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The Transformation of the International System?

Grant T. Hammond and Bryant P. Shaw

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Conflict, the Rise of Nations, and the Decay of States: The Transformation of the International System?

by
Grant T. Hammond and Bryant P. Shaw

Grant T. Hammond is Professor of International Relations and Chair of National Security Strategy at the US Air War College.

***Bryant** P. Shaw* chairs the Military Studies Department at the US Air War College.

INTRODUCTION: OUR PRESENT DIFFICULTIES

The international system is in a period of state expansion, or at least attempted expansion. More entities are trying to assert their independence now than at any time since the decolonization era of the 1950s and 1960s. In the process the state is being battered as both a concept and a legitimate reservoir of popular allegiance. The supposed benefits of national sovereignty are being challenged in a variety of ways throughout the world. States, in their traditional sense, are becoming both smaller and larger, and both less and more than was expected of them during the first half of the twentieth century. New organizations — regional associations both within and among traditional states, economic associations, social, ethnic and religious communities, affiliations based on interests or purpose rather than geographic propinquity — are all challenging the traditional role and sovereignty of the state in international politics. This article attempts to shed some light on what is happening, why this is so and what lessons are to be learned from previous African experience about alternative affiliation communities.

Many, like Tad Homer-Dixon, Robert Kaplan, Jean Raspail and others, see examples of "failed states," primarily in Asia and Africa.[1] They see growing populations, the resultant environmental degradation and a neo-Malthusian struggle among haves and have nots, even in poor societies, as the causes of assaults on the state. Canons of law and order dissipate under the rising tide of poverty, famine, pestilence, AIDS, economic chaos, ethnic strife and the resultant social conflict they produce. The argument advanced here is somewhat different. It suggests that whether the areas are rich or poor, democratic or totalitarian. North or South, it is the administrative state itself that is the problem. The state is failing to solve current problems, is no longer the inspiration that it once was, and it obstructs development and progress. Simultaneously, the illusion of nationalism or ethnic affiliation is on the rise. But it is peoples, not territory that give it meaning. In short, reliance on the Western unitary secular administrative state's capacity to cope with the challenges of the future is disastrously misplaced.

The notion that fixed territorial boundaries symbolize sovereignty over a defined jurisdiction often conflicts with the self-identification of peoples within

those boundaries. Nations, cultures, ethnic or religious groups, linguistic communities — be they smaller or larger than the states of which they are a part — seem to be the more long-lived, resilient affiliations and the ones that inspire fiercer loyalties and passions. This raises serious questions, in particular, how does one permit change, often by force, which challenges the sovereignty of the entities that govern the international community? Maintaining "stability" and using diplomacy and appeals to international law are all desirable, but the reality is that all too often the transformations are brought about, sustained or ended by the application of force. Prolonged low-intensity conflict often results, as Northern Ireland, Cyprus, Palestine, Sri Lanka, Chad, and Peru have shown. What are the causes and confusions regarding such instances of state decay and emergent national movements?

OPPOSING FORCES

The world is beset, not for the first time, by two opposing trends in the size and span of jurisdiction of its political and territorial units. These trends can be variously described as centripetal, centralizing, federative or imperial on the one hand, and centrifugal, decentralizing, disintegrative, fragmented and city state on the other. States are seen simultaneously, but for different reasons in different regions, to be both too large and too small to handle the problems they confront. States are incapable of effectively addressing on their own many issues that are truly transnational in scope — problems of weather, the environment, pollution, migrations, famine, AIDS, etc. They are too large to deal effectively with many of the problems that are regional within their boundaries — minority identities, localized issues of economic deprivation, rapid urban growth, decaying infrastructures and tax bases, pollution, waste disposal, unemployment, etc. Rival solutions of both larger and smaller spans of control and jurisdiction have been tried.

These efforts have resulted in different trends. The enlargement approach is represented by the growth of the regional concept of Europe and the creation of the European Community, now the European Union, from the Treaty of Rome in 1957 to the Single European Act, EC '92 and the European Union of the Maastricht Treaty of 1993. At the other extreme is the disintegration of the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia into increasingly numerous ethnic enclaves seeking political sovereignty and self-determination. In an Asian context one finds the perennial existence of the dominant Chinese state and culture surrounded by alternatives represented by the smaller Taiwan and South Korea as countries, and Hong Kong and Singapore as even smaller city states.

In the Americas, progress in creating the North American Free Trade Area exists simultaneously with the efforts of Quebecois separatists to dissect Canada and dissatisfaction between the western and eastern provinces. To the south, the Zapatista Revolution in Chiapas in Mexico and the Sendero Luminoso in Peru challenge national hegemony, albeit in different ways for different reasons. In the Middle East, a contest for preeminence is taking shape between Shia Iran on the one hand and Sunni Iraq on the other, with an array of states large in area (Saudi Arabia) or population (Egypt) and smaller ones, the regional equivalent of city states,

including Kuwait, the UAE, Bahrain and Qatar. Independence yearnings among Palestinians, Kurds, Armenians and the tribes of Afghanistan vie with efforts at integrating the region through such groups as the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the Arab League and the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC). In Africa, despite hopes for such groups as the Economic Council of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Organization of African Unity (OAU). decay and implosion seem to be the norm from Algeria southward. Both large entities (Nigeria, Zaire, Chad and the Sudan) and small ones (Rwanda and Burundi) are in severe turmoil of one sort or another. In between, life in Somalia, Angola and Liberia continues on its Hobbesian course as states and societies implode. Neither trend seems to be "the" answer but rather the product of what was politically feasible at the time. We are headed in different directions in an effort to solve many of the same problems.

STABILITY AND INSTABILITY

Which trend is more efficient or effective for long-term survival? How should the international system respond to these opposing forces? Which approach is the least destabilizing for the international system writ large? These questions are not novel in world history. We don't know the answers with any certainty. Nonetheless, we must assess the implications of these transformations as best we can. We are in the midst of trying to define a post-Cold War ""New World Order," albeit one charged with more instability than we would like. Is order necessary for stability or vice-versa? How does one permit changes in the status quo to occur peaceably? Even more fundamental than these practical challenges are the intellectual ones. Is our current approach to such questions within the conceptual confines of the Western administrative state — a late eighteenth-century notion exported to most of the world in the nineteenth — adequate for the complexities of a New World Order? Is the Western state still the "gold standard" for simultaneously promoting both stability and purposeful change? Or has it become more an obstacle to progress than its facilitator?[2] Why not look outside the Western paradigm for help?

