C·A·P WORKING PAPER

Making Use of the Future
Scenario Creation as a New Framework for Mediation of Regional Autonomy Conflicts

Von Ulrich Golüke

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An Analysis of Possibilities

You don't change the world by moving mountains, but by getting the ball rolling.

Sir Ralf Dahrendorf

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Abstract

This Working Paper addresses how scenario creation can be used as a new framework for the mediation of autonomy conflicts. It looks at the deeper, emotional structure of such conflicts in order to understand how they originate, what dynamics they develop, and how to address differences well before they escalate to the level of intractability and violence. Examining autonomy conflicts through this lens of emotion and identity helps analysts and practitioners to see them differently, and to see different solutions.

The author shows specific factors that influence regional autonomy conflicts in a new light and thus uses their driving force in a positive sense rather than let them fester and escalate.

The frame is developed in the first part of this analysis and then used to sketch out different models, in the form of archetypical scenario stories, about the paths which autonomy processes might take. This leads to a practical proposal, scenario creation, about what needs to be done. The author describes the preconditions, requirements and various steps of the scenario methodology and analyzes how this methodology might support the aim to arrive at a framework for mutual recognition and decision making. The paper tests the approach by looking at two examples of solutions that build upon this reframing, giving views on what worked, what did not and why.

A solution to autonomy problems needs to be interactive, peaceful, dynamically robust, and capable of further development, i.e., of evolving. The resilience necessary to build stability while adapting to change is not an easy quality to build, least of all in conflict situations, yet nothing else is really suitable as a sustainable solution. Three recent developments make old methods of solving autonomy conflicts, particularly imposing solutions from the outside, inappropriate for today's world: the decline of scarcity as an organizing principle, unprecedented transparency and openness, and human impacts of geophysical proportions.

One of the difficulties of reaching solutions to autonomy conflicts is that very often the conflict, the means of solving it, and the larger society are all changing along different time scales. Six layers of time are related to these questions – fashion, commerce, infrastructure, governance, culture and nature (fastest to slowest) – each of which responds in its own tempo, and influences developments in the nearby layers. But solutions developed at the speed of governance will come too late to solve problems of commerce, and may be too transient to counter long-term conflicts between cultures. Regional conflicts, very often conflicts of identity, intensify when

people feel that the identity is only stable in a small number of the time layers; for example, if an identity is only expressed in fashion and culture, it is more easily threatened than one that is expressed across five layers. (Furthermore, the erosion of scarcity has also brought an implied need to express identity in more layers, increasing the potential exposure to threats.) With a threat to identity comes conflict.

Scenarios help to overcome conflict by encouraging participants to think in a structured and non-zero-sum way about the future. The paper considers the relationships between autonomy and integration, and between assimilation and separation to devise four archetypal versions of how autonomy conflicts may develop. Each of these scenarios demonstrates the deeper causes and dynamics of regional conflicts. The archetypal stories are expressed locally in many different details, and the goal of using scenario methodology in concrete conflicts is to help participants reframe their thinking and develop a common frame of reference for shaping future developments. There is a specific set of techniques for this approach, which is discussed in detail. One of its most successful applications was during South Africa's transition to majority rule, when the Mont Fleur scenarios provided a new vocabulary for a national discussion about the desired outcome of that transition. Scenarios are not a means of negotiation, and they are not a vehicle for agreeing on specific issues. They are, however, a means for representatives to discuss a common future without having to agree on courses of action. The process is logical, rather than position-driven, and may enable participants to see new perspectives on hardened positions. It is also positive, emphasizing what is possible in the future and choice-driven, emphasizing the actions that bring the future into the present. The "gentle art of re-perceiving" makes use of the future to create opportunities for improving the present.

Setting the Stage

The amount of descriptions and analysis of what regional autonomy conflicts are and the advice on what to do about them is large and growing. However, for very understandable reasons, all this thought and advice is concentrated at the late, violent and often intractable stage of a conflict. The squeaky wheel does indeed get the grease. I have been asked to look at the deeper, emotional structure of regional autonomy conflicts. To be able to do so, I propose to reframe the problem: reframe it through the lens of emotion and identity – identity as it may exist in several layers with distinct and different timeframes. In doing so, I hope that the normal starting point – namely that of a sub-state unit which can express its *distinct* identity[1] – can be expanded a little in order to reveal deeper causes and, I hope, deeper elements of a solution to regional autonomy conflicts.

The justification, for doing so rests on the following assumptions:

- We will, by looking at regional autonomy conflicts through this deep emotional lens see things differently, and we will we see different solutions.

- It does thereby become a little clearer how to prevent, mitigate and solve regional conflicts – at least some of them.

In taking this perspective, I hope to show specific factors that influence regional autonomy conflicts in a new light and thus use their driving force in a positive sense rather than let them fester and escalate.

I develop the frame in the first part of this analysis and then use it to sketch out different models, in the form of archetypical scenario stories, of describing, classifying and solving regional autonomy conflicts.

All this leads, I hope, to a practical proposal – scenario creation – about what we need to do. I then test the approach by looking at two examples of solutions that build upon this reframing. I will describe them and give my opinion on what worked, what did not and why.

Finally, I close by sketching out what one may do to strengthen the validity of the new frame.

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[1] Ruth Lapidoth, *Elements of Stable Regional Autonomy Arrangements*, p 3, Working Paper prepared for the Workshop „Zwischen staatlicher Integrität und gesellschaftlicher Vielfalt – Modelle regionaler Autonomie", 4 September 2001 in Gütersloh.

The Shape of a Solution

Regional autonomy conflicts are becoming more numerous, violent and insolvable. 'Solving' them often takes the form of late stage (*too* late a stage?) outside intervention up to and including the use of sanctions, air raids and ground troops. While understandable, and certainly better than nothing, long term and sustainable solutions to regional autonomy conflicts need to be more than that. *All at the same time*, they need to be:

- interactive

- peaceful

- dynamically stable and robust, and

- capable of further developing. i.e. evolving.

While the first demand, interaction, is often met, 'peaceful' is too often defined operationally as merely the absence of violence. But it is especially the latter two that demand an extremely difficult situation: stability and change at the same time, in other words, a **resilience** that is far too often absent from regional conflict solutions. However, the difficulty of achieving these four simultaneous demands of a sustainable solution to regional autonomy conflicts should not keep us from trying.

Let us try.

Dealing with Change

Change, as the Greeks already knew, is inevitable. When people, groups and societies change, differences, in turn, become inevitable. What are the archetypical ways of handling these differences?

- **Resilience**: Some deal with these differences so that they never amount to anything. In fact, some even draw strength from them; we have all heard of the value of creative tension.

- **Escalation**: Some, however, do not deal with the differences; instead they fester, become big deals first and then unmanageable, until finally they lead to conflict, violence and death. The 'solution' is the utter exhaustion of the opponents

- **Imposed Solution**: There is a third variant, namely, that people themselves do not deal with their differences, but have a 'cooling-off' period, a settlement or

a solution imposed on them. This way of dealing with change and disruption has in fact been the norm throughout human history, mostly through sheer power, once in a rare while by appealing to a trusted third party.

Since it is the *loss of sheer, naked and violent power* – or at least the constraint imposed on its indiscriminate use in today's world[2] – which forces us to pay more attention to the first two ways of dealing with change, I offer three arguments why the power is seeping away:

- the fading of scarcity as the archetypical organizing principle of human behavior,
- unprecedented transparency and connectedness, and
- human impacts of geophysical proportions.

The fading role of scarcity

For imposed solutions to work, they need to deliver a desired outcome, even for the 'loser', or his next of kin. In a world of scarcity, the solution often solved a pressing subsistence issue. Reparations were often carefully gauged to be within the realm of possibility of the loser to pay. The winners of the Second World War, through the Marshall Plan, helped the European losers to survive. Today, the winners of the bombing campaign against Yugoslavia are paying USD1.28 billion to the loser. Yet despite the last example, the value of scarcity as an organizer of all human life, is becoming less and less.

Why is this so?

Because one person in six already lives in material abundance – whereas throughout history, the ratio was more like one in ten thousand. The world we live in now is different, radically different from that of our grandparents. While in their world you had to be a king or a queen in order to live in abundance, today about *one billion* of us – one sixth of humanity – do so. In a couple of generations the phenomenon of having more than enough went from *an oddity to a mass phenomenon* – in a span of time too short to measure historically. And those who live in abundance are not all concentrated in the 'North.' The middle class in India is larger than the entire

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[2]   Even when engaged in war, as NATO was a few years ago in its air attacks on Serbia, the survival of Serbia and the Serbian people was never questioned. In fact, already during the air campaign the same nations who waged war were planning for the reconstruction of the country they were attacking.

population of the European Union. If you substitute China for India, and North America for the European Union, the comparison still holds.

Does this have an impact on the refugee in Kosovo or the dweller in a Palestinian refugee camp or a victim of genocide in Rwanda? I suggest it does, since the one billion who do live in material abundance, roughly 15% of humankind, can **choose** to end their misery at any time. Witness the USD1.28 billion pledged to the reconstruction of Yugoslavia one day after the transfer of the former President of Yugoslavia, Mr. Milosevic, was handed over to the war tribunal in The Hague. **The rich have a choice** – something they did not have in the past – to let victims suffer or not. To our shame, far too often we choose to let them suffer, since we judge our promotion, our second house or third vacation too be more important.

> *In a world of abundance the carrot of an imposed solution of a conflict, namely that at least the material survival of the losers is assured, has lost its compelling force, dangling without purpose in front of the opponents' noses.*

Transparency and Connectedness

Second, for imposed solutions to work, they need to be cloaked in secrecy. The more despicable the violent imposition, the more need for secrecy, *a secrecy that no longer exists in a highly connected world*. One way to visualize how much more connected we are is to recall how far a normal human being, not a king or a field marshal, can travel in a day. For most of our history the limit was your own feet, or those of an ox or a horse, say fifty kilometers. And that meant walking 'full time.' This distance increased dramatically in the last hundred and fifty years to, say, ten thousand kilometers. Yet all this improvement was only about you, or your products, getting from A to a B much further away.

At least as important was the development of bringing information, even goods, from that distant B to you! Most dramatic, of course, in this regard has been the internet. Deliberately designed to be a resilient, even redundant, infrastructure we live now, almost, in real time. A similar impressive example is the phone. It took about one hundred years to get to eight hundred million fixed line connections. It is taking a mere twenty years to get to two billion mobile connections.

While impressive in its own right, the true significance of these changes lie in Malcolm Gladwell's idea of the tipping point:[3] The systems, in this case of information, commerce and warfare, have changed so fundamentally that they are no longer the systems of the past. While an e-mail in one sense is just a faster, more reliable and more convenient version of a carrier pigeon, thinking this way misses the point. And what is the point? That everybody knows everything about everyone, all the time.

What does that mean? To start with the frivolous: It means that when I lived in Geneva, Switzerland it was cheaper for me to order a book in Seattle, Washington than to get it from my local bookstore. Move to a village that has no bookstore and the example becomes a little less frivolous. It also means that a battlefield soldier has both more and more accurate battle information than Napoleon ever did. But the most profound implication of this connectedness is that it is creating a world of transparency and trust.

