Volkan states:

When territory – or even prestige – is lost to an enemy, and a group had difficulty forming a remembrance formation, the group can still be seen trying to recoup ancient losses. Under political, military or economic stress the mourning may become complicated when the representation of what is lost cannot be surrendered because it is too highly idealized or too necessary to self esteem (1990:43).

The next concepts deal with psychological mechanisms that make it easier for humans to aggress and kill one another. These are the processes of demonisation and *dehumanization* (Julius in Volkan 1990).

Demonisation is the mechanism for projecting negative images onto enemies, especially leaders, to make them seem like demons. An example of this would be that during the Gulf War of 1991 the U.S. government and media projected Saddam Hussein as Hitler, the 20th century's most infamous demon. By making Saddam Hussein out to be Hitler, it was easier for the government to manipulate public opinion against Iraq, thus creating a more favourable environment to wage war against the perceived enemy. Labeling someone as a 'terrorist' is a way of demonizing them.

Dehumanization is a step further than demonisation. It is when we begin to regard our enemies as something less than human. We regard them as demons or animals so that we cannot empathize with their pain as we attack and kill them. This is associated with *psuedospeciation*, whereby we regard our enemies as another species. Demetrios Julius discovers an interesting phenomenon about dehumanization: "An important point to note here is that this process of dehumanization of the other has a way of dehumanizing the individual himself as well As we deny dignity and respect to the other, we begin to loose our own

humanity and self respect" (1990:101). Consequently, the more we dehumanize our enemies, the less human we become ourselves. This cycle perpetuates our ability and desire to kill our enemies; indeed it makes it easier to do so. Rafael Moses explores this concept and reveals that due to the processes of demonisation and dehumanization, we can kill without guilt for two reasons: first, we are dealing with something that is less than human; and second, these subhumans threaten our very survival, so we are justified in our aggression due to self defense (1990:53). Dehumanizing the enemy is carried out by Serb paramilitary groups, as well as elements of the security forces within former Yugoslavia. The wider communities may not condone these acts, but they implicitly allow them to be carried out on their behalf.

A concept that is related to victimization is the *chosen trauma* (Volkan 1990:44). A chosen trauma is an event whereby a group is badly victimized. The group usually suffers from complicated mourning about this event. The group becomes obsessive about the trauma and often feels a sense of entitlement or payment for past wrongs. Aggressors and terrorists often focus on these chosen traumas to justify their unjustifiable acts. Indeed it is not uncommon for terrorist groups to name their organizations after chosen traumas. Examples of this would be the *Revolutionary Organization 17 November* (17 November) in Greece and the *October 1st Antifascist Resistance Group* (GRAPO) in Spain. Examples of chosen traumas would be the Holocaust for Jews, the famine and Bloody Sunday for Irish Catholics, and the IRA campaign against the Union for Northern Irish Protestants. The partition of Palestine can be seen as a chosen trauma for Palestinians.

The chosen trauma is a group element, whereas the *conversion experience* is an individual phenomenon. Joseph V. Montville identifies this concept as a personalized chosen trauma (Montville in Volkan 1990:174). It is an event in which an individual is victimized. It brings the remote sense of group victimization closer to the individual. It can convert the terrorized victim into a terrorist.

Peter A. Olsson explored the conversion of victims into terrorists and has developed the *personal pathway model*. Terrorists often perceive themselves to be the personification of a victimized ethnic group's fantasized liberation; they try to regain what has been lost (Olsson in Volkan 1990:187). Olsson defines this model with four primary elements:

1. Early socialization into a violent environment.
2. Narcissistic injuries (i.e. negative identity).
3. Escalatory events (i.e. conversion experience).
4. Personal connections to terrorist groups (1990:188).

