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**Order and Chaos  
in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

**Do We Need a New  
„Standpoint for Seeing and Judging Events“?**

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## Vorwort

Zu den gegenwärtig größten Bedrohungen der globalen und regionalen Sicherheit gehören der spätestens seit den Ereignissen vom 11. September 2001 ins Bewusstsein getretene Terrorismus und die mögliche Verbreitung und Verwendung von Massenvernichtungswaffen. Der damit verbundene Bewusstseinswandel legt auch eine Neubewertung von Theorien und Strategien nahe.

Dr. Frances Mautner-Markhof, Direktorin des Österreichischen Instituts für Internationale Studien in Wien und ehemalige Beamtin der Internationalen Atomenergie-Organisation (IAEA), geht in dieser Studie der Frage nach, wie man Herausforderungen an komplexe Systeme verstehen und bewältigen kann, wo doch komplexe Systeme im weitesten Sinne durch Unvorhersehbarkeit und Diskontinuität bestimmt sind, wie man an den nicht vorhersehbaren Diskontinuitäten in der Geschichte gut zeigen kann.

Die internationalen Wirtschafts-, Finanz- oder Sicherheitsverflechtungen sind genauso wie Verflechtungen des Terrorismus oder der organisierten Kriminalität als komplexe Systeme zu analysieren, die Störungen und Instabilitäten von Innen- und Außeneinflüssen auf das jeweilige System vor allem durch eine Art Selbstorganisation bewältigen. Um die Anforderungen unberechenbarer und chaotischer dynamischer komplexer Systeme zu verstehen, ist jedenfalls zu analysieren, unter welchen Bedingungen und in welcher Form aus Chaos Ordnung entsteht. Bedeutsam ist auch die sich verändernde Umwelt selbstorganisierender Systeme. Komplexe adaptierungsfähige Systeme müssen Ressourcen und Input wie etwa Energie, Information oder Kapital bekommen, um Strukturen und Abläufe zu erhalten, neue Fähigkeiten zu entwickeln und neue Optionen zu gewinnen.

Die Autorin veranschaulicht ihre Überlegungen unter anderem an Fragen der europäischen Integration und des globalen Terrorismus. Dabei sollen ein klareres Bild vom Verhalten solcher Systeme und ein besseres Verständnis der Voraussetzungen ihrer Weiterentwicklung oder ihres Zerfalls gewonnen werden. Schließlich wird eine solche neue Interpretation der tatsächlichen und möglichen Instabilitäten des 21. Jahrhundert wiederum die Politik, die Strategien und die Handlungen beeinflussen.

Neben den Überlegungen zur Selbstorganisation und ihrer Anwendung auf die Entwicklung der Europäischen Union sind aus sicherheitspolitischer Perspektive insbesondere die Ausführungen zum Terrorismus bemerkenswert. Hier erweist sich die Fähigkeit des Terrorismus, wunde Punkte offener Systeme zu nützen, als eine seiner großen Stärken. Umgekehrt legt die dezentrale Organisation des internationalen Terrorismus nahe, ihn durch die Behinderung jener Fähigkeiten, Forderungen und Eigenschaften, die zum Überleben notwendig sind, zu bekämpfen.

Walter Matyas

## Introduction

This paper presents a new way of approaching the challenges related to order and chaos in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, proposing a new paradigm or „standpoint for seeing and judging events“ (Clausewitz) based on the self-organization of complex systems.

These ideas are applied to current and acute issues, such as terrorism, the war and policy on Iraq, and EU evolution (structures, functions). The events of 9/11 and the emergence of international terrorism as the main source of threats to global stability and security have caused a reassessment of ideas and methods of analysis, to find new ways of understanding and dealing with the challenges and instabilities associated with increasingly complex and interdependent systems.

The approach presented deals with the characteristics and behavior of complex systems, as well as the conditions under which, at critical turning points, they can evolve through self-organization, or else tend towards disintegration. Also addressed are the issues of power, sovereignty, ideology, conflict and cooperation, as well as such questions as: what can be learned from the experiences of history, and how can instabilities resulting from „imperial overstretch“ be recognized and prevented before the stage and fate of „immoderate greatness“ has been reached.

## A New World Order: Power, Cooperation and Rules

Are we creating a world order that we sought, or ought, to prevent? An order in which the first and often only option for defending real and perceived national interests and security requirements will be power and military force? Is there a place for cooperation and binding rules in such an order? Or does *Macht* make *Recht*?

Is global order to be unilaterally imposed, cooperatively agreed, or some combination of each? Is power to be an end in itself, and if not, then for which higher goals is it to be used? How are states' vital interests to be defined, pursued and defended in a new order?

In the complex, chaotic world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, can any one country, no matter how powerful, create and maintain a world order on its own? Is it in its interests to do so? Is cooperation necessary and if so under which conditions? To answer these questions it is essential to know how political, economic and social systems – and thus the emerging global system of order – actually do function as opposed to how it is assumed by theorists and others that these systems should function. In these evolving complex systems, conflict is never far from the surface and cannot in principle be avoided. The challenge is to resolve these crises cooperatively if possible or, as a last resort and only when vital interests are actually threatened, with a minimum of destructive force and within recognized laws and limits.

## **Role of Ideology**

There are no lack of opportunities for the use of force, and determining which conflicts and crises are resolved by force is increasingly a matter of ideology. Competing ideologies will seek to determine who should possess and exercise power and impose order, and for which purposes. The role of conflict and cooperation depends on ideology and will mean that, for some, conflict is inherent, unavoidable and even desirable. We are now witnessing the emergence not of a conflict of civilizations but of ideologies.

In its broadest sense, ideology aims to impose a set of principles and practices for organizing political, economic, social and/or religious order and power and to determine why, how, by and for whom this order will be imposed/maintained, as well as the possibilities, directions and pace of change. An ideology is the product of the past, formulated with the intent of determining the future. Ideology has therefore both static and dynamic, backward and forward-looking aspects.

Ideology is concerned, therefore, with devising a framework which imposes order, controls systemic diversity and constraints and in so doing determines whether and how a system is able to evolve. It aims to control the evolution of this order by dictating the ideologically consistent principles, patterns and processes within the system which must endure, and those (ideologically unacceptable) which must be prevented, if necessary by force. Moreover, ideology influences the concept of reality, and the perceptions of risk (costs/benefits). It will also determine possible areas, if any, of mutual interest and cooperation in the pursuit of its declared goals. In complex political, economic, religious and social systems, ideology imposes constraints, determines which options are acceptable, how much diversity is allowed, and how power and resources including information are controlled/distributed.

Depending on the ideological principles or dogma, conflict can be viewed either as an abnormal state of affairs to be avoided or resolved cooperatively, if possible, in order to prevent destabilizing changes in a system, or as an inevitable omnipresent condition arising from the clashes with other systems and ideologies having incompatible or opposing principles and objectives. Thus, not all conflicts and problems are based on misunderstandings, misperceptions and/or insufficient knowledge. Many in fact are pre-programmed and inevitable.

Ideology is inherently a source of crises and conflicts, dictating whether and how these foster its interests and goals, and which outcomes of conflicts and crises are sought, acceptable and possible. Ideologically based conflicts aim to change the structure of power in, and indeed to diminish the power of, systems with opposing ideologies, through destabilizing these systems by crises, conflicts and chaos. Avoiding or managing crises requires, therefore, a clear and mutual understanding of the boundary conditions imposed by ideology and power, and of what is and is not negotiable, acceptable or avoidable. Conflicts between ideologies are basically conflicts of values and principles. Thus, ideologically-based conflict demands a

response based on the preservation and defense of certain principles and values – i.e., an ideologically-based response.

### **Role of Force and Cooperation in the „Old“ World Order**

In the post-World War II order, and indeed up to the last decade, it was generally accepted that military force was not the option of first but rather of last resort (not least because of nuclear deterrence and the costs associated with destabilizing the balance of terror). International intergovernmental organizations, primarily the United Nations and its associated bodies, were deemed to have an important and indeed unique role to play, despite, or perhaps even because of, serious political differences and even conflicts between and among member states. There was and is much to criticize and indeed to improve in this order, but the fact remains that very often the UN was there to deal with those matters which states either could not or did not wish to do unilaterally, or which could best be accomplished and accepted on a multilateral basis.

A tenet of this world order was that war was or should be an aberration and peace the „normal“ state or goal. This was historically unique, a „cold“ peace prevailed during the Cold War, punctuated by local conflicts which, however, never threatened the prevailing order. International regimes were created, based on cooperation and some diminution of sovereignty, to enhance stability and security. Even new nuclear powers, not parties to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), tried to act in quasi-adherence to the NPT, with some exceptions.

Regimes and institutions based on cooperation and a voluntary transfer of some sovereignty to achieve larger goals and interests, e.g., enhanced security and stability, have been increasingly under attack as ineffective or irrelevant. The problem, however, with most international regimes and institutions is not that states have given up too much sovereignty but too little (e.g., UN, NPT safeguards). A critical point was reached at the time of the Gulf War. Unfortunately, too many learned too little from this conflict. Others, who drew their own conclusions, saw that the outcome of this war, in many respects unsatisfactory, demanded a radically new approach or order – organized quite simply on a paradigm of power.

### **„New“ US World View: Origins and Implications**

The consistency and intensity with which the present ideologically-based world view is now being implemented by the United States leaves little or no room for anything but a humanitarian role for the UN, and almost none for opposing views. The basic ideas of this world view were laid down over a decade ago, and came to the fore with the present US administration and particularly after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. This new *Weltanschauung* was regarded by its proponents as far more realistic, reflecting the utility of power and of the threat or use of force to achieve interests and to maintain order, influence and security in a world of all against all. This was deemed to be a far more effective approach to

securing US power and interests than were earlier attempts at „cooperative“ world order and institutions, in which of course force also played a necessary but different role.

