BEYOND NEGOTIATION:
COMBATANTS FOR PEACE AND
AUTHENTIC SUBJECTIVITY
IN THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

Donna J. Perry
University of Massachusetts at Worcester
Graduate School of Nursing and
Massachusetts General Hospital
Boston

But this course of human progress…has taken place through the oscillations of the shorter cycle, in which social groups become factions, in which nations go to war, in which the hegemony passes from one center to another to leave its former holders with proud memories and impotent dreams. No less does it exhibit the successive lower viewpoints of the longer cycle.[1]

1. INTRODUCTION

THE PURPOSE OF THIS PAPER is to discuss a research study that I conducted with members of the Israeli-Palestinian group, Combatants for Peace, in light of Lonergan's heuristic structure of human development. The study itself is a much larger work that includes multiple themes and domains. For the purposes of this paper I will focus on the problems of group and general bias in prolonged conflict and will interpret the study findings within a transformative framework using Lonergan's metaphysics of human development. I would like to suggest that a lens of political negotiation to violent conflict is insufficient and that a sustainable solution must be grounded in the development of authentic subjectivity.

---

[1] Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding,* 5th ed., vol. 3 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Frederick. E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957/2000), 256.

2. GROUP BIAS AND CONFLICT

Group bias,[2] for Lonergan, is a type of bias in which one group acts for its own advantage while ignoring the questions and insights that would benefit other groups.

New ideas that are not favorable to the group in power are either excluded or damaged through compromise. He describes group bias as influencing shorter cycles of decline in which a succession of groups in power make operative only those insights that are deemed favorable to their own interest. The actualization of group-centric insights are cyclical, with shifts of power from one group to another and a corresponding implementation of different ideas. Lonergan distinguishes shorter cycles of decline related to the transient omissions of group bias from the longer cycle of decline related to the general bias of common sense which renders insights inoperative that are deemed not practical. He argues that general bias, the human tendency to focus on day-to-day problems and avoid long-term considerations, is pervasive to all societies and ultimately, more ominous.

> The shorter cycle turns upon ideas that are neglected by dominant groups only to be championed later by depressed groups. The longer cycle is characterized by the neglect of ideas to which all groups are rendered indifferent by the general bias of common sense.[3]

The shorter cycles of decline do not exist in a vacuum. The desire for group advantage can be intensified by competition for scarce resources. Unequal distribution of goods by groups in power can lead to simmering resentment and anger. Deep psychological wounds related to inter-group conflict exacerbate fears of the Other. Latent mistrust and stereotypes can be manipulated by the powerful who provoke inter-group tensions in order to promote their own benefit. Outside national interests may favor one group over another in order to profit themselves. And groups within groups play out their own power struggles leading to complex knots of unauthenticity and diminished intelligibility. All too often these conditions lead to the eruption of violent conflict.

---

2 *Insight*, 247-50.

3 *Insight*, 252.

But I would suggest that while shorter cycles of decline related to group conflict often emerge from group bias and the conditions that exacerbate inter-group tensions, the historical trajectory of such shorter periods of decline as running in *recurrent* and often less coherent cycles is a function of not only group but general bias (see Figure 1). These persistent cycles of inter-group tensions emerge from our ongoing failure to authentically address group bias itself and the underlying conditions that influence group bias and violent conflict.

Additionally, the cyclical group conflicts that drive the shorter periods of decline contribute to the destructive tendencies of the longer cycle. Lonergan notes that in the presence of group bias, because what is advantageous to one group is often disadvantageous to another, "some part of the energies of all groups is diverted to the supererogatory activity of devising and implementing offensive and defensive mechanisms.[4] When a portion of the insights and actions of all groups are directed toward offensive and defensive mechanisms, this "practical" diversion of human energy feeds into the longer cycle of decline, by taking energies away from long-term development and towards destruction.

Lastly, through its preoccupation with offensive and defensive mechanisms, the human race constitutes itself with a culture of war. This impedes individual and collective authenticity, furthering both shorter and longer cycles of decline.

Lonergan argues that group bias "tends to generate its own corrective."[5] But the corrective of one group bias that emerges from another group bias is not sustainable. The conclusion that groups will be groups; that group bias will continue to turn the wheels of power, and the acceptance of the human suffering that goes along with those turns is itself a judgment influenced by general bias. And the response to resolve these ongoing shorter oscillations will not be found in championing this group or that group but by the authentic development of a higher viewpoint of human understanding that takes responsibility for stopping these cycles and advancing the historical human good for *all* groups.

---

4 *Insight,* 249.

5 *Insight,* 260.

3. THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

This understanding is particularly critical in efforts to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict because of its unique history. The anguish of the Palestinian people, living under decades of military occupation, follows the torment and attempted annihilation of the Jewish people by the Nazi regime. The histories of these two peoples are inextricably linked and viewed through the communal lens of the Holocaust for the Jews and the Nakba, or catastrophe, for the Palestinians. The conflict exists within a context of two millennia of anti-Semitism, so carefully chronicled by author James Carroll,[6] and an eruption of Islamophobia following the events of 9/11 and the so-called war on terror. It is critical that interventions to address this conflict do not provoke further group biases which allow that dangerous cycle to repeat itself. We must find a way to make insights operative that are to the advantage of both groups.

One of the myths surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is that by advocating for one side we will have abandoned the other. But we do not need to choose between Israelis and Palestinians. Authentic peace building is a choice for both peoples. Repeated political efforts to resolve this conflict have failed, with devastating consequences. Typically these efforts have revolved around international negotiations; some that have reached a stage of formal agreement and others that have not. The word "negotiation" has a variety of definitions and the field of negotiation suggests a range of strategies. Common to these characterizations is the important role of communication, such as in the definition proposed by Moffitt and Bordone, "Back-and-forth communication designed to reach an agreement between two or more parties with some interests that are shared and others that may conflict or simply be different. . . ."[7]

Lonergan discusses the importance of communication as a functional specialty. But as a functional specialty, communication follows the other specialties of research, interpretation, history,

---

[6] James Carroll, *Constantine's Sword: The Church and the Jews* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2001).