This model uses many concepts relevant to the Enemy System Theory. Research into the development of terrorists would be useful in helping to explain the wider conflict. The preceding concepts and this model should aid in our

understanding of the creation and perpetuation of antagonism which results in perpetual cycles of violence. Demetrios A. Julius sums this up well:

Very simply put, the perpetuation of aggression is insured by the victimization action of one group upon another These reciprocal hostile actions *stimulate* and *enlarge* the opponent's historical enmity and validate each other's dehumanization Victimization is the process that leads to the final behavioral action of the cycle. . . . Since each attack triggers the process in the other, the two adversaries are locked in an ever expanding and vigorous dance of hostility (Julius in Volkan 1990: 106-7).

This victimization cycle of 'reciprocal hostile actions' helps to explain the depth of both the zero sum nature of the conflict, as well as the problems associated with the double minority model. With each group committing violence against the other, the zero sum nature becomes self evident. The victimization of each group fuels its fear of being an endangered minority group. This fear of annihilation and the egoism of victimization lead the group to further acts of aggression against the other group.

The Enemy System Theory offers a sophisticated theory of conflict which explains difficult problems such as terrorism and the depth of ethnic conflict. While it is a behavioural theory, it offers a bridge to classical theory by combining elements of developmental psychology with international relations theory. It transcends the realist paradigm in international relations theory by using communal or ethno-national groups as an important unit of analysis.

HUMAN NEEDS THEORY

Human Needs Theory (HNT) was developed in the 1970s and 1980s as a generic or holistic theory of human behaviour. It is based on the hypothesis that humans have basic *needs* that have to be met in order to maintain stable societies. As John Burton describes:

We believe that the human participants in conflict situations are compulsively struggling in their respective institutional environments at all social levels to satisfy primordial and universal needs – needs such as security, identity, recognition, and development. They strive increasingly to gain the control of their environment that is necessary to ensure the satisfaction of these needs. This struggle cannot be curbed; it is primordial (1991: 82-3).

This struggle for primordial needs is theoretically related to the Frustration – Aggression theory which is based on the stimulus – response hypothesis. The frustration of not satisfying these needs leads to aggression and subsequently, conflict. What distinguishes Human Needs theory from the Frustration – Aggression theory is that the former is concerned only with absolute requirements (needs) while the later is also concerned with wants and desires. Burton further states:

Now we know that there are fundamental universal values or human needs that must be met if societies are to be stable. That this is so thereby provides a nonideological basis for the establishment of institutions and policies. Unless identity needs are met in multi-ethnic societies, unless in every social system there is distributive justice, a sense of control, and prospects for the pursuit of all other human societal developmental needs, instability and conflict are inevitable (1991: 21).

The significance of this theory is that it recognizes and legitimizes needs expressed by both parties to conflict. The needs of both must be met, not the needs of one at the expense of the other. This helps to move the conflict from zero – sum to win- win. The abstraction of ‘human needs’ helps to eliminate the sense of mutually exclusive goals. Rather than fighting over the constitutional future of a country with the mutually exclusive goals of maintenance of the union or separation, the situation shifts to one in which both warring communities seek to fulfil their needs such as security, identity, recognition and development. These needs are not satisfied at the expense of the other community, but are realized along with the other community’s needs. These needs are not mutually exclusive or gained at the expense of another; they are universal.

The empirical historical experience abundantly validates Burton’s assumptions, one example here suffices. The Sudan is depicted as a microcosm of Africa where the number of minority groups is really extensive. Sudan’s society is a patchwork of ethnicity characterized by a dominant Islamic Afro – Arab core socio-cultural system, in which ethnic groups – particularly those inhabiting the southern region – enjoy a marginal status. The feelings of victimization on the part of Southern Sudanese plunged the country into a bloody civil war. The Addis Ababa agreement of 1972 temporarily put an end to hostilities by attempting to strike a balance between local cultures, languages, religions and other symbols of ethnic and regional identifications on one hand and national ones on the other without victimizing either. Peace prevailed until 1983 when the central government renegaded on some clauses of the agreement, Southerners felt betrayed and the civil war has resumed up to the present. What the Sudanese need today is to move their conflict from zero-sum to a positive win-win situation, as Burton suggests. That seems to be the best guarantee, perhaps the only one, to keep the country united and viable. Otherwise, the powder key is always there and it does not take much of a spark to ignite the explosion. What holds for the Sudan holds for other divided societies.