The answers to such questions hinge on what we mean by stability and how we view change in the international system. Stability has two core meanings: the capacity to resist change and remain the same, and the capacity to absorb change and become modified in the process. There is great confusion in the usage as a result. If we define stability as resisting change, the international system is clearly unstable at the moment. If we define stability as the capacity to absorb change, what is at issue is the degree of transformation underway and its implications. Further complicating this already complex issue, for good or ill, war—an extreme form of instability — has been the principal means of state creation in the international system and the vehicle by which states disappeared as well.[3] Most states, indeed most democracies, were created in war's crucible. It is all too easy to forget the role that conflict has played in forming what appears as today's "stability." That a Rwandan-like carnage

could lead to political stability seems hard to imagine. Democracy, however, owes its very existence to continuing challenges by force of arms, whether it be in the UK, France or the US. Our twentieth-century sensibilities and preference for legal remedies notwithstanding, such will continue to be the case. And there is little indication that the host of states created in the last five years will persist unchallenged by force of arms. For all the peaceful transformations (the Czech and Slovak Republics, the Baltics, some of the other former Soviet Republics) there are an equal number of militarized contests (Georgia, Armenia, Nagorno Karabakh, Bosnia, Croatia, and Chechnya).

The real problem with which we must contend is how to achieve and permit peaceful transformations in the international system. The adjustment of state borders is difficult enough, but the more vexing problems are popular demands for a different status and citizenship within competing political identities. Finding a way to allow for the political equivalent of divorce and independence on the one hand, and the forming of a new union and remarriage on the other is difficult at best. There are few amicable settlements in either arena given emotions, habits, property settlements, visitation rights, custody and other such issues. The legal remedies often seem to be more a part of the problem than a part of the solution.

STATES AND NATIONS

Much of the misunderstanding in our approach to the issues noted above and the ensuing, often ill conceived, action derives from confusing ethnicity with nationalism. Neither may be sufficient to achieve the other. But we often speak and act as if these are, or ought to be, overlapping affinities if not identities. Alas, such is not the case. And in using the terms state and nation interchangeably, we confuse things even more. All sovereign, recognized, legal entities with a central government exercising jurisdiction over a specified group of people and territory are states. Some states are coterminous with an ethnic group and a shared national history (Ireland) which may be reinforced with linguistic and religious solidarity as well (Israel). Some nations are the product of national movements based on these shared characteristics (Italy) while others are "nations" by virtue of a commitment to a set of political ideals (the United States of America). Rarely do the notions of ethnicity, nationalism, language and statehood coincide. The German or for that matter Chinese states have not necessarily been synonymous with the German or Chinese nations, let alone culture. There are many states, few nations and very few nation states, though we use all the terms interchangeably. This confusion in terminology makes a mockery of an already imprecise set of ever changing relationships. We are tempted to speak of the international community's components in terms more precise than the reality to which they refer. This interchangeability and imprecision obscures often fundamental distinctions critical to understanding the environment in which we must act.

Many have written eloquently about these issues recently. Among the more incisive commentaries are those of Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Edmund Pfaff. As Moynihan writes:

> ... the word country might usefully be dragged back into service as a more honest substitute. The way in which we use words — especially the word "nation' — is important. We cannot change the name of the United Nations, nor the many odd uses of the word 'international/ but we can be more conscious of the awkward fact that states and nations are by no means always co-terminous.[4]

Pfaff is even more direct: "Nationalism, of course, is intrinsically absurd."[5] He points out that there is a pretense at a German nation, which does not exist, and a Japanese one, which does, based on ethnic, linguistic, and cultural claims. There is an American nation as a commitment to an ideological preference but not in any sense one of ethnic, religious, regional or linguistic affinity in an avowedly tolerant multi-cultural society where everyone is an immigrant.[6]

> After a lifetime of study on the matter, Hugh Seton-Watson concluded that... no 'scientific definition' of a nation can be devised; yet the phenomenon has existed and exists. All that I can say is that a nation exists when a significant number of people in a community consider themselves to form a nation, or behave as if they formed one. It is not necessary that the whole of a population should so feel, or so behave, and it is not possible to lay down dogmatically a minimum proportion of a population which must be so affected. When a significant group holds this belief, it possesses 'national consciousness.'[7]

There is no litmus test, no scientific proof, no half-life, no predictive capability for determining which of the many nationalist sentiments will survive and which would-be nations will slip from the historical record never to be heard of again. Pfaff concludes somewhat vaguely but correctly that "[nationalism is the political (and military) expression of a form of group identity attached to an existing state, or to a community which is not yet a recognized nation-state but which believes that it should become one."[8] We are dealing with a phenomenon that owes as much or more to emotion and sentimentality, to myth and longing, as to reason, law, or scientific precision.

SOVEREIGNTY AND INTERNATIONAL LAW

Much of what we do in the name of international law is the least practical alternative open to us. Acting to retain and resuscitate supposedly existing but moribund political entities rather than sanction changes that occur through force of arms is a fool's errand. But since we are saddled with the international legal imperatives of political independence and territorial integrity as a prerequisite for statehood, the preservation of these entities has been accorded a status of law, not preference. Some entities we refer to as states — Angola, Zaire, Cambodia, Lebanon, Liberia, Somalia — are obviously not. There is no government, no span of legal jurisdiction, no sense of legitimacy, no identity — in short none of the supposed attributes of states — to support. Our language, the former status of these now non-functioning entities, and our preference for the status quo are all interrelated. We are attempting to preserve something which no longer exists or which was a figment of the international political imagination in the first place. Like the king's men in "Humpty Dumpty," we are engaged in an often impossible task of trying to put things back together again.

The urge to substitute a rule of law for force of arms is noble. But the process of doing so is not easy, is filled with inconsistencies and should not be seen as more effective than it really is. The instances in which a negotiated settlement of severe ethnic, linguistic, nationalist rivalries have occurred are few. Even then, they have generally been characterized by long struggles, numerous casualties and only a grudging acceptance of a status quo achieved decades, centuries or even millennia later. Israel, Eritrea, the Balkans and indeed much of the former Soviet Union all

bear testimony to this reality. It would seem to make little difference whether the negotiated settlements are imposed by a coalition of victors after a general war (the Concert of Europe, the League of Nations and the Treaty of Versailles, or the United Nations settlements after World War II for example), or are arranged by the combatants themselves, either in imperial struggles to put down independent minded dominions or victorious secessionist movements in civil wars. All are fragile, susceptible to being overturned from without or imploding from within, and are never fully consummated, save by the record of victory through force of arms when tested.

NOTIONS OF WORLD ORDER

Our efforts to preserve non-existent entities in the name of the fictions we would like them to be is understandable if foolish. Not knowing what the new relationships may become in terms of boundaries, popular alliances, resources, accomplishments, or threats, we prefer the comfortable illusion of some former idealized status which we seek to resurrect, rather than an open-ended future possibility whose results we may not like. (Watching state formation and disintegration on CNN can be disquieting.) That is the self-interest part of the equation. The more idealistic aspect harps on the sanctity of international law, a respect for law and order, and the rights of now defunct political entities whose dissolution afflicts the international community. Sometimes the individual instead of collective self-interests win out and we elect not to challenge the inevitable (Munich). Sometimes we persevere, even at great costs with little or no economic or ultimate political benefit (Korea and Vietnam). In other instances, an overlap of ideals and self-interests allows us to act profitably while appropriating the moral high ground, even if our success is less than compelling (Kuwait).