It would be interesting indeed to know what actual first-hand experience of a world of devastating wars and total destruction forms the basis of this *Realpolitik*. Or whether adequate account has been taken of cause and effect, action and reaction in those conditions and events which are now providing the rationale for such a world view, including the use of military power to solve problems which basically require political solutions. Despite the new importance of human rights in foreign policy, in the new US-dominated political and security order, those nation states able and willing to defend themselves and their interests will gain in importance, whether as allies or as enemies.

The new *Realpolitik* thus embraces so-called preventive wars and actions taken against nominally sovereign states which have not directly threatened the US, in order to destroy potential or assumed threats before they materialize. In addition to strongly polarizing world opinion against these policies, it has given other states so inclined yet another justification to implement similar preemptive strikes, just as some have used the „war on terrorism“ to justify otherwise unjustifiable military actions. It has convinced certain countries that the best chances for regime survival and the only possible defense against overwhelming US military power is to acquire weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Other countries, such as Japan, perceiving a growing regional threat from WMD, are seriously debating whether they also need WMD, in particular nuclear weapons, for self defense. Counterproliferation, as opposed to nonproliferation, which includes the use of force to destroy WMD capabilities, is now considered by some policymakers far more effective in eliminating such threats. In this way, we are creating a world we have tried to avoid, a self-fulfilling prophecy, with all its real and potential instabilities. Thus, as a result of the new world view, and in the wake of the terror of September 11 and of the responses to it, much has emerged which could indeed be described as Hobbesian, and much of this was avoidable.

### **Hobbesian World View and the Use of Force**

Hobbes portrayed a world in which one must be prepared to use all necessary force to defend vital interests, if threatened and if all attempts at peaceful resolution fail. Hobbes makes explicit both his understanding of the „law of nature“ and the „right of nature“, stating that „it is a precept ... that every man ought to endeavour peace, as far as he has hope of obtaining it; and when he cannot obtain it, that he may seek and use all helps and advantages of war. The first branch of which rule containeth

the first and fundamental law of nature, which is: to seek peace and follow it. The second, the sum of the right of nature, which is: by all means we can to defend ourselves".<sup>1</sup>

He explicitly refers to cooperation's advantages and to the options/constraints it confers, based on the „mutual transferring of right which men call contract"<sup>2</sup> And he is under no illusions as to the implications of the use of force: „For as long as every man holdeth this right, of doing anything he liketh; so long are all men in the condition of war."<sup>3</sup> He is also clear on the use of force not only for revenge or defense: „The aim of punishment is not revenge but terror",<sup>4</sup> history being replete with examples of the use of force as an instrument for terror.

But what is a Hobbesian world? It is not one which precludes cooperation, on the contrary, since his first precept is to „seek peace and follow it", the use of force being a last resort. The Hobbesian approach reflects awareness of both cooperation and conflict/use of force, of the tension between instinctive and potentially destructive self-interest on the one hand and mutually agreed, beneficial social behavior on the other. He makes clear the conditions under which cooperation and the „law of nature" must give way to the use of force, or the „right of nature."

In the world in which Hobbes lived, life for the vast majority was indeed „solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short". But there was another, perhaps far more essential aspect of his world, that of the emerging Enlightenment, one of the most important intellectual forces in Western history. Hobbes thus experienced and was influenced by not only the worst which humanity had to offer but also some of the most profound creations in the sciences, arts and philosophy. To the Enlightenment we owe, among other things, the centrality which freedom came to occupy in Western political, economic and ethical thought.

There is a central aspect of Hobbes' political thought which deserves far more attention, namely, his idea of how humans can be prevented from degenerating into a state of all against all by accepting a contract in which all power is transferred to a chosen sovereign who, not being party to this contract, acquires essentially unlimited authority. This sovereign must in turn provide for the security of his subjects or citizens and can do so in any way he sees fit. Whatever rights and freedoms an individual may have, he has because the sovereign ruler or other sovereign entity has so decided. The question must therefore be raised, and answered, if we may not be creating this kind of Hobbesian world, however inadver-

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas Hobbes: LEVIATHAN, or Matter, Form, and Power of a Commonwealth, Ecclesiastical and Civil, Ch. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., Ch. 14.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., Ch. 28.

tently. A world in which a sovereign is allowed more and more unconstrained power, because we are in a permanent „condition of war“.

Russell notes that as long as the relations of states are in „the condition of war of every one against every one“,<sup>5</sup> and there is a level of international anarchy, „it is by no means clear that increase of efficiency in the separate States is in the interest of mankind, since it increases the ferocity and destructiveness of war. Every argument he [Hobbes] adduces in favour of government, in so far as it is valid at all, is valid in favour of international [supranational] government. So long as national States exist and fight each other, only inefficiency can preserve the human race. To improve the fighting quality of separate States without having any means of preventing war is the road to universal destruction.”<sup>6</sup>

The idea of supranational government to prevent war and universal destruction, that is, to preclude any possibility of states ever going to war with each other again, was, in fact, the main driving force for the creation of what became the European Union.

## History and Hegemony

It was inevitable that there would be a renewed impetus to examine and question history, to learn from its experience and to pry meaning from the past, in order to deal with present and future challenges and threats. It is less inevitable, but no less true, that these new challenges and potential or actual instabilities could be described as the revenge of history, or the revenge of not understanding history – the history of groups, individual countries and regions.

History and the future are inseparable, but why? If one only understood enough of the past, could one anticipate and guide the future? Or is something more needed? The answer depends on the view taken on the nature of the physical and historical time development of systems and events. The past has been explained and often distorted by paradigms that, despite their attempts to be forward-looking and comprehensive, were and had to be rooted in the prevailing *Zeitgeist*.

It is thus important to know on what conditions and assumptions the prevailing paradigms are based, whether they ever really met the needs of the past, or could meet the demands of the present and future. The key question is thus: do we need a

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., Ch.14.

<sup>6</sup> Bertrand Russell: History of Western Philosophy, Ch.VIII, p. 541.

new organizing principle or, in the words of Clausewitz, a new „standpoint for seeing and judging events“?<sup>7</sup>

General propositions have been advanced, each seeking to comprehend reality and its thrust forward, sometimes selectively interpreting facts to fit theories. This is inevitable. So another problem is: how to separate facts from theories or, in historical terms, events from their interpretation? Is it possible to know a necessary and sufficient amount of facts in order to understand and interpret key historical events and currents in a balanced and objective manner? And what about the elements of chance, chaos and unpredictability as determining factors in history?

If history is to be a useful guide, then one must attempt to understand history as objectively as possible. Some subjective elements are inevitable, but an objective attempt to see and judge historical events and processes in all their complexity – including the points of view of relevant cultures, countries, groups and disciplines – must yield a different, and indeed a more complete, view from that which now prevails. History is strongly influenced by and bound to the existing paradigms and *Weltanschauung*. It is a myth that history is value-free and rises above its time. The best history is in fact that which represents, to the extent possible, the objective realities and subjective values of the time, the *Zeitgeist* and *Weltanschauung*, and is aware of doing so.

### **Need for a New „Standpoint for Seeing and Judging Events“**

A new *Weltanschauung* may be in order, to understand and better manage the diverse and evolving complex and chaotic systems and problems at the global, regional and local levels, associated *inter alia* with trade/finance, organized crime, security and terrorism. In this regard, it is helpful to recall where we have been, to anticipate where we are headed, and what might be the most effective way to do this.

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, looking ahead to the 20<sup>th</sup> century and early 21<sup>st</sup> century, no one predicted, nor could have predicted, the total disintegration of empires, the World Wars, the Cold War, the post-Cold War developments and conflicts, the spread of liberal democracies and market economies, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, international networks of organized crime and terrorism – that is, the defining events of these centuries. Mainly, the projections into the future were assumed to be continuities or linear extrapolations of the past and of what existed at the time – no discontinuities were expected. What could not be imagined could not happen. That was and is the great problem.

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<sup>7</sup> Carl von Clausewitz: *On War*, Editors/Translators M. Howard, P. Paret, p. 606.

It was assumed that time flowed, with no fundamental unanticipated changes or major surprises. If there is one lesson which can be learned from the past, and in particular the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, it is that in history there is no such thing as linear extrapolation. The future will be unlike the past – and in critical, unpredictable ways. This is another way of saying that the future (like the past) will have major discontinuities, turning points, abrupt changes and surprises. History, historical time, does not flow, it „jumps“, and in chaotic ways. The evolution through time of human society – with all the accompanying processes, events and systems – is nonlinear, unpredictable, discontinuous, chaotic and complex. The challenge, therefore, has been and will be to determine the paradigm and principles which can provide the basis for coping with complexity, chaos and surprise, and for taking timely decisions and actions with (usually) insufficient information, incomplete understanding and often irrational behavior on the part of the major actors involved.

One need look no further than the roots of the wars in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and of terrorism in the last and present centuries to see the power of the unexpected, and the dangers of confusing (usually limited) information with knowledge. Even vast amounts of information do not guarantee and indeed can prevent gaining necessary understanding, too much information often being the functional equivalent of too little. There are patterns of development, interaction and feedback in open complex systems, whose characteristics and functioning are neither well understood nor appreciated, and whose behavior does not conform to simple linear assumptions – providing the basis for surprise, instabilities and chaos.

As long as systems were or could be assumed to be bounded or constrained, the linear, mechanical models and paradigms of the past, overly long applied and with increasingly disastrous results, were taken to be applicable. It has become evident that these now have to be supplanted by an organizing principle which better serves to understand how complex systems have developed through history and to anticipate more effectively the key requirements for their stability and survival, as well as the determinants for their further evolution. This is no more nor less than requiring the most consistent and effective standpoint available for organizing knowledge and for anticipating, understanding and dealing with events, processes and systems.

„Nothing is more important in life than finding the right standpoint for seeing and judging events, and then adhering to it. One point and only one yields an integrated view of all phenomena, and only by adhering to that point of view can one avoid inconsistency.“<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 606.