There are bold assumptions in this theory. “This struggle cannot be curbed ... instability and conflict are inevitable”, these are contentious statements with far reaching implications. If the hypotheses of this theory are correct, if there are certain human needs that are required for human development and social stability, then the solution to conflict must be the ability to create an environment in which these needs can be met by all segments of societies. This is where Human Needs theory meets Burton’s Conflict Resolution Theory (CRT).

CONFLICT RESOLUTION THEORY

Professor Burton distinguishes between conflict resolution, management and settlement. Management is 'by alternative dispute resolution skills' and can confine or limit conflict; settlement is 'by authoritative and legal processes' and can be imposed by elites (1991: 73). Burton suggests by contrast:

... conflict resolution means terminating conflict by methods that are analytical and that get to the root of the problem. Conflict resolution, as opposed to mere management or 'settlement', points to an outcome that, in the view of the parties involved, is a permanent solution to a problem (1991: 72).

By accepting the assumptions and hypotheses of the Human Needs Theory, Burton suggests that there is a need for a paradigm shift away from power politics and towards the 'reality of individual power' (1991: 84). In other words, individuals, as members of their identity groups, will strive for their needs within their environment. If they are prevented from this pursuit by elites, other identity groups, institutions and other forms of authority, there will *inevitably* be conflict. The only solution is for the groups to work out their problems in an analytical way, supported by third parties who act as facilitators and *not* authorities. This is particularly relevant when the conflict is over *needs* which cannot be bargained and not material interests, which can be negotiated and compromised. One of the problems with the internal conflict school examined earlier, was that while there was some agreement on an explanation of a conflict, there was little consensus on solutions. There is a real need to step away from the specifics of the conflict and take a holistic approach. This abstraction will accomplish the goal of being more objective in the search for an adequate explanation. As Burton states:

Whatever the definition we have of conflict, wherever we draw the line, right down to family violence, we are referring to situations in which there is a breakdown in relationships and a challenge to norms and to authorities ... [Conflict] is due to an assertion of individualism. It is a frustration based protest against lack of opportunities for development and against lack of recognition and identity. Whether the tension, conflict, or violence has origins in class, status, ethnicity, sex, religion, or nationalism, we are dealing with the same fundamental issues (1991: 20).

If the participants in the conflict can begin to recognize their conflict as a breakdown of relationships, and that there are fundamental similarities between the antagonists, then the process of abstraction will enhance their objectivity. The purpose of this process is to enable the participants to come to the understanding that *all the participants have legitimate needs that must be satisfied* in order to resolve the conflict. The other key here is to develop an analytical process to facilitate the changes required to create a political and social system in which these needs can be met. Burton further notes that:

Conflict resolution is, in the long term, a process of change in political, social, and economic systems. It is an analytical and problem solving process that takes into account such individual and group needs as identity and recognition, as well as institutional changes that are required to satisfy these needs (1991: 71).

Traditional approaches to conflict management or regulation have largely been based on mediation and negotiated 'settlements'. These approaches will only work when the conflicting parties are amenable to negotiation and have something tangible they are able to bargain. However, the recognition of *primordial needs* eliminates the possibility of traditional negotiations. Consequently, we are left with Burton's requirement for a process of change in order to accomplish resolution. This process of change is the subject of the next section.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION: TRACK TWO DIPLOMACY

Using the Enemy and Human Needs theories to explain conflict in a specific setting is only the first step. Understanding the nature and parameters of a conflict is useful, but the objective is to use this analysis to resolve the conflict. By applying the assumptions of John Burton's Conflict Resolution Theory, we can map a way forward. There are practical methods and processes that can be used in our move from theory to practice. These processes are what is known as *Track Two Diplomacy*. Joseph Montville defines this as:

Track two diplomacy is an unofficial, informal interaction between members of adversary groups or nations that aims to develop strategies, influence public opinion, and organize human material resources in ways that might help resolve their conflict. It must be understood that track two diplomacy is in no way a substitute for official, formal, 'track one' government to government or leader-to-leader relationships (1991: 162).