But we often seek to preserve the status quo so as not to have to assent by silent concurrence to the transformations of the state system caused by civil wars, aggression and other "illegal" activities. And even when we apply force in the hopes of providing the only definitive rearrangement of power in the international system and the redrawing of violated boundaries, we often overreach, thinking our accomplishments more definitive and permanent than they really were. World War I, World War II, Korea and the Gulf War all suggest more hubris than lasting

accomplishment. Even more fundamentally, we default to the status quo because we are seduced by the allure of the Western administrative state as the medium of choice for political expression and stability. Wishing that the world were more orderly than it is is no sin, but seeking to make it so may be, depending on the historical and geographic narrowness of the conceptual architecture on which one constructs the basis for that new order. If we are not up to the challenge of thinking outside the Western paradigm to help mitigate the current political disorder, future observers will call us inept (albeit unintentional) catalysts and sustainers of that disorder.

It is a hope common to all leaders, regardless of the type of political form in the state in which they reside, that the world will be a more stable, safer and more predictable place than it is. Alas, it is rarely, if ever, any of those things for many, if not most, of the world's states and peoples. Change is threatening and the appeals to past circumstances, both rights and wrongs, are powerful sentiments that inherently threaten the status quo. Hence, there is a reluctance to support many causes, unless blatant self-interest is at stake. The nationalist issue may supply a convenient pretext or rationale for more naked self-interest on the part of those supporting the cause.

SELF-DETERMINATION

Much of our noble effort on this front has been in the name of that marvelously American if politically naive notion of "self-determination."[9] This lies somewhere between being an international equivalent of Maslow's "self actualization" for nation states, and the global equivalent of that most pernicious of all political values enshrined in the American Declaration of Independence—"the pursuit of happiness." Is the mere utterance of such a principle to accomplish its purpose? The US Civil War, as well as those in Spain, Russia, and China in this century suggest not. One man's freedom fighter is another's terrorist. Sinn Fein and the IRA, various factions of the PLO, the Ku Klux Klan and the bewildering welter of factions in Somalia, Angola and Liberia, all suggest that the concept may not be as clear as many assume it should be. How many selves, defined in what manner, under whose auspices, for what purpose, should be permitted to determine — what? In what manner? Over what period of time? From the United States to East Bengal, from East Timor to Quebec, Nagorno Karabakh to Afghanistan, South Africa to Canada, Zaire and Nigeria in Africa to the Amazon basin in the Americas, there are now or have been serious debates and arguments resulting in death and destruction over this concept and the manner by which it is to be accomplished. Some prefer the principle of one man, one vote while others seek refuge in force of arms more than idealistic principles of non-violence. Workable answers to how one implements majority rule and minority rights, assuming agreement on the implementation of such principles, are not foregone conclusions and may take generations to instill.

Woodrow Wilson may yet come to be the most reviled political leader in the twentieth century for doing his utmost to make self-determination a principle of international conduct and the philosophical underpinning for the transformation of

the international system. As the cornerstone of the post-World War I dissolution of four empires — Russian, Ottoman, German and Austro-Hungarian — it was unevenly and ineffectively applied, thus creating only a twenty year truce instead of a permanent post-war settlement. It was a convenient positive sounding principle to permit the dissection of enemy empires, albeit not those of the winning coalition. It was the first breath of decolonization which would not reach flood tide until five decades later. Two-thirds of the states in the world today — 120 countries — did not exist fifty years ago. We have lived through the most rapid expansion of states the world has seen and one of the least stable periods of international political life amid ostensible peace among the great powers. And, we may be in the midst of another rearrangement of the state system with an expansion in the number of states occasioned by the end of the Cold War. One is left with an equation for which there is no solution. How does one reconcile self-determination (of peoples) and territorial integrity (of states)?"[1] There is no way to simultaneously support the legal boundaries of states and the affiliational aspirations of peoples if they are not by accident in agreement, or serve some other state's purposes in being permitted to exist. There are few if any cases where this is so. Precious few such serendipitous occurrences exist in sub-Saharan Africa (Lesotho and Swaziland) and virtually none in the Balkans, the two most strife prone regions of our era. If we are going to cope with, let alone help shape, a "New World Order," we must come to terms with our current inability to balance these two competing imperatives. Thus far we have failed to do so through the lenses of the Western paradigm. It is time to broaden our vision.

THE INFORMATION REVOLUTION

The rapid broadening and deepening of the information revolution will itself change all organizations and hierarchies. From radio to television, from computers to fax machines, from telephones to videophones the impact has been utterly transforming. Nearly everything we do has been affected, from how we spend our time and money, how we work and play, and the speed and variety with which we can now communicate. Whatever the impact of the telegraph and the penny press in the last century, it is nothing compared to the live, real time reporting offered by the likes of CNN. Peoples participate, collectively and individually, much more directly in the unfolding of world events. The continuing miniaturization, lower costs, increased speeds, and multiplicity of ways to communicate are breathtaking. We can now communicate globally by notebook computers utilizing the information superhighway of which Internet is just the beginning. The increased ability to empower individuals through access, manipulation, storage, retrieval, and trading and selling of information will mean that business, government and other intermediary groups will be less efficient and less necessary for conducting human activity.

The information revolution is transforming our world in rather fundamental ways and as Walter B. Wriston observed in his book of the same title, we are in *The Twilight of Sovereignty*." We will establish the economic and political equivalent

of the "priesthood of all believers" wherein no intermediaries are required for our tasks and relationships with others. States are thus caught in a catch-22. To harness the intellectual vitality and entrepreneurial zeal of their citizens, they have to empower them to pursue individual likes and opportunities. In doing so, however, states may sow the seeds of their own destruction. The truly necessary services are at once more trivial and more important, but cluttered by inefficient state bureaucracies which are slow to take or respond to initiatives and less necessary for regulating global commerce, thought and action.

THE FUNDAMENTALS

We come then to a few fundamental issues which seem to complicate our current existence. These are the nature and raison d'etre for affiliation as a community, the degree to which such arrangements can be transformed peacefully over time, and whether communications technology makes these processes of affiliation and evolution easier or more difficult. Thus, political and legal aspects, social and economic issues and technological realties all play a role in the warp and woof of the state system, the birth and decay of states and other affiliational communities, and the nature of the system itself. We are well aware of our current predicament, if not as sure about how we came to the present impasse or what to do about the multiple difficulties of determining just what constitutes a state, a nation and how to handle their birth and death within a larger framework. But the modes of affiliation have not always been as they are today. There are other patterns and experiences in the past which may illuminate the difficulties we now confront.

Western history is filled with attempts at various types of empires, city states, leagues, nations, alliance networks, feudal relationships, dynasties, constitutional monarchies, local autonomous republics and the like. All have succeeded for some time to some degree but none appear to offer any universal answers to the peaceful expansion and contraction of the state system. With the passing of the Cold War, it is ironic that the number of civil disturbances within states has increased dramatically. We are faced with mounting fragmentation and attempts to redefine what constitutes a viable political community in nearly every area of the globe. It is not *national security* that is as much at stake as *national identity.* And most states are not really nations but called such for convenience. The political entities represented by most so-called nations are administrative territorial states whose very identity and existence are being called into question. They are either too large or too small to be nations, at least according to significant minorities, if not majorities, within their borders.