This is not the reflection of a philosopher or artist, but of Clausewitz in his great work *Vom Kriege* („On War“) first published in 1832. This statement, like so much else in his work, is not only about war but also about the characteristics and behavior of highly complex and chaotic systems in general, and is based on a systemic point of view in which events, processes and their environment are interdependent and interactive, and in which their history and time development are essential. The „fog of war“ and „friction,“ which he so eloquently describes, are to be found not only in war but in any complex or chaotic system in which all information necessary for rational decisions is not only unavailable but unknowable, full control is impossible, decisions are not necessarily rational, and in which rapid, unpredictably evolving change and/or conflict is occurring or possible.

Thus, Clausewitz' work can be read as one of the first serious expositions of the nature and management of dynamic complex, chaotic systems. He thus states that „war should be conceived as an organic whole whose parts cannot be separated, so that each individual act contributes to the whole and itself originates in the central concept“.<sup>9</sup>

„It is clear, consequently, that war is not a mere act of policy but a true political instrument, a continuation of political activity by other means.“<sup>10</sup> „Subordinating the political point of view to the military would be absurd, for it is policy that creates war ... From this point of view again, no conflict need arise between political and military interests.“<sup>11</sup> „War is an act of force to compel the enemy to do our will.“<sup>12</sup>

With his famous definition of war as a continuation of politics by other means, Clausewitz emphasizes the necessary role of political power and purpose in the decision to wage and win war and of the political nature of, and control over, the larger system of which war is a part. History shows that nations and other groups pay a high price for not understanding the nature and purpose of war, nor acting accordingly. More than this, one becomes aware that at the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century there are wars being waged not only by states, in the classical military sense, but also by terrorist and crime organizations, acts undertaken to „compel the enemy to do [one's] will“.

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 607.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 87.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 607.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 75.

## **Implications of Maintaining Capabilities for a Constant State of War: „Imperial Overstretch“?**

An emerging reality is not only the new nature of wars being waged in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, but the fact that certain countries are approaching what may become a constant condition of war. Critical is how long the necessary capabilities for this be can be sustained, since no state, no matter how powerful, can for long afford the vast resources both for maintaining a necessary level of economic prosperity and for the research, development, production and use of increasingly advanced and expensive weapons and systems required for 21<sup>st</sup> century warfare.

In an interestingly oblique reference to the important work of Paul Kennedy, „The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers“, Kagan claims that Kennedy, who invented the term „imperial overstretch“, believes the „United States can sustain its current military spending levels and its current global dominance far into the future“.<sup>13</sup> A closer reading would have supported another conclusion, inasmuch as Kennedy writes, „it may be argued that the geographical extent, population and natural resources of the United States suggest that it ought to possess perhaps 16–18 percent of the world’s wealth and power, but because of historical and technical circumstances favorable to it, that share rose to 40 percent or more by 1945; and what we are witnessing at the moment is the early decades of the ebbing away from the extraordinarily high figure to a more ‘natural’ share. That decline is being masked by the country’s enormous military capabilities at present, and also by its success in ‘internationalizing’ American capitalism and culture.“<sup>14</sup>

He states further: „In the largest sense of all, therefore, the only answer to the question increasingly debated of whether the United States can preserve its existing position is ‘no’ – for it simply has not been given to any one society to remain permanently ahead of all the others, because that would imply a freezing of the differentiated pattern of growth rates, technological advance, and military developments which have existed since time immemorial.“<sup>15</sup>

Kennedy argues forcefully that a Great Power needs to strike an acceptable, non-destabilizing balance among the triangle of demands on its resources, namely, military expenditures, consumption and investment, and sees an inherent conflict between merchant and warrior/militaristic states. He shows how a Great Power cannot remain so if there is a significant lag in productivity growth. „The feat demanded of most if not all governing bodies is therefore a threefold one: simultaneously to provide military security (or some viable alternative security) for its national interests, and to satisfy the socioeconomic needs of its citizenry, and to

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<sup>13</sup> Robert Kagan: Policy Review No. 113, June/July 2002.

<sup>14</sup> Paul Kennedy: The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers, p. 533.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

ensure sustained growth, this last being essential both for the positive purposes of affording the required guns and butter at the present, and for the negative purpose of avoiding a relative economic decline which could hurt the people's military and economic security in the future. Yet achieving the first two feats – or either one of them – without the third will inevitably lead to relative eclipse over the longer term, which has of course been the fate of all slower-growing societies that failed to adjust to the dynamics of world power."<sup>16</sup>

Thus, it is essential for the evolution and endurance of such a complex system that it produce and allocate resources wisely, including those from outside its own system. Until recently, the US was able to do this with the help of an incredibly growing and productive economy (certain record levels of profits having since been revised downward and/or questioned), and an equally incredible level of private and public consumption/expenditure (leading to record high levels of personal, corporate and national debt). The shortfall was made up by the constant, large influx of foreign financial and direct investments, inflows necessary to offset its current account deficit and compensate for increasingly large public and private expenditures. With financial inflows decreasing, the US may have to start taking the advice which it, the IMF and others regularly give to other, usually developing, countries experiencing similar problems. Policymakers would be well advised to consider the effects of large additional outlays for yet more military systems and expenditures, which could have serious economic, social and political costs in the non-military areas of the overall system.

A corollary of Kennedy's thesis is that the decline of empires is not due so much to having spent too little on the military, nor on the unwillingness to use military force, but on the severe imbalances among resources devoted to the military, consumption and investment. This was also seen in the unpredictable and swift implosion of the Soviet Union in 1991, confirming once again that great empires do not crumble from without but disintegrate from within.

There are serious concerns that in its attempt to maintain global order through military force, the US may in fact run the risk of „imperial overstretch“, and of creating disorder and instabilities. The US may also be placing far too much importance on those kinds of problems and threats which it assumes military power can deal with, on a unilateral basis, while neglecting or minimizing other equally important problems or solutions.

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 446.

## **Self-Organization and Chaotic Behavior of Complex Systems: A New „Standpoint for Seeing and Judging Events“**

What could be, in Clausewitz' words, „the right standpoint for seeing and judging events“ in the present, one which would „yield an integrated view of all phenomena avoid inconsistency“, support deeper understanding of „phenomena“ and provide the ability to anticipate and guide the events and processes associated with the evolution of complex systems. There is not only an intellectual necessity to gain a deeper and clearer understanding of events and systems, but also and perhaps more importantly the necessity to develop effective policies to create and maintain order, as well as to manage political, economic and social change. An awareness of this is reflected in the use of such concepts as „new organizing principle“, „order“, „disorder“, „chaos“, „complexity“, which, while not developed and applied in a systematic manner, are signposts pointing out both a need and a direction.

The evolution of complex systems is best understood by the theory of the self-organization of complex non-equilibrium (or far from equilibrium) systems, put forth in its most effective form by the Nobel prize recipient Ilya Prigogine<sup>17</sup> originally in the field of chemistry. These ideas are finding wider applications in specialized areas of economics, ecology, biology and the social sciences.<sup>18</sup>

The theory of self-organization of complex non-equilibrium systems arose out of the need to understand the non-linear, discontinuous behavior of open complex systems – i.e., unpredictability and instabilities – which could not be explained or predicted by classical linear mechanistic theories, since these theories were unable to account for such things as interaction with and input from the environment in which the system is embedded, non-linear feedback, discontinuities in systemic development and order through fluctuations.

This organizing principle deals with open complex, nonlinear systems and the conditions under which they can deal with disturbances and crises in order to evolve and endure. These perturbations or instabilities can arise from within or from outside of the system, i.e., in the changing environment on which the system depends for input of vital resources. Instabilities and crises can lead to turning points (bifurcations) of the system, forcing it to self-organize at a higher level of order/complexity or else towards disintegration.

Complex systems are found at the level of states, substate entities, and supranational organizations and comprise political, security, economic, social and cultural systems. The international system of trade and finance (in the form of globalization) and the systems for international security are evolving complex systems. Interna-

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<sup>17</sup> Ilya Prigogine, Gregoire Nicolis: *Self-Organization in Non-Equilibrium Systems*, p. 197.

<sup>18</sup> M. Mitchell Waldrop: *Complexity: The Emerging Science at the Edge of Order and Chaos*.

tional networks of organized crime and terrorism are, unfortunately, evolving complex systems as well. Such systems behave in a nonlinear, unpredictable and chaotic manner. Complex systems cannot be dealt with in isolation, but only in the context of (potentially destabilizing) interactions with their environments, including the influx of various types of resources (e.g., information, material, financial, human) into the system. These characteristics are especially critical because of the momentous impacts of global processes such as democratization, the spread of market economies, information technology and communication, and of global networks of terrorism and organized crime.

In its simplest form, self-organization appears as a continuous disorganization in response to instabilities, constantly followed by re-organization at a higher level of order and complexity. Organization is thus both a state and a process, being and becoming. It is at the branching points that the system either disintegrates or evolves via structural and other changes (through adaptation and innovation) to a higher level of order characterized by a new balance between systemic options (heterogeneity or diversity) and constraints (homogeneity, redundancy or controls).

The essential points are: order in open complex systems can be maintained only by the input of order-producing resources (such as energy and information) from the system's environment; a complex system requires communication, regulatory and feedback mechanisms to utilize effectively the input from the environment and to combat potential crises/perturbations which could lead to instabilities; and the manner in which a system maintains its dynamic stability and the capability to evolve will depend on its ability to utilize information and other resources to develop options (through innovation and flexibility), balanced by suitable constraints, to deal with chaos, unpredictability and instabilities, which may also involve introducing new elements of control or regulation.