One of the key phenomenon that track two diplomacy has been developed to deal with is *Protracted Social Conflict* (PSC) (Azar in Volkan 1991: 93). Protracted social conflict is a type of conflict that is not based on material interests, but is one based on needs; particularly identity related needs of ethno-national or communal groups. Edward Azar describes this conflict type:

These identity groups, whether formed around shared religious, ethnic, racial, cultural, or other characteristics, will act to achieve and insure their distinctive identity within a society. When they are denied physical and economic security, political participation, and *recognition* from other groups, their distinctive identity is lost, and they will do whatever is in their power to regain it. In short, this is the origin of protracted social conflict (1990: 95).

Track two diplomacy is a three stage process that enables group representatives to work towards resolving intergroup conflict in a non-threatening, non-coercive and non-confrontational environment. As mentioned, it is not designed to replace track one or official diplomacy, but it can often pave the way for

official negotiations by initiating attitude changes in public opinion and decision makers. There are three stages or processes. The first stage is a series of problem solving workshops or forums. These workshops are designed to bring influential people from the respective communities in conflict, but not the key decision makers, together to explore alternative means of defining their conflict. The goal is to transform their perceptions about the conflict from zero-sum to win-win. This can be achieved through the process of facilitated meetings as part of the workshops. These workshops are facilitated by a panel of experts on the psychology of intergroup conflict and on the specifics of the conflict in question. The facilitators do not seek to impose or even offer solutions to the conflict, their purpose is to facilitate communications and gently guide the participants towards changing their attitudes and perceptions themselves. Through this change comes the ability to view the conflict in new terms. This is the transformation that makes viewing the conflict as zero-sum to viewing it as win-win, possible.

The workshops are composed of a series of plenary and small group meetings over several days. These formal meetings are supplemented by informal social events such as dinners and sightseeing. The atmosphere is conducive to bridge building and understanding and not to power politics and bargaining. Herbert C. Kelman has defined seven central features of these workshops: "its healing purpose, its analytical process, its focus on needs, its establishment of alternative norms, its stress on self-generated learning, the facilitative role of its third party, and the clinical nature of its research enterprise" (Kelman in Volkan 1991).

As noted about protracted social conflict, it is about needs and not interests. Kelman believes that the focus on needs is essential in the process of attitude and perceptual change:

For example, if both parties insist on possession of the same territory, they are boxed into a zero-sum definition of the conflict, whereby the demands of one can be satisfied only at the expense of the other. When they look behind these positions, however, they may discover that one party wants the territory to satisfy its security needs and the other to satisfy its identity needs. Having redefined the conflict in these terms, they can begin to search for a solution that would allow the one to express its national identity without jeopardizing the other's national security (1991: 157).

In dealing with the essential needs of groups in conflict that are in a restricted amount of space (i.e. islands), the focus on territoriality can become acute. The correlation between protracted social conflict and island or limited habitats is not coincidental. Northern Ireland (Ireland), Cyprus, Sri Lanka, and Fiji are all examples of this type of conflict in restricted island areas. In these cases the limited amount of land compounds the conflict. In these conflicts it is essential that the parties move beyond a territorial dispute and into an environment where all participating groups' needs are met.

The second stage of track two diplomacy is to influence public opinion and to change the attitudes and perceptions of the protagonist communities. These changes will be based on the alterations that were made by the participants in the problem solving workshops. This is by no means a simple or automatic process, but one that takes time, and a great deal of perseverance and patience. Before the communities themselves can be targeted, the workshop participants must first convince the decision makers in their communities of the veracity of their newfound perceptions. After this has been achieved, the wider communities can undergo a process of transformation. Mass communication will be an important element of this process. Besides mass media, academic journals and conferences and special events can help with perceptual changes. This process is helped by tangible gains that are made in the third process: cooperative economic development.