Perhaps the very notion of a "state" is part of the problem and not part of the solution. There is much more to existence than political identification. And its chief contribution has been seen as promoting security for a specified group of people in a defined scope of territory. But if there is no particular overlap and reinforcement among the people and the territory, then the geographic notion of a state is not a source of security but rather of insecurity, domestic and international. Are there

other efforts in the past not limited to Europe which may provide clues to handling in a more efficient or effective manner the associational evolution of politically significant and economically viable communities? We think the answer is yes. Sub-Saharan Africa has some interesting associational affiliations that redefine the way in which groups have and share identities, pursue group purposes and evolve into different forms. It is to these experiences and different views of both ethnicity and the state that the article now turns.

THE RELEVANCE OF THE AFRICAN EXPERIENCE

The Rest and the West[12]

It may appear odd to seek help from the African past in dealing with the confusing welter of centripetal and centrifugal forces noted above. In the popular and even in the scholarly imaginations, Africa often exists as a historical cul-de-sac whose past consists merely in "the unrewarding gyrations of barbarous tribes," as a prominent British historian noted only thirty years ago.[13] Yet this Western approach to understanding Africa is instructive precisely because it highlights the deficiencies of the conceptual tools used to analyze the challenges posed by the forces of integration and disintegration noted earlier. As the political science literature shows, the Western experience has been rather oddly and narrowly limited to Western models and the presumed universality of the Western experience for development in all societies.[14] Much of that development literature dealt with issues of elites, parties, traditional and non-traditional societies, and the institutional emulation of Western societies. The developmental catechism for colonial states to follow in progressing from ascriptive to achievement oriented societies was to be based on Western individual oriented patterns emphasizing hierarchical control and ideological commitment.

Unfortunately, such was exactly the wrong medicine to be administered to neo-colonial regimes caught up as Cold War pawns, for it vitiated whatever advantages their traditional cultures and pre-colonial experience may have afforded. That experience proved more resilient and capable than the thinly veiled neo-feudal hierarchies which the West (including the former USSR) tried to graft onto the so-called "developing" countries.[15] It is as if the experience of most of the world's people and regions did not exist, and held no insights or variations on the fundamental questions of order and freedom that were of any real use to the Western world. There is much to learn from the experience of others which may inform current debates on how best to order and administer various groups of human beings seeking different claims of identity, legitimacy and independence. The African experience provides insights into some of these questions. It also challenges many of the assumptions and concepts at the core of Western experience and the current discourses on the transformations around us. The Balkans, former Soviet Republics, and the rest of the world might benefit from a careful examination of African models of associations and affiliation compared with some of our vexing problems.

Ethnicity

This is particularly true regarding notions of "ethnicity" ("tribalism"). That the Western intellectual tradition, mesmerized by the normative aspects of the nation-state, is ill-equipped to handle "ethnicity" in its contemporary manifestations is all too apparent. It is particularly worthwhile to examine the roots of this inability, as found in Europe's conceptual and bureaucratic approach to sub-Saharan Africa in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Though technologically and militarily capable of penetrating the region, most Europeans were not prepared to understand it. As the last major region to be colonized, historical knowledge of sub-Saharan Africa was practically nil. Early European explorers, soldiers, bureaucrats and missionaries entered areas of linguistic complexity and social and political diversity quite different from the political system then evolving in the metropoles.

A severe economic imperative accompanied this intellectual shortcoming. The cardinal imperial rule was that colonies should pay their own way, at the very least. Metropolitan governments would not risk raising taxes at home to underwrite the costs of the imperial enterprise, and so colonial bureaucrats had to provide "administration on the cheap." The stakes were high: "effective occupation and administration" were the mutually agreed-on criteria for legal recognition of colonial claims. The international legitimacy of the imperial state thus rested on the very practical problems of whether and how the colonizer would conduct censuses and collect taxes. Colonial administrators thus had to establish "order" with minimum resources throughout vast areas, in totally unfamiliar political, social and economic environments.

This necessity for the colonized to subsidize the imperial enterprise, coupled with Europe's ignorance of African societies and economies, drove the colonial process to a specific administrative objective. Subjects would be categorized by "tribe" — entities whose identities were ultimately determined by the colonizers according to criteria of administrative convenience. Only in this fashion could the confusing welter of languages and political and social communities be rendered comprehensible, described and explained with any sort of rationality, and administered "productively." The imperial military requirement for "effective occupation" early on was thus quickly followed by the need for anthropologists to produce "effective administration" for the colonial state.[16]

If this paradigm of "tribe" shaped colonial administrative policies, it also laid the foundation for subsequent attempts to understand an unfamiliar and complex continent called "Dark." The longevity of this intellectual trend is perhaps best epitomized by the 1959 publication of George Murdock' s book, *Africa: Its Peoples and Their Culture History*,[11] whose accompanying ethnographic map shows Africa divided into hundreds of "tribes" each with well-articulated boundaries. The map is of particular historical interest as the primary "lens" through which administrators, anthropologists, political scientists and historians alike saw the region: the

Western mindset quickly translated what were often social and linguistic phenomena into territorial political entities resembling micro-states, each within well defined, often minute areas. Historian Eric Wolfe*s characterization of such constructs seems particularly appropriate here: "By turning names into things we create false models of reality. By endowing nations, societies or cultures with the qualities of internally homogeneous and externally distinctive and bounded objects, we create the model of the world as a global pool hall, in which the entities spin off each other like so many hard and round billiard balls."[18] Murdock's ethnographic map exemplifies this "billiard ball" paradigm which still underlies current Western perceptions of "ethnicity" in general and Africa in particular. Its salient assumptions are:

— Africans define themselves primarily in terms of distinct ethnic or tribal affiliation; kinship ideologies are principles to which "primitive" peoples are inflexibly devoted;

— such affiliations are basically immutable and are serious obstacles to "nation-building" and political stability;

— ethnic affinity meant territorial control;

— these "tribes" had little contact with each other, save violent interaction;

— the colonial period in African history is most important because it introduced the concept of the Western administrative state as the political form toward which these "tribes" should evolve and as the instrument of choice for economic and social progress;

— "progress" comes to Africa from without.

But this synchronic, anthropological vision of a tribally compartmented Africa is at odds with the historical record. To the contrary, pre-colonial African history provides examples of the forms ethnic interaction actually *has taken* (and therefore *could take)* when such interaction springs not from an unswerving allegiance to the ideology of kinship, but from concepts of mutually beneficial relationships instead. Likewise, the more recent colonial and independent historical record suggests what *has happened* (and will *continue to happen)* when ethnic interaction is imprisoned within an arbitrarily defined "state." The three conventional periods of African historiography are relevant here: the precolonial period up to 1780; the so-called "precolonial century" from 1780-1880; and the colonial and independence periods.

