



laetus in praesens

Alternative view of segmented documents via Kairos

25 May 2004 | Draft

Errorism vs Terrorism? Encroachment, Complicity, Denial and Terratism

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An Annex to this paper is entitled *Varieties of Encroachment* (2004),
presented in an amended form as *Provocation of "Unprovoked Aggression" by Encroachment* (2023)

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Introduction

This period is saturated with news about terrorists, their activities and the threat they constitute to a civilized way of life. This focus has largely obscured earlier concerns with a variety of other dangers to humanity and to life on Earth -- about which there is a considerable body of knowledge. Conceptually we find ourselves positioned in radical opposition to "terrorists" but with little understanding of what such people might themselves be opposed to. And yet, during the earlier relative scarcity of terrorists, we had a profound sense of the rightness of our attitude as exemplars of civilization -- despite the volume of evidence that all was not right in the world that our civilized attitudes had engendered.

In religion, What damned error, but some sober brow
Will bless it and approve it with a text,
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?
William Shakespeare

Errorism

How is it that we can be righteous in our sense of being exemplars of a civilization, faced with a multitude of life threatening challenges, but are able to discount totally the perspective of those we choose to label as terrorists? And this despite the fact that most civilized democracies were brought about by the activities of minorities that were then also labelled terrorists. Given our lack of creativity in responding to terrorism with the dignity, forbearance, elegance and humanity we would like to associate with our role as exemplars, perhaps there is a case for exploring the possibility that, in such polarized circumstances, we could usefully label ourselves as "errorists".

Errorists might then be understood as people who are convinced of the coherence and rightness of their attitude to the degree that they are unaware of the blindspot in their thinking which makes it erroneous in some measure. Errorism is a large-scale form of groupthink.

Erroneous with respect to what? How is this condition to be understood in the light of the insight of [Chuang Tzu](#) (*The Pivot*):

Tao is obscured when men understand only one of a pair of opposites, or concentrate only on a partial aspect of being.... each denies what the other affirms, and affirms what the other denies. What use is this struggle to set up "No" against "Yes," and "Yes" against "No"?... When the wise man grasps this pivot, he is in the center of the circle, and there he stands while "Yes" and "No" pursue each other around the circumference.

What is this larger framework to which the dynamics between errorists and terrorists point? How does an errorist comprehend that framework when one of the characteristics of errorism, as a hegemonic mode of thought, is to assume that its values are necessarily universal?

If as errorists we are without doubt as to our righteousness, how can we enter into any dialogue with those with alternative perspectives? No doubt -- No dialogue? Politicians are categorical that there is no possibility of dialogue with terrorists. But Kinhide Mushakoji (*Global Issues and Interparadigmatic Dialogue*, 1988) argues that some Eastern schools of thought avoid this challenge of the excluded middle by distinguishing four conditions: affirmation, negation, affirmation and negation, non-affirmation and non-negation. That is, for every affirmation (position) there is simultaneously a negation and a double affirmation and a double negation: yes, no; both, and neither.

From the conditions of the planet, now and foreseen, and the manifest failure of our best collective strategies to offer more than palliatives and promises, it would seem that conceptually the arguments we have developed in support of the development of our civilization are fundamentally flawed -- to some degree at least. This would be the case with both the conventional socio-economic programmes and the delightful alternatives. It is therefore a relief to be faced with terrorism rather than have to acknowledge those flaws. But on the other hand it may be that terrorism offers a distorted mirror of errorism.

Terrorists are of course primarily characterized by the physical violence they do and the fear that they engender. How could we have anything in common with such an agenda? But, have we as errorists eschewed violence? Do we engender fear? Does the mode of thought of errorism engender violence? [Johan Galtung](#) (of [TRANSCEND](#)) argues that only amateurs engage in physical violence, whereas professionals engage in "[structural violence](#)" through manipulating social conditions to their own advantage. Perhaps the most skilled errorists even engage in "[conceptual violence](#)" -- or even "[spiritual violence](#)".

How might such subtler and more insidious forms of violence operate? Traces may be seen in various forms of encroachment through which the "territory" of others is peaceably occupied by barely perceptible stages -- undermining their ability to thrive. When this finally evokes a violent response, this can then be righteously labelled as the unprovoked action of terrorists. The error inherent in the encroaching action of errorists goes unremarked -- except by terrorists. The mode of operation of both the errorists and the terrorists -- in "being the change" -- is to be deplored as unworthy of an advanced civilization. But how to give form to more appropriate modes?

In this respect, humanity may face a major lesson with the eventual arrival of extraterrestrials. Will they be errorists in our eyes, requiring that we respond as terrorists -- as many science fiction scenarios have explored? Will they be astounded at our failure to subscribe to their fundamental galactic values of *xinth*, *kloor* and *sdrar* -- which any advanced civilization naturally seeks to embody? Will they see it as their duty to enable the people of Earth to experience those values -- in their own best interest and despite the resistance of human "renegades" to whatever structural changes are required to our civilization and its antiquated political processes and beliefs?

On the other hand, such aliens may recognize us as errorists, evoking a response from them in terrorist mode - exhibiting galactic respect for the dynamics of our civilization.

More poignantly, is it the case that the mindsets we hold as errorists sustain a pattern of relationship that effectively engenders "aliens" within our own civilization? Amongst the challenges whose existence we deny, the young and the elderly increasingly perceive each other as alien, as do rich and poor, those of different faith, and those of different intellectual tradition. Each has its own version of *xinth*, *kloor* and *sdrar* that is meaningless to the other - and possibly more meaningful than the *freedom*, *peace* and *democracy* of politicians. This pattern would also seem to be emerging within our psyches between our different modes of activity -- recognized in its extreme form as multiple personality disorder !

Does the dilemma in encountering "the other" come down to the challenge of sins of omission (false alarms) or commission (failed alarms), recognized by statisticians as Type I and Type II errors respectively?[\[more | more\]](#). The sins of omission of errorists are in opportunistically "crying wolf" with respect to terrorists in the absence of adequate evidence, whilst their sins of commission are to fail deliberately to respond effectively to the conditions of concern to terrorists. For the terrorists, the sins of omission are in their rejection of dialogue (with "infidels"), whilst those of commission are the fundamental failure of which their destructive acts are symptomatic. It would be nice to completely eliminate both error types, but in practice reducing one causes the other to increase. This is because the appearance of guilt and innocence are not clear-cut. Innocent people can appear to be guilty and the guilty can appear to be innocent.

"Experience should teach us to be most on our guard to protect liberty when the Government's purposes are beneficent. Men born to freedom are naturally alert to repel invasion of their liberty by evil-minded rulers. The greatest dangers to liberty lurk in insidious encroachment by men of zeal, well-meaning but without understanding."

Justice Louis D Brandeis

Encroachment

The processes of encroachment are necessarily subtle -- hence the surprise at the unexpected levels of violence they may evoke. It is their subtlety that delays any response and creates a context in which the response may be labelled inappropriate, unreasonable -- or as

terrorism. Due to the subtlety, it takes time to understand the nature of the encroachment as an experiential pattern with unwelcome consequences. Other terms that describe aspects of this insidious process are infiltration, ingratiation and inveiglement -- as a prelude to processes associated with such terms as arrogation, appropriation, usurpation, invasion, and seizure.

An annotated review of the variety of forms of encroachment is available elsewhere (*Varieties of Encroachment*, 2004; later amended as *Provocation of "Unprovoked Aggression" by Encroachment* (2023)). The following argument is based on that review.

Etymology and symbolism of encroachment

Encroachment derives from Middle English *encroachen*, meaning to get or seize illegally, and from Middle French *encrochier*. It signifies: to enter by gradual steps or by stealth into the possessions or rights of another, gaining possession gradually and to advance beyond the usual or proper limits. It is related to "crochet" and especially to "crook" and "hook". This is an implement or tool, such as a bishop's crosier or a shepherd's staff, with a bent or curved part -- metaphorically signifying someone who is dishonest, namely not straight. As a verb it may be used with reference to bending or making crooked -- or, in the light of its etymology, even to hooking (seemingly pointing to an association between the activities of an "encroacher" and a "hooker"). An obsolete variant "accroachment", signified to draw to one's self as with a hook, or to usurp jurisdiction as with royal prerogatives.

"Encroach" appears to share some of its origins with "crouch" and its relationship to crook. "Crouch" signifies to bend or stoop or press the entire body close to the ground, notably in servile posturing. There is an amusing degree of confusion in people's minds (as suggested by web searches) between "crouching" and "[croaching](#)", especially in the title of the film *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (pronounced in Chinese as *wo hu cang long*) and attributed to a Chinese saying teaching the concealment of strengths from others and preservation of the element of surprise. The film is set at the end of the Qing dynasty, before the encroachment of Western influence: the last age of heroes [\[more\]](#)

Ode to the Abyss

What new advancement of the night
On citadels of stars around whose might
Thy slow encroachment runs,
And crouching silence, thunder-potent, sleeps
Clark Ashton Smith

With encroachment there is therefore a strong suggestion of a "straight" process and a subsequent "capturing" operation with some form of "crook", whether physical, behavioural or metaphorical. In the purely physical sense this is evident in the use of the shepherd's crook to grab forcefully the sheep around the neck to keep it from going in a direction the shepherd doesn't want the sheep to go. The curved part may also be used to hit the sheep, usually on the head, to "guide" them. Bishops have long been inspired by the implications of such uses of the crook in their role as shepherd of a flock of Christians - especially the contrast between the idyllic pastoral image of the shepherd on the hillside and the realistic challenge of guiding animals that cannot even think for themselves -- and a shepherd who does what he has to do in order to protect them from danger and possibly even from themselves [\[more\]](#).