Why? We all know that people in smaller communities are more honest than people in large cities – on average. There are at least two explanations for this that I can think of. One, all honest people move, on average, to smaller communities and less honest people move to larger cities. The second, and perhaps more plausible, explanation is that people who happen to live in small communities know there is a greater chance of being found out and held responsible – and they take this into account when contemplating dastardly deeds! If the latter explanation rings more true, it holds great promise for the world at large: if we live in a world where everybody knows everything about everyone, all the time, then chances of being found out and held responsible are rising, relentlessly. Remember, the honesty of small communities does not require agreement on 'universal standards of honesty' – it is a true bottom-up, self-organizing system that makes people, on average, behave more honestly.

> *Today, as a conflict progresses anywhere in the world, we know what atrocities are being committed, virtually the moment they happen. Sovereignty, as a result, is not what it used to be and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have become formidable definers and shapers of issues we are concerned about.*

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[3] Malcolm Gladwell, 2000, *The Tipping Point*, Little Brown & Company; ISBN: 0316316962

Human impacts have reached geophysical proportions

The thirds critical requirement for imposed solutions to work is that *the imposition must not feed back to the imposer*. But now they do, because what we humans do, matters – on geophysical scales. As John McNeill[4] writes in his recent book, about one fifth of all the years spent by human beings on this planet took place during the last one hundred years; and we probably consumed more energy during those one hundred years than in our entire previous history put together.

So what? Well, all our instincts and habits derive from a time when this was not so. It was that limited, if not unnoticeable impact, that allowed us to tolerate risk, mistakes and imposed solutions. Whatever happened, as tragic as it was for those directly involved, there were enough of us left over to 'learn by trial and error.' For a community of people that is a good strategy, as long as the error was self-limiting in both space and time. And everything we were able to do, until a few decades ago, fell well within that category: whether roads, Roman or otherwise, aqueducts, windmills, armadas or hundred-year wars. Nothing came close to even being noticed on a planetary, let alone galactic scale. Clever as we are, we learned to take the system's resilience – that is its ability to bounce back – for granted. Evidence is surfacing that there were instances in the past when eco-systems collapsed due to human influence, and the humans in them disappeared with the system. But even those events were local, contained and self-limiting.

When buffers are actually inexhaustible – in practical if not quite theoretical terms – then not to worry about them, indeed to take them for granted, makes a lot of sense. When they are not however, it is a deadly mistake.

The explosion from the atom bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945 was the first human-made flash of light bright enough to be visible from deep space. However, far more insidious are the less spectacular events, like global warming. As McNeill puts it, "Mankind is now probably the biggest force for environmental disruption – bigger than almost any single force of nature and far greater than any other species."

Our power is now such that we matter on a planetary scale. Whatever solution a winner of a regional autonomy conflict imposes, more likely than not, will come back to haunt him.

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[4]   John McNeill, 2001, *Something New Under the Sun*, W.W. Norton & Company; ISBN: 0393321835

Thus, I argue, all three conditions – promise of material survival, secrecy, and no feedback to the imposer – no longer hold, at least to the extent they did even a few decades ago. Hence a 'conflict resolution' method – imposed solutions – depending on these notions looses in importance in line with the loss of importance of the underlying assumptions.

We need to turn elsewhere.

Resilience Emerging

We are back, the argument goes, to the first two possibilities of dealing with change, differences and conflict: *taking differences in stride* or *falling apart over them. **The distinction between them is resilience***. Beyond understanding the change or disruption itself, it is the second necessary aspect of any situation one needs in order to predict what will happen. Unfortunately, beyond the strictly physical meaning of elasticity, resilience is an emerging property of a system: fancy words for saying that if *after* a shock or disturbance a system bounces back or recovers, it indeed had the necessary resilience. A *post facto* descriptor, in other words.

Nevertheless, people have tried to approach the concept so as to make it predictive: what attributes, and in what proportion, does a system need in order to be able to withstand a given disturbance? Applied to groups of people, societies that is, Freeman Dyson observed:

> *The destiny of our species is shaped by the imperatives of survival on six distinct time scales. To survive means to compete successfully on all six time scales. But the unit of survival is different at each of the six time scales. On a time scale of years, the unit is the individual. On a time scale of decades, the unit is the family. On a time scale of centuries, the unit is the tribe or nation. On a time scale of millennia, the unit is culture. On a time scale of tens of millennia, the unit is the species. On a time scale of eons, the unit is the whole web of life on our planet. Every human being is the product of adaptation to the demands of all six time scales. That is why conflicting loyalties are deep in our nature. In order to survive, we have to be loyal to ourselves, to our families, to our tribes, to our culture, to our species, to our planet. If our psychological impulses are complicated, it is because they were shaped by complicated and conflicting demands.*[5]

Resilience, in other words, has to do with the interplay of many layers of life, defined and separated by their dominant time horizons. At any one time, a person therefore lives in all of these time scales. He or she takes part, has a foot, so to speak, in all of

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[5] Freeman Dyson, 1992, *From Eros to Gaia*, Pantheon, pg. 341, as quoted in Stewart Brand, 1999, *The Clock of the Long Now*, Basic Books, pg. 35

them, although the impact of any one individual on the development of culture, species or planet is hard to detect. Still, culture is nothing more than the habits, values and beliefs of individuals, accumulated and distilled over hundreds and sometimes thousands of years.

The same picture can be seen if we look in the other direction: An individual is made up of cells with very different time spans. Hair and intestinal cells live for only a few days; liver and blood cells a few weeks to months; and egg cells as long as the individual.

What emerges, is a clichè, namely that of the 'web of life'. But it is more than a clichè: it is how living systems survive under adversity, woven together in intricate ways. Hence the result of any change or disturbance is also dependent on the system's resilience at that time:

- are there redundant paths and functions that can take over from a damaged part or a region?

- how supple is the structure so that it might absorb the blow?

- how vigilant, we might even say intelligent, is the system to be able to repair the damage and learn from it?

Looking at *either* change *or* resilience one knows nothing; the outcome always depends on the balance *between the two*. Resilience is a dynamic system property – hence one can have too much of it, which we see in adolescents, in the posturing of especially the Prussian High Command before the First World War[6] and in many other examples from history and daily life. Any unchallenged and resilient structure eventually atrophies – it becomes efficient, brittle and careless.

And yet: If this is how people and groups, like all living systems, deal more or less successfully, with change, why are we so unskilled at it?

For an answer, we need a small detour and we need to start with Dyson's concept of interconnected layers of time in which we all live simultaneously and in which we all have to succeed in order 'to stay in the gene pool.' Stewart Brand relabeled these layers in his book, *The Clock of the Long Now* and called them

- fashion

- commerce

- infrastructure

- governance

- culture

- nature.

These layers are separated by orders of magnitude of time: fashion is a matter of months, commerce of years, infrastructure of decades, governance of centuries, culture of millennia and nature way beyond that. As Brand points out, any one layer always needs both the speed and liveliness, even irreverence of the one 'below' *and* the slower, context setting attributes of the one 'above' in order to thrive. Each layer itself is in constant flux. It is not, for example, that culture lasts unchanged and unchangeable for one thousand years and then, as if by magic, a new one pops up. Rather, every day, elements of culture change a little, but one does need several hundred years before one notices a distinct change. On the fashion layer, distinct differences are visible, on the other hand, within weeks.

To illustrate this idea, Brand[7] uses the example of a coniferous forest:

> *The hierarchy in scale of pine needle, tree crown, patch, stand, whole forest and biome is also a time hierarchy. The needle changes within a year, the tree crown over several years, the patch over many decades, the stand over a couple of centuries, the forest over a thousand years, and the biome over ten thousand years. The range of what the needle may do is constrained by the tree crown, which is constrained by the patch and stand, which are controlled by the forest, which is controlled by the biome. Nevertheless, innovation percolates throughout the system via evolutionary competition among lineages of individual trees dealing with the stresses of crowding, parasites, predation and weather. Occasionally, large shocks such as fire or disease or human predation can suddenly upset the whole system, sometimes all the way to the biome level.*

In a healthy system, the layers of time change at their own pace, maintaining an overall safe equilibrium, even while individual layers go through ups and down, commotions and changes. Systems do not always pay equal attention to all layers:

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[7]   Stewart Brand, op. Cit., pg. 34-35

we humans, for example, are as young adolescents much more interested in fashion then when we are old. If the respect for the rhythm of any one layer diminishes or disappears, the system begins to show signs of disease. Investments in infrastructure, for example, can never be entirely justified by commercial criteria alone, they need to appeal to the logic and requirements, the context in other words, of the governance layer.

Similarly, education, an intellectual infrastructure, cannot thrive merely justified on commercial grounds. Systems that can span all the layers thrive at the expense of those who cannot. This is not easy; culture for example, the layer of language and religion is often difficult to reconcile with the faster moving layers below. And nature, with its even longer rhythm, poses even harder challenges. Yet when we disturb nature's pace with motivations from the faster layers, as we are doing with the speeding up of the genetic loss of diversity and the climate change, for example, we risk setting free truly geophysical forces, who appear to us, on the faster layers, as apocalyptic. Systems find their surest health, Brand concluded, in resolving the apparent contradictions of pace of these layers.

That, in short, is the picture Brand paints. He only coincidentally places people in his picture, while for us in this analysis, they are of central concern. The way people, individuals, groups and regions take their place in this background is through their identity and emotions.

Identity and Emotions

Identity answers the question of who we are and to whom we belong. It gives the person or group the capacity to orient themselves, quickly and with surety, in new situations. A resilient person or group has developed answers on all six layers (again, we could extend this viewpoint in the other direction and find ourselves dealing with questions of self at the biochemical and immunological level). As it is for a forest, it is equally true that for people a challenge, which is a change or disturbance, to any one layer can be cushioned by the others, thus giving time to the challenged, even damaged, layer to repair itself.

It takes very little imagination indeed to realize that when the sense of identity reduces itself to fewer and fewer layers two things can happen:

- if the challenge occurs on a layer that has been abandoned, nothing happens; in this case the shrinking of the self means that the 'self' has not been challenged

- if, however, the challenge occurs on any layer still left, then the ability to withstand change and disruption, if directed at that layer, is badly compromised. For example, if you define your self, your identity, or allow it to be defined by others, only on the, say, cultural level, anything that happened hundreds of years ago becomes bitterly important to you. When challenged, you have no layer left to cushion the blow. Hence it is not surprising that you lash out, and often do so in the name of some absolute truth, because religion, more often than not, resides on the cultural layer. In short, the person or group or region becomes efficient, brittle and vulnerable. And every issue becomes a very big deal indeed.

Thus the question that needs to be asked is this: Is our sense of self, of identity really 'shrinking' to fewer layers?

Is our sense of self, of identity, shrinking?

To get a handle on this, we need to go back to the world we come from: scarcity. In that world the anchor of everything is *physical survival.* That is the paramount concern; all else is merely 'nice to have'. Hence the identity question – who am I, to whom do I belong? – in this world has answers that serve the need for physical survival and having privileged access to resources – of whatever kind – was all that really mattered.

From humble and beneficial beginnings, scarcity became our overarching, our archetypical organizing principle. It was, and still is, in our bones. It was the glasses through which we looked at everything: life and death, relations and happiness, the heavens and earth. It drove us to learn 'for life,' to take the right job, to marry the right spouse and to defend what we had. In the extreme, it drove us to war. It created, and then made preeminent, the dismal science, economics because that is the science of how to allocate scarce resources.