THE PRECOLONIAL ERA

As an accepted sub-field of historical inquiry, African history is relatively new. Upon the independence of many African states in the 1960s, scholars responded to the perceived need to prove that Africa did indeed have a history. Perhaps to help legitimize the historical pedigree of these newly independent entities, early research efforts were aimed at studying that "institution of institutions," the pre-colonial state. The core of this research linked large-scale centralized political development with intense economic exchange.[19]

First articulated with special reference to West Africa, the thesis argued that a parallel series of well defined but relatively narrow ecological zones stretched across the bulge of Africa in an east-west direction. Each of these areas produced commodities required by, but not available in, adjacent zones to the north and south: dates and salt in the Sahara; in the sahel. hides, milk, meat, and manure from livestock; gold, rice, millet, and sorghum in the sudan; kola nuts and root crops in the forest. This ecologically specialized production made possible a complex system of local trade that, over time, expanded to a regional network. The introduction of the camel into the Sahara early in the Christian era made feasible further links via trans-Saharan routes to North Africa, and thence to the Middle East

and medieval Europe.

Wherever the north-south exchange of these products was most intense, i.e., trade along the sahel-sudan boundary between pastoral and agricultural communities based "competitive cooperation,"[20] large-scale, durable political systems developed to control that trade and provide security for it. Thus a succession of multiethnic "sudanic" empires based upon inter-ethnic cooperation arose along this ecological border: Ghana, Mali, Songhai and Kanem each respectively established its own sort of "Pax Savanna" over large areas of West Africa from the fifth through the sixteenth centuries.

Of interest here is that this entire system was organized on concepts of mutually beneficial relationships between different ethnic groups—principles that belie the notion of a compartmentalized, fractionalized, "tribal" Africa. Note the breadth and consequence of these sudanic empires: they played an integral "middleman" role for still more extensive economic networks stretching from the forests of the West African coasts across the Sahara to the Mediterranean Sea, the Middle East, and Europe itself. Gold from the West African fields of Bambuk and Bure provided the basis for the European commerce until the sixteenth century (when the Spanish opened up the silver mines in central America). At a minimum, such systems required knowledge of distant markets, procedures for extending credit and exchanging currency, provision of security, and language interpreters. These and other necessities precluded fanatical devotion to the ideology of kinship or ethnicity; the benefits of economic or political cooperation dictated otherwise. Songhai is perhaps the epitome of this process, for its rule provided security for its foreign merchants and a generally stable economic basis for over 250 years across a multi-lingual, multi-ethnic empire as large as Western Europe — no small achievement.

The arrival of the Europeans in West Africa in the late fifteenth century buttresses the "trade and state formation" thesis. One of the main European objectives was to gain access to precious metals, and success in doing so from the southern coast of West Africa short circuited the elaborate trans-Saharan trade network. The new economic "pull" of the Europeans from the south slowly but

surely undermined the geostrategic importance of the sudanic empires' position astride the sahel and the savanna; by the late sixteenth century, Songhai had weakened to the point where it collapsed. Simultaneously this economic "pull" from the south enhanced the strategic location of several small kingdoms on the forest-savanna boundary (some of which were oriented northwards by the earlier trading patterns). Benin, Dahomey, Oyo, and the Akan states reoriented and expanded their trade routes southward to exploit new economic opportunities provided by the Europeans' arrival.-[1] Once again this response stimulated the development of political and economic systems which, by the 1780s, were sophisticated enough to supply European ships with 50,000 slaves annually — an achievement as logistically notable as it was morally reprehensible.[22] and one which would have been impossible without inter-ethnic (indeed inter-racial) cooperation.

As with the sudanic empires, these later polities required cooperation from diverse ethnic groups; a variety of cultural and social technologies were available for facilitating such cooperation. The development of trade languages — Hausa in West Africa, Swahili in the east and Lingala along the Zaire River—represents one such tool. Islam, the "religion of commerce,"[23] was another — as it had been in the earlier empires to the north. Indigenous African religions served a similar function. The Aro Ibo of eastern Nigeria likewise drew upon the prestige of their oracle, Ebinokpabi, in coordinating their trade system through stateless Iboland. Aro traders capitalized on the prestige of the oracle and formed fictive kinship ties with their non-Aro neighbors; in so doing they established a flexible and durable commercial network. The Nzabi who lived along the ethnically fragmented coasts of Gabon and Congo deliberately manipulated their kinship ideology to achieve a similar aim. In Senegambia, occupational solidarity prevailed over ethnic affiliation. Islamic brotherhoods (in particular the nineteenth century Sanusiyya) linked different lineages and formed a political structure that helped organize trade routes in eastern Libya southwards across the Sahara.[24]

Such "horizontal" social and professional bonds cut across the "vertical" kin groups and facilitated creation of alliances when necessary or expedient. This was not an unusual phenomenon in Africa. Such alliances (termed "age sets") were also characteristic of pastoral societies. The success of Nilotic expansion beginning in the• BC/AD period in East Africa was due primarily to this type of social technology. Young men from different lineages were collectively initiated into a single age set which progressed through a series of different ranks. As the Nilotes spread from one area to another, this system facilitated the incorporation of strangers into the Nilotic cultural system.[25] This same social technology also contributed to the Zulu military and cultural hegemony in the early nineteenth century.

THE PRE-COLONIAL CENTURY

The 1780-1880 "precolonial century" also highlights the flexibility of African lineage ideologies. Europe, in the throes of the industrial revolution, required markets for her products and vegetable oils to lubricate her machines.

Afro-European trade rose sharply during this period and its terms greatly favored the Africans. Prices for ivory, cloves, palm oil, gum, beeswax, and hides rose dramatically — sometimes three or fourfold in a 30 year period — while prices for European cloth and firearms stayed steady or even decreased.[26] As happened during the slave trade, disease, especially malaria, prevented direct European access to the interior, and the conduct of the trade was left in African hands.