[7] Michael L. Moffitt and Robert C. Bordone (eds.), *Handbook of Dispute Resolution: Program on Negotiation* (Jossey-Bass, 2005), 279. Retrieved 7/2/10 from *http://www.pon.harvard.edu/glossary/#section-N*

dialectic, foundations, doctrines and systematics.[8] Critical to this sequence is that communication is the output of a system that is responding authentically to a contemporary challenge within a historical trajectory. Unless the communication of negotiation has emerged from such a process it will never be equal to the task at hand.

Lonergan notes that, "at each turn of the wheel of insight, proposal, action, new situation, and fresh insight, the tendency of group bias is to exclude some fruitful ideas and to mutilate others by compromise."[9] Negotiation, when it is not based on authentic subjectivity, but instead reflects the biases of self, group or practical interest, may lead to the compromise of good ideas. Indeed, the underlying biases and conflicting viewpoints of the multiple factions within both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict have effectively prevented a coherent set of authentic decisions, thus impeding the negotiation of a political settlement.

The emergent probability of processes of agreement and decision function as schemes of recurrence in the political structure. But just as such processes can inform the good of order toward progress, they can also lead to decline.

> . . . as crises multiply and remedies have less effect, new schemes are introduced; feverish effort is followed by listlessness; the situation becomes regarded as hopeless…[10]

If the political process of agreement and decision is not based on an authentic interpretation of history, the contemporary situation and human needs and potential, the wrong schemes may be introduced. In the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, with its devastating cycle of violence, new schemes are urgently needed that are based on a critical analysis of the emergent probability of human relations and the peace that emerges from the human dignity of collective good wills.

---

8 Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972/2003).

9 *Insight,* 251.

10 *Insight,* 235.

4. COMBATANTS FOR PEACE

Combatants for Peace (CFP) was started in 2005 by Israelis and Palestinians who had been active participants in the cycle of violence. Israeli founders of the group had served in the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) and Palestinian founders had been involved in violent resistance on behalf of the Palestinian struggle for freedom. These individuals joined together in a commitment to renounce violence and to use joint non-violent activities to advance peace. Their mission statement affirms, "We see dialogue and reconciliation as the only way to act in order to terminate the Israeli occupation, to halt the settlement project and to establish a Palestinian state with its capital in East Jerusalem, alongside the State of Israel."[11] Based on their awareness, understanding, and judgments about the conflict, the group has declared, "Therefore we have decided to act together in the following ways."[12] Activities that have emerged from this joint decision include reflective dialogue, public education lectures in which members of the group share their personal stories, solidarity activities in the West Bank such as helping shepherds reach their fields safely, and non-violent civil demonstrations.

On its website, CFP describes itself as a "movement." The choice of this word is significant, especially in light of its goals which are the following:

- To raise the consciousness in both publics regarding the hopes and suffering of the other side, and to create partners in dialogue.
- To educate towards reconciliation and non-violent struggle in both the Israeli and Palestinian societies.
- To create political pressure on both Governments to stop the cycle of violence, end the occupation and resume a constructive dialog[sic].[13]

The goals "to raise consciousness," "to educate," "to create partners," and "to create political pressure" are *developmental* goals.

---

[11] Combatants for Peace web site (Retrieved 8/2/10) http://cfpeace.org/.

[12] Combatants for Peace web site (Retrieved 8/2/10) http://cfpeace.org/.

[13] Combatants for Peace web site (Retrieved 8/2/10) http://cfpeace.org/.

In these goals we can appreciate a sense of individual and collective movement from unauthenticity toward authenticity. Faced with an empirical situation of ongoing violence, these individuals reached new understandings, judgments, and decisions about the conflict. And collectively they began to reach out to others to bring about change. As individual "systems on the move," members of CFP have created an expanding mutually transformative movement, seeking to inspire a new consciousness in those around them.

From 2007-2009 I conducted a qualitative research study with members of CFP to better understand how these individuals had made the decision to commit to non-violence and join the group. The study was conducted within the framework of transcendent pluralism[14] which is described below. To conduct the research I used an explicit application of Lonergan's transcendental method[15] called Transcendental Method for Research with Human Subjects that I had first developed in my dissertation as a method of progressive phenomenology for the human sciences.[16] Use of transcendental method in this fashion involves guiding research participants into interiority through reflective questions that focus on eliciting data of consciousness within the operations of experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding. Data from multiple subjects are then analyzed and related to each other. There were eighteen participants in the study. Eight of these were Israeli and ten were Palestinian. The full results of this study are being analyzed in a separate manuscript.[17] In this paper I will consider certain aspects of the study results in relation to Lonergan's metaphysics of human development.

5. TRANSCENDENT PLURALISM

Transcendent pluralism is an emerging theory that seeks to address

---

[14] Donna Perry, *Transcendent Pluralism and the Evolution of the Human Spirit: A Philosophical Nursing Inquiry using Lonergan's Transcendental Method of Transcendent Pluralism in Catholics Who Support Same-Gender Marriage* (Boston: Boston College; Dissertation; defended June 22, 2006).

[15] *Method in Theology.*

[16] Perry, *Transcendent Pluralism and the Evolution of the Human Spirit.*

[17] Donna Perry, *Combatants for Peace: The Israeli-Palestinian Peace Movement* (New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2011).

problems related to human devaluation through the advance of human dignity. The framework has been described in detail elsewhere but a few points will be noted briefly here. In this framework, humanity is viewed as an emerging historical community in which dignity evolves through personal decisions and mutually transformative relationships. Human dignity is defined in transcendent pluralism as, "value in personhood."[18] And personhood is defined as "the unique wholeness of human identity that has intrinsic value in being and a developmental value that reaches fulfillment in the conscious development of good will."[19] Human dignity encompasses the value of each person in his or her being and becoming. Critical to this definition is that our own dignity is inextricably linked with that of others and treating others with dignity reflects the manifestation of our own dignity.