As I have argued above, that world is no more, *even if five out of six people on this planet still have at least one foot firmly in this world.*[8] Hence our question of identity needs new and different answers then those from the past.

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[8] For the complete argument, see my book *On the Edge of Abundance — Making Sense of What's to Come*, forthcoming end 2001. See also Vaclav Smil, 1999, *Energies*, MIT Press and his earlier book, now out of print, 1993, *Energy in World History,* Westview, Boulder, CO.

As physical survival recedes, the other deep questions of human existence – purpose, relation and legacy[9] – come to the fore. *It is in these additional dimensions we need to answer who we are and to whom we belong*. Since this is getting a little complicated, it may help to visualize a four by six matrix, something like this:

Time-layer	IDENTITY	PHYSICAL SURVIVAL	RELATION	PURPOSE	LEGACY
Months	FASHION				
Years	COMMERCE				
Decades	INFRA-STRUCTURE				
Centuries	GOVERNANCE				
Origin of Regional Autonomy Conflicts					
Millennia	CULTURE				
Tens of millennia	NATURE				

Table 1: The space for identity

Potentially, identity spans the entire matrix, while in the past, all we had time and power to pay attention to was the column marked 'physical survival.' Even then we really only focused on the commerce and infrastructure time layers. A few found answers on the fashion and governance layers – but that was it. Identity on the culture and nature time layer 'emerged': Storytellers, often mythical figures themselves, created the myths to live by.[10] In this time-identity space, regional conflicts have their origin between the culture and governance layers.

All this made eminent sense, since the possibility of any one person impacting the story of who we were on these slow moving time layers was not within his or her

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9   Taking my cue from the religions of the world, from Joseph Campbell's work (1993, *Myths to Live* by, Arkana; ISBN: 0140194614) and from Abraham Maslow's work (1998, *Maslow on Management*, Wiley, NY ISBN 0-471-24780-4)

10   A wonderful, relatively brief overview is given by Joseph Campbell, op. cit

power. Hence, those that did venture there were special, eccentric, even crazy. From shamans to priests, from bards to gurus, they were not your everyday neighbors. If what they saw and said made sense, they became revered and even legends; if not, they were unceremoniously sent packing. If the words did not have a thoroughly modern and commercial ring to it, we might well say that our ancestors 'outsourced' their finding of answers to the questions of identify on the culture and nature time layers to those eccentrics who felt called upon to live there.

Time-layer	IDENTITY	PHYSICAL SURVIVAL	RELATION	PURPOSE	LEGACY
Months	FASHION	+			
Years	COMMERCE	++			
Decades	INFRA-STRUCTURE	++			
Centuries	GOVERNANCE	+			
Origin of Regional Autonomy Conflicts					
Millennia	culture	/			
Tens of millennia	NATURE	/			

Table 2: In the past, the space for identity was restricted to the first column.

As physical survival, that is the lack of fear of starvation, began being taken for granted by 15% or more of humanity (1 out of every 6) instead of the 0.01% – after all a 1500-fold increase in a few, very few, generations – we are free to seek answers to who we are across the entire spectrum of the matrix:

Time-layer	IDENTITY	PHYSICAL SURVIVAL	RELATION	PURPOSE	LEGACY
Months	FASHION	++	++	++	++
Years	COMMERCE	++	++	++	++
Decades	INFRA-STRUCTURE	++	++	++	++
Centuries	GOVERNANCE	++	++	++	++
Origin of Regional Autonomy Conflicts					
Millennia	CULTURE	++	++	++	++
Tens of millennia	NATURE	++	++	++	++

Table 3: Now, the space for identity spans the entire matrix

But as any student of Dr. Faustus knows, the freedom to do so implies the obligation, and at times the curse, to do so. How can we possibly do that, and do it well? The short and cruel answer is, we don't! Rather than methodically create consistent answers with integrity and respect across the entire matrix, giving us resilience to spare, we tend to move around the space, frivolously and thoughtlessly at times. We declare, and live, as if loyalty to a particular spot in our heroes' sports stadium was all that mattered. Often with equal single-mindedness we choose loyalty to a cause, be it money or deep ecology, or whatever. One tries single-handedly to become the richest person on earth, the other to save the planet. Others still withdraw to the very bottom right of the matrix and simply worry about joining their particular guru in some private nirvana. The examples can be extended at will and together, they come very close to the picture Robert Putnam recently drew in his book *Bowling Alone*:[11] very fragmented and very fragile.

Not healthy – but not that surprising, since the freedom to find answers to our questions of identity is very new; indeed historically speaking it happened in the blink of an eye. So it will take time to feel at home in this vast space. In the meantime,

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[11]   Robert Putnam, 2000, *Bowling Alone*, Simon & Schuster; ISBN: 0684832836

people who want to create trouble for their own ends have a vast field in which to manipulate their fellow men and women. On the negative side, we see it with the rise of Neo-Nazi gangs, not just in Germany; with the creation of international violent demonstrators of anti-globalization; of soccer hooligans and countless others. On the positive side, we see the rise of multitudes of non-governmental organizations, often small and unknown, but driven by a genuine desire to better the lives of their fellow men and women.

Yet all are transitory phenomena – occupying the space of answers of identity while the rest of us get in shape, slowly and reluctantly to find those answers for ourselves. Because only when we do, as individuals, as groups, as regions, do we gain the resilience, the suppleness and the intelligence necessary to deal with change and disturbance – which in a globalized world is flooding over us in unprecedented ways and volume – as a matter of course, *without* it developing into conflict which is violent, cruel and destructive.

The question I asked at the beginning of this section turned out to be wrong: Our sense of identity is *not* shrinking, but the time-space over which we have to find answers is vastly expanding – all because the daily struggle for physical survival is not what it used to be. While far from pleasant, that struggle allowed us to restrict our questions and answers of identity to what is turning out to be a very small subset of what is possible – and because it is possible, it has become necessary.

Our task, and in conflict situations, whether emergent or regional or otherwise, our *very urgent* task is to become vastly better at creating answers to all the possibilities of identity; with respect and integrity.

If we consider the assertions that

- regional autonomy conflicts have their deep emotional roots in a diffuse, unclear and unhealthy sense of identity, and

- the time-space of emotional identity over which we have to find answers is vastly expanding

then we need to answer how we can structure the search for solutions of regional autonomy conflicts so that they are more likely to lead to success.

One suggestion on how to do that is by creating scenarios, the topic of the next chapter.

Using Scenario Methodology for a
New Regional Autonomy Conflict Taxonomy

The ideas and discussions about what to do with regional autonomy conflicts can be arranged as four clusters:

- autonomy, at times leading to strict proportionality

- integration

- assimilation, and

- separation.

While at least one dictionary defines assimilation as "the absorbing of one cultural group into *harmony* with another"[12] others empathize the loss of something, like the Encyclopedia Britannica: "the process whereby individuals or groups of differing ethnic heritage are absorbed into the dominant culture of a society. Usually they are immigrants or hitherto isolated minorities who, through contact and participation in the larger culture, *gradually give up most of their former culture traits and take on the new traits to such a degree that socially they become indistinguishable from other members of the society.* Assimilation does not denote racial or other biological fusion, though such fusion may be related.

"Complete assimilation rarely occurs, as evidenced, for example, by the great diversity of local and regional cultures in Europe, despite centuries of conquest and recurrent attempts to force assimilation. There have, nonetheless, been some notable instances of assimilation, particularly in the United States, the so-called melting pot of ethnic groups. Millions of European immigrants to the United States, through relocation, the influences of the public-school systems, and other forces in American life, became almost completely assimilated within two or three generations."[13]

Thus, the use of the word when discussing regional conflicts often has this negative connotation. That is unfortunate, especially since the other definitions of assimilation from chemistry and biology stress the beneficial part of the process, coming close to a meaning of symbiosis.

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[12] *WordNet Æ 1.6, © 1997 Princeton University*, accessed at www.dictionary.com, emphasis added

[13] Encyclopedia Britannica, www.encyclopedia.com, emphasis added

Despite the drawback, in the context of this analysis, of the use of the word I would like to use it and ask you to keep in mind the harmonic aspect – and if that proves difficult, at least a neutral connotation.

The other words are much simpler:

Au-ton-o-my[14]

1.   The condition or quality of being autonomous; independence.

2.   a.   Self-government or the right of self-government; self-determination.

        b.   Self-government with respect to local or internal affairs: *granted autonomy to a national minority.*

3.   A self-governing state, community, or group.

 [Greek autonomi, from autonomos, *self-ruling*. See autonomous.]

separation[15] 1: the state of lacking unity [ant: union] 2: coming apart [syn: breakup, detachment] 3: the distance between things; "fragile items require separation and cushioning" [syn: interval] 4: sorting one thing from others: "the separation of wheat from chaff;" "the separation of mail by postal zones" 5: the social act of separating or parting company; ""the separation of church and state2 6: the act of dividing or disconnecting

integration[16] 1: the action of incorporating a racial or religious group into a community [syn: integrating, desegregation] [ant: segregation] 2: the act of combining into an integral whole [syn: consolidation] 3: an operation used in the calculus whereby the integral of a function is determined

Yet merely listing the clusters, even if we give clear and distinct definitions, creates a problem in that it is a static description; thus it is not obvious what to do to move a given situation to a more favorable position. If, instead, we were to conceive the clusters as defining the endpoints of two vectors, and place them at right angles to each other, *we create a space*. Interpreting the space as having a time dimension – with 'now' being in the center where the axis cross and extending outward towards the periphery – *the space becomes dynamic*. It becomes a place in which we can

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[14]   Source: The American HeritageÆ Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition, Published by Houghton Mifflin Company, accessed at www.dictionary.com

[15]   Source: *WordNet Æ 1.6, © 1997 Princeton University,* accessed at www.dictionary.com

[16]   Source: *WordNet Æ 1.6, © 1997 Princeton University,* accessed at www.dictionary.com

situate a given regional autonomy conflict *and* we can begin to sketch out **paths to a solution**.

For those who need to a little visual help, the space could look like the sketch on the next page. As a working hypothesis, I have labeled the vectors as *cohesion*, with its endpoints of *assimilated* and *separated*, and *permeability*, with its endpoints of *autonomous* and *integrated*. 'Assimilated' has a 1 in brackets behind it, to remind everyone of its neutral meaning.

The vectors, or axes, create four quadrants: I, bounded by the 'assimilated – autonomous' vectors; II, bounded by the 'autonomous – separated' vectors; III, bounded by the 'separated – integrated' vectors; and IV, bounded by the 'integrated – assimilated' vectors. The labels are, though accurate, not very catchy and as I develop some archetypical conflict stories for each quadrant, I will offer some better titles. For now, however, it is important to realize that it is *the entire time-space* in which conflicts develop, escalate and, hopefully, get solved. By viewing conflict in this manner, we have given ourselves greater and more nuanced freedom: We can take a series of little steps, rather than despair at the huge gap that remains to be closed. As Sir Ralf Dahrendorf once said, 'you change the world not by moving mountains, but by getting the ball rolling.'