Cooperative economic development is not engaged in as a substitute for problem solving oriented conflict resolution, but as a means to enhance it. Cooperative economic development is just that. It is a cooperative venture whose goal is to alleviate the worst material sufferings of the contentious communities. It is usually directed towards the group that has been historically victimized and underdeveloped. Edward Azar notes that: "Furthermore, the satisfaction of basic needs of the victimized, either along communal lines or as part of a national strategy, should be the ultimate priority of government development policies. Only thus can we move toward managing protracted social conflict" (1991: 101). The basic needs can first be met by providing jobs for those who have been chronically unemployed. It is amazing how agreeable people can become once they have useful jobs to keep them busy and some money in their pockets to spend. These material gains will not eliminate the conflict, but they will help to alleviate it in the worst sections of the communities and it will provide people with tangible proof that things can change and can work.

Track two diplomacy has been tried and proven successful in changing the attitudes and perceptions of workshop participants. It is an essential step in paving the way for track one diplomacy to succeed. In most cases of protracted social conflict, track one diplomacy has been tried and has failed. The elites seek to bargain and manipulate in order that their constituencies can get the best 'deal' possible. Although this is normal in international relations, this will not be successful in solving the seemingly intractable cases of protracted social conflict. A precondition for successful negotiations between elites is the change in perceptions that track two diplomacy accomplishes. Herbert Kelman describes the results of workshops that he has participated in as a facilitator:

I have been greatly encouraged by the extent to which the representatives of the two parties with whom we have been working have been able to discover common ground, to conclude that there are potential negotiating partners on the other side and negotiable issues to consider, to recognize the occurrence of change and the possibility of further

change, and to develop the sense of guarded optimism that is required for movement toward conflict resolution (1991: 153).

These changes are essential in order to create a more positive environment in which substantial negotiations can take place.

CONCLUSIONS

The search for the parameters of conflict theory has led us to a number of conclusions. First, there still remains a lack of cohesion or consensus among theorists that prevents us from crossing the threshold into grand theory. In the past, the paths of micro and macro approaches seldom crossed. The evolution of conflict theory indicates that these two approaches will converge in the future. For example, one cannot adequately explain conflict in Sri Lanka, Rwanda, Cyprus, the Balkans, or the Middle East without examining both the classical and behavioural approaches. Once this barrier is crossed and there is fusion of these approaches, on many analytical levels, we will witness the development of a grand theory of human conflict. Conflict engenders change. The Chinese character which defines the concept of change is represented by the characters for danger and opportunity. Conflict is the embodiment of such a paradox.

The internal approach offers a better understanding of conflict and there is some agreement about the causes of conflict. However, there is no consensus on solutions, as the adherents of this school are influenced by the bias of their respective communities. There will be no consensus on solutions until there are significant attitude and perceptual changes in both the elites and the communities themselves. This will only be brought about by the widespread use of track two diplomacy and the acceptance of the principles of the enemy system, human needs and conflict resolution theories.

The Enemy System Theory introduces the human need to dichotomize and thus create enemies and allies. Both the Enemy System and Social Identity theories stress the importance of self esteem and positive identity particularly with regard to relations between *ingroups* (allies) and *outgroups* (enemies). Human needs theory hypothesizes that there are certain irreducible human needs which must be met in order that societies can function without maladaptive conflict. Burton's conflict resolution theory recognizes these needs and suggests ways to accommodate them analytically and non-coercively. Track two diplomacy offers a process that can be used to achieve the results envisaged by Burton's Conflict Resolution theory.

At present, a fusion of the Enemy System Theory and Human Needs Theory offer the most comprehensive and objective explanations of ethno-national conflict. However, this explanation is not enough. Burton's Conflict Resolution Theory provides a holistic approach to conflict resolution. As a relatively new and pioneering theoretical development, it remains outside the mainstream of

the literature. It challenges the assumptions of Western political thought that power is based and exercised through elites who establish norms of behaviour. However, it remains to be seen whether this approach will be accepted by the participants in ethno-national conflict, and used to their benefit to resolve it.

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