Self-organization is a nonlinear process which, to be successful, must be accomplished while maintaining and/or adapting the basic functional and structural patterns which define the system, i.e., its identity or essence. This is the definition of survival and evolution of a complex system. The branching points are the critical points in the development of a complex system, the points at which discontinuities occur, at which time jumps rather than flows. These are turning points at which crises occur and new organization/order can emerge – and are the essence of history.

There is an intimate connection between the self-organization of complex systems and deterministic disorder, usually referred to as chaos. Unfortunately, „chaos“ and „chaotic“ have been so commonly used without regard for the technical meaning that it is difficult to convey the idea that the science of chaos, which has developed exponentially in the last quarter of a century, is a new, important and paradigm-changing approach to understanding nonlinear processes and systems. Nonlinear behavior is not the exception, but the neglected (or disregarded) reality that only recently became acknowledged. Technically, chaos may be defined as

„the irregular, unpredictable behavior of deterministic, nonlinear dynamical systems“ or „a kind of order without periodicity“.<sup>19</sup> These are systems which defy cyclic behavior and predictability, but nevertheless exhibit patterns and structure. They also are systems to which increased options become available, and in which self-similar patterns on different scales are exhibited (self-similarity being symmetry across scales). Dynamical systems exhibit chaotic behavior, and this disorder can lead to a new kind of order.

In this connection, the now famous „butterfly effect“<sup>20</sup> may be mentioned, as the perhaps most widely known example of how arbitrarily small uncertainties in knowledge about or changes to a system at any point (e.g. at the outset of a process) can magnify or lead to arbitrarily large, unpredictable effects, which are qualitative changes in the behavior of the system. In technical terms, the „butterfly effect“ refers to extreme sensitivity to the initial conditions of a system. Since perfect knowledge/complete information is impossible, chaos is inherent in every system. In practice, it has been and until recently could be systemically ignored, with and without significant consequences, depending on the system involved. But the further a system gets from assumed linear behavior (analyzable in the strict mathematical sense) the more it must be dealt with using new computer and mathematical techniques permitting the understanding and even predictions of behavior of nonlinear chaotic systems.

The „discovery“ of chaotic behavior in a wide range of physical, meteorological, biological and even economic systems also demanded a change in point of view. It was necessary to look at the whole or global system – i.e., the global nature of the system – to understand what effects small perturbations or uncertainties on a local scale might have. Thus, another major implication of the pervasiveness of nonlinearity in real systems is that the mechanistic paradigm leading to reductionism (taking apart a system into small constituent analyzable parts, then putting them together to predict behavior of the total system) is not applicable. The whole must be considered *in toto*, as it is qualitatively far more than and different from the sum of its parts. This does not mean, however, that certain patterns cannot be identified, which evolve as the system evolves, such patterns evolving both in space and time. In nonlinear systems, it is feedback (of information) which regulates and controls the system, accentuating the vital importance of information and communication for such systems.

Self-organizing systems exhibit both chaos and dynamic stability, in that they are nonlinear, nonequilibrium systems in which instabilities with chaotic behavior have not led to systemic disintegration, but rather to higher levels of order, the so-

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<sup>19</sup> James Gleick: Chaos, p. 306.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., pp. 20–23.

called order out of disorder, an inherent characteristic of such systems. Thus, chaos and seeming randomness can give rise to order out of fluctuations and perturbations. The development of the system is not linear or smooth, but proceeds in jumps, in a nonlinear manner with feedback providing the necessary regulation and control mechanisms for systemic survival and evolution.

For complex chaotic systems, the butterfly effect implies that actions and uncertainties on a small(er) scale can result in large, unpredictable, uncontrollable and often destabilizing effects in the larger (global)-scale system, which has huge implications for the way policies and strategies can/should be formulated and implemented. This was well understood by Clausewitz, among others.

It has become clear that the paradigm of self-organization of complex nonequilibrium systems (some of whose behavior may be described as chaotic, in the above-mentioned sense) is applicable to political and social systems as well. In particular, there are characteristic patterns in the behavior of nation-states: those which are intrinsic to its essence or identity; those due to the external environment in which it finds itself; and those which are responses to chaotic or unpredictable events. The aim of a new organizing principle or paradigm would be, *inter alia*, to explain the evolution of such patterns.

Just as Moliere's *bourgeois gentilhomme* discovered he had been speaking „prose“ all of his life, we may discover that we have been observing and been involved in the self-organization of complex systems throughout history without having had or applied a paradigm or „prose“ in which to frame our discourse.

## **The European Union: A Complex System in the Process of Self-Organization**

The European Union long ago recognized that it could either export stability through enlargement or import instability through avoiding change and flexibility while maintaining static structures and procedures. The EU's main goal is now to increase and support democracy, security, economic prosperity and social stability in the new EU member states and in other European countries. The EU, being an open complex system, cannot remain static if it is to preserve its capability to evolve and endure – it represents a work in progress, a complex system evolving to higher levels of organization and complexity. EU decisions for a fast-track expansion and an even faster track for reform are intended to provide the EU with new capabilities and options, through flexibility and innovation, for dealing with internal and external perturbations, crises and conflicts.

The difficulties of creating and maintaining an optimum balance between systemic options and constraints is nowhere more apparent than in the manner in which the EU was set up and in the current challenges it now faces. To create a European Union of sovereign nation states, a considerable amount of sovereignty was negotiated away by each state, on favorable terms, to acquire the bene-

fits/options associated with EU membership, in the process accepting the accompanying constraints (laws, regulations, decision-making rules) of the EU system. The same kind of process is now taking place, in the form of EU enlargement (new members) and restructuring (new decision-making processes and a constitution), and represents the system organizing at higher levels of complexity. The ultimate aim is to increase the transparency, democratic legitimization and efficiency of the EU, while defining and agreeing on those tasks and functions for which the EU is responsible and those which remain within the sovereignty of each member nation-state.

The evolution of the EU in the form of changes in its size and structure has necessitated introducing limits on the options/rights of its members, as well as controls to prevent economic, political and cultural destabilization related to, for example, its labor, social and internal security systems. Thus, EU members see both the long-range political and economic advantages of expansion, as well as potential threats such as a feared deluge of more (legal and illegal) immigrants, with the concomitant disruption of labor markets, social/cultural structures and identities, and increased threats to internal security. The events of September 11, 2001 have led to the stiffening of the conditions and requirements for internal security and migration.

The need to balance systemic diversity and options with constraints within the EU's complex system, to ensure its effective functioning as it develops to higher levels of organization, is reflected *inter alia* in the nature/problems of its restructuring, which was essential before new members could be added. The restructuring/restrictions concern the rule of unanimity and use of the veto on many issues, as well as the limitation of members' representation in key EU decision-making bodies. The present EU, encompassing 25 member states both large and small, must have different and more efficient mechanisms for decision-making than the original six-member European Community had, so that one country cannot delay or prevent important measures which are in the interest of the rest. Needless to say, there is much opposition to this on the part of many member states, but the final outcome is clear: while there will be certain areas of vital interest in which unanimity is maintained, majority decisions will prevail in most areas, and that majority will be weighted on the basis of population and financial contributions to the EU.

Another manner in which the EU is evolving to an increased level of complexity is through „enhanced cooperation“, sometimes called a Europe of „different speeds“ or „concentric circles“, whereby groupings of countries in agreement on and accepted to be involved in critical steps regarding a set of key issues, for example, defense and security, would join together and move forward in these issue areas, the others being relegated to outer „circles“. This process has already occurred in the introduction of the common European currency (Eurozone countries) and in the uncontrolled movement of persons among certain countries (Schengen Agreement). It is also beginning to emerge in the course of achieving unified defense, security and foreign policies.

The wars and conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Balkans have accelerated this process. The beginnings of an EU organized around different issues is becoming a reality. As the number of countries, of varying levels of political and economic development, increases which are or wish to become EU members, one is likely to see a differentiated and more complex organization of the EU. Something along these lines has been proposed regularly. Former French president Valery Giscard d'Estaing (who served as president of the EU's constitutional convention) and former German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt have presented a model of enhanced cooperation<sup>21</sup> which foresees:

- An „organization of the European space“, defined by EU enlargement and addressing economic and free trade issues accompanied by a limited level of political integration, at most the existing level;
- The „organization of a European common defense“ which, to be operational, must be based on those countries which possess significant military capability and on their public commitment to accept a mechanism of fast and effective decision-making, with a concomitant loss of sovereignty;
- An „organization of EU countries able and willing to achieve much deeper political integration“. Since full integration of 25 or more countries with very different political and cultural traditions and economic development is not a realistic goal, the realistic option is integration for those countries which have the political will and nearly the same political, economic and social conditions. At present almost all such countries belong to the Eurozone. New institutions separate from but compatible with existing EU institutions must be created. The countries in this inner political grouping would have to be willing to sacrifice a level of sovereignty commensurate, ultimately, with political unity, e.g., a federal state.

An EU organized along the above lines would create, for those involved at each level of organization, many important new options which would otherwise be unavailable to these countries. Participating states would have to be willing to relinquish increasing amounts of sovereignty (i.e. through the acceptance of more unified decision-making, rules, regulations and controls) as these higher levels of integration and organization emerged. In creating the EU, member states have understood the advantages of giving up some of the options of sovereignty to gain far more through EU membership, which provides a new horizon of options and benefits which could never have been attained by each state individually. In the

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<sup>21</sup> Valery Giscard d'Estaing, Helmut Schmidt: Time to Slow Down and Consolidate Around „Euro-Europe“, International Herald Tribune, 11.4.2000.

process, EU members have accepted additional constraints and an agreed, negotiated and legally binding diminution of their sovereignty.

## **European Union: Role and Responsibilities in the Emerging World Order**

The European Union has for years, indeed up to the recent Iraq war, relegated itself in many respects to being a bystander in matters dealing with global security and politics, having neither the political unity nor will for a common defense and security policy, nor the public commitment or support for allocating the large amounts of resources necessary to develop or purchase high-technology, high-priced weapons for waging 21<sup>st</sup> century war, as opposed to those weapons they have, intended mostly for Cold War military engagements. Also, since the end of the Cold War, Europe had not seen the need or urgency for critical new military expenditures, especially since most of its members felt themselves unthreatened and also well served in their security and defense requirements by membership in NATO.