A Taxonomy for Regional Autonomy Conflict 'Solutions'
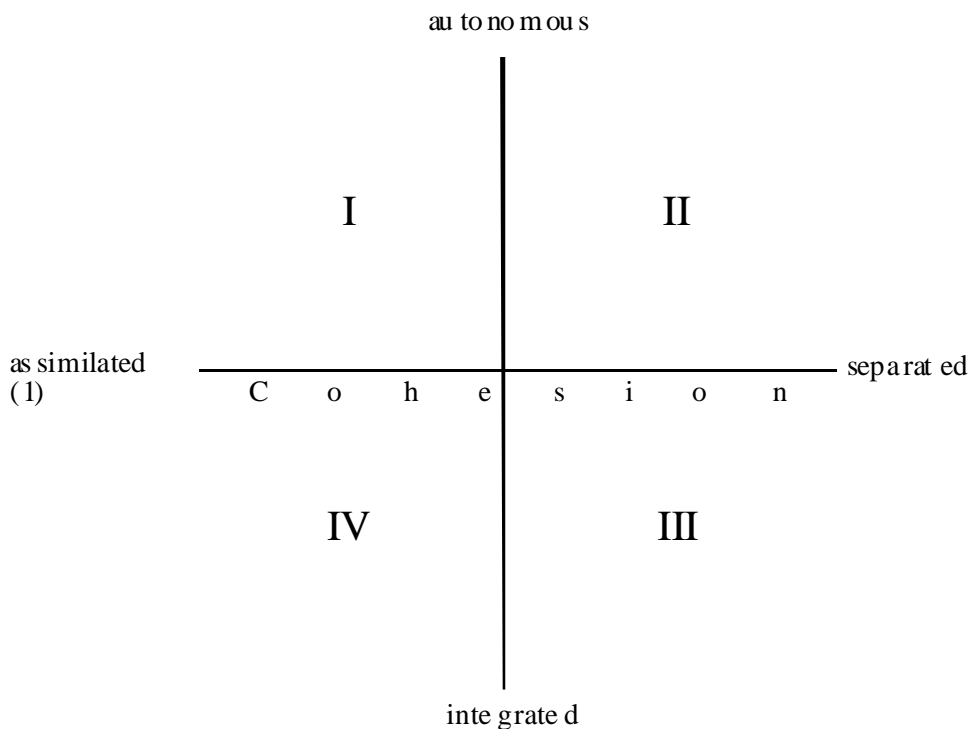
There are two ways to explore the space: One is to try to place conflicts in this space. Existing ones would end up as a point, from which one could speculate about solution paths. Historical conflicts could be traced in their actual development. Here in this analysis, I will use the second way to explore the space, namely by creating four short and archetypical stories of regional autonomy conflicts, each placed as much as possible each in its own separate quadrant. Each story starts in the center, where the axes cross, and moves through time towards the edges of the space.

Quadrant I: assimilated – autonomous

A minority in a country of transition finds itself, first cautiously, then exuberantly without the constraints of the decades of global ideological struggle. It is no longer part of a global game of good and bad, of right or wrong. At the same time, the minority does not believe that its cultural identity, its sense of self, which for so long had been at best ignored and at worst suppressed, is served by a rush of the center, of the majority, to embrace the Anglo-Saxon version of the market economy, however smoothed its implementation may have become.

Wearily it watches as the majority gets ever more enthusiastic about joining the European Union. While at first the minority believes that it could simply be subsumed in a general, rather bland and unexciting, European identity, some of its members realize that on paper at least the European Union had fought long and hard, and actually implemented, extensive safeguards of minorities, both in its member countries as well as in those countries wishing to join. 'Minority rights' as they were called had become a proxy of sorts for democracy and good governance. After some hesitation and much soul searching, the minority decided to make protection along the EU model its own cause. It became adept at understanding and using the concern of the European Union in pressuring its own central government into negotiating and then making the safeguards it needed part of the laws of the country.

A few of the lobbyists/negotiators even went so far as to create a new non-governmental organization, called 'Protecting Minorities International' PMI for short, which became recognized and sought after by other minorities in other countries wishing to join the European Union to help them repeat their own success in these countries.

Safeguards that are embedded in rules and regulations as well as the body of laws need, so it was felt by all parties, measurable clauses and quotas in order to make progress visible; and to convince 'Brussels' that all was well, that progress had

indeed been achieved in dealing with the grievances of the past. While wiser voices counseled against too much micro-management it was perhaps the memory of the past with its empty and bombastic slogans that led the negotiations between the minority in the central government to be quite long on specifics and quite short on room and procedures on how to differ.

At first, all was well. But as time passed and the younger folks of the minority got older they no longer felt that the agreements negotiated in the past, also on their behalf, really reflected their wishes and dreams. Their unease, for that is all it was in the beginning, was not strong enough for them to really work to change and adapt the rules. On top of that, the willingness of the central government, which by then had been accepted into the European Union a long time ago, to revisit old grievances – for that is what it looked to them – was limited, if not nonexistent. The mood was very much to let sleeping dogs lie, as the saying has it.

Time, however, moved on. And the initial unease grew and became more focused. The atmosphere got chillier. The tone of the discourse changed from seeking solutions, albeit to please the European Union, each side for their own reasons, to confrontation. Each side became defensive and each side listed demands that the others could not meet. A stalemate existed and the language got more brutal. Comparisons by outsiders with a Lebanon in the late 70s and early 80s, when the rights of minorities had been prescribed in exquisite and as it turned out increasingly irrelevant and finally deadly detail, were brushed aside by saying this could surely never happen in a civilized country.

The confrontation escalated. Single-issue parties were formed and it was predictable how much of the vote they would get. Since their appeal was limited they had no chance of influencing the structural arrangements made a long time ago. As a result, their supporters increasingly turned away from democracy and rumor has it that they are beginning to take up arms.

The story of quadrant I is entitled: **Frozen in Time**

Quadrant II: autonomous – separated

A small country in the center of Europe, bypassed by the attention of geopolitical forces, is struggling to accommodate its very different ethnic groups. It does not help that they are also separated by language. The groups were long held together by the demands of the nation-state that protected the interests of the various groups vis-à-vis all the other nations. But as supra-national entities emerged, the importance of the nation-state diminished everywhere and hence the constraints imposed by it were

losing their immediacy and thus their force. Demands from the groups to be recognized as 'special' and therefore not subject to all the rules of the majority of the people in the country started to be heard.[17]

Language, because of its visibility, became a big issue. At first several languages were elevated to be the officially recognized languages. Since this was not Switzerland where tolerance for different languages had grown over centuries, after a few years efforts were undertaken by some of them to become preeminent overall the others – in the places in which they were spoken. Each additional demand, however silly and shortsighted, and considered quite impossible at the beginning of the conflict, became in the logic of escalation the obvious next thing to do.

This took time but little by little the groups gained more and more control over local affairs. Next, the definition of what was local was expanded, step-by-step so that in the end only defense, foreign and financial policy were considered to be central. But even that began to be questioned as foreign policy became considered to be predominantly an instrument of regional economic development. Why shouldn't region A have its own trade representative in all the major capitals of the world? Of course once region A did this, region B had to do the same, then region C – or even region D, even though it was a part of A. Symbols like the monarchy and the national football team were fading as local celebrities took their place. Since all were part of a supra-national economic region bound together by a common currency, the logic of economic togetherness became less and less, before it disappeared entirely. What had been normal a while ago, that rich regions supported poor ones, became an anachronism.

As new administrative boundaries were drawn to coincide largely with the language boundaries the connection between everyday tasks and the government became ever more local and people wondered why on earth they still bothered to have a central government.

As a new federal election was being fought, a mainstream party in region A, in order to prevent a far right nationalistic party from entering parliament, for the first time voiced the possibility of negotiating a formal separation. The few centralists who were left had a hard time arguing their case for staying together, since for so long and without much problem, the attempts by each of the groups to become more autonomous had been so smooth – even inevitable. Just as in another part of the continent a football cheer had become the name of a political movement, so the loyalty of the people to a national identity had become an issue of clever marketing. Constitutional arguments for the sake of the nation, delivered by generally old

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[17]   The EU calls these demands for special treatment "opt outs."

people, simply didn't have a chance. The party that had initiated, and legitimized, the discussion about separation became ever bolder and saw in the polling data, at first quite to its own surprise, that it got more and more of the vote.

Concerned voices spoke up too late as the party succeeded in getting 52 percent of the vote on polling day, more than twice as much as the next one did. It was obvious who became the new prime minister and as I write this, negotiations under the auspices of a respected former US senator with the aim of a formal separation have begun.

The story of quadrant II is entitled: **Drifting Apart**

Quadrant III: separated – integrated

The story of separated and integrated, which sounds like an oxymoron, is the story of different worlds. At its extreme, it is the story of apartheid, but before it gets to that, it is the story of shantytowns and slum dwellers who where drawn to Mexico City, to Mumbai, to New York or to Johannesburg in order to partake in the richness they see and know about but that is not theirs.

Usually, it is not the story of organized groups – it is the story of the exploited who are afraid, and have reason to be so. Most people in search for a better life for themselves and their children at one point or another pass through this story. What was different in the past is that it was a stage. Nowadays in areas with like West Bank or the Gaza strip it seems to have become a way of life. And when it does become a way of life, it is probably the most explosive of all conflicts because no matter what those in power try to do to keep the powerless separate, they are integrated, they are woven into the daily fabric of the powerful, for they do their menial tasks.

The story then of this quadrants starts with the desire of poor people to better themselves. They are drawn to the parts of the world that 'have' and today's mobility allows them to act on this pull. They enter into the world of the rich, physically integrated, at times living in the same household, but separated by a gulf that could not be greater. As long as the migrants are able to better themselves, significantly and speedily, the potential for conflict is limited. At times, the immigrants are honored, if not in person, then in the abstract as enriching the host culture, as underpinning its wealth and stature. But when this upward mobility stops, either because the host no longer provides the possibility of betterment or because simply too many migrants arrive in too short a time, the situation can quickly and without warning turn into violence.

Perhaps it stretches the definition of 'regional' to call the conflict between haves and have-nots a regional autonomy conflict, but whether we look at South Africa ten years ago, the US-Mexico border or the Middle East now, these conflicts can and do become regional. Trafficking in humans, especially women, the fear of large scale immigration from the East haunting the current 15 members of the EU, the development of Arab ghettos in Marseille and elsewhere, the expulsion from Libya of thousands of Africans, the race riots in towns of Northern England – it all points to how little it takes before the actions of individuals, not bound by geography nor culture, escalate into some of the most intractable regional conflicts of all.[18]

The story of quadrant III is entitled: **Different Worlds**

Quadrant IV: integrated – assimilated

Caught by its own rhetoric of openness, of cosmopolitan flair, of its need for skilled labor, the center is surprised when people start to hold it to its words. At first with reluctance, because of deep seated clichès and resentments against those 'not from here,', but later with cautious steps, the majority tries to live up to its slogans. It is a rocky road. It is not until the tourist and leisure industry with its growing importance and visibility sets an unmistakable tone that change starts to take root. While their initial motivation is crass commercialism – resentment against foreigners simply is not good for their business – over time, this develops into a genuine interest in and respect for others. And as the others, in turn, are interested in the locals, the locals themselves begin to look more closely into their own history, development and identity.