Within transcendent pluralism, three types of outcomes of human actions are considered.[20] The first type of outcome is the "empirical effect" in the world. The second outcome, following Lonergan,[21] is the "self-constituting effect" of our decisions on our own authenticity. And the third outcome, a critical component of transcendent pluralism, is the "transformative effect" of our actions on the authenticity of others.[22]

This framework calls for us to consider each decision in both a contemporary and historical context with respect to whether an action is likely to achieve empirical good, to help us advance our own good will, and to help others develop good will.

Group bias in this theory is understood as a failure to universally affirm human dignity for all persons. Group bias proceeds from an incomplete development in intelligence, resulting in a judgment that one group of persons is of lesser value than another. But following the definition above, the devaluation of others is also a devaluation of ourselves and a failure to fulfill our own capacity for human dignity.[23]

Group bias places limitations on the outcomes anticipated in

---

[18] Donna Perry, *Catholic Supporters of Same Gender Marriage: A Case Study of Human Dignity in a Multicultural Society* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2009), 61.

[19] Perry, *Catholic Supporters of Same Gender Marriage,* 61.

[20] Perry, *Catholic Supporters of Same Gender Marriage*, 69-72.

[21] *Method in Theology*, 38.

[22] Perry, *Catholic Supporters of Same Gender Marriage*, 65-73.

[23] Perry, *Catholic Supporters of Same Gender Marriage*, 126-31.

transcendent pluralism. It has negative effects on the empirical reality of the social situation, not only through neglect of the possibilities of concrete plurality, but through the institution of unauthentic and unintelligible schemes that result in destruction, bloodshed, and human suffering. It diminishes the authenticity of the members of the group(s) holding the bias by lessening their capacity to act with good will. And it leads to a deformative rather than transformative effect on the victims of group bias, often resulting in resentment, hatred, and revenge.[24]

One of the central understandings in transcendent pluralism is that our encounters with difference can play a critical role in our personal transcendence. In the paper below I hope to demonstrate that genuine pluralistic human relations can play a critical and collective transcendence. It is through such mutually transformative encounters that a healing transformation based in human dignity can come about.

6. LONERGAN AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Lonergan argues that organic, psychic, and intellectual development of the human person are interwoven processes in which organic development is integrated by psychic development, and psychic development is in turn provided a higher integration through intellectual processes.[25] Each level functions through the laws particular to the capacity of that particular level. The processes on the higher psychic and intellectual levels relate to "systems on the move,"[26] and Lonergan correlates this movement with existential discovery. Such a view of development, then, is related to the journey and higher purpose of the human person.

Human development is described by Lonergan as a genetic process within a set of five heuristic categories.[27] He describes the first category, the individual unity of the person, as a given and the remaining four categories as "laws." These include the laws of effect, integration, limitation and transcendence, and genuineness.

---

24 Perry, *Catholic Supporters of Same Gender Marriage*, 129-32.

25 *Insight,* 494.

26 *Insight,* 494.

27 *Insight*, 494-504.

Lonergan's use of the word "law" is curious given that while he describes finality as a "*directed* dynamism"[28] (italics mine), this directed dynamism is not predetermined. But perhaps some clarity around the term "law" can be obtained in light of Pat Byrne's discussion of Lonergan's description of classical law in science.[29] Even the classical laws of nature are conditioned by other processes and entities. For example, while the process of photosynthesis in plants follows a particular sequence of events, the cycle is dependent upon both light and water. Lonergan's laws of human development can be understood not as guaranteeing fixed outcomes but as emergent probabilities, dependent on the cumulative realization of other possibilities, of which human attentiveness, intelligence, reasonableness, and responsibility are key components.

These five categories provide a useful heuristic structure to understand human growth. In the following sections I will discuss this heuristic structure using illustrations from the data of consciousness that emerged in the study findings. While Lonergan discusses human development in relation to the individual person, these laws can also be understood as operative within the community as a larger unity. In the following sections I will apply the structure to the individual level, then at the level of CFP, and finally at the level of the larger Israeli-Palestinian society.

7. HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND THE INDIVIDUAL

7.1 Unity

Lonergan describes the human person within the category of things to be understood as a "unity, identity, whole in data."[30] The person is an individual who is comprised of the totality of his or her dimensions and all the events that have occurred to that individual over time. In the context of development this unity is comprised of various "conjugates":

---

28 *Insight*, 473.

29 Patrick Byrne, "Intelligibility and Natural Science: Alienation or Friendship with the Universe?" Paper presented at 37th Annual Lonergan Workshop, Boston College, June 22, 2010.

30 *Insight,* 271.

physical, chemical, organic, psychological, and intellectual. These conjugates ground a variety of patterns of human behaviors that occur within what Lonergan calls "flexible circles of ranges of schemes of recurrence."[31]

Among the CFP research participants, awareness of the conflict can be interpreted as perceived actual or potential threat to the unity of person and community. Experiences of violence, destruction, suffering, and death were interpreted as personal and communal threats. Disruption of unity could relate to the various physical or psychological conjugates of the individual or disruption to the schemes of recurrence anticipated by these conjugates. Communal identity, whether Palestinian or Israeli, was also considered an important part of one's unity. And the Israeli and Palestinian communities were perceived as larger unities in themselves.

Palestinian participants described significant losses: physical, psychological, loved ones, houses, and land. For example, one participant described a physical deprivation after being wounded from a shooting as well as a psychological loss related to missing his brother, who was murdered. Several Palestinian participants described sorrow over the absence of loved ones who were imprisoned for resistance activities. Some Israeli participants also described losses, such as an injury from military training and the bereavement of friends who did not come home after the 1973 war.

For both Israelis and Palestinians, the family, community, home, and land were considered important elements of the person as extended across space and time. Place was viewed as an integral part of one's people, both one's present home and historical memory. The intimate attachment to the land can be appreciated in the Hebrew scriptural verse, "If I forget thee, Jerusalem, let my right hand wither."[32] A similar deep connection can be found in the words of Palestinian poet, Mahmoud Darwish. In his poem, "I Am There" Darwish laments:

> I come from there and remember. . .
> I have traversed the land before swords turned bodies into banquets.
> I come from there, I return the sky to its mother when for its

---

31 *Insight,* 495.