Individually, EU member states now have little or no voice or power in global security, defense or even political matters. How will the EU as a whole respond to this state of affairs? Can it achieve unity in these areas, despite the large divergences manifested in the member states' support or rejection of war against Iraq? What changes in the functions and structures of the UN and NATO could bring these organizations a meaningful role in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and what role could the EU have in effecting these urgently needed changes, which must reflect present realities and future goals while maintaining the basic principles upon which these unique organizations were founded?

The problems and resistance encountered in the process of negotiating further EU integration in the form of political union or unified defense, security and foreign policies reflects the unwillingness and difficulties which EU countries have in relinquishing national control in these areas, closely connected with power, sovereignty and national identity. However, the concept of sovereignty is in a state of flux, indeed undergoing radical change in some respects. While the EU was created by member states who willingly gave up some of their sovereignty in exchange for far greater benefits related not only to economic power but also to political stability (the most important of which is a half century of peace among the EU countries), the United States is increasingly and systematically rejecting any obligations or institutions which limit its concept of sovereignty, the achieving of its national interests and goals and of its preferred global order.

It has thus directly and immediately confronted Europe, the EU, with a critical choice: rapidly diminishing political and military significance, or unified action to change this state of affairs; and with the key question: will only the US or also the EU provide the paradigm and principles for the future global system of order.

European NATO members and the EU are confronted with a stark and urgent challenge. Namely, whether, at this turning point in history, the EU and Europe in general want to and can have any influence over the new world order, over what it will be, who decides and why. Simply put, will the US have to take the EU into account in non-economic matters, or will it have power to implement its world view unilaterally. The price for entry into this game is power, military power, and thus a level of EU military and political integration and capabilities which until now seemed impossible to achieve within any reasonable timeframe. Therein lies the challenge.

Europe had neglected – until recently – to see the emerging realities and requirements of 21<sup>st</sup> century threats and warfare, the increasing gaps in European vs. US war-fighting capabilities, and above all the sharp differences between the US and Europe in their views of a new world order, made painfully clear by the events associated with war in Iraq.

Recent attempts by some EU countries to foster more unity in defense and security have a long way to go, insofar as certain countries fear this direction will bring a Europe oriented away from the US and its implicit defense of NATO members, thus damaging NATO. Others see that certain key steps such as common weapons production and procurement and an EU rapid reaction force would strengthen the EU pillar of NATO. However, NATO is in danger of becoming a political forum at best, with not even marginal responsibilities for military operations in wartime. Far more conflict and crises will have to be dealt with before a meaningful unified EU defense and security policy emerges. But the importance of a politically unified EU is becoming increasingly urgent and accepted, although not yet by all EU members.

In the process, one must seek answers to: What *is* „old“ about Europe? Is it „old“ to have learned the bitter lessons of centuries of war as a continuation of politics by other means? And is it „old“ to prefer war as an option of last resort, and to exhaust all other options before choosing military force? Or perhaps it is „old“ to adhere to treaties and agreements? These questions must form part of the core dialogue between the EU and the United States on the new global system of order, security and dynamic stability. Despite recent developments, this dialogue must be carried out by the EU as a whole, and not by individual member states.

A Europe representing different levels of cooperation and integration and a higher level of organization in political and defense areas is emerging. The need for this has been foreseen for quite some time, if Europe is to attain and retain a political weight and influence commensurate with its economic power. Schmidt and Giscard noted in this regard: „The will to maintain a considerable degree of self-determination vis-à-vis the global powers will become an additional strategic motive for European integration. Individually, none of the European nation-states is in itself weighty and powerful enough to stand up to the major world powers, which will surely be tempted in the century ahead to solve their problems without taking adequate account of the interests of others. Only if we act together to

complete construction of the EU into a fully operable entity can the European nations expect to maintain influence in the world.”<sup>22</sup>

Giscard and Schmidt, in proposing their idea of concentric circles – or a Europe of different speeds to achieve greater integration and unity – warn of the consequences of failing to modernize and restructure the EU for these purposes: „The haste to enlarge the union, combined with neglect for institutional reforms, can mislead the Union into a sequence of severe crises during the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.”

An all-inclusive and undifferentiated EU expansion to the East would strongly influence the kind and level of EU organization and integration which is feasible. If the EU limits itself to those states which can meet all requirements for full membership, then to the existing disparities and problems in Europe there would be added actual/potential instabilities caused and exacerbated by the creation of zones with markedly different levels of prosperity and security. This would lead inevitably to crises, conflicts and destabilization, sooner rather than later.

Thus the key question is: How should the EU organize itself, and on what principles? Will it be an EU of 25 or more disparate countries which may or may not be able or willing to integrate into one political or economic entity? Or is a Europe of different levels of organization and complexity more realistic and inevitable? Implicit in this is whether all European countries (including Turkey) could even potentially fulfill all requirements for full EU membership. Behind this lies a question similar to that once posed by Goethe regarding Germany, when he asked: „Wo liegt Deutschland?“ or „Where does Germany lie?“ Does it lie wherever Germans and their culture are to be found, or within the borders of the German state? Much of the history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was bound up with the aggressive answering of this question, and others.

In this sense one must also ask: „Where does Europe lie, and where does it end?“ Does Europe have, and should it have, borders and if so, how are these to be determined? And „What is Europe?“ Is it strictly geographically defined, or is it an idea and a set of values? If Europe is to be based on a shared vision, values and culture, then which? Can these be applicable, then, wherever Europeans are found? Are there inalterable elements, values, patterns of existence which define Europe’s essence, and thus the organizing principle of EU evolution? These are the critical questions for the future stability, security and prosperity of the EU and Europe, and for its role in the evolving global order.

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<sup>22</sup> Valery Giscard d’Estaing, Helmut Schmidt: Europe Runs Before It Can Walk, Bangkok Post, Post Publishing Co., 16.4.2000.

The EU should seek to encompass the large and the small, the faster and slower, the richer and poorer countries. This will be based on contrasts, cooperation and competition, and will inevitably lead to an EU of „different speeds“, or different levels of integration and organization, with a core group moving faster and further towards political integration, and other groups moving at various speeds and combining in various, less intensive ways.

It is also clear that the EU must be prepared to share some of its wealth, prosperity and security in order to diminish existing sources of political, economic and social instabilities, and to prevent new ones, in the form of crime and terrorism which feed on poverty, exclusion and fanaticism, from arising. While it may be a false hope to hold out the possibility of full EU membership for a number of countries, they must be brought into the outer circle of EU support, development and transfer of key values and goals. Core values will include democratic political systems and institutions, human rights, the rule of law and some form of a functioning market-based economy. This will be a critical contribution to achieving a new, dynamically stable order. The vacuum not filled by the EU acting with vision and courage will be filled by something dangerous and destabilizing.

If successful, the changes and evolution now taking place in the EU and Europe, and the manner in which this is understood and accomplished, could provide an important model for other regions as well.

A unified EU will also play a critical role in determining whether the future world order is unilateral or multilateral; whether sovereignty for a few states is absolute while for most others it is relative and negotiable, and whether any meaningful multilateral institutions will endure.

## **Global Terrorism: A Complex, Chaotic and Evolving System**

The end of the Cold War brought increased hope and anticipation that a world order based less on military power and confrontation and more on enlightened self-interest was unfolding or at least possible – a world where states cooperated to create both new options and the concomitant necessary constraints, while relegating military force to an option of last resort. Indeed, a number of former communist states succeeded in becoming pluralistic democracies with market-oriented economies, at first imperfectly functioning but then advancing to the point where eight of them became EU members in 2004.

At the same time, other regions and nations of the world were descending into more and more poverty, conflict, chaos and denial of whatever limited political and personal freedoms their people had. The inability to provide hope, opportunities and stability in these countries led to increasing repression and anti-Western sentiments, since it became convenient to identify the West and in particular globalization and the United States as the source of their problems. Some of these antagonisms were not without foundation, since people and nations saw them-

selves in an unequal struggle not only to progress economically and politically, but also to maintain their own cultural identities in the face of advancing globalization and westernization. The more the former goal slipped out of reach, the more fervently the latter goal was pursued.

While organized crime and corruption greatly increased and thrived in the vacuum created by the demise of political, economic and social systems especially in countries of the former Soviet Union and in central and eastern Europe, organized religion – Islam – thrived and often became radicalized in those countries which had no political outlets for opposition and change, and little or no economic possibilities for development, all of this exacerbated by grossly unjust distributions of wealth and power, and the sense of powerlessness to redress actual and perceived historical injustices.

It is important to recall that the United States enjoyed worldwide sympathy and support after September 11 in its war against terrorism, a fight that all regarded as absolutely necessary and urgent. Most countries intensified all anti-terror operations and all related international cooperation, as well as national efforts to find and destroy local and international terror cells and networks – which has led to successful blows against the structures and activities of international terrorism.

One of the main reasons given officially for the war against Iraq was to subvert and destroy the support and links between the Iraqi regime and international terrorism (the other being to find and destroy those weapons of mass destruction which UN and later US inspectors did not find). However, no significant links to international terrorism have as yet been determined and no WMD have been found. Indeed, many would have placed a number of the new US „friends“ and „allies“ far higher than Iraq on a list of states associated with terrorism.

An unresolved and highly inflammatory topic is what the definitions of terrorism and a terrorist should be. The central issue is if and where a boundary exists between terrorism and the struggle for political and other rights.

Key questions remain: Has the military operation in Iraq, which effected „regime change“ as well as regime removal, contributed to the fight against terrorism? How have government policies and practices affected democratic processes, international relations, and human rights problems associated with this war? Are the United States and other countries safer than before? Or have global terrorist networks and groups been provided with even more „justification“ terrorist activities? Time will provide answers to these questions, sooner rather than later.