The crook has therefore become a symbol of guardianship, power and authority. For the ancient Egyptians, the sceptre was called (*heka*) when in the shape of a shepherd's crook. The crook and flail were used in all royal ceremonies [\[more\]](#). For Catholics the end of the crook is sharp and pointed wherewith to prick and goad the slothful, the middle is straight to signify righteous rule, while the head is bent or crooked in order to draw in and attract souls to the ways of God [\[more\]](#).

Strategies and stages of encroachment

Encroachment may be understood generically as a phase in a hunting strategy -- leading up to the kill. Predators in the wild have a range of distinct hunting strategies: from an alligator's solitary lunging ambush to the drawn-out chase of a wolf pack hunting caribou (see [Motion camouflage pack hunting](#)). Humans have developed a range of hunting strategies for food and recreation [\[more\]](#). In the social sphere, hunting strategies have developed in the guise of: [job hunting](#) and head hunting, spouse hunting, witch hunting, market hunting, [asteroid hunting](#), hunting strategies of sexual predators, [political will hunting](#), bounty hunting, etc. Hunting still requires a strategy that progressively constrains the target, but the "kill" then involves some form of acquisition and possession -- which may indeed be perceived as unacceptable to the target.

A process of encroachment may be seen as a way of avoiding or postponing outright conflict, as noted by Richard Wilhelm and Cary F. Baynes in the :

I Ching (chapter 6)
Conflict develops when one feels himself
to be in the right and runs into opposition.
If one is not convinced of being in the right,
Opposition leads to craftiness or high-handed encroachment
But not to open conflict.

The process of encroachment is usefully illustrated by the apocryphal experiment of slowly heating water with a frog in it as compared to that of dropping the frog into hot water. In the later case it jumps out. In the former case it adjusts to the slowly rising temperature -- without jumping -- and dies [\[more\]](#). The slowly adjusting condition of the frog may be compared to the process experienced by a child undergoing "grooming" by a paedophile. Encroachment is based on progressively modifying the "rules of engagement" to disguise the

level of threat as it increases from imperceptibility. But given that the encroached-upon is habituated to the threat as it increases, the degree of threat is not actually experienced as threatening -- as with the frog exposed to gradually increasing degrees of heat.

The argument of this paper is that there is a degree of equivalence, or isomorphism, between the various forms of encroachment identified in the Annex (*Varieties of Encroachment*, 2004; *Provocation of "Unprovoked Aggression" by Encroachment*, 2023). To that extent, insights into the stages of encroachment should, for example, be obtainable from the stages of the "grooming" process used by paedophiles to befriend children over the internet with the intention of abusing them -- stages identified by Rachel O'Connell of the Cyberspace Research Unit at the University of Central Lancashire (*A Typology of Child Cybersexploitation and Online Grooming Practices*. 2003):

1. **Friendship:** Flattering a child into talking in a private chatroom where they will be isolated. The child will often be asked for a non-sexual picture of themselves.

This stage is recognizable as the first in many preludes to what may subsequently be perceived as abusive contact. It is evident in commercial relationships, missionary first contact, political and diplomatic appeals for dialogue, etc. Rather than friendship, it might be termed as a stage of familiarity.

2. **Forming a relationship:** Asking the child what problems they have to create the illusion of being their best friend.

This is the stage of minimal formalization in which the unique nature of the bond, and the associated pattern of behaviour, is acknowledged in some preliminary way. Again, it is basic to commercial relationships (noting contact details, etc), diplomacy ("regular talks", memo of understanding, etc). This might be termed the stage of precedent creation.

3. **Risk assessment:** Asking the child about the location of their computer and who else has access to it in order to assess the risk of being detected.

At this stage there is a need to assess whether the relationship can be transformed into one through which the agenda of the encroacher can be effectively pursued. In the case of a commercial relationship, is it likely that the potential client can be persuaded to sign? For the diplomat, can some favourable position be negotiated?

4. **Exclusivity:** Building up a sense of mutual love and trust with the child, suggesting that they can discuss "anything".

In the commercial case, at this stage, the focus is on the special and unique quality of the relationship with the client ("because you are a valued special client, we can make an exception", etc). In the case of diplomacy, emphasis may be placed on the long tradition of a "special relationship", etc. The concern at this stage is to build dependency -- to "gain a hold upon".

5. **Sex talk:** Engaging the child in explicit conversations and requesting sexually explicit pictures from them. At this stage the paedophile will usually try to arrange a meeting with the child.

This is the stage in which the shift is made to confidentiality. In the commercial case the possibility of "under the table" payments may be evoked, for example, and even the possibility of obtaining forbidden (illegal) goods. In the diplomatic case, this is the stage at which the legalities of conventions are set aside and "frank" discussions take place with regard to assistance in contravention of them (arms deals, secret accounts, etc). Building on the dependency already developed, the aim at this stage is to give operational form to it so as to advance the encroacher's agenda in ways that allow the asymmetric relationship to be exploited once it becomes too late for the encroached-upon to raise "reasonable" objections. The encroached-upon has been set up for the "kill", in commercial terms.

According to the SIRC Guide to Flirting, every salesperson knows that there is little point in establishing a great rapport with potential customers, attracting their interest, gaining their trust and so on, if they fail to "close" --- "closing" is sales-speak for actually making the sale, securing the contract, getting the customer to hand over money or sign on the dotted line. Sales staff are specifically trained in "closing techniques" to help them achieve this all-important goal. In the same way, if a person is genuinely attracted to a flirting partner, and want to see him or her again, no flirting skills are much use unless they ensure effective "closure". In this case, the goal in "closing" is to secure not a contract or a sale, but the chance to meet again.

This isomorphism may be tentatively explored in relation to the "spaces", with which people identify under different circumstances, upon which the encroachment takes place:

Patterns of encroachment					
Space	Encroachment phases			Closure phases	
	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III	Phase IV	Phase V
Encroachment of bio-physical space -- Territorial encroachment -- Environmental encroachment					
Encroachment of socio-political space -- Group encroachment -- Political encroachment -- Legal / government encroachment					
Encroachment of economic space -- Encroachment of commercial space -- Encroachment of profit-making					
Military-industrial encroachment -- Industrial encroachment -- Military encroachment -- Encroachment of technology					
Encroachment of psycho-cultural space -- Communication encroachment					

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Encroachment of knowledge space -- Ideological encroachment -- Encroachment of symbolic space 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encroachment of inter-personal space -- Encroachment of behavioural space -- Encroachment of personal space -- Sexual encroachment 					
Temporal encroachment					
Structural encroachment					

Like the frogmin warming water, the encroached-upon experiences only slight discomfort throughout the earliest phase (Phase I). This phase melds into a second (Phase II) in which the encroached-upon experiences constraints upon its options -- a closing down of options and degrees of freedom. In the following phase (Phase III), the encroached-upon is effectively "painted into a corner"

The concern here is the transition from perception of encroachment to perception of "invasion", "usurpation" and "occupation" and the associated, and often tragically violent reactions -- associated notably with terrorism.

"Catastrophe" as the outcome of encroachment

One interesting set of clues is provided by the literary critic Northrop Frye (*The Anatomy of Criticism*, 1957) who distinguishes five stages of action, linking encroachment to catastrophe, in the pattern of a tragedy (as summarized by [Deborah B. Schwartz](#)):

1. **Encroachment:** Protagonist takes on too much, makes a mistake that causes his/her "fall." This mistake is often unconscious (an act blindly done, through over-confidence in one's ability to regulate the world or through insensitivity to others) but still violates the norms of human conduct.
2. **Complication:** The building up of events aligning opposing forces that will lead inexorably to the tragic conclusion. "Just as comedy often sets up an arbitrary law and then organizes the action to break or evade it, so tragedy presents the reverse theme of narrowing a comparatively free life into a process of causation."
3. **Reversal:** The point at which it becomes clear that the hero's expectations are mistaken, that his fate will be the reverse of what he had hoped. At this moment, the vision of the dramatist and the audience are the same. The classic example is Oedipus, who seeks the knowledge that proves him guilty of murdering his father and marrying his mother; when he accomplishes his objective, he realizes he has destroyed himself in the process.
4. **Catastrophe:** The catastrophe exposes the limits of the hero's power and dramatizes the waste of his life. Piles of dead bodies remind us that the forces unleashed are not easily contained; there are also elaborate subplots (e.g. Gloucester in *King Lear*) which reinforce the impression of a world inundated with evil.
5. **Recognition:** The audience (sometimes the hero as well) recognizes the larger pattern. If the hero does experience recognition, he assumes the vision of his life held by the dramatist and the audience. From this new perspective he can see the irony of his actions, adding to the poignancy of the tragic events.