32 Psalm 137:5.

mother the sky cries, and I weep for a returning cloud to know me.[33]

One of the Palestinian study participants described the confiscation of family land as a significant loss for him and his family. This occurrence severed the physical connection from the family to the land as well as disrupted the schemes of recurrence related to their use of the land.

> I understood the nature of the conflict when I find that a huge parts of our lands in [our village] was confiscated by the settlers and the Israeli military forces. They put a fence around it and they confiscated it completely and forbid us from using it.
> –Palestinian member of CFP

Israeli participants in the research study described concerns about potential loss of land. The conflict was viewed as a threat to national existence.

> As an Israeli kid. . . I didn't understand why the Arabs, don't like us. And… why they want to take our country.
> –Israeli member of CFP

In addition to actual physical privations, the conflict also created disruptions in the schemes of recurrence. For Palestinians, the barriers and checkpoints of the occupation caused significant disruption to the schemes in the good of order such as education, health care, and livelihoods. Israeli participants did not face such restrictions, but there were some alterations in daily routine related to security concerns. For example, one Israeli member of the group described the impact of suicide bombings on travel by bus. In this case, the actual scheme still took place, that is, the bus still ran on schedule, but the perceived potential of a suicide bomber created a psychological constraint in the effective freedom to use the bus.

> Ever since I was twelve; every time I go on a bus the first thing I do is look at everyone, just take a look at everyone sitting on the bus and see if there is someone suspicious. And if there

---

[33] Mahmoud Darwish, "I Am There" (Retrieved 6/13/10 from http://qumsiyeh.org/mahmouddarwish/).

is; I am getting off the bus…. Because that's what happens in Israel… You could explode in buses.

–Israeli member of CFP

Initial response to the conflict described by study participants was generally within formal or informal schemes of recurrence that had already been put into place to protect or restore unity of person, one's people, and one's land. Personal involvement in the conflict's cycle of violence can be viewed as the linking of one's personal identity with the larger identity of one's society and efforts toward community preservation or restoration. Israeli participants spoke of being educated from a very young age about the need to defend one's people – and the inevitable military service that awaited them. For Palestinians, participating in violent resistant activities, was deeply connected with the desire to do good for one's community, which was strongly linked with personal identity.

I'm started my struggle when I am 13 years old; I go to the jail when I am 15 years old. There is connection between my question about my *personal* identity and the *national* identity.

–Palestinian member of CFP

Several of the Israeli participants indicated that the perspective of Palestinian loss was omitted from the narrative they learned from their received tradition. The unity achieved by reclaiming their historical land had a blind spot related to the meaning that the same land held for someone else.

Lonergan describes the relations of one person with another within the dramatic pattern using an analogy of an onion in which one gradually reveals oneself in the manner that successive layers of an onion are peeled back, "so that one is aloof with strangers, courteous with acquaintances, at ease with one's friends, occasionally unbosoms oneself to intimates, keeps some matters entirely to oneself, and refuses even to face others."[34] A major challenge with the Israeli-Palestinian context is that the relational barriers in the dramatic pattern are not merely between strangers but between *enemies*. And the "layers" have been sealed not only by the unwillingness of an individual to disclose

---

34 *Insight*, 495.

but by an outer rind that is coated in myth. The prevailing stereotypes are fueled by fears related to past damages that have been inflicted by one side on the other. The actual wounds of empirical experience become intertwined with and distorted by the cobwebs of illusion.

There are obstacles to communication at the level of the physical conjugates related to concrete separation of the peoples as well as at the psychological and intellectual levels related to fear and myth. Achieving understanding requires overcoming these barriers so that people from each side can come together to reveal their own meaning and honor the meaning of the sufferings, dreams, and hopes of the Other. This is not simply a matter of one person making a decision around personal disclosure. Peeling back the layers requires mutual decisions on behalf of the one who reveals and the one who perceives.

The founders of CFP had to initiate and work through that process together as a small group of individuals. As the organization grew, schemes of recurrence were designed in such a way that brought people of the two sides together physically and then facilitated the processes of revealing and honoring meaning through mutual reflection, storytelling, and dialogue. Participants in the study indicated that this was transformative in uncovering the layers that advanced self knowledge as well as knowledge of the Other. Together the layers of the onion were peeled back as individuals from one side revealed to the Other the underlying manifolds comprising each unique unity.

7.2 Law of Effect

As the human person develops there are shifts and expansions in the flexible ranges in the schemes of recurrence. Higher integrations on the intellectual level modify the underlying manifolds while the changing underlying manifolds evoke alterations in the higher integration. Lonergan argues that within the law of effect, development occurs along the lines in which it has been successful. Unless one asks further questions and gains new insights one will not advance in knowledge.[35] The law of effect can be appreciated in the ongoing cycle of violence in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. New questions, insights, and creative solutions are desperately needed in order to break out of this pattern.

---

[35] *Insight*, 495-96.

For the study participants, personal experiences raised new questions and led them to reflect on how to break this cycle.

The human person needn't be merely a passive recipient of occurrences. One can also deliberately seek the experiences that will lead to new insights. "Because one wants to develop, one can frequent the lectures and read the books that put the further questions and help one to learn."[36] Some participants described purposely seeking out experiences that would expand their understanding of the conflict. One Israeli participant described deciding to attend a seminar because he realized that he needed a catalyst to become more active in addressing the conflict. He made a decision to learn – anticipating that it would lead to a decision to act. Meeting Palestinians at a workshop shifted his scale of values such that becoming involved in peace building became a higher priority.