In the meanwhile, for many countries as well as for the UN, EU and NATO, terrorism is a large, intractable, complex and growing problem, which can only be dealt with through intensive and long-term international cooperation, and rarely through military force. If military actions and reprisals could have eliminated the roots and actions of terrorism, then Israel would long ago have achieved security and safety, and Russia would have solved its „Chechnya problem“.

It is thus essential to know as much as possible about the nature of terrorism and its associated networks as well as the connections, *inter alia*, to organized crime. These networks represent a complex, evolving system in the process of adapting to external threats, perturbations and instabilities as well as to profound changes in their environment.

Terrorism has a deep connection with extreme forms of nationalism and/or resurgent religious or ethnic-driven fanaticism. It also has its roots in political and economic desperation. It is the weapon of choice for those who are or feel unempowered. Its present manifestations arise in large part from the geopolitical remnants of the mess left behind by the events and dissolved empires of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Terrorism attempts to avenge, equalize and achieve. It seeks redress for real and perceived religious, political, economic and social injustices of the past and present. Its future ends justify all means.

A key characteristic is its ability to identify those points in the structure and functioning of open societies and systems which could be used against them, and then to take advantage of these. Thus, the openness and freedoms of democratic societies, the economic and financial opportunities provided by market economies and globalization, and the educational and social systems of these countries are abused. All strengths have inherent in them their own weaknesses, and this has provided a key to the internationalization of terror.

While terrorism is not unique to the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, it has nevertheless taken on an overwhelming role and importance both for its perpetrators and its victims in this period. It is becoming the act of force and violence which comes closest to Clausewitz' definition of war: a continuation of politics (including the politics of ideologies) by other means, to compel the enemy to do one's will. It is especially important to understand this phenomenon at this point in history, since it profoundly determines perceptions of threats and security needs, and can critically affect the stability, security and even survival of certain national, regional and international systems.

Contrary to its common widespread image, terrorism did not originate with violent radical Muslim fundamentalists, nor with the Arab and Jewish terrorists attempting to establish the states of Palestine and Israel. The assassins practiced terror in Persia in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Although terrorism is not confined geographically to the Muslim world, that is where its fault line now seems to run. The fact that the preponderance of terrorism exists in Muslim groups and countries may have to do with the fact that they remain the largest group, of widely varying and often conflicting ethnicities, that were subjugated and „organized“ by the various empires which had their demise in the last century, including the Soviet empire. Palestine is but one example of terrorism as an *Ersatz* for political weakness and hopelessness, of economic and social devastation, engendering military responses which themselves are not far removed from state-sponsored terror.

The roots of terrorism are reflected in the core elements of its ideology – in the case of the international Al Qaeda terrorist network, these are fundamentalist militant Islam, anti-Western and especially anti-US fanaticism. The political aim, cloaked in religious ideology, is the overthrow of especially Muslim governments and systems not sympathetic or conforming to the goals and proclaimed values of Islamic fundamentalism. While non-Muslim countries must take all measures possible to overcome global terrorism, the key to the attack on religious fanaticism and Islamist terrorism will lie primarily with Muslim states, groups and individuals taking strong, concerted and convincing measures against terrorist ideology and activities. They must be able and willing to support a tolerant, modern and humane Islam. A special burden and responsibility must be placed on those governments which have depended for survival on their implicit or explicit support of radical Islamic fundamentalists (and in some cases terrorists) while exterminating or expelling political opposition. Necessary but not necessarily sufficient for the continued existence of these governments are radical changes to provide political and human rights, eliminate corruption and create economic and social opportunities and hope for their populations.

The lack of political rights and economic opportunities, and the cynical abuse of religion and people (population growth having far outstripped any hope of economic progress in many of these countries) have stoked ethnic, religious and political hatreds within certain countries and between groups. Under these circumstances, maintaining power and attaining political or ideological goals are aided by apportioning responsibilities and blame for local problems to „outside“ forces and civilizations – which is not uncommon. Sovereignty, as well as religion and ethnicity, are used as both offensive and defensive weapons, resulting in extreme forms of nationalism and ultimately political, religious or ethnic fanaticism. Add to this politically drawn and conflict-causing boundaries, then sources of instabilities and conflict – and the potential for terrorism – are pre-programmed.

The roots of terrorism also lie in real or perceived injustices, whereby a certain group (even a minority) exerts unacceptable, inordinate and sometimes illegitimate power to the detriment of the rest, with the resultant disparities in political empowerment and economic standards, suppression of human rights, disregard or disrespect for cultural norms, extreme readings of religious tenets and most of all, the identification of an „other“ as the enemy. If there were not an „other“, then one would have to be artificially created. Especially in terrorist and fanatic movements, whether on the right or left, there is the need to unite against something – thus an „other“ is necessary and held responsible, rightly or wrongly, for all grievances. The „other“ by definition cannot belong to the group with which the terrorists identify, so that if there is the same ethnicity, then religious, political and/or social differences come to the fore.

## Self-Organization of the Complex System of International Terrorism

Clausewitz conceived of war as „an organic whole whose parts cannot be separated, so that each individual act contributes to the whole and itself originates in the central concept“. There is no better description than this for the nature, structure and functioning of the complex, self-organizing system of international terrorism.

The system of international terrorism, comprising terrorist subsystems and networks, is a complex self-organizing system struggling to survive and evolve. The system is decentralized and widely dispersed and is maintained ...

Can the paradigm of the self-organization of complex systems be relevant and applied to terrorism? The system of international terrorism, together with its component parts (terrorist subsystems and networks) is a complex system struggling to emerge, survive and/or evolve. The organization of the system of international terrorism is decentralized and widely dispersed, this system being maintained by a network of financial and other inputs and controls as well as by ideological and other constraints. Through violence it seeks to develop options to advance itself and its goals and to eliminate those constraints and elements by which it feels relentlessly bound. It is dependent on the steady influx of resources (information, members, equipment, money gained through criminal activities or donated by „supporters“) from outside its own system (i.e., from its environment). Control and assurance of this input of resources are essential.

Through crises and conflicts the system of international terrorism drives itself and is driven to new branching points at which its ability to survive and evolve is constantly being tested. It attempts to survive through evolving to higher levels of organizational complexity associated with more options and improved capabilities to adapt and endure, all of which requires more resources to sustain the system. It capitalizes on the surprise, unpredictability and potential for disorder and chaos inherent in any complex system, while improving its ability to survive through diversity/dispersion, flexibility, adaptability and innovation. For this evolving entity, undergoing an almost organic kind of growth, certain patterns and processes (ways of behavior and functioning) must, however, endure throughout its evolution, in order that its identity, *raison d'être* and ideology be preserved – otherwise it will disintegrate.

The evolving complex system of international terrorism, requiring a continuous input of resources from its environment, undergoing constant perturbations and having dispersed control and feedback mechanisms, rarely self-destructs with each setback. Rather it behaves more like an organism, which reacts by re-organizing, if possible, at a new, more complex level of order corresponding to more diversity/options and a new set of constraints and controls. At all levels of organization it must rely on inputs of resources from its environment in order to survive. It is not a stable system – indeed it is far from equilibrium. If the system's (externally or internally imposed) constraints become very much larger than its options for action and adaptation to threats and crises, there is little or no possibility to survive.

Some terrorist activities do succeed, and this will always be the problem. It sets an example, as if any were needed. But before this is achieved, there will be forceful attempts to eliminate such organizations and groups whenever possible. History shows that this is not always a viable approach – there is a sinister continuity (cause and effect) to terrorism both in space and time. This reality, and the fact that terror sometimes does achieve its goals, provides a strong motivation, and strategies to overcome the ideology and activities of international terrorism must take this into account.

Dealing with the international system of terrorism must include defeating its ability to self-organize or, put another way, setting in motion the conditions for its disintegration as a complex system. This would involve, for example, preventing the system from dispersing, and cutting off or imposing severe constraints on all resources needed to maintain the system including denial of information, communication and feedback, which would lead to internal instabilities and possibly disintegration of the terrorist organization. It will also involve utilizing the characteristics of the terrorist network against it, such as surprise and stealth, denial of mobility, cooperation and coordination, and creating conditions for chaos. Essential are capabilities to recognize if the system is approaching a critical transition point, and to force it to such a point while denying it the options to adapt/survive at such a transition. All of this requires international cooperation at all levels, to gain current and detailed knowledge of the structures, processes, patterns and indeed principles on which the system functions, and a new approach to policies and operations to overcome the system.

A crucial test for nation-states (and their political, economic, social and religious systems) as well as for global systems will be the ability to comprehend, confront, control and eliminate terrorism and its partner, organized crime, now perceived as the main threats to security and causes of destabilization. Acts of terrorism – intended to create chaotic disorder and instabilities – and responses to these acts will drive these systems/societies to a series of crises and turning points and test their ability to survive and evolve to higher levels of organization and complexity. This will place stresses on both freedom and security, and must be accomplished while defending the basic principles, patterns and process which constitute the essence of these societies.

Systemic disintegration is seldom accomplished solely through disturbances and attacks from the outside; there must be internal factors and processes which result in destabilization from within the system. The ideological roots of Islamist terrorism have to be attacked, which is an attack on the system itself. Ideological conflict and challenge can only be overcome by an ideologically-based response. That is, ultimately terrorism must be defeated ideologically, through a „war“ of ideas and ideals.

In this connection it is important to note that the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, in its recent report (The 9/11 Commission

Report, July 2004), concluded, among other things, that the US and others must not only dismantle and defeat the terrorist network and terrorist activities but must prevail in the longer term over the radical ideology that gives rise to Islamist terrorism, and that we are experiencing a clash of ideologies as well as a clash within the Muslim civilization.