A catastrophe can readily be understood as a discontinuity -- in relation to the continuity associated with the process of encroachment. A catastrophe is a sudden change, a jump, after the smooth progress typical of encroachment. The nature of discontinuity in dynamic systems has been the subject of formal analysis notably by [René Thom](#) (*Structural Stability and Morphogenesis; an outline of a general theory of models*, 1975) and [Jean Petitot](#) (*Morphogenèse du Sens*, 1985). Such analysis has been successfully applied not only to natural systems but also to dynamical models in semiotics and semantics, notably with respect to grammar. The semantics of a sentence is recognized as holding some form of dynamics. Therefore, in exploring encroachment, and the shifting rules of engagement between parties, it may prove appropriate to review the language through which the process is articulated, and given legitimacy and coherence, by the encroacher.

At the discontinuities ("jumps") in a dynamic situation, such as those between the encroacher and the encroached-upon, external inputs (by the encroacher) produce maximum effects. At other times (in the gradual encroachment phases), the effort (or cost) of intervention to achieve a given result is likely to be higher. In catastrophe theory, the condition when external input produces maximum effect within the system is called metastability. In studying negotiation challenges, James E Goodby (*When War Won Out: Bosnian Peace Plans Before Dayton*, 1996) suggests that the notion of "ripeness" takes into account the concept of metastability. Interrogators and "groomers" would agree in the light of their understanding of "negotiation".

Given the spatial character of what is encroached-upon, and the evidently spatial character of the image-schemas proposed in the works on the metaphorical nature of conceptualization of [George Lakoff](#) (*Women, Fire and Dangerous Things: What Categories Reveal about the Mind*, 1987) and [Mark Johnson](#) (*The Body in the Mind: the Bodily Basis of Meaning, Imagination, and Reason*, 1987), there is a strong case for exploring the phenomenological basis of conceptual metaphors as in the work of Franson D Manjali (1997).

Understanding the relation between the encroacher and the encroached-upon as a dynamic of forces, the relevance of the language to "grooming", as an example, may be seen in the following summary by Franson D Manjali (*Dynamical Models in Semiotics/Semantics*) of the argument of [Leonard Talmy](#) (*Force Dynamics in Language and Cognition*, 1988):

For Talmy... the category of "force dynamics" (FD) consists of exertion of force, resistance to force, overcoming of resistance, blockage, and removal of blockage, etc. Comprising a range of relations of an agonist vs. antagonist kind, the FD category serves to explain a host of traditional categories like causativity, and those which can henceforth be seen as semantically related to it. Talmy shows that the FD schemas play the role of the source metaphor for other similar dynamics observable in the

psychological, psychosocial, modal, and discourse domains. More generally, Talmy has argued that the grammatically-specified notions are amenable to structural schematization involving the relationship between two entities in space, time or other conceptual domains

Manjali then highlights the generality of this framework:

Common to these approaches are the topologico-dynamic schemas identified corresponding to the action patterns. (In the karaka theory, however, the schemas are only implicit). Moreover, all except Talmy's FD schemas are directly concerned with the case category. The karaka theory, on the other hand, posits essentially different types of actions which are metaphysically construed, at least by Bhartrhari, as part of the constant unfolding of the Ultimate reality (or Brahma) as perceived from the perspective of the speaker. The karakas, or the actantial case relations originally proposed by Panini in the 5th century b.c., and followed by the long Indian grammatical tradition are the following: karta (=agent/subject), karma (object/goal of action), karana (instrument), adhikarana (the substratum of action), apadana (the source of action) and sampradana (the destination).

This is then related to Thom's perspective by Manjali:

In the context of Thom's Catastrophe Theory (CT), the list of archetypal morphologies proposed represents a deductive system where the variations in the actantial dynamics are associated with their corresponding topological graphs. CT has essentially to do with the effect of local (quantitative, micro-) variations on the global (qualitative, macro-) structure. It involves the topological description of the sudden, abrupt discontinuities induced by the local perturbations of a system. On the basis of the qualitatively different configurations of discontinuities that can occur for a maximum of four control variables,

Thom identified seven "elementary catastrophes". These catastrophes are further shown to yield a set of 16 linguistically-relevant "archetypal morphologies" or "semantic archetypes" corresponding to topologically different types of verbs, with increasing actantial complexity. The catastrophes are:

Elementary catastrophes			
Catastrophe	Control factors	Behaviour axes	Examples
Fold	1	1	refraction of sunlight by raindrops to form a rainbow
Cusp	2	1	transitions from flight to fight, love to hate, and anxiety to calm in man and animals; it models conditions for a military force's possible sudden collapse along a continuum of increasing vulnerability
Swallowtail	3	1	predicts certain kinds of behavior patterns in human nervous disorders
Butterfly	4	1	models the effect of firepower on survivability of a military force
Hyperbolic Umbilic	3	2	analyzing the collapse of bridges and the development of sonar devices
Elliptic Umbilic	3	2	models flow of fluids
Parabolic Umbilic	4	2	model problems in the field of linguistics

Control Factors	1 Behaviour Axis	2 Behaviour Axes
1	Fold	-
2	Cusp	-
3	Swallowtail	Hyperbolic Umbilic, Elliptic Umbilic
4	Butterfly	Parabolic Umbilic

[\[more\]](#)

Thom reached a remarkable conclusion in 1965: that for a very wide range of processes, only seven stable unfoldings, the seven 'elementary catastrophes', are possible. The unfoldings are called catastrophes because each of them has regions where a dynamic system can jump suddenly from one state to another, although the factors controlling the process change continuously. Each of the seven catastrophes represents a pattern of behaviour determined only by the number of control factors, not by their nature or by the interior mechanisms that connect them to the system's behaviour. Therefore the elementary catastrophes can be models for a wide variety of processes, even those in which we know little about the quantitative laws involved. This is an extraordinary idea: how is it possible that two processes can have features in common even when they are on different physical scales, operate under different quantitative laws and are affected by different sets of causes ?"

Given that encroachment may be viewed as latent conflict, and that catastrophe theory has been extensively used to explore decision-making in (potentially) conflictual situations ([web resources](#)), **there is a case for considering how the different catastrophes above map the behavioural and semantic regions of continuity around the zones of discontinuity.** In particular **do these maps of force dynamics indicate how the rules are being shifted under the forceful pressure of the encroacher?**

R J Rummel (*A Catastrophe Theory Model of the Conflict Helix*), for example, applies the butterfly model in elaborating the "conflict

helix" as "a general conceptual model of the process of conflict and peace. It is meant to provide explanation and understanding of the outbreak, sequence, and termination of conflict and peace at all social levels, from the interpersonal to the international". For Rummel:

The process of jumps between successive equilibria within a situation, of social contract - to - conflict - to - social contract - to - conflict, is a winding upward in mutual learning and adjustments. As long as *the major conditions of a relationship remain fairly constant*, this process leads toward longer lasting and deeper peace, interrupted by shorter and less intense social conflict. A sharp change in these conditions can set this process back, or even shear the conflict helix, as shown in [Figure 2](#), and cause the whole process of mutual adjustment and learning to begin anew. What changes will have this affect will depend on the parties involved. Between husband and wife, it might be the first child or the mother-in-law moving in; between business and government, a severe depression or leftist revolution; between two states, a reversal of the military balance or a radical change in the government of one.

However it is the argument of this paper that what may appear to be peace may be conflict-free encroachment setting the stage for unreasonable conflict. Rummel's [description](#) is remarkably suggestive of the perversity of "mutual adjustment" in the case of "grooming", given the quality of the "peaceful" conditions of that process -- and more generally in the adjustments made in the relation between encroacher and encroached-upon:

Theoretically and empirically, the intensity of conflict between i and j is dependent upon four primary conditions: the transition in power between them, the gap between their structure of expectations and balance of powers, their joint freedom, and their ability to project power across the geographic distance between them. Specifically, then, the four conditions and their definitions are the following:

Power transition: the degree to which capabilities are shifting toward the actor who is dissatisfied with the status quo (the core of the structure of expectations).

Gap: the incongruity between the structure of expectations and balance of interest, capabilities, and wills.

Joint freedom: the degree to which i and j both have internal civil rights, political liberties, and economic freedom; the less such joint freedom, the more i's expectation of violence if the status quo is disrupted; if i and j are both liberal democracies, there is no such expectation of violence.

Joint power projection: the capability of i and j to project power across the geographic distance between them, as defined, for example, by the inverse "social gravity" function G_{ij}^2/P_iP_j , where P is some measure of power to transcend distance and G is the geographic distance.