> I participated in an Israeli-Palestinian seminar for two weeks. But I can say that I went to the seminar with the feeling that I need a trigger. To become more involved. So I would say I *wanted* to be involved but it was somehow not important enough… I needed a trigger. And that trigger was the seminar and meeting those people.
>
> –Israeli member of CFP

The development of new insights leading to new actions also requires additional skills and the willingness to undergo a period of awkward functioning until such skills are developed. For example, participants spoke about the need to learn the practice of nonviolence as a new way of responding to the conflict.

7.3 Law of Integration

The law of integration indicates that development may be initiated by one of any number of sources but through the principle of correspondence, an initiated development must be integrated with the other levels of the person for successful completion. The initiation of development may be from one of the internal conjugates of the person on the organic, psychic or intellectual levels or it could emerge through external circumstances such as material situations or the influence of

---

36 *Insight*, 495.

other people. Healthy development of the person as a unified being, however, requires that a new development become integrated in the functional unity of the person.[37]

For participants in the study, the decision to join CFP was influenced by multiple prior experiences. These included external experiences such as witnessing the consequences of violence, personal encounters with the Other that challenged stereotypes, or the inspirational example of role models. Interior experiences were also described such as feelings of being "bothered" about injustice, worries about repetitive or worsening violence, a desire to fulfill one's dreams that were being inhibited by the situation, or a longing for peace.

Practical and moral insights led to judgments of fact and judgments of value informing the decision to commit to nonviolence. For example, several Palestinian participants described that witnessing the horrific cycle of violence during the second Intifada led them to reflect on the Islamic teaching not to kill innocent people. Several spoke explicitly against the suicide bombings and the loss of innocent life. They realized that they needed to find a nonviolent path so that their resistance to the occupation would be consistent with their Islamic faith. And on a practical level, they realized that their desire for Palestinian freedom could not be achieved through violent struggle. Similarly, Israeli participants described making moral judgments about the injustice and violence of the occupation and the practical judgment that the occupation was exacerbating a cycle of violence. The decisions to adopt nonviolence and join CFP provided a way to integrate practical and moral judgments in a manner that was consistent with values and desires.

Several participants described having reached a state of internal readiness that led them to respond affirmatively when invited by a current member to attend a group event. For most of the participants, the decision to commit to nonviolence and the decision to join CFP were separate, although interrelated. And these decisions did not necessarily come in the same order. The examples of two members of the group illustrate the principle of correspondence initiated through two different pathways. One of the Israeli members of the group described making the decision to refuse to serve in the Occupied territories, some

---

37 *Insight,* 496-97.

years before the formation of CFP. His subsequent involvement in the group emerged through a need to extend his sentiments of refusal into productive activity to end the occupation itself and to change the social situation. For another participant, the decision to join CFP came first. While serving in the occupied territories during the second Intifada he was disturbed by the violence he saw perpetuated by the IDF. He described knowing in advance that he would need to make a decision to refuse. Joining the group helped provide the foundation and support which then helped him to take that next step. He knew that to be a member of CFP and to continue to serve in the occupied territories would be morally inconsistent.

7.4 Law of Limitation and Transcendence

The law of limitation and transcendence relates to the tension of the human person as an organism responding to stimuli on the sensory and sensitive levels of biology and psychology while at the same time being an intelligent organism seeking higher understanding of sensory experiences. This tension never fully disappears and part of the work of the intellect is not to eliminate but to integrate the underlying organic and psychic manifolds within a higher understanding.[38] For example, one of the study participants compared violence to an instinctive response, such as eating. To use nonviolence one had to move beyond one's basic biological instincts of stimuli and response. This did not mean that one ignored the conflict and the experiences of violence and suffering but that one responded to them in a new way. Biological reflexes needed to be transformed into a higher rational response that sought nonviolent solutions.

> The most easy solution for your hunger is to eat. And it's very easy for you to use the violence . . . And the most difficult thing is to find the solutions for this kind of conflict . . . the nonviolence is the most difficult thing.
>
> –Palestinian member of CFP

The law of limitation and transcendence reflects the inherent tension of human development between the subject as he or she is at present and the potential for what one can be. "its point of departure

---

38 *Insight*, 497-99.

necessarily is the subject as he happens to be; but its direction is against his remaining as he is,"[39] This tension can be appreciated in some of the challenges that participants described to their work which included both logistical challenges as well as internal and external dialectical challenges.

Lonergan notes that transcendence requires the human person to break away from the inertia and old patterns of his or her prior stage of development. Study participants described the need to overcome deeply held attitudes towards the Other. Palestinian participants described internal challenges related to sitting down with Israeli ex-soldiers, their former enemies. Israeli participants described needing to overcome years of education dominated by the prevailing Israeli narrative about the conflict and deeply held negative cultural stereotypes about Palestinians.

Internal challenges related to overcoming past patterns of behavior were complicated by external events such as violent provocation and societal disapproval. The participants' experiences illustrate that the psychic tension of transcendence can be exacerbated and prolonged by an unaccepting environment, suggesting that successfully navigating the law of limitation and transcendence may require overcoming unauthenticities in one's own culture. For example, participants' spoke of needing to resist the culture of violence around them.

The movement beyond one's current horizon requires a willingness to step beyond one's comfort zone and overcome fears. Lonergan notes, "Present desires and fears have to be transmuted, and the transmutation is not desirable to present desire but fearful to present fear."[40] Members of CFP needed to overcome the limitations of internalized fears in order to take part in the group. One member of the group discussed her fear of going to the West Bank and the way that she came to understand those fears and weigh the risks involved. Overcoming fear, for this participant was a *decision*.

> We need . . . to stop being afraid if we want peace. We need to understand that there are humans from the other side and they are afraid of us as well. I think that fear is the best weapon. . . .

---

39 *Insight*, 497.

40 *Insight*, 497.

So. You just need to, to (pause) to *decide* it. That's it. That you're not frightened anymore.

–Israeli member of CFP

7.5 Law of Genuineness

Lastly is the law of genuineness which involves bringing the tension between human limitation and transcendence into consciousness. The success of conscious development, "demands correct apprehensions of its starting point, its process, and its goal."[41] Genuineness involves a critical interior reflection of oneself as one is in relation to one's apprehension of an ideal self.