They are surprised at the diversity they find. Paired with their growing self-confidence, they organize themselves along many, overlapping lines of identity. Any one person is surprised when they find themselves working on hosting an international music festival, organizing a relief convoy to Macedonia, playing soccer, discussing with the regional minister of education options for school reform, and getting ready to fly to Hong Kong for a week to take part in a conference on regional decision making – all in one day!

Many issues have become part of the local jurisdiction, growing out of a, by now, long established and well understood and honed process of devolution. However, how to deal with the global demands of climate change does pose a new challenge. The center did sign the agreement, as it so often does, but implicitly left the

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18   Sabastiao Salgado, 2000, *The Children*, Aperture; ISBN: 0893818941 is a visual version of this story

implementation to the regions. To make that link – from global, even planetary issues to regional implementation – that really is a new challenge. Thankfully, the Hong Kong conference organizers have scheduled a one-day seminar where people elsewhere in the world facing similar issues can learn from each other.

'Learning from each other,' in fact, is the key driver of this quadrant. It has been recognized that knowledge plus surprise equals learning, as the motto of yet another region puts it. The exchange of ideas and of thoughts and of people, possessing a quiet self-confidence creates constantly new and surprising constellations. Newcomers are valued for the contributions – to cooking, stories, innovations and prosperity, rather than despised for their being different.

And yet – it is a difficult and at times very tiring world. Being a full participant in this story requires a strong, yet subtly flexible personality that not everyone possesses. Some people, even in this world, prefer certainties and clear alternatives. 'Multiple identities' to them sounds ominously close to 'schizophrenia.'

The story of quadrant IV is entitled: **Multiple Cultures**

A Taxonomy for Regional Autonomy Conflict 'Solutions'
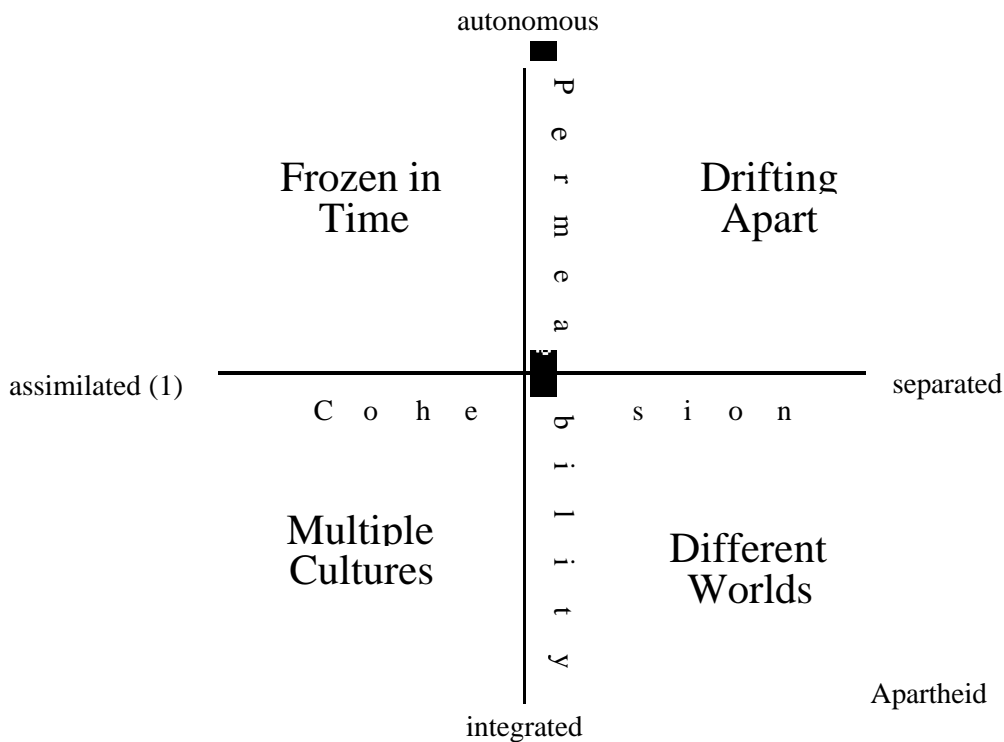
Paths to Solutions

Reading these stories in their archetypical form leads one to reflect about which one of the quadrants meets the requirements of long-term, sustainable solutions to

regional autonomy conflicts better than others. Let us remind ourselves that a lasting solution needs to be *integrative*, *peaceful*, *possess dynamics stability* – in other words resilience, and *be capable of further development*.

It seems to me that quadrant III, **Different Worlds**, is the most explosive one. Because of the closeness, in physical terms, of the parties to the struggle and the lack of a coherent, identifiable grouping of the 'minority' – witness the struggle of the Roma to get their rights respected – make it easy to dismiss the potential for conflict until it bursts out into the open, and time for a solution to emerge is painfully short. Too short in many instances.

The space of quadrant I, **Frozen in Time**, it seems to me, can only be a temporary solution. Once you have cemented differences in rules, regulations and the law, no matter how benevolent and well-meaning the original intent, reality will start to move away from the agreement the minute the ink of the signatures is dry. At first, this is not a big deal – and in any case overshadowed by the euphoria of finally having reached an agreement. However, as time goes by, the strain of having an almost arbitrary point in the past elevated and fixed to the way power is being shared is rubbing against an ever-changing reality becomes stronger. But by then the willingness of the majority to re-open, as they see it, old issues is far less – there is after all an agreement in place. Why isn't the agreement more flexible? Because it is far easier to devise static answers to past grievances than it is to device dynamic solution envelopes that can handle situations no one foresees. All constitutional assemblies struggle with this and most of their answers are less than satisfactory.

I am unsure of the solution potential of the space of quadrant II, **Drifting Apart**. On one hand, what could be better than a peaceful agreement to disagree? In fact there are those who predict that the future will be one of regions, and if this is true, drifting apart, if handled with compassion, respect and the necessary time it takes, may be a path towards that world of regions. And yet, there is no natural self-limiting force to this drifting apart. Once Scotland leaves the UK, what about the Hebrides leaving Scotland? Or the First Nations of Quebec leaving Quebec? Or Franconia leaving Bavaria? Perhaps it is my lack of vision, but if we do elevate drifting apart to a way of solving regional autonomy conflicts, we may well be on a path of deliberate and unstoppable fragmentation.

The fourth and last quadrant, **Multiple Cultures**, seems at first quite attractive as a space for regional conflict solutions. It is the one in which we will find ourselves increasingly to be part of. Whether we like it not, our ability and desire to travel, to move, to explore, puts us in contact with many more cultures than our grandparents ever did. In the past, one did an internship in the shop round the corner; today one can fly for three months to Singapore. However, it can be an utterly confusing and distressing space – for nothing is as it was. In clear contrast, the certainties of culture

derived from physical geography are real, tangibly real. I can go and visit and touch the island my forefathers fished from, even if I make my living in some other place and fashion. On the other hand, I can admire the courage of an immigrant and admire their clothing and food and music – but understand, really understand them, that is hard.

For us, and especially for our children, to develop skills to know who we are in diffuse and stressful situations so that challenges **do not** become intractable conflicts is a critically urgent and important task. Scenarios, and especially their creation, are one way to do that.

At this stage of the analysis, before I give a brief overview on how to run a scenario creation exercise, I would like to stress again that my brief was to focus on the deeper, emotional causes of conflict. Once they are clearer – through a scenario methodology or otherwise, it is still absolutely necessary to cast the solution into a legally binding framework of the kind Ruth Lapidoth[19] describes.

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[19]   Ruth Lapidoth, *Elements of Stable Regional Autonomy Arrangements*, see supra note 1.

Creating Scenarios – Reframing Identity

When what lies ahead is best described by *a range of possible futures* or even by *true ambiguity*, as regional conflicts and their outcomes surely are, McKinsey has argued for the use of scenario methodology to arrive at a framework for decision making[20]. An important reframing invites solutions because scenarios open up the discussion on issues far beyond the day-to-day-conflict. Their focus is not on recent topics and problems but on the long-term perspectives for the participants. It is not about guilt and who is responsible for the mess we are in, but about new and different options of how we might create a different future. A scenario project creates a *newly appropriate* and *shared language*, thus expanding the common good. Because a scenario-building process is not a consensus activity, it integrates divergent, yet plausible views and long-term perspectives into the resulting stories.

In somewhat plainer language, scenario stories are useful in very ambiguous situations, when mere trend extrapolation and a systematic evaluation of all possible alternatives is not possible or desirable. "Scenarios do not predict the future so much as they illuminate it, preparing us for the unexpected. Scenarios are multiple approaches to the future, stories of the inevitable and necessary (e.g. demographics and technology) recombined with the unpredictable and matters of choice. The best scenarios aren't necessarily the ones that come true; they're the ones that subvert expectations, providing deep insights into the changes happening all around us. The better the scenarios are, the more they penetrate to the deepest possible understanding of the present," as Nancy Ramsey once put it.[21]

How can one achieve all that?

Core Team: The starting point is to assemble a core team of four small group facilitators, a scenario editor-writer and a plenary facilitator, who also acts as the project's director. If there is enough money, it is nice to also have support for logistics and administration. Accounting should always be handled outside the project, as one will be spending about USD200,000 or even more. All core team members are paid, all others receive no fee or honorarium, but their expenses should be reimbursed. If money is tight, you can ask them to pay their own travel cost. It is important to budget enough time and money for the core team to meet at the very least for one full day of preparation for each workshop.

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[20]   For more detail, see *Strategy under Uncertainty*, Harvard Business Review, Nov.-Dec. 1997 pp. 67-79

[21]   Nancy Ramsey and Pamela McCorduck, 1997, *The Futures of Women*, Warner Books; ISBN: 0446673374

Language: It is more complicated and costly if the project needs to be run in a language you do not know. One solution is to hire a local project director who is fluent in your and the local language, and whom you trust more or less blindly. All you then need is a translator who keeps *you* abreast of what is going on. It is the local project director who in turn hires the rest of the team. Even if it sounds difficult to do, we in fact did this once with a project in the Czech Republic a few years ago. One of the participants is now the Czech Minister for the Environment, another the Deputy Minister for Industry. Another possibility of dealing with the language is to have all meetings simultaneously translated.

Question: Next, you settle *with* the participants on the defining question of the project, which needs to be

- about the future (if you ask about the past or even present, you will spend a lot of time airing irreconcilable grievances and have no time left to create a future)

- about something the participants can actually have an impact on (to ask, for example, teenagers to speculate about world government leads to silliness, boredom – or science fiction, but rarely to real action)

- and about something that really matters *to the participants.*

A good question, especially in conflict situations is to shape it around the world of the participants' children.

Participants: The selection of whom to include is always a mixture of the absolutely right people as well as opportunity. But be sure that those you do invite are respected, open-minded and representative of *all* the important perspectives of the issues at hand – even if some have to call in from prison or exile. The number of participants is a balance between diversity and logistics (and money). The former says more, the latter, fewer. A good number is about thirty, so that together with the core team you have about forty people in the room. With fewer, you need to be very careful to get the breadth and depth for a resilient set of stories, with more, the sheer handling of the logistics becomes a distraction.