Curiously, [Peter J. Carroll](#) (*Liber Null and Psychonaut*, 1987) uses catastrophe theory to explore the relation between materialist and occultist views. He argues that catastrophe theory indicates that something unusual is likely to be expected under certain conditions, but not exactly when to expect it. It does, however, indicate how to provoke catastrophes. Carroll applies the theory to situations like initiation, illumination, and religious conversion, where there is a sudden change of state. [\[more\]](#) Again this suggests the relevance of such approaches to the unexpected consequences of encroachment.

These explorations, notably with respect to "illumination", recall the long-standing Buddhist concern with "gradual" versus "sudden" enlightenment (see Peter Gregory (Ed), *Sudden and Gradual: Approaches to Enlightenment in Chinese Thought*. 1991) [\[more | more\]](#). Poetry is used to articulate the associated doctrinal differences dating from the 7th century, with the two fundamentally different perspectives presented in verse form. Well-known to Chinese Buddhists, each of the mutually contradictory verses continues to reflect the perspective of a distinct school of thought within that tradition and continues to be the subject of commentary. Philosophically both perspectives were based on a belief in the intrinsic purity of mind, which, while pure in its self-nature, is soiled by adventitious passions. One, the **gradualist approach**, insists that effort is necessary to rid the mind of these foreign impurities, expressed through the metaphor of wiping and polishing a mirror. The contrasting **sudden approach** to awakening considers only its essential purity, to the point of refusing to recongnize the existence of any impurity to be removed (cf Paul Demiéville. *The Mirror of the Mind*. In: Peter N Gregory, 1991).

When it is recalled what influence such subtle distinctions have had (and continue to have) on the incidence of religious war, it is appropriate to see them as the articulation of policy differences. Perhaps the errorism underlying encroachment could be fruitfully contrasted using poetry with the terrorism of the consequent catastrophe (see *Poetry-making and Policy-making: arranging a marriage between Beauty and the Beast*, 1993).

From encroachment to "possession"

The past decade has seen the frequently articulated perception of Christian fundamentalists that Islam is "satanic" -- and the corresponding perception of Muslims regarding Christians [\[more | more\]](#). These perceptions have been expressed at the highest levels of leadership in both cases. It is therefore ironic that another set of clues to the process of encroachment comes from efforts to clarify the stages of psychic encroachment leading to demonic possession [\[more | more\]](#):

1. **Encroachment**, where a negative spirit is given an opening to a human being, either through voluntary means, such as a satanic ritual, or through involuntary means, such as a curse or the performance of an unholy act. It is the stage where permission was

granted either willingly or unwillingly for the spirit or spirits to take hold. The Roman Ritual of Christian Exorcism reads: "I cast thee out, thou unclean spirit, along with the least encroachment of the wicked enemy and every phantom and diabolical legion. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, depart and vanish from this creature of God...."

2. **Infestation**, when the demons are experienced as first haunt a person's house, for example.
3. **Oppression**, when the spirits are experienced as beginning trying to take over -- namely possess -- the person living in the house. This stage is far greater than that of infestation. There is a mental barrage of temptation -- terrible dreams, and fear may consume the person who is experiencing the assault of senses. Constant sleep deprivation may be used as well to break down the targeted individual or individuals. It is this stage where the demonic is setting the person up for the ultimate goal and desire: possession.
4. **Death**, the final stage, of demonic possession.

The explanatory comments offered in many of the examples of encroachment given in the Annex to this paper (*Varieties of Encroachment*, 2004; amended as *Provocation of "Unprovoked Aggression" by Encroachment*, 2023) stress the gradual process of eroding freedom of action in some way. It is however the final stage, possibly to be understood as "post-encroachment", when the encroacher has acquired sufficient freedom to ensure final "closure" with a final "pounce" or "kill". In the case of sexual relations, for example, the term "pounce" is occasionally used to describe this behaviour. The term "kill" is more common with reference to closure in commercial relations -- although some metaphor of rape may also be used in that context. It is against this action that "unreasonably" violent reactions may be made -- as in the case of terrorism.

The distinction between the gradual stages and the closure stages may indeed be crudely modelled by the two parts of the shepherd's crook -- the lengthy preliminaries before the compressed period in which the "bent" and "crooked" nature of the strategy becomes evident. The preliminaries may always be described as "reasonable" by the encroacher and -- with difficulty -- may be interpreted as such by the encroached-upon, impressed perhaps by the knowledge or authority of the encroacher. It is in the "crooked" phase that the encroacher more obviously usurps and takes possession -- and the "game" becomes more fully evident to the encroached-upon. However, typically, this is by then too late for the encroached-upon, who has already exhibited a history -- difficult to challenge -- of transferring power and control to the encroacher. The cuckoo has moved into the nest and expects servicing !

It is the final "bending" phase, symbolized in the shepherd's crook, in which the encroached-upon is "locked into" the pattern completely controlled by the encroacher -- who, in a perverse distortion of the ecclesiastical and pharaonic roles, then becomes the "guide" in the process. The suggestion here is that the precise nature of this bending is helpfully articulated in catastrophe theory -- in terms of control and behaviour factors. A simple analogy is provided by the point at which the thread of a screw "takes".

Another source of insight into this process of "bending" -- which relates to the insights to be derived from movement over the surfaces of the elemental catastrophes of catastrophe theory -- is that of mathematician [Ron Atkin](#) (*Multidimensional Man; can man live in 3-dimensional space?*, 1981) and his development of [q-analysis](#). Of particular interest, for the experience of the encroached-upon, are the implications of the structuring effect of non-comprehension. One interesting feature of this -- in terms of catastrophe theory's control factors and behaviour axes -- is the effect of the experienced forces to which an individual is subject by exposure to something which is not fully comprehended, especially when the non-comprehension is not consciously recognized, or is disguised by satisfaction with a superficial explanation. In a sense the comprehension of an individual creates the space-time geometry within which he or she functions (in Atkin's terms), whereas his or her non-comprehension determines the nature of the forces to which he or she is subject within that geometry (again in Atkin's terms). [[more](#) | [more](#) | [more](#)]

Such considerations suggest the power of q-analysis in clarifying approaches to human and social development in general -- but to the processes of encroachment and "possession" in particular. Reducing the dimensionality of the geometry on which a person (or group) is able to live is an impoverishment associated with repressive forces. Expanding the dimensionality induces positive, attractive forces through which a sense of development and enrichment is experienced. Q-analysis seems to be a valuable new language through which precision can be given to intuitive experiences and their communication, particularly since it provides an explicit measure of obstruction to change.

Encroachment and closure through "Getting to Yes"

A less charged set of clues to the process of encroachment is provided by studies of the negotiation process and its objective of closure on an agreement or deal. This process has notably been explored by Roger Fisher, William Ury and Bruce Patton (*Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*, 1991), followed by William Ury (*Getting Past No: Negotiating your Way from Confrontation to Cooperation*, 1993). These are based on the work of the Harvard Negotiation Project of the [Harvard Program on Negotiation](#), a group that deals continually with all levels of negotiation and conflict resolution from domestic to business to international. Such studies offer vital insights for diplomatic and commercial negotiations and provide material for many courses on negotiation..

In the case of [ESI International](#), for example, the development of negotiation skills for project managers relate to four stages : Using rapport to establish communication, Exploring to determine issues, Creating movement to obtain agreement, Closing to ensure commitment. A course on [Advanced Contract Negotiation Skills and Techniques for Project Managers](#) distinguishes four stages: Rapport, Exploratory, Negotiation, Closing. Another course distinguishes six stages: Preparation, Discussions, Regroup, Negotiate for resolution, Reach consensus, Close [[more](#)]

Insights may also be obtained from the stages of the treaty negotiation process. One interesting example is negotiation with First Nations where the following stages are distinguished [[more](#)]: Submission of Statement of Intent, Readiness to Negotiate, Negotiation of Framework Agreement, Negotiation of Agreement-in-Principle, Negotiation of Final Agreement, Implementation of a treaty.

The general principles of negotiation can clearly be interpreted to apply to situations in which the hidden agenda of one party is not necessarily to the advantage of the other -- as is implied by many of these courses. This is typically the case in asymmetric negotiations

as explored by Joel Peters with respect to the Middle East peace process [more], and by Kimberly Elliott (*Pitfalls in Asymmetric Negotiations: Will the U.S. be the Next Goliath?* 2003) of the Center for Global Development. Researchers Kathleen L. McGinn and Angela T. Keros (*Improvisation and the logic of exchange in socially embedded transactions*, 2002) argue that negotiators turn to three dynamic processes -- trust testing, process clarification, and emotional punctuation -- when they have difficulty moving the interaction toward a coherent, mutually agreed upon improvisation. The authors examine in detail the few asymmetric negotiations, which do not involve a shared logic of exchange.

Such asymmetry is mapped by John Mole (*The Deal Map: Power and Relationship in Negotiation*) who argues that two sets of values, 'power' and 'relationship', determine most of the elements of negotiation. They especially influence the final stage of bargaining and agreeing. They form the axes of the Deal Map. This interrelates four negotiation types (predator, controller, trader, partner), for each of which there is a different and distinct set of values and behaviours at each stage of negotiation. According to Mole, the easiest negotiations are with those of the same type. The hardest are with those of the diagonally opposite type on the map.