Responses of the study participants suggested genuineness in the willingness to critically reflect on and respond to inner tension related to one's role in the conflict, the decision to adopt nonviolence, and the associated difficulties inherent in that decision. For example, one participant indicated that he continued to submit his decision to refuse military service to a genuine reflection.

> You hear other things that make you think, "Is it right? Is it worthwhile?" . . . And after my refusal, at least at the beginning I was seriously destabilized by the severity of the attacks. So, at that time certainly I was, "Was it right? Was it wrong?" And I kept saying to myself, it's OK. These kind of decisions, if you don't re-think them, then you're lying to yourself . . . . It's good to put these doubts out in the open every once in a while. Reconsider them.
>
> –Israeli member of CFP

Ultimately this participant was able to reaffirm his decision based on interior reflection.

> But I kept saying to myself: "Look inside. You know that this is right. They can use all kind of discourses, strategy. In the end of the day this occupation is just *not right*. And there's no way to make it right." And so I think after the initial *storm*, it's a little bit, more quiet inside, I was - I don't want to say happy… I was

---

41 *Insight*, 500.

content with the fact that I did something I thought was right even though it was *extremely* difficult, scary.

–Israeli member of CFP

The study findings suggest that the genuineness of critical interior reflection was an important process that helped participants to make their initial decision and then sustain them in meeting the challenges of nonviolence. Their commitment was supported by internal deliberation on the incompatibility of violence with perceived ideals of morality and the vision of an improved future for themselves and their societies. Genuine self reflection about their decision led to the conviction that they had chosen the right path.

8. DEVELOPMENT AND COMBATANTS FOR PEACE

8.1 Combatants for Peace as a New Unity

The heuristic structure of human development can be used to explore development on not only the individual level but on a group or community level as well.[42] The emergence of CFP involved development of the group as a new unity of human relations with its own identity. Participants saw the very existence of the group, with its joint Israeli-Palestinian membership, as a concrete achievement. The decision to work together collectively as one organization emerged from a difficult process of reflection and dialogue, culminating in a joint affirmation of unity.

One of the biggest disagreement that we agree after all of that is our goals. We are *one part*. It's not two parts, Israelis and Palestinians. As a one part. We are Combatants for Peace. . . . That was *so hard* for beginning.

–Palestinian member of CFP

The relations between members of the group deepened over time, and participants described moving from seeing the other person as an enemy to a human being and beyond that as a partner and, in many cases, a friend. A number of participants in the study spoke of

---

[42] Perry, *Catholic Supporters of Same Gender Marriage,* 155-57.

the importance of the group as a whole and that ultimately future achievement related to the power of the group.

> My personal role must be within the whole group. So the achievement will be in the name of the group, not in the name of the persons. Individual activity and influence is very good and big but within the group it will be bigger.
>
> –Palestinian member of CFP

8.2 Law of Effect – A Network of Encouragement

In the current context, Israelis and Palestinians had very little opportunities to interact with one another. Palestinians were restricted from coming into Israel proper unless they had a permit, which was difficult to get. Most Palestinians' experiences of meeting Israelis were limited to soldiers and settlers. Israelis could only visit a few areas of the West Bank and very few chose to do so because of their fears. Thus, Israelis had little or no access to Palestinian life and their understanding of Palestinians was largely mediated by the cultural stereotypes in their received tradition. One of the critical functions of CFP was to create new schemes of recurrence in which Palestinians and Israelis could move beyond current comfort zones to share new experiences and reach a new level of joint understanding and functioning.

Additionally, members of the group made operative insights that had previously been deemed inoperative due to individual, group, and general bias. They developed new schemes of recurrence such as regular meetings, through which encounters would recur and reflective relationships could be developed and fostered. They also helped members to develop the skills needed at this new level of functioning by holding activities such as workshops on nonviolent resistance.

Being active in the group required moving beyond one's comfort level to speak with the "enemy" and overcoming fears based on both myths and actual threats. Participants indicated that the relations and support of members within the group helped individual members to overcome these fears. The transition to a new direction and level of successful functioning was thus accomplished within a network of transformative solidarity. The importance of support from others can be appreciated in Lonergan's emphasis on being "encouraged out of shyness, timidity,

pretended indifference, to zest and risk and doing...."[43] For example, one of the Palestinian participants spoke of the initial difficulty of sitting with an ex-soldier – his enemy. The commitment of that former Israeli soldier helped him overcome that barrier.

> It was not easy for me to work together with an ex-soldier which was considered all the time that he is my *enemy*, and the enemy of my people. But the commitment of this soldier *with me* in this kind of activities gave me the [ability] to pass by this challenge and to work together.
>
> –Palestinian member of CFP

8.3 A Window for Integration and Implementation

Through integration, the initiation of development within individuals led to corresponding changes in the person and ultimately these changes were communicated by word and deed as members of the group influenced others toward similar development through the transformative effect described above.[44] This communication is consistent with Lonergan's depiction of the role that external sources play in the initiation of development through "the discoveries of other minds and the decisions of other wills."[45]

A development which begins in one's feelings must be perceived, understood and given expression in concrete tactics.[46] Many of the participants described having already reached a certain level of awareness about the need for a nonviolent approach and in some cases had made the internal decision to take a different path, but there was not any structure in place at that time for them to realize their ideas. CFP provided that structure.

The participants' responses illustrate the importance having organized networks of human relations and activities for both the initiation of development as well as the integration of that development into one's daily life. In several cases, an invitation to join the group from an existing member was the initiative for a new member to join.

---

[43] *Insight*, 496.

[44] Perry, *Catholic Supporters of Same Gender Marriage.*

[45] *Insight*, 496.

[46] *Insight*, 496-97.

CFP also provided an organizational structure in which members could implement their insights and convictions in practical ways.