Interviews: Then you interview about three to five times as many people as you have participants in order to get a very good sense of the mindset of the conflict. If possible, tape record the hour long interviews, promising and under all circumstances *keeping* the confidentiality you want interviewees to have so you can get to the core of the issues. It is always the interviewee who grants you permission to tape record the interview or not. If you do not get permission, take notes. Interviews take one to two hours with set up and if your logistics work very well, you can interview three to five people in a day.

Interview analysis: All tapes are transcribed and the identity of the interviewee removed. Often the questions themselves are stripped out. A good way to do the analysis, I find, is to organize each answer as a paragraph and then sort the paragraphs in some form. This removes the flow and context from the interview, making it harder to read, but it does make it easier to really hear what the person said or meant. Each paragraph should be boiled down to one word or two on post-it notes. Eventually, these notes are clustered into the themes that emerge. There are other ways to analyze the content of interviews, all the way to computer aided ones, but there is no need to make it more complicated than necessary.

The analysis takes three people three full days of work; it is usually a subset of the core team who does this – but never one of the interviewees or participants. The analysis team prepares an hour-long presentation of the themes and drivers it distilled out of the interviews. Usually simple, often hand drawn overheads are best, since the presentation is clearly work in progress and serves merely as one input to the workshop.

Workshop: The heart of the inductive scenario creation process is the residential workshop. Three full days each, at least two of them several months apart. Sometimes, when you have many participants, or a very difficult group or situation, give yourself the flexibility to run a third one. Don't skimp here, because it is here that the space in which the participants believe their future will unfold is created.

How? By breaking up all the participants into four small groups and ask them to come back, in a couple, three hours, with two drivers that are at the same time the most uncertain and the most important ones for the questions of the scenario exercise, in this case, solutions to a regional conflict.

There are two difficulties: 'most uncertain' and 'two'. Somehow we are conditioned to be highly suspicious of uncertainties, real men not only do not cry, they also seem to have to *know* – even if they have to fake it. But the paradox is that to have any chance that what we do *does* have an effect, we actually *need* uncertainty. If everything were already certain then there is, quite literally, nothing you can do to make any difference at all!

Once that mental resistance is overcome, the next difficulty is 'two'. We are loath to commit ourselves to such a small number. We want options, choices, room to maneuver, ten, or more, *action* items and long lists of demands the other side must meet before we deign to consider their grievances! And so we have become 'list generators,' forgetting in the process that some things *are* more important than others; and also forgetting that if you have ten or more key points that you have to act on – after all, they are *key* – you very well may be busy, but not necessarily effective.

Reaching agreement on what those two are takes creativity, courage, trust, time and a little guidance. The guidance comes from the core team, the rest from the participants. They work in small groups – each group with their own facilitator for a few hours. During this time, the plenary facilitator and the writer-editor wanders from group to group, listening but not saying a word – in order to get a sense of the overall direction of thinking. However, no matter how it develops, there will always be a perception that this has all been 'pre-cooked' and that this whole process is just a charade to lend an air of legitimacy to something that has already been decided elsewhere. There is nothing you can really do, because to change that perception depends in the end on the personal integrity of the core team. It happened to Adam Kahane who facilitated the South African Mont Fleur scenarios (see details below). He later said: "I was effective because I arrived in ignorance and respect. One of the participants said afterward, 'Adam, we couldn't believe anyone could be as ignorant as you. We were sure that you were manipulating us. But when we realized you really didn't know anything and you were really there just to support us, we decided to trust you.'"[22]

One from the group presents their findings in the plenary. Here, the plenary facilitator helps the entire group to agree on the two most important and uncertain drivers for their future. It may be necessary to go back and forth, because reaching two drivers is devilishly difficult. Often, more, many more drivers are offered and it is up to the facilitators to guide the group, large or small, to search for and find the deeper, more profound concept that overarches the conflicting many.

In these discussions, a list will emerge of the important *and* certain drivers. Keep track of them and try also to whittle them down to a few. They, in addition to the questions of identity will show up and be dealt with in every story that eventually emerges.

Facilitators: I have often been asked what qualities a facilitator needs and I know books have been written on the subject. However, the best job description for facilitators I have ever come across is actually an old Chinese proverb: 'A good leader is one whom the people love. A bad leader is one whom the people hate. But a truly great leader is one where the people say: We did it ourselves.' Substitute 'facilitator' for 'leader', then you have it.

Drivers – Axis: Once participants, sometimes from exhaustion, *much* better from conviction, agree, the drivers are arranged as axis, like this:

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[22]   Peter Senge, Art Kleiner, Charlotte Roberts and George Roth, 1999, *The Dance of Change*, Currency Doubleday

Arrange the two drivers as axis

uncertain driver 2

Most important | and uncertain driver 1
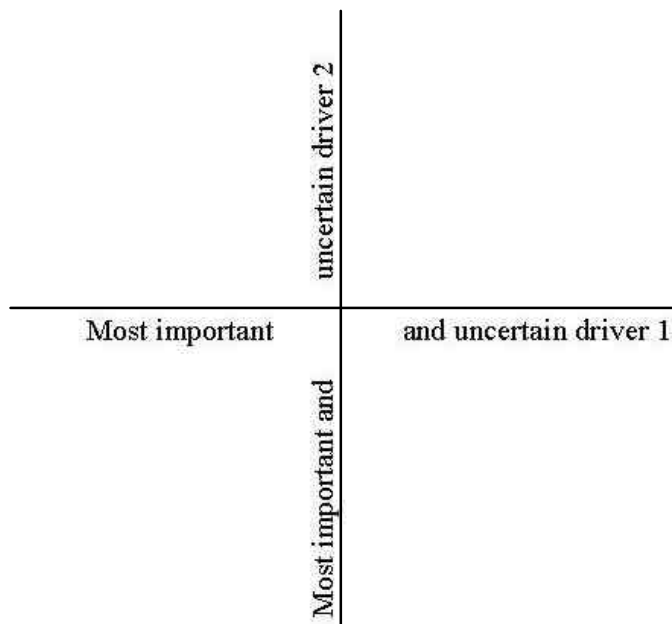
Most important and

The Givens:

Important AND Certain

Given 1
Given 2
Given 3

...

Given n

Endpoints: Then the participants, again first in small groups need to define, to anchor in other words, the endpoints. If, for example, one axis is 'trust' define for me the extreme ends of the uncertainty surrounding trust. While the anchor, the definition is rarely one that a natural scientist would feel comfortable with, it is important to get the groups to be as precise as possible. Natural language is and needs to be ambiguous, but it leads to the situation where different people hear the same word, agree, but their underlying understanding is completely different. In conflict situations this is dangerous.

At this point it may become obvious that the axis endpoints are very difficult to anchor, for example take the concept 'economy'. What emerges as uncertainty is often a shallow binary solution 'good' and 'bad'. If you let these words stand, you are almost guaranteed later on in the process to have endless anecdotal discussions about what good and bad really mean. It is much better to have stronger action concepts and definitions to begin with.

Time horizon: A second strand of the conversation at this stage is the time horizon. Starting at the center of the axis as *now*, how far out are the end points? Months, years or generations? A very good outcome is to be thinking about the world in which their children are as old as they are now, a generation or so, in other words.

However, in very intractable conflict situations, that may be too long and it may be more productive to look at the next two to five years.

At the end, you have a picture like this:

Anchor the end points

driver 2

driver 2

Define all four end points:
Units and Timehorizon

driver 1
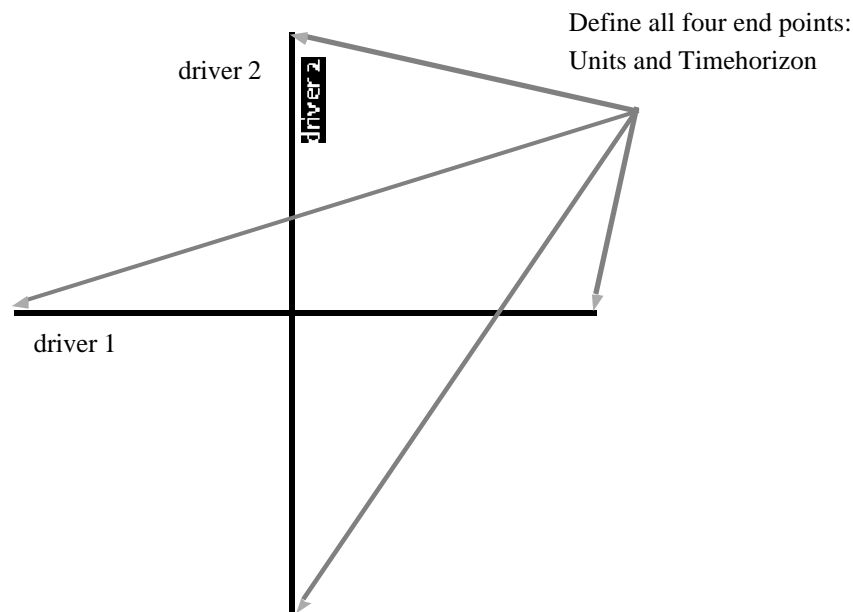
The
Important AND Certain
Given 1
Given 2
Given 3

Given n

Sketch a story: Starting at the center of the axis each of the four groups takes a quadrant (now it is clear why you need four small group facilitators) and sketches a first story, all the way to the edge of the quadrant – i.e. throughout the entire time space. Either have the groups draw a path themselves or have the plenary group suggest one once a group has presented.

There are several key issues to be aware of:

No story: If none of the quadrants come back with a story, or a kernel of one, chances are the axis – the original two important and uncertain – drivers where inadequate. Go back to square one.

Paths meander through more than one quadrant: If this is the norm, again chances are that there is something wrong with the axis: sloppy definition, very ambiguous concepts, not enough discrimination/difference between the two, etc. Go back to square one.

Rotate & mix participants: You need to rotate the participants (and usually the facilitators too) through all quadrants. It is not any one story you want participants to be proud of, but the entire space, because that is where their future most likely will unfold. Rotate and mix groups so they do not 'fall in love' with 'their' quadrant.

Letting go: One very subtle issue usually emerges at that stage: Once we have, as humans agreed on the uncertainty of something, and the time over which it will play itself out, we tend to want to have something to say about this entire range. Putting people in one quadrant, i.e. restricting them to one quarter of the space in which their future will unfold, what you are doing is to ask them to *trust others* – some of which may well be their sworn enemies – to create some, in fact the bulk of their space, of their future. There will be nervousness, suspicion and hesitation. Respect and dissipate it!

Timing: It is very difficult to know in advance how long people need for these steps up to here. However, do what you can to reach this far by the end of the first workshop, participants need some context in which their thoughts, discussions and actions are placed until the next workshop.