Encroachment is a process typically used by a more powerful partner in a situation where the agenda is less principled than the values governing the encroached-upon. Obvious examples are an adult convincing a minor to engage in sex, or the efforts of an experienced pusher to persuade an innocent to try some drug. "Getting to Yes" then has more sinister implications when the "deal" is "closed" -- especially when the outcome is tragic, as may be the case of teenage pregnancy and addiction.

Intimate relationship between "errorism" and "terrorism"

The above argument endeavours to point to the nature of the relationship between errorism and terrorism:

- In the later phases of encroachment, the errorism may create an experience of terror in the encroached-upon. This is most easily seen in the case of child abuse. It is also evident in the action of "peaceful" settlers in their exertion of control over native peoples, possibly only through structural violence. Errorism is then associated with terrorism. The apparent innocence and legitimacy of encroachment is transformed into terrorism, at least as it may be experienced.
- The terrorism that emerges as a reaction to encroachment becomes associated with its own form of errorism, through inability to discover any viable strategy that does not involve physical violence. The apparent appropriateness of the violent self-defence by "terrorists" is transformed into errorism as the means obscure the ends.

This transformation has been termed [enantiidromia](#), namely the process whereby something is transformed into its opposite. Interestingly the term derives from classical Greek drama -- and is presumably a feature of tragedy, as identified by Northrop Frye (see above). For Diana Price (*Jung and Enantiidromia*, 2003) it is the emergence of the unconscious opposite when an extreme, one-sided tendency dominates conscious life. Enantiidromia is typically experienced in conjunction with symptoms associated with acute neurosis. This explains why many of the most hardcore submissives and masochists usually carry great responsibility and power in their everyday life and careers. Masochism is their counterbalance that prevents enantiidromia and the development of neuroses.

The process of enantiidromia has been explored by [William Irwin Thompson](#) (*Pacific Shift*, 1985) in relation to Gaian politics. It is well illustrated by the outcomes of many modern revolutions, whether democratic or otherwise: the optimistic romanticism of Rousseau which helped provoke the French revolution rather quickly turns into the dark terrorism of Robespierre; Stalin, the successor to Lenin in the Russian revolution, behaves much worse than the inhumane Czar he and Lenin struggled so much to replace; Chairman Mao as brutal a ruler as any ruthless Chinese emperor that preceded him, etc. [more]

Enantiidromia is the name Heraclitus gave to the law which governs blind contingency. Jung identified it as the psychological law which says that sooner or later everything turns into its opposite, saying:

The only person who escapes the grim law of enantiidromia is the man who knows how to separate himself from the unconscious, not by repressing it - for then it simply attacks him from the rear - but by putting it clearly before him as that which he is not. [more | more]

Enantiidromia is well illustrated by the situation of the US forces who framed themselves as innocent and welcomed "liberators" of Iraq from terror, only to find themselves as framed thereafter as hated "occupiers" by the Iraqis -- notably as a result of adopting interrogation techniques, and arbitrary killings, indistinguishable to many from the terror cultivated in this way by Saddam Hussein. The photographs reinforced this view -- despite President Bush's statement (6 May 2004) that "people seeing those pictures didn't understand the true nature and heart of America".

As a former UK Environment Minister (1997-2003), Michael Meacher (*Playing Bin Laden's Game*, 2004) introduces a devastating example of enantiidromia as follows:

Despite the revelations of torture, the US-British policy is unchanged: see this historic struggle through to its conclusion for the sake of democracy and civilisation; apply overwhelming force against terrorists and extremists; and show unremitting resolve to root out resistance wherever it is found. Whether it is Americans in Iraq, Israelis in Palestine or the west against al-Qaida, the approach is the same: a policy proclaimed in the name of freedom, tolerance and a decent world order that, ironically, could hardly be better calculated to produce the opposite.

Complicity of accomplices

The complicity of those involved in the process of encroachment may be distinguished as follows:

(a) **Encroacher:** Clearly there is a need for the encroacher to be covert in initiating and sustaining the process. It is necessary to appear as having a normal relationship with the encroached-upon -- free of any perversity that may later become apparent. The encroacher has in fact to work at cultivating the fiduciary relationship, building trust. The strategy is essentially one of creating a bond of complicity to the exclusion of other perspectives. In the final phases, when the encroacher is gaining "possession", the task then is to create a situation in which the encroached-upon has more to lose than to gain by protesting to others about the unique nature of their relationship. Such arguments may be based upon threats of loss of face, loss of privileges, condemnation of others, long-term damage to a career and future opportunities, etc.

(b) **Encroached-upon:** The encroached-upon is faced initially with the challenge of the attention accorded by the encroacher. This may be assessed as promising privileges and competitive advantage in relation to others. To the extent that it is the strategy of the encroacher to encourage and nourish this belief, the encroached-upon may become a willing accomplice throughout the preliminary stages -- especially of these continue to nourish a faint hope of miraculous escape from enmeshing by the encroacher. When the encroacher "pounces" and moves in "for the kill", the encroached-upon may indeed become convinced that more is to be gained by acceding to the process than by expostulating, or by articulating any concern to others. The encroached upon then indeed becomes an accomplice.

Unreasonable responses are triggered by failure of the bond of complicity. Terrorism may be understood as a response to the actions of others who have "gone too far".

Denial by accomplices: encroacher

Protesting questionable intentions: It is clear that the encroacher is highly motivated to deny vigorously any questionable intentions, whether in response to expostulation by the encroacher during the process, or to others commenting upon the process, or following any form of final "possession". This is particularly important when the encroacher has a duty of care for the encroached-upon in an institutional setting. As a group this is equally true if the framework is a national or international community subject to some form of rule of law. Indeed as a member of that community, the encroached-upon may be able to persuade the authorities in that community of the merits of avoiding scandal and its effects on the reputation of the community as a whole. An excellent historic example is provided by the case (documented by Karen Liebreich, *Fallen Order*, 2004) of the Piarist Order, founded in 1622 and banned in 1646, whose key members indulged in paedophilia and were promoted in order to avoid scandal. The founder, Jose de Calasanz (canonized in 1767 and named in 1947 as celestial protector of schools) framed his approach to such accusations as: "One should first assure oneself of the truth with all secrecy, which in such cases should be dissimulated and covered up, so it does not appear true even if it is". As Liebreich notes: "The contemporary Catholic church's practice of moving a suspected paedophile away from the original scene of the crime for fear of ensuing scandal and the backlash clearly has long antecedents." [\[more\]](#)

Normality of denial of atrocity: The denial of Latin American dictators regarding their violence against citizens and the "disappeared" provides another example [\[more\]](#). Denial of racism provides another, as documented by Paul Street (*Those Who Deny the Crimes of the Past Reflections on American Racist Atrocity Denial, 1776-2004*). More successfully studied, notably by Noam Chomsky, is the denial by the US government of its role in Central America and especially in Nicaragua [\[more\]](#) [\[more\]](#). He argues that the media and the intellectual classes in general facilitate denial systematically, notably with the idea of American exceptionalism, of benevolence occasionally gone astray, wiping out the parts of history that are unpleasant, celebrating magnificent achievements often on the basis of false accounts [\[more\]](#). He relates that to the war against Iraq [\[more\]](#). George Monbiot argues that the USA is ignoring its own role in stifling global democracy (*An empire of denial*, *The Guardian*, 1 June 2004). Stanley Cohen's argument (*States of Denial: Knowing About Atrocities and Suffering*, 2001) is based on hundreds of theoretical references in sociology and psychology, woven together with both private and public experience of how "the past comes back to haunt you". Looking at the perpetrators of atrocities -- from Nazi Germany to apartheid South Africa via the years of military dictatorship in South America -- he notes "the unedifying ways in which most people comply with authority". Denial of responsibility inevitably follows one of four paths: obedience to superiors, conformity with society, necessity or splitting of the personality. He believes that denial is the normal state of affairs, and that what he calls "the Oxfam/Amnesty view", in which the outsider is asked to take action, is the exception.

Exceptionalism: A common form of denial -- exceptionalism -- is to acknowledge specific incidents where evidence is undeniable, but to argue that these are completely isolated and exceptional. It is their representation of a systemic pattern of abuse which is then denied. Curiously such arguments are similar whether it is a matter of sexual abuse by priests or inhumane treatment by interrogators. The process of damage limitation is then characterized by definitional game-playing, category manipulation and conceptual gerrymandering (*Category Manipulation in Global Dialogue*, 2000). The interesting question is how to determine the number of perpetrators that should be considered "small" and acting "in isolation" in contrast with a small number acting in consort, as the agents of a larger system -- as with any special task force (whether a Delta Force, a group of astronauts, or a military intelligence unit).

Justification for suppression of information for "national security" reasons then bears striking resemblance to the cover-up processes in relationship to sexual abuse by priests. The institutional "security" response is considered of higher importance, to protect the collective mission, rather than to remedy any wrong-doing (or address its systemic implications).