> I used to be *always* against the violence and Combatants for Peace was the *shelter* for me to struggle, a shelter for me to realize my beliefs . . . Before I joined the group I hadn't any… opportunity to pass my *message* but through Combatants for Peace I find the *window* or the gate to pass my message and my idea.
>
> –Palestinian member of CFP

A critical element of group integration related to transmitting beliefs into action. This was important for integrated development on the individual level and also for group relations. For the individual, action was important for personal integrity. For example one Israeli participant said that it was not enough just to refuse to take part in atrocities being committed by his society. He had to "SHOUT."

The translation of personal beliefs into public action was also vital for building trust in the group. While dialogue was an important part of the group's process, Palestinian members of the group took care to emphasize that CFP was *not* a dialogue group. They explained that in Palestinian society, joint Israeli-Palestinian groups that meet for dialogue or cultural exchange alone are looked down upon as "normalization." CFP was not viewed as normalization because both the Palestinian and the Israeli members of the group were working actively to end the occupation**.** One Palestinian participant indicated that the presence of refusnik soldiers in the group was the critical factor that prompted him to join. The participant also said that the willingness of the Israeli members of the group to state their positions publicly and to demonstrate against the occupation led him to trust them. On the level of judgments of fact, the demonstration by Israeli members of successfully integrating their inner beliefs with their public action was the *condition* needed for Palestinian members to verify their trustworthiness.

Interestingly, the words "integrity" and "integrate" come from related Latin roots. "Integrity" comes from "integritās" meaning "soundness," "whole," or "complete" and "integrate" comes from

"integrātus" meaning "to make whole."[47] Thus the developmental process of integration involves making oneself whole by achieving consistency in one's knowing and one's active living. The judgment that one side (Israelis) could be trusted by the other side (Palestinians) was linked to their wholeness, or successful integration.

8.4 Moving Beyond Limitations toward Transcendence

The tension manifested in the law of limitation and transcendence reflects the restriction of one's present habitual state that stands in opposition to the dynamism inherent in moving to a new level of functioning (Lonergan, 1957/2000). Lonergan notes that the realization of finality in human development is "not according to law…according to acquired habit…; on the contrary, it is a change in the law, the spontaneity, the habit, the scheme…."[48] Navigating the law of limitation and transcendence involves breaking free of one's old patterns. To end protracted violent conflict, patterns must be transformed on both the individual and community level in order to end the cycles of violence that all too often accompany the shorter cycles of decline. Study participants recognized that individuals on both sides were contributing to the cycle of violence and that to end the bloodshed, they needed to begin with themselves.

With the expanded viewpoint that emerges through intellectual development, Lonergan notes that an individual begins to view themselves as "an object coordinated with other objects and, with them, subordinated to some destiny to be discovered or invented, approved or disdained, accepted or repudiated."[49] The study participants expressed an understanding that the actions on both sides were contributing to a cycle of violence. This understanding led to a conscious decision to work together reasonably and responsibly to transform that cycle. There was a grasping of a mutual destiny, a rejection of the current trajectory of violence, and the intelligent creation of a joint vision of peace for both people along with the actions needed to bring about that historical change.

---

[47] The Free Dictionary Web Site. Retrieved 8/2/10 from http://www.thefreedictionary.com2010.

[48] *Insight*, 497.

[49] *Insight*, 498.

Although the focus of my research was more on the individual members rather than on the internal functioning of CFP as an organization, some participants did reflect on the challenges the organization faced as a whole. Participants identified a vision for areas of development that they would like to be realized in CFP. The movement toward transcendence was an ongoing process.

8.5 Being Genuine

Genuineness involves admitting the tension of limitation and transcendence into consciousness and honestly addressing the questions that arise in that process.

> It does not brush questions aside, smother doubts, push problems down, escape . . . . It confronts issues, inspects them, studies their many aspects, works out their various implications, contemplates their concrete consequences in one's own life and the lives of others.[50]

One of the participants spoke about the challenges associated with being a member of CFP in that it required the willingness to move beyond the escapism in society to wrestle with very difficult questions. The schemes of recurrence established by the group included critical reflection and dialogue that fostered such genuineness. The deep relationships within the group created a level of trust through which members could support each other in this process. One of the central elements in the group process included members sharing their personal stories with each other and at public forums. The story format itself facilitated genuineness as each member described their personal trajectory from the "starting point " of experiences in the conflict, their initial response to those experiences, the interior "process" by which they came to new affirmations and actions, and a new understanding of their personal and collective "goal" as peacemakers.

---

50 *Insight*, 502.

9. DEVELOPMENT IN SOCIETY:
AN INCOMPLETE INITIATION

Lonergan distinguishes between minor authenticity with regard to the individual and major unauthenticity in which a tradition itself has become unauthentic.[51] In the context of a longstanding violent conflict with a cycle of violence perpetuated by both sides there were clearly major unauthenticities to be overcome in both cultures. Doran writes about the reflexive level of cultural value that arises within philosophy, theology, and science in order to influence the social infrastructure toward greater authenticity. The expression of these values forms a "superstructure."[52] The emergence of the CFP, with its members working to transform the broader Israeli and Palestinian societies, has served the function of a grass roots superstructure. Lonergan's metaphysics of human development provides a helpful heuristic to understand this process, its achievements, and its limitations.

9.1 Israeli-Palestinian Society as Discordant Unity

An understanding of Israelis and Palestinians as part of a larger unity seems paradoxical. How could two societies entrenched in such a bloody conflict be considered a unity? An insight into this paradox can be found in Lonergan's statement that we find ourselves as objects who are but one part of the "universe of being."[53] The whole already exists. What remains is for us to affirm ourselves as part of that whole – and to act accordingly. Unity, then, might be understood as potential, formal, or actual – a unity *to be known* through the existence of two peoples in a shared geography, a unity that is to be understood and a unity that is to be affirmed. Affirming that unity is integral to building peace. As observed by the Israeli author Amos Oz, "We are not alone in this land, and the Palestinians are not alone in this land…. Until Israelis and Palestinians recognize the logical consequences of this simple fact, we will all live in a permanent state of siege…[54] Viewing the two peoples as

---

51 *Method in Theology,* 80.