The vastly increased commercial opportunities for African entrepreneurs provoked a "social revolution" on the continent, particularly in the western and central regions. Up until the end of the eighteenth century, involvement in long distance trade and access to the prestige goods which it provided had been the almost exclusive prerogative of ruling groups. In contrast, increased European contact with Africa provided channels to wealth which were *not* dependent on membership in a particular lineage or ruling group. Around the turn of the century, new opportunities for economic involvement arose, and previously undistinguished individuals and lineages achieved wealth and status *outside* the traditional social and political systems.[27] The effects were profound: certain long-standing empires began to disintegrate as new ones replaced them. Economic wealth and, with it, political status could now be achieved by "outsiders." Within lineages, respect and political power began to coincide with wealth, not age. On the west central African coast, the Duala and the Mpongwe benefited from European trade and became powerful. Among another central African group, the Fang, access to such wealth combined with an emphasis on lineage exogamy and helped fuel an expansion which brought a political and social system to a vast territory wherein wealth, not kinship, was the single most important criterion for leadership. Likewise the Tio and Bobangi societies of the lower Congo River expanded and were transformed internally by this trade: "big men" acquired capital and with it, a political following. Further south, the Ovimbundu, Chokwe and Luso-African long distance traders followed similar paths, caused the oligarchy of the vaunted Lunda Empire to lose its royal monopoly on long distance trade and prestige goods, and precipitated its downfall.[28]

The West African coast exhibited a similar dynamic. The Niger Delta trading states of Nembe, Bonny and Kalahari featured structures in which political power was vested not in any specific lineages but rather in "self-made" individuals whose prestige derived from their demonstrated commercial abilities and wealth from trade in slaves and palm oil. Even ex-slaves could rise to such ranks; one of these, Ja-Ja, established his own form of commercial imperialism by founding the state of Opobo in 1869 — much to the disgust of his British commercial competitors.[29]

THE COLONIAL PERIOD

Pre-colonial Africa thus represented the very antithesis of an atomized continent composed of small, antagonistic tribal fragments. Indeed, the lineage system itself was not the eternal touchstone for self-definition. While in theory and practice kin affiliation was extremely important as an organizing principle, kinship

ideology was radically altered when economic or other circumstances so dictated. The colonial intrusion changed this situation in several fundamental ways.

For the colonizers the continent's social and economic revolution threatened to undermine the cardinal principle that the colonies should pay their own way. Colonies had to be economically productive, but the imperial logic dictated that profits should accrue directly to the colonizers, not the colonized. One therefore finds colonial legislation replete with laws prohibiting any substantial role for African entrepreneurs in the greater economic life of the territory. France, Britain and Belgium even went to war to smash the burgeoning commercial empires within their own territories. Seen from this perspective, then. Europe — even in the short-term — brought economic regression, not progress, to the continent.

Such actions derived from Europe's attitude toward the continent as a "sovereign void"[30]—an attitude made feasible by military and medical technology that gave Europeans the option of ignoring or overwhelming African middlemen and their polities in the quest for raw materials and territory. Colonies were established by the simple fiat of "effective occupation and administration;" the legitimacy of colonial boundaries derived from European, not African, considerations. As already noted, imperial officials, interested in rationalizing colonial entities, compartmentalized their districts and territories according to criteria of administrative convenience and economic profits for the metropole. The precolonial dynamic of mutually beneficial arrangements or competitive reciprocity was replaced with economic and political systems whose main goal was subsidizing imperial administration in areas often bereft of inherent economic rationality. Such changes robbed lineage systems of their flexibility and capacity for change. The very elements of differentiated affiliations that were the strength of African communities and the key to their success were ignored by the colonizer. In short, the dynamic of "state formation" responded to "top-down" economic and administrative imperatives instead of the "bottom up" dictates of old.

Imperialism changed the rules of the lineage game in yet another way. Colonial boundaries encapsulated diverse ethnic groups and divided related ones between different European powers. Within these arbitrarily defined arenas Europeans then introduced the "benefits" of colonial rule: Western education, jobs, health systems, religion, forced military service, and so on. The differential access of indigenous people to these benefits could provoke vicious and often deadly inter-ethnic competition and instability.[31] Colonial rulers then used this competition — a competition engendered by the imperial presence itself — to legitimize the imposition of colonial "order": Europe was indeed bringing "stability" to a continent divided and fragmented, by Europe.

In sum, by imposing on Africa the Western administrative "state" while simultaneously and deliberately leaving the companion concept of "nation" at home, Europe sowed the seeds of an economic and political morass which still persists. The imperial logic could not have it otherwise, for, as Crawford Young reminds us, the colonial enterprise was the very antithesis of the nation-state — a

legal abstraction characterized by the lack of shared values.[32] Colonial rule brought to Africa the absolutist political system of seventeenth-century Europe,[33] wherein a combination of force of arms and divine right legitimized political rule. In so doing, Europe laid the basis for later pathologies often attributed to Marxist vectors: Africa's post-independent penchant for the one-party state, for military rule, and for command-driven economic systems. The "tribe to nation" theme of African political evolution is a myth of European origin, and comprehensible only in terms of European activities in Africa, not in terms of Africa itself. For the Westerners to then blame Africans for the latters' distress is historically and culturally reprehensible. Of more consequence, for the West to believe Africa's current distress can best be remedied within a Western-imposed political paradigm is historically myopic, even absurd.[34]

THE FUTURE: NEW PATTERNS OF AFFILIATION?

The Problem of Peaceful Change

How to permit change in the absence of a universal planetary sovereign or short of the outcome of a test of arms is the central problem for international politics. Rules of the "game nations play"[35] are hard to come by and implement without resort to force and violence. Africa provides models of affiliational communities that have much to offer the West. Unfortunately, the West's ahistorical approach to Africa and its inappropriate investment in the unitary administrative state obviated the usefulness of those models. Instead of proving the vehicle for overcoming ethnic conflict, the artificial, imposed version of the Western state often became the prime instrument for its promotion.[36] As long as such states exist in Africa and elsewhere, so too will "tribalism." The implosion of such entities in Africa is a logical outgrowth of their political artificiality and economic irrationality.[37] That this disintegration resembles other areas which suffered under their own forms of colonialism — the Austro-Hungarian, German, Ottoman, and Russian Empires — should come as no surprise. Neither should its exquisite examples of inhumanity.

But it is only through an ahistorical lens that the future looks so bleak. The African experience as described above also illustrates how one could be a member of a changing, evolving group defined more by social and economic self-interest than by political allegiance. The situational and very fluid nature of ethnic identity[38] rendered change easier to initiate and accommodate. But appreciating this notion requires revising the notion of a static, ahistorical "tribalism." "Tradition,"' historian of Africa Jan Vansina reminds us, "is not just 'continuity' and certainly not "unchanging,' although that idea is so ingrained that most writers use the adjective 'traditional' as a synonym for 'unchanging.'"[39] Africa's precarious environment demanded (and continues to demand) maximum flexibility in this regard; the reward, as noted above, was often a significant stability and order. Absorption of change was therefore more functional than resistance to it. In contrast, the rigid and contradictory imperatives of self-determination and territorial integrity of international law may be part of the problem and not part of the solution. This is particularly

true in the current contexts of ethnic cleansing, final solutions and national control, which seem to play so large a part in the political struggles over centuries.

Transcending national identity will not be easy and will take a very long time. But, despite the halting progress of the European Union, evidence suggests that progress can be made. And progress has been relatively rapid at that. The basis for this success has been exactly that of African entities in pre-colonial times—patterns of economic and social self-interest which build upon but also transcended other affiliations or needs. The problem has been that the spur to such progress has been the cataclysm of two world wars within the span of a generation. That is an excruciatingly high price to pay. We need a more honest and dispassionate assessment of the costs and consequences of differing courses of action. A review of tests of allegiance and the patterns by which we analyze ourselves, our relationships and our needs, both individual and collective, is in order.

The Withering Away of the State?