Sketch a first story for each quadrant

driver 2

driver 2

From the center (NOW)
to the edge of each
quadrant

driver 1
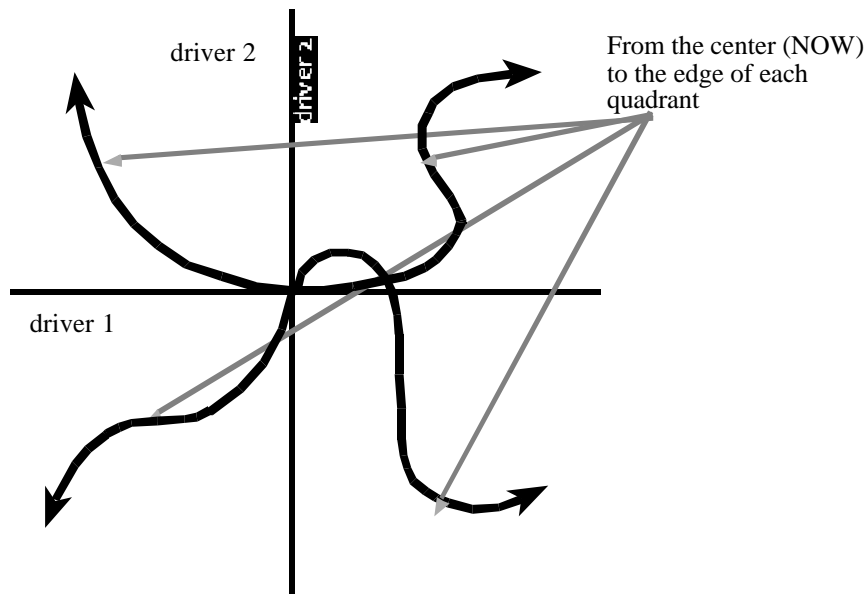
The Givens:

Important AND Certain
Given 1
Given 2
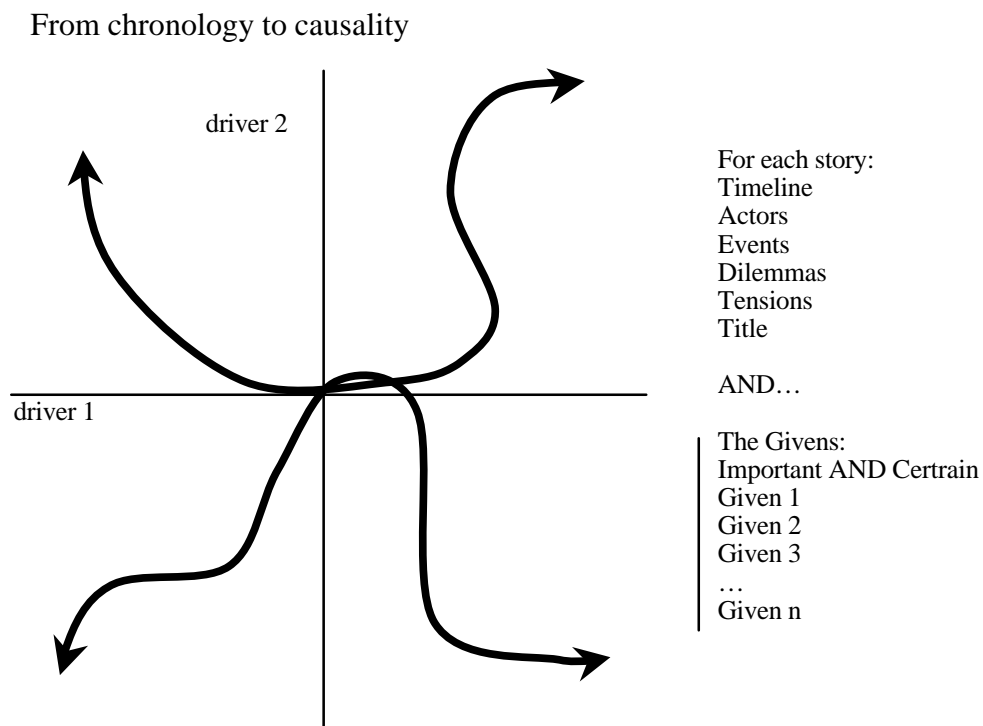Given 3

Given n

Strengthening the stories

The next workshop is meant to make participants feel at ease in the entire space.
These are the steps you can take to help them:

Reflection: Set aside time when they come back to elicit and respect the reactions
participants got when they talked about the project in their particular outside world.

Causality: The really important part in getting to a good story is the switch from
chronology to causality. The first sketch created in the first workshop is in ninety-
nine percent of the cases a chronological sketch: A did this, then that happened, then
C pushed B, D got elected, killed or expelled and finally F did that. You know the
pattern because it is how we look at life, it is how history, overwhelmingly gets
taught. But chronology condemns you to be reactive. If time really drives everything
– as a chronological view presumes – then what can you really do? Nothing at all –
you can only wait. Instead, get participants to give you reasons and logic. Ask, like a
pestering five-year old, why, why, why? If pathways bend, ask what caused the path
to go the way it did, and not any possible other way? If most of the narrative takes

place at the edge of quadrant, ask 'how on earth did you get there from here?' If a deus-ex-machina appears, ask for the reason.

Do all of this with patience and curiosity, do not have, or even give the appearance that you have, the knowledge and you are not pleased with their answers, as schoolmasters too often do. Use the question 'why' so the participants arrive at a deeper, more profound understanding of what might happen in their future.

From chronology to causality

driver 2

driver 1

For each story:
Timeline
Actors
Events
Dilemmas
Tensions
Title

AND…

The Givens:
Important AND Certrain
Given 1
Given 2
Given 3
…
Given n

Flesh: Once people think causality, get them to flesh out, repeatedly, the story with actors, events, dilemmas, the givens – all of them – titles and whatever else they can think of.

All along, keep mixing the participants so they feel ownership of the entire space, not a quadrant or any one path through the space. This is the time where four stories sometimes collapse to three or expand to five, all out of the logic of the conversation about the future.

Look beyond the workshop: Sometime in the middle of this workshop euphoria and camaraderie break out. People in the safety of the space you have helped to create, people see a future, options and hope. It is important you get them to take this feeling outside. Discuss the rollout – the products: video, presentations, reports, newspaper articles, and interviews – the project produces. Talk about how they can and will

influence the mindsets of people still locked in the escalating conflict outside. Help them take the stories back to the groups they represent. If possible, have teams made up of opposing interests go together and present. Make sure the power brokers as well as normal folks hear about the stories. Distribute them widely.

Editor: So far, I have not said anything about the editor of the scenarios, other than that you need one. He or she takes the fragments of stories that have been created – on post-it notes, on flip charts, with digital cameras, whatever – and crafts them into page-turners. They need to be *that* good. Because you are creating a new myth: namely that conflict is not the only way the future can unfold. A myth, in other words, strong enough to compete *and win against* the daily reality of discrimination, violence, even death that people see all around them. That is why the stories need to be strong, plausible, novel and challenging. If they are not, they are dismissed as just another outcome of some silly daydreamers. Can it be done? Victor Hugo once said: "There is nothing as strong as an idea whose time has come." And as the South African Mont Fleur example, detailed below, shows, quite possibly it can.

The editor, though in charge of the writing process, checks with and relies on the authority given to him or her by the participants. Sometime this can be handled by e-mail; sometimes a third face to face meeting is needed.

That is how you do scenarios. To resolve conflicts, you must help create a new myth, one that sketches out believable pathways into a conflict free future. In the world we now inhabit, the conflicting parties themselves must create it; all you and your core team can do is be a catalyst through which things happen a little bit faster.

From Theory to Practice

I would like to mention two examples of using scenario creation as a tool of regional conflict resolution. Both were facilitated by Adam Kahane,[23] one successfully and one not. The successful ones are the Mont Fleur scenarios and rather than second guessing Adam and his team, I quote him at length.

Example 1: The Mont Fleur Scenarios

Context and Participants

The historical context of the project is important to understanding its impact. It took place during the period between February 1990, when Nelson Mandela was released from prison, and the African National Congress (ANC), Pan African Congress (PAC), South African Communist Party (SACP), and other organizations were legalized, and April 1994, when the first all-race elections were held. During these years, dozens of "forums" were set up in South Africa, creating temporary structures that gathered together the broadest possible range of stakeholders (political parties, civic organizations, professional bodies, government departments, trade unions, business groups, etc.) to develop a new way forward in a particular area of concern. There were forums to discuss education, housing, economic policy, constitutional matters, and many other areas. They ranged from informal, off-the-record workshops to formal, public negotiations. The Mont Fleur project was one type of forum that, uniquely, used the scenario methodology. The purpose of Mont Fleur was "not to present definitive truths, but to stimulate debate on how to shape the next 10 years." The project brought together a diverse group of 22 prominent South Africans – politicians, activists, academics, and businessmen, from across the ideological spectrum – to develop and disseminate a set of stories about what might happen in their country over 1992-2002.

Summary of the Scenarios

The scenario team met three times in a series of three-day workshops at the Mont Fleur conference center outside Cape Town. After considering many possible stories, the participants agreed on four scenarios that they believed to be plausible and relevant:

- Ostrich, in which a negotiated settlement to the crisis in South Africa is not achieved, and the country's government continues to be non-representative

- Lame Duck, in which a settlement is achieved but the transition to a new dispensation is slow and indecisive

- Icarus, in which transition is rapid but the new government unwisely pursues unsustainable, populist economic policies

- Flight of the Flamingos, in which the government's policies are sustainable and the country takes a path of inclusive growth and democracy

The group developed each of these stories into a brief logical narrative. A fourteen-page report was distributed as an insert in a national newspaper, and a 30- minute video was produced which combined cartoons with presentations by team members. The team then presented and discussed the scenarios with more than fifty groups, including political parties, companies, academics, trade unions, and civic organizations. At the end of 1992, its goals achieved, the project was wrapped up and the team dissolved.

What the Project Was and Was Not

The ideas in the Mont Fleur team's four scenarios were not in themselves novel. What was remarkable about the project was the heterogeneous group of important figures delivering the messages, and how this group worked together to arrive at these messages. The approach was indirect and the results subtle:

- Mont Fleur did not resolve the crisis in South Africa. The project, along with other, non-scenario forum processes, contributed to the establishment of a common vocabulary and mutual understanding. The shared language of Mont Fleur extended beyond the negotiating elite, and was thus able to include such dialogues as an exhortation to Flamingos in a Sunday church sermon and a concern raised about Lame Duck on a rural radio phone-in. This kind of

common understanding, together with many other factors, promoted agreement upon a settlement to the crisis.

- The participants did not agree upon a concrete solution to the country's problems. They reached a consensus on some aspects of how South Africa "worked," on the complex nature of the crisis, and on some of the possible outcomes of the current conditions. More specifically, they agreed that, given the prevailing circumstances, certain strongly advocated solutions could not work, including armed revolution, continued minority rule (Ostrich), tightly circumscribed majority rule (Lame Duck), and socialism (Icarus). As a result of this process of elimination, the broad outline of a feasible and desirable out-come emerged (Flamingos).

- The process was not a formal, mandated negotiation. Rather, it was an informal, open conversation. At the first workshop, some of the participants expected to encounter difficulties in agreeing on anything. Over the course of the meetings, they talked until they found areas of shared understanding and agreement, several of which were relevant to the formal negotiations which were occurring simultaneously.

- It did not deal with the differences among the participants. Negotiation tends to focus on identifying the positions and interests of the parties and then finding a way to narrow or reconcile these differences. The Mont Fleur process, in contrast, only discussed the domain that all of the participants had in common: the future of South Africa. The team then summarized this shared understanding in the scenarios. The aim of such non-negotiating processes is, as Marvin Weisbord, an organizational consultant, has stated, to "find and enlarge the common ground."