Case of Donald Rumsfeld: These forms of denial were dramatically evident in the extensive testimony of Donald Rumsfeld to the US Senate (7th May 2004), in the company of his military subordinates, regarding the widely-publicized photographs of abuse of Iraqi prisoners. Rumsfeld's defence against accusations of cover-up was that:

(a) highly proper internal investigations had been undertaken from January 2004, when the abuses were first reported (despite the abuses having been reported to the US authorities months previously by the International Committee of the Red Cross-ICRC and subsequently declared to be "tantamount to torture" [\[more\]](#) [\[more\]](#));

(b) it would have been extremely demoralizing and dangerous for US military, faced with an intense combat situation, to be exposed to the scandalous and the totally unprecedented conduct of a very small group of their colleagues (irrespective of the "demoralizing" effects of such abuse on the victims and their families, or the early precedent of [My Lai](#) with its effects on the conduct of the Vietnam war);

(c) he had only seen the photographs on the previous day and it was only on viewing those photographs -- *it's the pictures, stupid ?!* -- that he had appreciated the significance that had not been adequately carried by confidential textual reports to which he had not had access (despite the fact that the photos had been available in January 2004, the nature of the abuse had been adequately described in such early text reports, and he was US Secretary for Defense);

(d) the 6 or 7 alleged perpetrators represented an extremely small proportion of the fine and honourable military forces active in Iraq in promoting American values for the benefit of the Iraqi people (despite his assertion that in any one year there were 18,000 ongoing criminal investigations of US military personnel and the Iraqi people were far from being universally appreciative of the US military's conduct);

(e) he could not properly have sought access to the photographs and other evidence, whatever their significance, in order to avoid any accusation of improper interference in military justice that might prejudice the defence of the accused (irrespective of the systemic violence possibly underway against other prisoners, then and subsequently);

(f) the chain of command and information was such that highly significant information available to US military intelligence did not necessarily, or immediately, pass up that chain to the highest levels at which military strategy was defined (despite the unprecedented investment in sophisticated communication and interpretative systems, and the motivation of intelligence services to compensate for the "intelligence failure" of the coalition in relation to 9/11);

(g) it was not possible for him to determine, nor proper for him to seek to determine, amongst 18,000 ongoing investigations against US military personnel, those that might be of strategic significance in the conduct of operations in Iraq (despite the fact that any measures against suspects to ensure the success of such operations could well be undertaken in defiance of the Geneva Convention, as he had first indicated in policy statements in January 2002 [[more](#)]).

Using valued institutional processes as camouflage: Rumsfeld was thus able to use the *sub-judice* argument both to justify non-disclosure of information to the US Senate and House of Congress and to justify his own lack of awareness of the significance of the photographs -- whilst simultaneously claiming that timely investigative and corrective procedures had been undertaken.

Following this logic, had prisoners been systematically killed or gassed in large numbers in Iraqi prisons, Rumsfeld's focus would have been on not releasing (or becoming aware of) the information to avoid prejudicing the trial of those who might have been falsely accused of responsibility in the matter. Furthermore, in declaring that there were other "more awful" photos and videos -- of a "sadistic, cruel and inhuman" nature -- yet to be released regarding the particular incident, he avoided responding to questions as to whether equally unexpected evidence might later surface regarding other forms of (possibly systemic) abuse within the military "on his watch". Like paedophile networks, Rumsfeld's Pentagon has its secret database of "dirty pictures" for the private perusal of military intelligence. Subsequent to the hearing, release of the pictures was blocked -- unsurprisingly because, once again, they might prejudice the trial of those who had taken them.

"It's the pictures, stupid!?"

"It is the photographs that gives one the vivid realization of what actually took place... Words don't do it. The words that there were abuses, that it was cruel, that it was inhumane, all of which is true, that it was blatant, you read that and it's one thing. You see the photographs, and you get a sense of it, and you cannot help but be outraged."

Donald Rumsfeld, US Secretary of Defence, 7 May 2004 [[more](#)]

What other challenges and possibilities go officially unrecognized, and denied, because they are only described in text ?

Depths of denial: How awful can Rumsfeld's "more awful" be? Was it the scale -- gas chamber style? Using animals to rape women -- or perhaps men with AIDS? Live snakes in orifices -- or live rats forced into the stomach? Submersion in pig-shit -- or its forced consumption? Ripping off limbs -- drawing and quartering? Impaling? Burning alive? Where did the good Christian soldiers -- defending Christian American values -- get their inspiration? From the biblical "Sodom and Gomorrah" -- ironically thought to be sited in Iraq -- and consonant with the sexual acts between Christian soldiers appearing in the photos? From Hollywood movies about slimy "aliens"? From the Inquisition? From experimentation on humans exemplified by [Dr Joseph Mengele](#) of Auschwitz -- and followed in the USA and the UK by biochemical experiments on soldiers and prisoners? From "snuff" and S&M videos on the American market? Or from American allies -- such as Abdurrashid Dostum -- whose massacre at Mazar-el-Sharif was covered up? [[more](#)] Or from a "culture of violence" exemplified by hazing practices cultivated and tolerated in every American institution -- as argued by Susan Sontag (*What have we done?*, 2004)? Or by widely sanctioned, routine mistreatment, practiced in American prisons [[more](#)] -- exemplified by the curious fact that the man responsible for directing the re-opening of the Abu Ghraib prison after the US invaded Iraq, and for training the guards, was Lane McCotter of Utah, who was selected for the job by none other than Attorney General John Ashcroft (a born-again Christian, like George Bush) -- after an inmate had died "on his watch" while shackled to a restraining chair in a Utah prison [[more](#)].

Abuse of unchallengeable authority: Rumsfeld's declarations, made under oath, were necessarily to be accepted at face value -- despite a long history of assertions by him regarding the existence of WMD in Iraq. He is fully supported by President Bush and by up to 70% of the American population !. Similarly Tony Blair declared himself to be equally supportive of his Minister of Defence -- with both claiming

(on 10 May 2004) that they had not been aware of abuses reported, on several occasions, to both the Ministry of Defence and the Foreign Office, by Amnesty International during 2003, and had not needed to be informed [more]. "I instruct you not to report to me anything about which I might wish to do nothing?" Tony Blair then admitted that he had not read the report of the ICRC after the public release of the photos. Shakespeare's Pompey once again?

Pompey's reply to Menas on being informed that the throats of his guests, Caesar and his companions, could now be safely cut:
"Ah this thou shouldst have done,
And not spoke on't! In me 'tis villainy;
In thee 't had been good service. Being done unknown,
I should have found it afterwards well done,
But must condemn it now"

Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*
as quoted by Paul Rayment, Former Director of
Economic Analysis, UN/ECE, *Financial Times*, 15
May 2004

Subsequent to Rumsfeld's testimony, however, Seymour Hersh (*The Gray Zone: How a secret Pentagon program came to Abu Ghraib*, *New Yorker*, 24 May 2004) demonstrates the nature of the ultra-secret, "black" Special Access Program (SAP) which would necessarily have obliged Rumsfeld to omit any reference at the public hearings to knowledge he had with regard to procedures put in place to ensure "special access" to those in whom the USA perceived a need to be interested for reasons of "national security". According to Hersh's informants, all the so-called "black" programs under Rumsfeld's authority had one element in common: the Secretary of Defense, or his deputy, had to conclude that the normal military classification restraints did not provide enough security. Constrained by such deep secrecy, what price perjury and democracy?

How naive is it necessary to be to assume that those constrained in this way, within what they themselves define as a "black" (or covert) world, act in the interests of "national security" as others in the "white" (or overt) world might hope it to be understood? Or might they -- as the "heart of darkness" of "democracy" and camouflaged by its values -- be cold-bloodedly prepared to sacrifice any "white" value in the pursuit of values defined only by themselves? The possibility has of course been extensively explored by Hollywood movies. What is the probability that those in the "black" world had more to do with 9/11 than they would wish to be known in advancing their strategic interests -- a theme explored by conspiracy theorists? Is it a case of: "The more we do to you, the less you seem to believe we are doing it." (Joseph Mengele, Auschwitz)?

In relation to the current crisis, the "heart of darkness" theme has been explored by Jack Dalton (*America's Heart of Darkness*, Al-Jazeera, 21 May 2004), citing Nietzsche: "Whoever fights monsters should see to it that in the process he does not become a monster." Others have used the theme in analyzing the US abuse of prisoners [more | more] and, as might be expected, in efforts to demonize those opposed to the USA [more | more | more]. The theme has also been used to characterize the technocratic mindset within the USA from which new weapons of mass destruction are now emerging [more].

As noted by Paul Rayment in his reference above to Pompey: "Those directly involved in the violation of the Geneva Conventions in Iraq will presumably be court-martialed or otherwise dealt with. The really difficult problem is dealing with the Pompey's of this world." The challenge of who controls the guardians of democracy has notably been explored by Patrick J. Garrity ("*Sed quis custodiet ipsos Custodes?*" *The Quadrennial Defense Review Tries to be All Things for All People*, 1997), citing Juvenal's *Qui custodiet custodiet?* Is pleading ignorance a valid defence? Either leaders should resign for incompetence in failing to demand that they be kept informed of vital information; or their senior advisers should be forced to resign for failing in their duty to ensure their leaders received it.