It is entirely possible that what Marx predicted may well happen but for vastly different reasons than he argued. States are increasingly less able to solve many of today's problems for their citizens. Although the possibility exists that the state "may be rehabilitated" and "is set for a renaissance, albeit in revised format," as Timothy Shaw asserts, much of the evidence points in the opposite direction.[40] Welfare has defeated warfare as the major issue among those who live in advanced industrial societies. National security for many, if not most, is not as preeminent as it once was given the demise of the Cold War. The "social contract" theorists' justification for the creation of the state, while not exactly irrelevant, is less convincing as an explanation for the continuation of the state. The modern state has more and more demands placed upon it which it is less able to meet efficiently and effectively. These are increasingly social and economic in character, not political and military. Social security, not national security is the major issue for advanced industrial societies and the poorest of developing societies as well.

States are incapable of solving a whole host of problems. Whether it is air and water pollution, the holes in the ozone layer, the spread of AIDS, the dangers of toxic waste, many of today's problems do not stop at a border and cannot be resolved short of international cooperation on a grand scale. Another range of problems — drugs, crime, education, decaying infrastructure, adequate medical care, among others — are local and capable of solution below the national level among provinces, counties, cities, or local governments or combinations of them. States are at once too big to solve some problems and too small to solve others. They are increasingly irrelevant or ineffective in solving many major problems for their citizens.

National policy administered by or among state governments is giving way to non-national affiliational groups that are growing and addressing numerous problems and issues transnationally and functionally. The world now has more than 180 states and something over 300 International Governmental Organizations

(IGOs). But there are nearly 5,000 International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) and hundreds of thousands of informal, global functional networks and affiliations of a more avocational nature.[41] The needs and work of humankind are being met increasingly not by states but by other types of organizations and affiliations. Given the changes in our ability to communicate, travel, transfer money, buy goods and services, receive information, access health care, learn, and work on a global basis without the intermediary of states, how much longer will they remain the principal form of identity, affiliation, allegiance and commitment?

Equally important, linguistic, ethnic, racial, religious and regional communities linked by varying degrees of common beliefs or practices are part of the problem for individual states and the state system writ large. Why not permit different types of affiliational communities to function as well as states? Submerging everything into one's identity as a citizen of a state — reinforcing an accident of birth in most cases — and then investing so much in the loyalty to that entity seems unnecessary, dysfunctional and increasingly irrelevant. It is arguable that a large portion of the earth's populace — illiterate, poor, fixed in location, diseased, hungry, without a future and concerned with daily survival more than anything else — neither knows nor cares about nationality. State affiliation is either irrelevant or part of the problem. Maintaining law and order within states or peace among them is increasingly difficult. For many, it is the popular affiliation of nation that is important, not the legality of state identity.

Karen Rasler and William R. Thompson in their study on *War and State Making* argue against the withering away of the state. They argue that it may have never been optimal, save for one purpose: making war. As they state:

> In a world of competitive state organizations, some states prospered from warfare. A good number simply disappeared. As far as the global powers are concerned, only a few states proved to be optimal in profiting from periodic global and interstate wars and geoeconomic restructuring. In the very long run. even most of these successes have turned out to be transitory. ... Without a sufficiently radical change in context, it is difficult to envision a withering away of the state in the new future. Unfortunately, it is much easier to envision the state as a war machine persisting indefinitely, gradually adding new activities to its organizational repertoire, but always remaining a war machine at the core.[42]

Perhaps we have it wrong. Perhaps the state and state system, optimized for war, is incapable of creating lasting peace. Perhaps the continuance of the state is the cause of, not the solution to, war. If so, the problem of peaceful change may require the end of the state system.

Sustaining fictive political entities — what Marc Katz terms the "Legacy of Empire"[43]—is a losing proposition. To speak glibly of "nation building" or mistake the *de jure* diplomatic courtesy and UN membership of unviable regimes for *de facto* sovereignty is to sustain empire's moribund and "stinking" remnants.[44]

Maintaining such states on the international life support system — not only at great cost but even while intensifying the very suffering and disorder we strain so mightily to remedy — is both ineffective and immoral. It is also an arrogant denial to others of the opportunity afforded the West for building viable social, political and economic systems suited to local circumstances. To proclaim that force of arms has no role in such "development" is a rejection of our past, much of the world's present and our collective future, regrettable though that may be.

ALTERNATIVE AFFILIATIONAL COMMUNITIES

Are portions of the African experience relevant to our present circumstances? Could they be adapted to our use in an effort to discourage war, promote evolutionary change and defuse some of the intra-state rivalries confronting the world? We think there are and that unless some more creative initiatives such as these are tried, we have little to look forward to, particularly in Africa itself, other than what Robert Kaplan has called "The Coming Anarchy. "[45] As abuses of claims to national identity and xenophobia increase everywhere and the ability of the administrative state to solve daily problems declines, alternative modes of affiliation offer at least some hope in coping with the political decay surrounding us.

We find ourselves confronting overlapping aggregations of competing interest groups. Some are based on stirrings of national consciousness as defined above. Some are based on kinship, some on language, others on religion and the much maligned ethnic affiliation or race, real or imagined. Some are social networks more than anything else. Some seek separation from larger entities by force of arms. All cannot achieve political independence and survive as viable economic entities, despite longings to the contrary. All are capable to greater or lesser degrees of local autonomy which will promote their self-interest within a larger orbit. These groups may collide or coexist.

If that larger orbit is one of tolerance, there is hope. That is the true genius of democracy as a political concept — there is no single litmus test of participation other than to allow others to express group and individual identity and practices as you would yours. Minority rights, while difficult to maintain, are absolutely fundamental as a concept if one seeks to reduce confrontation and conflict and replace them by cooperation and competition. Along the way no one is required to participate. Patterns of interest groups evolve naturally. These ebb and flow, even come into and pass out of existence depending on the circumstances, personalities, practices and interest aggregations of the times.

Just as African communities existed for centuries without the benefit of strictly defined territorial states or the concept of national or state identity *per se,* so others may be in a position to replace political definition through citizenship or party with more functional and efficient concepts of economic utility and social responsibility. This cannot be a substitute for the global network of political organization that now exists, at least not for some time. But it can augment the now dominant set of relationships governed by politics, and the politics of the status quo at that.

Unless or until we find better mechanisms of affiliation and peaceful, creative adaptation, the scourge of interstate and civil war in which only the force of arms determines the outcome will likely keep the planet in an unending Hobbesian condition. The West as well as the East, the North as well as the South, all are subject to these forces. Given the lethality of today's weaponry and the access of so many to so much of it, mutual self-interests dictates that we should work hard to counter this prospect.