## **Order and Evolution in Complex Systems: The „Butterfly Effect“**

Managing the evolution of complex, chaotic systems depends on answers to key questions such as: What are the organizing principles of these systems, and how are they determined? What defines and maintains order in global systems? How is dynamic stability to be understood? What is the role of cooperation and conflict in achieving order and stability? Under what conditions should force be used?

The effects of actions and events anytime, anywhere can and will have increasing global implications. In principle, the extreme sensitivity of complex global systems to uncertainties in the knowledge of or changes to the „initial conditions“ of such systems is unavoidable and must be taken into account in the development of realistic political and strategic goals and policies. There will always be information and knowledge which is unavailable at the time any decision or action is undertaken, the effects of which can result in large, unpredictable, uncontrollable and potentially devastating consequences. With the global span of near instantaneous communications and other networks, the „butterfly effect“ – associated as it is with unpredictability, surprise and chaos – has a large and growing impact on global security, trade, finance, transport and other systems/networks; it is thus unavoidable that it will play an important role in comprehending and confronting the increasing threats of terrorism, organized crime and attempts to acquire weapons of mass destruction.

At any given moment, policies must therefore be made, goals and strategies determined, and decisions taken with the awareness that there can no longer be even a theoretical assumption of certainty of outcomes, only certainty in the principles, processes and capabilities of response. Thus, a new paradigm, a new way of „seeing and judging events“, must represent and reflect this new awareness and will place important demands on the qualifications of those with responsibilities for leadership, for action and response – which must be able to deal with the special characteristics, behavior and requirements of complex systems. Many of the necessary responses and options can only be developed on a broad basis, supported by an agreed framework of rules.

A key challenge is whether any rule-based order is considered desirable or possible. And if so, how are the rules to be made and enforced? Functioning global systems must ultimately be based on mutually acceptable/beneficial options and constraints, and on cooperatively devising and agreeing on an optimum balance between these. Agreed rules – usually in the form of binding agreements – to

ensure *inter alia* the amount, quality and timeliness of information exchange, transparency, control and response to violations are necessary to maintain any complex system of order.

### **Evolution of Sovereignty**

Extreme imbalances in options and constraints among constituent parts of a system, as well as extreme chaotic behavior of any component part of the system – whether global (arms control, nonproliferation, trade, finance), national or regional – will result in systemic instabilities. In any complex system, an increase in one side's (power to dictate) options while decreasing those of the other(s), i.e., the unilateral power/act of imposing options or constraints, will sooner or later lead to crises, conflicts and potential destabilization of the system. Many of these options and constraints have been, uncritically, associated respectively with the prerogatives or diminution of sovereignty.

The sovereignty which came to many countries through the ending of colonialism, communism and other types of imposed control is guarded jealously, and seen as an absolute good in and of itself. While certain former communist countries have seen their interests far better served by exchanging some of their sovereignty for the far greater benefits of EU membership, most newly independent states are in general unwilling or unable to accept that, as Raymond Vernon once said, „one of the most important things you can do with sovereignty is to negotiate a part of it away on favorable terms“.<sup>23</sup> Preserving national identity and cultures thus becomes a vital interest, and sovereignty is perceived to play an increasingly essential role in this. A state's idea of sovereignty is related *inter alia* to its history and culture, level of development and power. Actual or perceived diminution of sovereignty (political, economic, cultural) with no net benefits can foster increased extremism, which can become destabilizing not only for a country but for an entire region, and by extrapolation, globally.

The fact that the basic tenets of sovereignty are undergoing profound challenges and changes can only exacerbate this trend, especially as states with far longer traditions of independence have widely differing views on the meaning and utility of sovereignty. The idea of „negotiating away“ some measure of sovereignty on favorable terms, i.e., for a net benefit, inherent in the founding and functioning of the EU, is not how states such as the United States, Russia, China, India and others understand their sovereignty. On the contrary, they have demonstrated the importance they attach to all the prerogatives of classical sovereignty and, in some cases additional prerogatives of their own choosing. Thus any perceived „encroach-

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<sup>23</sup> Raymond Vernon: International Economics Lectures, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 1980.

ments“ on national sovereignty and on the ability unilaterally to defend national interests, such as the United Nations and other international obligations entail, becomes increasingly unacceptable. Less powerful states will, to the extent possible, value and interpret their own sovereignty accordingly.

### **Need for Cooperation in Creating and Maintaining a System of Order**

Thus, it will become increasingly more difficult to negotiate international agreements and regimes on a cooperative basis, which would entail relinquishing some options of sovereignty for the larger benefits and goals of enhanced international stability, security and development. The diminishing role of cooperation will significantly reduce options available to all states for pursuing and defending their interests and for creating systems of global and regional stability and security. Another modality consists in the formation of ad hoc issue-related groupings based in theory on shared interests and policies, most recently epitomized by the „coalition of the willing“ in the Iraq war. This has little or nothing to do with real cooperation, which implies and results in cooperatively devising and agreeing on options and constraints for the net benefit of all involved.

A balance between systemic options (or diversity) and constraints, agreed and accepted by all constituent parts of the system, is the basis of dynamic stability in any effectively functioning complex system of order. Here one can associate options and diversity, for example, with the unfettered exercise of sovereignty or with the freedoms and openness associated with pluralistic democracies – and constraints with negotiating away a part of sovereignty on favorable terms, for example, rules and agreements for the control and elimination of WMD (including the necessary information acquisition and exchange, transparency, verification and control) or with those laws and rules to assure individual and collective rights and security within a democratic society.

The dynamic stability of a global order requires cooperation at a fundamental level. Realism dictates that no state can for long unilaterally impose its will or world view primarily through the exercise of power and the threat or use of force or reprisals. This in no way diminishes the right of each state to defend its vital interests, but it does demand a clear understanding of the range of interests to be subsumed under the idea of self-defense. Even with overwhelming power in some areas, one state alone cannot create or maintain a global system of order, which requires cooperation and acceptance to attain the level of functioning needed for security and stability. This is clearly the case for any global system to effectively combat terrorism, including agreements for the control and elimination of WMD. More importantly, unilateral actions cannot achieve and maintain the breadth and depth of international support needed to win the global war of ideologies, ideas and values.

Thus, despite capabilities for unilateral action and for use of overwhelming force to achieve interests, cooperative behavior is not, nor need be, an action of last

resort. On the contrary, active cooperation, involving many elements, has a solid basis in *Realpolitik* and provides the broad and binding support to achieve the dynamic stability of a complex system. The survivability of a global system of order and of the states which constitute its key component parts, as well as fighting and eliminating terrorism and WMD, require serious cooperation and real allies.

### **United States with or vs. Europe? Shared Values, Competing World Views**

No hegemonic power wants a serious competitor, but the United States views most European states as having neither the will, capabilities nor interest to wield any real military or political power. Little noticed or appreciated are the increasingly active out-of-area military engagements of Germany (a critical step in its post-World War II history) and of other EU countries, and EU decisions and efforts to attain 21<sup>st</sup> century defense capabilities. The meeting of four EU members in April 2003, aimed at starting a process of unifying EU defense and security, was interpreted mostly for what it was not – or for what it was assumed to be against – rather than for what it could portend and for the obvious EU needs it was intended to meet. Since then a *modus vivendi* has been achieved permitting the EU to pursue a common defense and security policy which is accepted as being not against but rather complementary to NATO and the US.

Influential members and advisors of the present US administration believe that many EU states, obsessed with peace and well-being, are unable or unwilling to perceive, or defend themselves against, the new threats of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, have no use for power and are simply afraid (politically, economically and socially) to use force. There is little understanding and less acceptance of the brutal historical experiences which have lead most Europeans to reject war except as a last resort or for self defense. These are the states of the „old“ Europe, which they claim are only too willing to let the US defend them and their interests when necessary. Not so the „new“ Europe – to be found in the „coalition of the willing“ and ready to follow the US wherever it may lead. One inevitable conclusion of this state of affairs is that, in the view of the US and others, neither NATO nor the UN can any longer be relied upon to provide sufficient support for US decisions to use force and for the military operations to implement these decisions.

Europe, however, has not given up its sovereign rights and responsibilities in the defense of its vital interests, nor its claims to wielding power on a global basis. The global reach and power which the EU has achieved economically and financially will require time, effort, events such as Iraq – and above all political will – to achieve in the political and military areas. This does not imply that the EU aims to exercise military power in the same way and for the same reasons that the US does – the use of force being another area in which the two sides' views are diverging. This being the case, it will be hard to avoid a NATO which in the future will not be essential to military policy and operations, nor an EU which will tend to see the defense of its own interests outside of the NATO framework.

From experience, it is evident that multilaterally devised and agreed global systems of order do not exclude the use of force when required. But many countries have a firm conviction of the necessity to achieve agreement on how and when force is to be used, and of the conditions under which states' actions are accorded legitimacy. Otherwise no superpower nor its imposed or desired order is in the position to control the effects of what would become a permanent condition of war. This is why the United Nations, reorganized on a cooperative basis to reflect actual realities and requirements and to deal with its existing problems, must retain its unique role despite past failures in certain areas and the not-so-benign neglect of the United States and others.

While Europe and indeed the rest of the world have from the first shared unquestioningly the US goals of combating terrorism, many countries of Europe and elsewhere no longer perceive threats, or the responses to threats, in the same way as does the United States. It is true that during the Cold War, Europe was the front line, while in the war on terrorism, the US is perceived to be the front line, Europe however clearly not being immune to terrorist threats and attacks. But there is far more involved. Until recently, the US and the European democracies have, with reason, taken for granted that they shared the same world view, basically the same ideology with minor variations. This is changing and, based on experience with the war against Iraq, it will be harder than ever to find agreement on what threats demand the use of force or an act of war, and thus on how international terrorism can most effectively to be dealt with.