Results from the Project

The Mont Fleur project produced several different types of results: substantive messages, informal networks and understandings, and changed ways of thinking. The primary public output of the project was the group of scenarios, each of which had a message that was important to South Africans in 1992:

- The message of *Ostrich* was that a non-negotiated resolution of the crisis would not be sustainable. This was important because elements of the National Party (NP) government and the business community wished to believe that a deal with their allies, instead of a negotiation with their opponents, could be sufficient. After hearing about the team's work, NP leader F.W. de Klerk was quoted as saying, "I am not an Ostrich."

- *Lame Duck's* message was that a weak coalition government would not be able to deliver and therefore could not last. This was important because the nature, composition, and rules governing the Government of National Unity (GNU) were a central issue in the pre-election negotiations. The NP wanted the GNU to operate subject to vetoes and other restrictions, and the ANC wanted unfettered "winner takes all" rules. Lame Duck explored the boundary in a GNU between compromise and incapacitation.

- *Icarus* warned of the dangers of a new government implementing populist economic policy. This message – coming from a team which included several of the left's most influential economists – was very challenging to the left, which had assumed that government money could be used to eradicate poverty quickly. The business community, which was worried about Icarus policies, found the team's articulation reassuring. The fiscal conservatism of the GNU was one of the important surprises of the post-election period.

- The simple message of *Flight of the Flamingos* was that the team believed in the potential for a positive outcome. In a country in the midst of turbulence and uncertainty, a credible and optimistic story makes a strong impact. One participant said recently that the main result of the project was that "We mapped out in very broad terms the outline of a successful outcome, which is now being filled in. We captured the way forward of those committed to finding a way forward." The second result of Mont Fleur was the creation of informal networks and understandings among the participants – an influential group from across the political spectrum – through the time they spent together. These connections were standard for this forum period, and cumulatively provided the basis for the subsequent critical, formal agreements. The third result – the least tangible yet most fundamental – was the change in the language and thought of the team members and those with whom they discussed their work. The Mont Fleur team gave vivid, concise names to important phenomena that were not widely known, and previously could be neither discussed nor addressed. At least one political party reconsidered its approach to the constitutional negotiations in light of the scenarios.

Why the Project Produced These Results

How can such a simple story-telling process produce these kinds of results? A scenario conversation has several characteristics that make it powerful:

- The scenario process is logical. There is no place in the core of a scenario conversation for positions or values. Instead the discussion is about facts and

logic: can you convince your fellow team members that the story you are putting forward is plausible? In the first Mont Fleur workshop, a story about the Chinese Red Army helping to liberate South Africa fell away on these grounds, rather than on the basis of preferences.

- The process is open and informal. Building scenarios can be creative because the process is "only" about telling stories, not about making commitments. This allows people to discuss almost anything, even taboo subjects. Early in the Mont Fleur process, one of the ANC members proposed a story called "The Chilean Option: Growth through Repression" (a play on the ANC slogan, "Growth through Redistribution"). This precipitated an important discussion, which would not have had a place in a normal left-wing party political debate.

- The process is inclusive and holistic. A story about the future has to be able to encompass all aspects of the world: social, political, economic, cultural, ecological, etc. Moreover, the process of telling several stories encourages people to surface and listen to multiple perspectives. In discussing a fundamentally unpredictable future, there is no one truth; this accords respect for the points of view of all of the participants (in a conflict, one or more parties is usually not being heard) and it allows everyone to see more of the world. Poet Betty Sue Flowers says that working with a set of scenarios is like having three or four different pairs of glasses, and that practicing putting them on and off makes it easier for an individual also to see the world a fifth and sixth way.

- The process elicits choices. One of the premises of scenario thinking is that the future is not predetermined and cannot be predicted, which means, therefore, that the choices we make can influence what happens. In a situation where people feel swept along by overwhelming, inevitable currents, this is an empowering world view. During its transition, South Africa was haunted by apocalyptic visions; the scenario stories helped people rationally think through their options.

- The process is constructive. A scenario conversation turns the attention of a group away from the past and present – where the debate is often mired – toward the future. It shifts from looking for The Solution to exploring different possibilities, and from the separate interests of the parties (as in negotiation) to their common ground (the future in which they all will live). Pierre Wack, who pioneered scenario planning at Royal Dutch/Shell, said that scenario work involves "the gentle art of reperceiving." These characteristics mean that a scenario process can facilitate shifts in language, thinking, and action. Each of these reframings provides for a more constructive basis for working on difficult issues.

Conclusion

The Mont Fleur exercise demonstrated the informal, indirect scenario approach to be an innovative and productive method for a society in conflict to approach the future. This approach is different from and complementary to negotiation. As this project demonstrates, it is a promising tool for future attempts to reach public consensus.

(End of Quote)

The full story, including the four scenarios can be found at

http://www.gbn.org/public/gbnstory/articles/ex_mont_fleur.htm

Example 2: The Colombian Story

The second example is an exercise in Columbia. In Adam's words:

> *It is too soon to judge the full impact of Destino Colombia, beyond the shared understanding that the 43 have created amongst themselves. By itself, this understanding has an important symbolic value in polarized Colombia, and is already generating excitement and forward movement. Another important symbol is this month's photograph of the country's newly elected president talking informally with guerrilla leaders in their jungle base. Perhaps the project is both evidence of – and has made a contribution towards bringing forward – the latent potential in Colombia for people working together to create a better future.*

His way of saying that nothing really changed. (One participant I know personally has since emigrated.) It is easy to speculate why this outcome was so different from the South African one. My personal feeling is that one key player, US interests especially as related to the deep US conviction that their drug problem is a supply and not a demand issue, was entirely missing from the exercise. If such a powerful key player is not there, then the exercise is handicapped, perhaps even doomed to failure, from day one. One implication of this view is that a scenario exercise in Macedonia that does not take into account US/EU/Russian designs – as muddled as they may be – is also doomed to fail even if all the local interests are at the table.

But then again, perhaps a more positive speculation is actually true: namely because the time horizon of the Columbian stories was much longer, 20 years instead of 10 as was true in the South African case, we simply need to be more patient.

The full story, including the four scenarios can be found at

http://www.gbn.org/public/gbnstory/articles/ex_destino.htm

What works and what does not?

Again, I would like to quote Adam Kahane:

"The most important element required for the success of this type of scenario project is proper timing: are public leaders ready to talk together about the future? If there is readiness, then two other things become critical: how the process is led and how the team is composed.

"The process must be:

- Credible. The people who convene and lead the project must be broadly respected. They must be seen as advocates of the process and not of any particular position or outcome.

- Informal and reflective. A scenario exercise is a "Track Two" process, which must be separate from (parallel or prior to) "Track One" formal negotiations. The power of scenario work comes from its status as an exercise in reflection and imagination, which is not directly linked to action. Therefore, although it is possible to follow on from constructing scenarios (what might happen) to creating a vision (what we want to happen), and then to planning action (what we will do), these processes must be carefully insulated from one another.

- Inclusive. The value of these projects is that they build the common ground among different perspectives and parties. It is therefore important to be as inclusive as possible. The Mont Fleur project was unfortunately diminished by its failure to include the Inkatha Freedom Party, which has been an important dissenter in South African politics.

"The team needs to be:

- Respected – composed of leaders who are influential in their own communities or constituencies. They need not hold "official" positions.

- Open-minded (in particular, not fundamentalist) and able to listen to and work with others.

- Representative of all the important perspectives on the issues at hand. Any stakeholder must be able to see their point of view represented by someone on the team, though they need not be formal representatives of these groups or positions."

Pitfalls

One difficulty if you own a hammer is that many problems start to look like nails to you and you begin pounding away. Think, before you pound. The same is true for scenarios. While a powerful new tool for regional autonomy conflict resolution they are by no means a panacea. Indiscriminant, sloppy and thoughtless application can only frustrate those who desperately need to find a way out of their misery. Think, before you act!

Secondly, in this analysis I focused on the deeper, emotional identity aspects of regional autonomy conflicts. It is important never to underestimate

- the socio-economic,
- diplomatic,
- military, and
- geo-political

dimensions of any conflict.

Yet, shaping the future of the parties to the conflict through scenario creation is indeed a way to make the solutions to their differences

- more interactive
- more peaceful
- more dynamically stable and robust, and
- more capable of further developing. i.e. evolving.

The sooner one starts, the better.

What to do Next?

Analyses like this always seem to call for more research. This one is no exception – but it also calls for more than that.

The Research

There are three areas of research:

I   It would be useful to strengthen the hypotheses and framework sketched out in this analysis, namely that:

      1   Conflicts are dealt with

            a   by imposing solutions

            b   by creating solutions with the conflicting parties themselves

            c   by escalation

      2   In a transparent and connected world which is no longer focused on daily physical survival 1a is becoming less and less possible

      3   The difference between 1b and 1c is the resilience of the emotional identities of the participants; resilience that exists across orders of magnitude of time *and* across physical survival, relation, purpose and legacy as shown below

      4   We are skilled at and used to creating resilient emotional identities only in the top left hand corner of the matrix (shaded gray) – and if we are moving anywhere, we are moving further towards the short term

      5   We need to become skilled at and used to creating resilient emotional identities across the entire matrix

      6   Scenario creation is a useful new tool to do this

            a   in general and

            b   in acute conflict situations

Time-layer	IDENTITY	PHYSICAL SURVIVAL	RELATION	PURPOSE	LEGACY
Months	FASHION				
Years	COMMERCE				
Decades	INFRA-STRUCTURE				
Centuries	GOVERNANCE				
Millennia	CULTURE				
Tens of millennia	NATURE				

Table 1: The Space for Identity

II   Using the taxonomy developed in the middle of the analysis, it would be useful to strengthen the four archetypical stories of regional autonomy conflicts to provide a mapping tool where people can locate themselves and their conflicts – thus opening their eyes to possible solution paths.

III   Finally it would be useful to do a normative study an how to create the right setting that allow the creation of peaceful myths powerful enough to replace the myths and reality of war and destruction.

The 'More'

I   As corporations loose their identity – which in the old days may have come from geography or the character or the charisma of the founder – in a globalized, winner-takes-all atmosphere, some are experimenting with scenario story creation as a way of enabling corporate identities to emerge continuously in order to create a highly compact and highly defensible competitive advantage. Since these are very early days it might be possible for the Bertelsmann Stiftung or the Center for Applied Policy to shape this process together with some of these companies.

II   Apply the ideas and processes expressed in this paper to a real world conflict situation with the view towards *solving the conflict* - but at the same time observe, track and evaluate what is going on with a view of making conflict resolution through scenarios less of an art and more of a science. Embed this in a classic continuous improvement process and in five to ten years, I predict, the Bertelsmann Stiftung and the Center for Applied Policy will be the world leaders in solving regional conflicts in this manner.

III   Embed these new decision making behaviors in organizational and institutional structures so that each time one starts, one does not need to start at the very beginning. If it proves impossible to embed this new approach to regional autonomy conflicts in existing structures, one should create appropriate new ones.

Last Words

I hope this analysis has given enough material and entry points for disagreement and I look forward to a discourse in a spirit of improving and applying these ideas to help solve regional conflicts, and, as Adam Kahane once said, "to make the world a better place".

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