Displacement of concern: Typical of denial, Rumsfeld's major regret was **not** the abuse by those under his command but rather the illegal disclosure of the photos and of the military's report by General Taguba about the allegations [more] -- contrary to the military and judicial rules of confidentiality under Rumsfeld's command (which had created the organizational culture actively encouraging those abuses by military intelligence) [more]. In response, the *Army Times* in the USA has stated: "This was not just a failure of leadership at the local command level. This was a failure that ran straight to the top." This has been expressed in other terms by Sidney Blumenthal (*The Bush orthodoxy is in shreds*, *The Guardian*, 27 May 2004): "...everyone in the line of fire motioning toward the chain of command, spiralling upwards and sideways, until the finger pointing in a phalanx is directed at the hollow crown".

As indicated by Rosa Ehrenreich Brooks, formerly a senior adviser on human rights to the US State Department: (see Suzanne Goldenberg. *US forces were taught torture techniques*, 2004):

"The attitude that was communicated started from the highest levels and was sent on down the chain. It created an overall climate in which adversaries were dehumanised, the distinction between suspect and known perpetrator was effaced, and the overall message was that international law or domestic niceties get in the way of doing quote 'what we had to do'...When that is the message from the top it enables all sorts of bad behaviour."

Outrage against abuse, as noted by Norman Solomon (*The Coming Backlash Against Outrage*), is reframed as worse than the abuse itself as notably exemplified at a hearing of the Senate Armed Services Committee (11 May 2004) by Republican Senator James Inhofe: "As I watch this outrage - this outrage everyone seems to have about the treatment of these prisoners - I have to say ... I'm probably not the only one up at this table that is more outraged by the outrage than we are by the treatment"

Religious parallel, "evil" -- and "exorcism"?: Subsequent to the release of the photos, widespread evidence from a variety of sources, emerged to indicate the systemic nature of such abuse under military direction on the behalf of the coalition governments claiming to represent the highest values of civilization. The parallels with the pattern of denial of sexual abuse by the priesthood within the Catholic church are striking -- especially given the evidence of sexual abuse of boys by coalition soldiers.

Such issues are consonant with the extraordinary recognition accorded to "evil" in modern times by the Bush and Blair administrations inspired by Christian fundamentalists -- as the "Axis of Good" (rather than as an "[Axis of Shame](#)") [more]. Such perceptions have even been embodied in the attitudes of the highest military commanders, as with General William Boykin, US deputy undersecretary of defence for intelligence, who has been widely quoted as declaring that the so-called war on terrorism was a Christian struggle against Satan [more]. How do such views get embodied in the attitudes of common soldiers and "special forces" -- perhaps deliberately encouraged to believe in their role as Christian "crusaders"? Would it not then be imperative within their logical framework to establish some kind of "International School of Exorcism" to improve professional resources for processing terrorists possessed by such "evil"? [more] Might this not benefit from the insights of the Pope's recent *De Exorcismis et supplicationibus quibusdam?* [more]

Should the [Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation](#) (formerly the School of the Americas) now be seen as a modern equivalent of such a school [more | more]? How should the techniques it prescribes, as described in the classified US Army Field Manual 30-15: *Intelligence Interrogations* (Section II: *Use of Force*), as referenced in *Physical Interrogation Techniques* (Richard Krousher, 1985) and noted by John Sutherland (*Guardian*, 21 January 2002), be adapted to this end [more; more] ? In the light of the declassification of such manuals in 1996, and the revelation that they promoted executions, torture, blackmail and other forms of coercion [more], how might such methods be distinguished from "torture" -- declared by the US to be contrary to government policy, as outlined in *Intelligence Interrogations* (FM 34-52, 1987), despite the experience of the encroached-upon to the contrary? Given reports of use by military interrogators of a battery of 50-odd special "coercive techniques" at Guantanamo Bay, how are such denials to be reconciled with reports of training in the UK for British and American "special forces" in techniques of "resistance to interrogation" (RTI) and "tactical questioning" (TQ) -- subsequently adapted by those so trained to their own interrogation of Iraqi prisoners? [more] This could be a brilliant technique for "not-training" competent torturers. Given their use in military intelligence, could Donald Rumsfeld also successfully claim ignorance of them in order to avoid any accusation of improper interference in such "judicial investigation" processes?

Given the perception by Islamic fundamentalists of the "satanic" nature of the USA, is it any wonder that al-Qaida training camps might well be perceived as their own form of "schools of exorcism" through which "evil", as they understand it, is to be excised from society with any appropriate means?

Nazi parallel: The extremely delicate issue for the coalition forces, and for the US government in particular, is the manner of their rebuttal of any comparison with Nazi practices. Despite widespread evidence regarding systematic mistreatment of prisoners in the USA [more], for example, or a pattern of officially sanctioned/tolerated/condoned (?) abuse (and deaths) in British military training camps [more], or killing of prisoners and civilians (see Kamil Mahdi. *Let's face up to it -- we are torturers too.* *Guardian*, 1 June 2004, and the confirmation by Gerry Adams. *I have been in torture photos, too.* *Guardian*, 5 June 2004 of the horrific detailed description of personal experience from 1972 of systematic abuse at the hands of UK security services). Curious the contrast with the self-perception of those at West Point ("fortress of virtue, preserve of the nation's values") and Sandhurst as being the prime defenders of western values [more]. Curious too that Gerry Adams, formerly labelled as a terrorist by the UK (now president of Sinn Fein and member of the UK parliament for Belfast West), should have been courted and feted in the USA by conservatives, then and now [more | more]. Much is made of the vital distinction between abuse against detainees as "acts by isolated individuals" and systemic abuse as "an instrument of official government policy". If it is demonstrated, following disclosures by Hersh and others, that it has indeed been government policy to engage in abuse (and torture, possibly leading to death) against those in detention, the US government will then be subject to condemnation on its own terms. Pleas of ignorance from the highest levels of the chain of command would then raise issues of a deliberate policy -- consistent with the SAP precedents -- to ensure deniable culpability.

Reporting on the testimony of [Jean Améry](#) (*At the Mind's Limits: Contemplations by a Survivor of Auschwitz and Its Realities*, 1980), a victim of Nazi torture, Michael Ignatieff (*Evil under interrogation.* *Financial Times*, 15 May 2004) states:

Améry also insisted that torture should be viewed not in individual terms as the psychosexual aberration of particular torturers but as a key to the identity of the society responsibility for it. He argued that torture was not an incidental feature of the Third Reich but the essence of its view of human beings....For torture, when committed by a state, expresses the state's ultimate view that human beings are expendable. This view is antithetical to the spirit of any constitutional society whose *raison d'être* is the control of violence and coercion in the name of human dignity and freedom.

The additional twist in relation to the Nazi chain of command, as it emerged at the [Nuremberg trials](#) and the subsequent trial of [Adolf Eichmann](#), was the question of obedience to orders within the chain of command. This is a plea already made by operatives associated with the Iraqi prison abuse photos -- claiming to be under orders from the US military intelligence hierarchy (seeking to obtain shameful photos through which to blackmail victims into betraying those in their community). This is confirmed by the report of the ICRC: "In certain cases, such as in Abu Ghraib military intelligence section, methods of physical and psychological coercion used by the interrogators appeared to be part of the standard operating procedures by military intelligence personnel to obtain confessions and extract information" [more]. The ICRC claimed that it had repeatedly made known its concerns to coalition forces.

Use of proxies -- "it wasn't us !": A modern twist is already emerging in that for-profit contractors to the military -- involving many former members of the armed forces -- have been providing services to the military in Iraq, notably in locations where abuses are now being documented. If the contract only specifies "assistance in eliciting information" then the contracting military force can deny any responsibility for the pattern of abuse by their contractors associated with obtaining that information. Like any international

nongovernmental organization (NGO), the contracting "nongovernmental" multinational corporation (whether headquartered in the USA or not) is then not accountable under international law with regard to the action of its "nongovernmental operatives" (NGOs?) -- a strategic contribution by the US government to undermining the embarrassing role of human rights NGOs in reporting abuses by the USA. Interestingly, through this approach of the US government, international mercenary organizations are being positioned as the "shadow" of humanitarian NGOs -- perhaps to be considered consistent with the traditional US position in relation to militias and the right to bear arms under the Second Amendment to the US Constitution (*Arming Civil Society Worldwide: Getting democracy to work in the emergent American Empire?* 2003).

When regime change is finally achieved in the USA, will the human rights and other abuses of the Bush regime (including Guantanamo Bay) be labelled, like the abuses in Iraqi prisons, as the acts of "a few irresponsible elements" not representative of "the true nature and heart of America" -- to use Bush's words? The complicity of the majority will then be denied -- despite the evidence to the contrary from the opinion polls prior to regime change.