### **Iraq: Turning Point in the Evolution of a Global System of Order**

The war against Iraq, and all the crises associated with it, represent a major discontinuity and challenge for global order and for regional security and stability. It is also affecting in unpredictable ways the political, economic and social systems in Iraq and elsewhere. The complexity of the processes leading up to the war, as well as the war and its aftermath, have been inevitably accompanied and impacted by the „butterfly effect“, whereby small fluctuations and inherent uncertainties become magnified, affecting the whole course of events and leading to actual and potential instabilities. One could, in fact, argue that events involving Iraq since 1990 have been some of the most unfortunate and serious examples of the butterfly effect in recent history. Iraq has also exacerbated, perhaps created, fault lines within the UN, NATO and the EU, resulting in the need to change essential aspects of the structures and functions of these organizations. Looking back, this was almost inevitable, and represents a critical point in the evolution of the system of world order.

Iraq – a complex political, economic and social system – is itself at a critical point or bifurcation in its history and development. It can, and it is to be hoped will, evolve to a higher level of organization, or it could disintegrate. To ensure the dynamic stability of the system and its component parts, the inherent and increas-

ing diversity in the system must be balanced by democratically agreed constraints or controls. Clearly a condition for the endurance and evolution of this system is maintaining those processes and patterns which constitute its essence. Further, the system must have the ability to adapt to and deal with (potentially destabilizing) inputs and impacts from within the system and from its environment. The success of a future Iraq will depend on how well these determinants for stability and evolution are understood and realized.

One of the justifications for the US emphasis on its right unilaterally to use force to impose its will, if necessary through the use of force, is its new world view and concomitant policies is that, seeing the deficiencies and failures of the previous world order (or disorder), that its hegemony is required to bring about (its preferred) global order, without which threats and conflicts would multiply, its power would be diminished and chaos would ensue. In this view, there is little of importance to be achieved either by cooperation or with allies in the usual sense. This US policy could also be driven by the desire to avoid political dialogue and decisions on certain issues. Much simpler is to define all actions under the „war on terrorism“ and a right to preemptive military action, a lesson not lost on others seeking military solutions to what are essentially political problems. One may ask if the real interests of the United States, including the projection of power and influence, have been well served by the policies – indeed ideology – on which the decision to wage war against Iraq were based, or by the manner in which the US proceeded to implement these policies before, during and after military operations to remove the regime.

This debate – concerning as it does a conflict of world views or ideologies, and not a „clash of civilizations“ as such – is especially interesting because it places in high relief the main issues on which future political, ideological and thus actual battles will be fought, won and lost: those of power, morality and justice, and more especially, who/what determines what these are and for what purposes they are used.

## **Concluding Remarks**

A civilization is the ultimate complex system. The culture, values and principles of such a system are considered by many to be the enduring elements and patterns, and thus the essence, of these systems. This cannot imply acceptance of, or relinquishing efforts to change, the abuse or denial of fundamental human rights. In the era of globalization, however, certain countries and groups have come to feel that their civilizations and identities are under increasing bombardment, threatened by waves of economic, financial, media and technological input usually outside of their control. In this sense, all globalization is local, and sources of instabilities can and will arise at the interfaces of global and local systems. People still want to live in a society and not in an economy, and historical and cultural traditions cannot be reduced to commercial values. Social responsibility and stability as well as sensitiv-

ity to national identity, cultural and ethical values need to be incorporated into the worldwide advance of a new, more enlightened form of globalization and indeed into the creation and maintenance of any global system of order.

Preserving power and sovereignty, culture and national identity, especially against external impacts related to democratization, globalization, secularization, and in some cases military operations and terrorism, represent some of the main causes of actual and emerging conflicts within and between civilizations.

More apposite than any „clash of civilizations“ are the ongoing clashes and conflicts within civilizations, i.e., within religions, societies and cultures. The roots of this are, on the one hand, fundamentalist, militant and extreme interpretations of ideologies with strong political elements and aims and, on the other, conflicts among political and economic classes (the haves vs. have-nots in terms of power and prosperity) and ethnic groups. Conflicts between countries having both different and similar cultures and levels of development, as well as within countries and regions associated with the same civilization, have always existed and continue to exist.

The emerging shape of conflicts will be a clash of opposing claims to power, values, legitimacy – and of opposing views of future world order. This is an opposition not only of ideologies but also of material versus non-material values, independently of the culture involved, that is, between those who claim to be defending enduring and defining beliefs, patterns, values and institutions and those who, in pursuit of power or profit, may disregard and even destroy these defining patterns and elements. It is incumbent upon those striving to implement systems for enhancing security, prosperity and development to demonstrate by actions and results that both security and material progress can support, rather than diminish, the enduring patterns and elements which define complex cultural and civilizational systems. And that power is used in a just and legitimate manner.

This critical point in history presents a unique chance to shape the future, to determine cooperatively the conditions and directions in which civilizations and countries are to evolve, and this should be based on a common understanding of the essence of what should endure. Oswald Spengler,<sup>24</sup> in his „Decline of the West“, analyzed at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the nature and driving forces, i.e., the patterns and processes, as well as the evolution, of western and other major civilizations – valid even now at the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Through his knowledge of civilizations, he identifies an historical, organic-type of development or „biography“, of a civilization, which occurs in successive stages, i.e., periods of forming, blossoming, maturity and decline. The strength and survival of a civiliza-

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<sup>24</sup> Oswald Spengler: *The Decline of the West (Der Untergang des Abendlandes)*.

tion, he observes, is measured less by its military, material and financial strength than by the nature and practice of its fundamental ideas and principles.

In his work, Spengler identifies these ideas and principles as the driving force for civilizations, whose end phases, he notes, are increasingly identified with materialistic, militaristic or ideological aims rather than with essential values and principles based *inter alia* on societal and individual rights and responsibilities. He observes that, over time, weaknesses in the latter cannot be compensated by strengths in the former, whereby capabilities for real defense and protection have been critical throughout history. He concludes that the enduring principles and patterns – which constitute the essence of civilizations and the societies and systems they comprise, and which determine their capability to evolve and endure in the broadest sense – are almost always non-material. Indeed, the driving force for the future has historically been provided by aspirations based on the spiritual and moral foundations of civilizations which, while differing, generally have more in common than not.

History shows that inhumanity can accompany the imposing of external values and aims on others. It also shows the dangers and disasters of not being guided by, nor acting in defense of, one's own essential principles and values. In the end, it is ideas and ideals (or the lack thereof) – the basis for the rights and for the wrongs of a society – which will determine whether and how a complex system of civilization will develop and endure.

In his great work, „The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire“,<sup>25</sup> Gibbon has provided an unique historical record and analysis of the important patterns, processes and events associated with the emergence, greatness, strengths and weaknesses of the Roman Empire, identifying particularly those elements and factors, threats and instabilities, which led or contributed to the demise of one of the great civilizations. He concludes that the Roman empire, while always susceptible to attacks and disturbances from without, basically crumbled from within, because those principles, capabilities, characteristics and resources of the empire and its citizens, from which it had drawn its strength, were gradually diminished, changed or destroyed.

Gibbon puts great stress on the important role played by the spirit of the people, and the loss thereof,<sup>26</sup> and on the continual and dangerous breakdown of the authority and rule of law. The empire lost the needed ability to comprehend and deal with the nature, sources and magnitude of the constant changes, challenges, threats and instabilities to which it was subjected. It failed to maintain sufficient

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<sup>25</sup> Edward Gibbon: The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., vol. 4, p. 104.

resources and necessary capabilities for *inter alia* adaptation, innovation and evolution – required to preserve those patterns and processes which constituted its unique identity. It had lost its ability to achieve dynamic stability and development through self-organization. For Gibbon, „the decline of Rome was the natural and inevitable effect of immoderate greatness”.<sup>27</sup>

Each era and civilization demands and creates its own system of order, and also has of necessity its own „standpoint for seeing and judging events”. This standpoint, as the system itself, is in a process of evolution, reflecting new understandings of purpose, reality and history, and new responses to challenges. The evolution and dynamic stability of complex systems can be understood in terms of an ongoing process of self-organization on various levels. To be successful, this process must achieve *inter alia* a balance between the options and constraints of the system. This balance is most effectively attained and maintained through principled leadership and the cooperative development of mutually agreed rules, regimes and institutions – i.e., cooperatively devised options and constraints – which themselves must evolve and adapt to the events and environment of the system. The survival and development of complex, constantly changing global systems, together with their component systems, depends critically on the capabilities to maintain these systems through the constant and sustainable input of sufficient resources, and especially on the ability to innovate – the creation of „newness” – and to adapt to actual and potential threats and instabilities, while maintaining the systems’ essence.

While acquiring and maintaining adequate military capability to counter threats and support policies is clearly necessary, it is not sufficient. Achieving a sustainable world order will demand more than this. A functioning system of global order has to be supported by all those involved, based on some measure of mutual respect and advantage, on agreed principles, and on serious attempts to cooperate in devising problem-solving options, where force should in principle be the option of last resort. Power in its various forms is related to, and necessary to support, many options and constraints. But ultimately, the survival of any complex system of order, which civilizations and individual nations represent, will be based not simply on power but on the flexibility and capability to recognize and cope with the ever-changing conditions and potential instabilities which threaten the essential patterns and processes of the system both from within and without.

The evolving world order will prove to be defined and maintained not primarily by force but by basic principles and values, including the rule of law, fundamental freedoms and human rights. This is becoming increasingly apparent when observing, for example, how the undermining of truth, in whatever form, can

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., vol. 4, p. 105.

imperceptibly lead to the undermining of democratic systems. Indeed, one must ask how long and in what form democracy can survive, if the essential role of truth (in all its manifestations) is not consistently and widely recognized, practiced and defended.

In history there are no straight lines, but there are patterns, and from these patterns it is possible to understand what can and should endure in the process of self-organization. In this way also, we can avoid creating a world, an „order“, which we sought to prevent.

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