CHOICES

Will centripetal or centrifugal forces ultimately prove successful? Will larger, imperial entities hold sway in the name of economies of scale and multicultural societies, or will there be a proliferation of micro states born on the anvil of self-determination? In the short-term we argue that a more diverse state system, or rather lack of one. will likely emerge. Old attributes and ascriptive affiliations will not die away easily, however, and may become even more passionate attachments than they are today for a variety of causes, both emotional as well as rational. Governments will become increasingly inefficient and less and less necessary as far as the wealthy, rich, and educated are concerned[46] They will also become less strong in tugging at the loyalty and allegiance of the have-nots of the world if competing with religion, ethnicity, language and race. But where these may be fused with a political entity, on any of these grounds, such allegiance and loyalty are likely to become fierce claimants on the time, talents and resources of many.

We suspect that what is most likely is both a disintegration of the state system on one level, with its continued expansion on another. Whether Samuel Huntington or his critics are correct about the "clash of civilizations" remains to be seen.[47] One suspects that some future conflicts will be civilizational. but a great many others may not. It is civil wars that have produced many of humankind's larger cataclysms. The separatist or expansive longings of various groups seeking to express themselves as territorial, politically independent entities will not disappear. But the costs they exact may become so high as to make alternative arrangements more likely. A shrinking of the number of major state actors seems likely, amidst a general proliferation of would-be states enjoying vastly different half-lifes. Simultaneously, we will see an explosion of international non-governmental organizations whose existence and reality has little if anything to do with traditional forms of political sovereignty. Such hierarchies will exist mainly as conduits for and custodians of information variously disaggregated among self-selecting pools of users and consumers whose political affiliations are unimportant and whose economic and technological competencies may be all powerful. Not only information *per se* but manipulation of genetic codes and genetic engineering will be major players in the new architecture. The state may well become a victim of technological progress as well as human abandonment.

Africa's past has suggested other norms for affiliation. A hybrid entity combining both economic and social imperatives, as opposed to political and

military ones of the state, may offer a successful alternative to traditional forms of affiliation. It would initially be based on mutual overlapping commercial and technological self-interest. It could also combine the best of the traditional administrative state and the more efficient and effective multinational corporations or regional or even global affinity groups. If such patterns of commitment of generally like-minded individuals could be constructed in either loose confederal arrangements or a more artfully fused commitment to overlapping interests most readily discerned by shared values and life style preferences, then a truly new form of affiliation, allegiance, commitment and sustainment may be created.

Such a hybrid set of associations, not unlike the free trade blocks of the EC and NAFTA on one level, would be far more than these. They would have no geographic requirements for contiguity. They could function as associated nodes of an information network. There would be shared education, economic and life style affinities that may well come to override traditional and less effective bonds of place of birth or ethnic affiliation. Class may well prove to be the stronger bond of association and alienation a powerful entropic force in societies to overcome if at all possible. Such a reality would resurrect Marxist critiques of the past and create a new line of conflict and cooperation in the international system. Such an evolution would likely lead to renewed conflicts of a different sort and revolutions of an all too familiar ring. A new round of haves vs. have-nots would seep over the international system, pitting masses of barbarians against keepers of civilization. Such is a familiar tale and an oft repeated cycle in human history. It is part of the expansion and contraction of the entities in the international system. Nations will likely have resilience as an organizing principle. States, in their traditional sense may not. But as the one continues, if not prospers, the other will likely mutate and what we call the international system will likely be a vastly different complex of actors than we know today.

Grant T. Hammond is Professor of International Relations and Chair of National Security Strategy at the US Air War College.

***Bryant** P. Shaw* chairs the Military Studies Department at the US Air War College.

Endnotes

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32. Young, "Patterns of Social Conflict," p. 75.
33. Thomas Callaghy. *The State-Society Struggle: Zaire in Comparative Perspective* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984).
34. See P. Johnson's "Colonialism's Back — And Not a Moment Too Soon," *The New York Times Magazine,* 18 April 1993. pp. 22,43-44. For a more recent expression of this same point of view. see William Pfaff, "A New Colonialism? Europe Must go Back to Africa," *Foreign Affairs,* 74. no. 1 (January-February 1995), pp. 2-6.
35. This is the title of John Spanier's marvelous text in international relations. *Games Nations Play: Analyzing International Politics (New* York: Prosper. 1972).
36. For an early and prescient articulation of this thesis, see Melscn and Wolpe. *Nigeria: Modernization and the Politics of Communalism.*
37. See Crawford Young's *The African Colonial State in Comparative Perspective* (New Haven. CT: Yale University Press, 1994). for the notion that the nature of the African colonial state is responsible for many of the frailties of its independent successors.
38. These characteristics are masterfully documented in Crawford Young's *The Politics of Cultural Pluralism* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1976). Ethnicity's continuing impact is featured in Young's more recently edited work. *The Rising Tide of Cultural Pluralism: The Nation-State at Bay?* (Madison. WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1993).
39. Vansina. *Paths in the Rainforests,* p. 7.
40. Timothy M. Shaw. "Beyond any New World Order: the South in the 21st Century." *Third World Quarterly,* 15.no. 1 (1994),p. 140. AdifferentcaseismadebyCrawford Young in 'The Dialectics of Cultural Pluralism," in Young, ed., *The Rising Tide of Cultural Pluralism,* p. 21.
41. Charles W. Kegley and Eugene R. Witkopf, *World Politics: Trend and Transformation,* 4th ed. **(New York: St. Martin's, 1993), pp. 154-59.**
42. Karen A. Rasler and William R. Thompson. *War and State Making: The Shaping of Global Powers* (Boston, MA: Unwin Hyman. 1989), pp. 218-19. For another view of the connection between military power and me state, see Bruce Porter. *War and the Rise of the State: The Military Foundations of Modern Politics* (New York: Free Press, 1994).
43. Mark N.Katz. 'The Legacy of Empire in International Relations." *Comparative Strategy.* 12 **(1993),** pp. 365-83.

44. The phrase is Rebecca West's from her classic *Black Lamb. Grey Falcon* as cited in H. Barkey's review essays of Brzezinski'sOwfo/Cow *ml* and *Moymhaxi'sPandaemonium* in *Strategic Review,* 21, no. 4 (Fall 1993), p. 62

45. Kaplan. "The Coming Anarchy."

46. Carl Builder of RAND and others, notably Heidi and Alvin Toffler. make persuasive arguments along these lines. See (for a short version) the Toffler's "Societies at Hyper-Speed," *The New York Times.* Sunday. 31 October 1993. p. E 17; or for a longer version, their *War and Ami- War: Survival at the Dawn of the 21st Century,* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1993).

47. Samuel Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs,* 72, no. 3, (Summer 1993). pp. 21-49. Several responses to Huntington by Fouad Ajami, Kishore Mahhubani, Robert L. Bartley. Liu Binyan. and Jeane Kirkpatrick are contained in *Foreign Affairs,* 72, no. 4. (Fall 1993), pp. 2-27; Huntington's rejoinders are found in "If Not Civilizations, What? Paradigms of the Post-Cold War World," *Foreign Affairs,* 72, no. 5, (November-December 1993), p. 186-94. For yet another view of Huntington's thesis, see Richard E. Rubenstein and Jarle Crocker, "Challenging Huntington," *Foreign Policy,* 96 (Fall 1994), pp. 113-28.