Control of the media: The processes of collective denial have been further exemplified by the treatment in the USA of the documentary by [Michael Moore](#) (*Fahrenheit 9/11*), awarded the *Palme d'Or* at the 2004 Cannes Film festival. Distribution of the film, which explores the relationship between the Bush family and the royal family of Saudi Arabia, has been blocked by Disney, allegedly due to pressures on the corporation [[more](#) | [more](#) | [more](#)]. Moore had previously been responsible for the Oscar-winning documentary *Bowling for Columbine* that explored the gun-culture of the USA, and its support by the [National Rifle Association](#) that is proud to have the "ear of the President".

Denial by accomplices: encroached-upon

In this case considerable pressures operate to sustain a pattern of denial, possibly lasting decades. A prime factor is the shame associated with the process of "possession" and the impact of any revelations on the person's career or relationships. This may be compounded by the lack of access to a protest procedure in which they have confidence. In the case of collectivities such denial manifests in the widespread pattern of cover-up of "dirty secrets" characteristic of classification of documents in the interests of "national security", for example. In both cases financial or other rewards may be offered to sustain the pattern of silence.

"Terraism"

The process of encroachment, and the denial relating to any catastrophic consequences, is used as a major distraction from the larger picture that errorism fails to address (*Destructive Weapons of Mass Distraction vs Distractive Weapons of Mass Destruction*, 2003). In the general case it is the denial of the devastation of the planet and its peoples that is associated with the dominant mindsets and policies. This might usefully be termed "terraism" (see *War against Terra*, 2002).

In seeking to transcend the polarized, "Us or Them", [binary thinking](#) promoted by errorists and terrorists alike, "terraism" might be fruitfully reframed in terms of its inherent strategic dilemmas:

- **As planetary aggression:** In this case terraism might be understood as that form of "errorism" that does violence to the planet and its peoples -- through an effectively unconstrained pattern of exploitative "awful" terrorism against the bio-physical and psycho-social environments that appears, paradoxically, to be essential to human survival
- **As planetary harmony:** In this case terraism might be understood as that mode of action and thinking that engenders harmonious relationships that are the challenges of sustainable development, despite the "errorism" to which the initiatives of any developers are subject -- terraism then to be understood as the honourable, "awe-full" fear for the future of the planet, of its peoples, and for the harsh judgement of the future (*Is God a Terrorist: Definitional game-playing by the Coalition of the Willing?*, 2004)

The challenge, recalling the insight of Chuang Tzu (above), is how to embody both perspectives in a more comprehensive mode of understanding -- free from demonization -- in which the strengths and weaknesses of each perspective are counter-balanced.

George Bush and Osama bin Laden have together done a great job in enabling the world to see the challenges in another light -- and with a greater sense of authenticity (see *Evoking Authenticity: through polyhedral global configuration of local paradoxes*, 2003) than prevailed before their intervention.

Conclusion

"Errorism" is best understood through the processes of encroachment. As such it tends to be action taken by the powerful, or who derive their power from respectability and moral superiority -- perhaps enhanced by charm or spiritual authority that brooks no criticism. This serves as camouflage for the "twisted" perspective of the encroacher through which the relatively innocent encroached-upon is "turned" and their will suborned. It is when the trap of encroachment is sprung that the encroached-upon may revolt violently and "unreasonably" against their oppression, possession or occupation. Such violence is claimed by the encroacher to be completely unprovoked.

There is a degree of equivalence between the different forms of encroachment identified here. Encroachment may be understood as a strategic mindset that is most appreciated **individually** in the courtship process. It is perhaps least appreciated in individual sexual harassment and abuse -- perhaps best described as a pathological form of the courtship process. Encroachment does indeed have acceptable forms in the case of product and service marketing -- although here too many questions are raised regarding their pathological forms -- as with any process of negotiation (see *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*, 1991). Any courtship process might indeed be seen as a process of, possibly mutual, encroachment -- through which the other is progressively "enmeshed"

without being conscious of any "point of no return". The argument of this paper, given the nature of its conclusion, might be considered an example of "memetic encroachment" !

It is in this context that it is useful to examine the case of territorial encroachment (especially, as discussed in the [Annex](#) to this paper, in the light of the potential of [conceptual violence](#) and [spiritual violence](#) intrinsic to modern interrogation). To what extent should it be understood as systemically equivalent, in its pathological forms, to the "terror" associated with:

- Sexual harassment especially when territorial encroachment is deployed against another culture susceptible to destructive and uncaring penetration?
- Child abuse especially when territorial encroachment is deployed against those of lesser privilege and with more limited resources?
- Interrogation techniques as territorial encroachment applied by both dictators and the "forces of freedom" of modern civilization?

Beyond these apparently distinct questions is the challenge of the way in which they may be perversely intertwined at a deeply fundamental level involving twisted understandings of the role of women (*America as Eve-ill Empire: Evocation of Authenticity Elsewhere*, 2003) to the dismay of feminists (Susan Sontag, *What have we done?*, 2004). This is perhaps epitomized by the widely publicized photograph of a young female operative abusing Iraqi prisoners for sadistic pleasure (Joanna Bourke, *Torture as Pornography*, 2004), and much more subtly in the role of those at the highest level who may seek deliberately to take advantage of such contexts (*The "Dark Riders" of Social Change: a challenge for any Fellowship of the Ring*, 2002). There is a strong case for recognizing democracy's "heart of darkness" within which dubious entities slither -- camouflaged by the values of political and religious rhetoric.

How to reconcile the USA's self-acclaimed role of purveyor of the values of civilization with its acknowledged role as a source of sex-related spam (made accessible to every e-mail user around the world) and of pornography (made accessible in every room of its most distinguished hotels). At this time, there is an extremely cynical irony to accompanying the release of the photos with the archaic symbolism of despatching US "virgins" to the UK to promote sexual purity with the "sacrifice" of abstinence -- a Christian fundamentalist programme supported by US government funding [[more](#) | [more](#) | [more](#) | [more](#)]. Given the cultural lead taken in the USA in body piercing, with its paradoxical relationship to self-torture, there is even further irony at this time in the name of the group as the [Silver Ring Thing](#), especially given the continuing use of "chastity rings" as sexual restraints and sex toys.

To what extent is encroachment on other cultures, notably as practiced through western hegemony, to be understood as having similarities to the process of "grooming" -- under the guise of repeated reference to the civilizing values of "liberation", "democracy", and "justice"? Might these processes now be a feature of "[psychological operations](#)" and "[memetic warfare](#)"? Or should the challenge of giving authentic expression to those values indeed be recognized as one of seeing through the language of what is effectively an "alien" political leadership of human civilization -- vigorously engaged in memetic manipulation in favour of its understanding of values, noted above as *xinth*, *kloor* and *sdrar*? (see also *Communicating with Aliens: the Psychological Dimension of Dialogue*, 2000).

Do the eccentric beliefs of some conspiracy theorists regarding takeover of human civilization by "aliens" (or by "satanic forces" in the view of some fundamentalists) constitute a distorted recognition of the insidious, encroaching corruption of human institutions -- exemplified by the tragic betrayal of a duty of care for their pupils by some religious orders, under the spiritual patronage of a 17th century protector of paedophiles? As with those protecting paedophiles in some institutions, will those covering up torture and abuse in others simply be honoured, promoted -- or transferred to other duties?

Are the new and looser "standards of proof" elaborated in response to terrorism to be applied to other forms of encroachment -- to protect the encroacher as much as the encroached-upon? Of relevance to the concern expressed about the encroachment by democracy's "heart of darkness", Michael Ignatieff (*Evil under interrogation*, *Financial Times*, 15 May 2004) concludes:

Terrorists seek to strip off the mask of law to reveal the nihilist heart of coercion within, and we have to show ourselves and the populations whose loyalty we seek that the rule of law is not a mask but the true image of our nature.

The "heart of darkness" of western imperialism has been explored in the much studied novel by Joseph Conrad (*Heart of Darkness*, 1899; also film versions) neatly contrasting early dreams -- perhaps now to be interpreted as the democratic values to which people are so vigorously encouraged to aspire -- with the reality of the subsequent experience:

"At that time there were many blank spaces on the earth, and when I saw one that looked particularly inviting on a map (but they all look that) I would put my finger on it and say, "When I grow up I will go there. . . True, by this time it was not a blank space any more. It had got filled in since my boyhood with rivers and lakes and names. It had ceased to be a blank space of delightful mystery -- a white patch for a boy to dream gloriously over. It had become a place of darkness."

Conrad is noted for the statement: "The Terrorist and the Policemen both come from the same basket" (*The Secret Agent*, 1907) -- as remarked by [Anthony Sampson](#) in connection with the current crisis (*To Defeat Terrorists their Grievances must also be Addressed*, 2001). In Conrad's novel the concept of darkness is applied to conquered territories whose inhabitants (often of darker skin) are exploited by colonialists whose encroachment on other parts of the world is no more noble than other types of violence and thievery. On the map, places that are blank and devoid of outside interference are apparently the most desirable. [[more](#)]

Finally, as a projection into space of this pioneering encroachment by human settlers and entrepreneurs into the lands of others, should the mindset of the famous motto of the *Starship Enterprise* be more appropriately understood through sexual euphemism as:

To Boldly Breed Where None have Bred Before?

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