52 Robert Doran, "'Complicate the Structure': Notes on a Forgotten Precept, "Paper presented at 31st Annual Lonergan Workshop, Boston College, 2004.

53 *Insight*, 529.

54 Amos Oz, "Israeli force, adrift on the sea," *New York Times*, 1 June, 2010. Retrieved

part of a larger unity is important not only for those within the conflict but for those outside because it helps us move beyond taking sides and to look at the conditions needed for peace within a larger whole.

The recognition of the two societies as part of a larger community can be understood as a "higher viewpoint"[55] through which Lonergan says that lower manifolds come together. With a higher viewpoint we can understand that the current social situation can be traced to the historical and contemporary collective experiences, understandings, judgments and decisions of both people. The Israeli-Palestinian region is already a unity, albeit a deeply fragmented unity, bound together by geography, history and mutually destructive processes.

One might then question how a peace proposal for a two state solution could be conceived when viewing the two peoples as a "unity." But the higher viewpoint of unity simply acknowledges the interrelated existence of the two peoples within a geographic space. The goal of two states existing peacefully envisions political borders based on helping the two people to transcend the dialectical differences that currently exist and to move towards complementary differences. The complementarity of two states does not need to be based on cooperative shared activities such as those within a functional specialization. Complementarity can be found in the respectful relations between two goods of order based on the needs and cultures of two different peoples. Areas of cooperative complementarity might develop with time. But the critical need at hand is to transcend current dialectical differences (dialectic will be discussed further below).

For the purposes of social analysis I suggest that it might be helpful to further distinguish complementary differences into a range from autonomous to collaborative types. These categories reflect the degree of cooperative functionality in interrelations. Differences can be complementary without necessarily being fully collaborative. Even if there is little to no interdependence in the Israeli and Palestinian systems, their smooth functioning, the meeting of needs for their respective peoples, and refraining from harming the schemes of the Other would contribute to a larger peaceful whole.

---

from web site http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/02/opinion/02oz.html?ref=opinion&page wanted=print

55 *Insight*, 465.

9.2 The Law of Effect and the Community

Within the law of effect, if the Israeli and Palestinian societies are not open to new insights and the implementation of new practices, they will continue to function in old patterns of cycles of violence. Here the role of CFP has been to introduce new schemes that go beyond the group itself to the larger public such as house meetings, lectures, and civil demonstrations. Such events challenge the existing assumptions and views of the Other and the conflict.

In human affairs Lonergan notes that, "commonly accessible insights, disseminated by communication and persuasion, modify and adjust mentalities to determine the course of history out of the alternatives offered by emergent probability."[56] The word "persuasion" highlights that it is not enough merely to provide people with data. In order to "adjust mentalities" it is important to make the data compelling. Several participants said that as former fighters they had credibility in their respective societies and that the stories told by members of the group provided a powerful witness. One recounted an experience he had giving a lecture to high school students who were nearing the point of their military service. He heard later that the students described the event as "mind blowing."

9.3 The Need for Integration

But just as the unity of a person requires new developments to be integrated on all levels of the person, change within one sector of a community calls forth change on other levels. At present, CFP can only be considered an initiated development, working to communicate a new consciousness but as yet without the complementary advances in the broader society.

CFP faces obstacles in their goal of persuading others. One of these is logistical. As a grassroots movement they are not integrated into the official good of order which means they do not have easy access to the schemes of recurrence by which information is regularly disseminated. And personal meetings between Israelis and Palestinians are very difficult due to the physical separation. Barriers to regular channels of communication impede the principle of correspondence. Still, they

---

56 *Insight*, 236.

continue to work to communicate their message through as many forums as possible.

9.4 Limitations to Transcendence

The law of limitation and transcendence is manifested in cultural elements of the larger societies that are resistant to change. The tension can be appreciated in the Israeli need for security and the Palestinian need for freedom. The fear sown by violence and the anger provoked by injustice are imbedded in the conflict and constant reminders of the sensory and the sensitive. Palestinian participants pointed out the challenges in persuading their communities to have a different outlook in the midst of violent military occupation. Israeli participants were challenged by prevailing Israeli perceptions that Palestinians were not partners for peace.

Transcending this tension meant helping people to move beyond fear and anger and to understand the underlying community consciousness that gives rise to the cycle of violence. Again, this was not to be achieved by eliminating the neural demands of the people but by trying to increase understanding that it was only through peace that the needs of security and freedom would ultimately be achieved.

Participants described a variety of reactions to their work ranging from anger to skepticism to acceptance. In some cases family and friends were persuaded by their outreach, and some participants reported that they had successfully recruited new members to the group. But their message was one that not all people were ready for.

The responses suggest that group and general bias become intertwined in conflict as the stereotypes of group bias become part of the common sense beliefs of a community. Thus, the group bias of the Other as "not a partner for peace" combines with the practical blind spot of general bias leading to the conclusion that to work for peace with the other side is not practical. One of the Israeli participants told me that he and others who worked for peace were looked upon in Israeli society as "the left wingers who are a little bit crazy." This view recalls Lonergan's statement that, "men of practical common sense become warped by the situation in which they live, and regard as starry-eyed idealism and silly unpracticality any proposal that would lay the axe

to the root of the social surd."[57] The stereotypes of group bias and the practical blind spot of general bias have led to a societal inattentiveness and dismissal of creative possibilities to solve the conflict. As Lonergan observes, "in human affairs the decisive factor is what one can expect from the other fellow."[58] And if one expects the other fellow to be a "non-partner" then there is no sense in even talking to him.

9.5 Genuineness Challenged

Lonergan notes that the tension created by the conscious awareness of our concrete self as compared to our ideal self can be an "unwelcome invasion of consciousness."[59] But just as in the individual, the group is also generally adverse to the relentless self scrutiny that brings the tension between limitation and transcendence into consciousness. In some cases members of the group found the questions they raised and the insights they offered to be such an unwelcome invasion. Genuineness was a challenge in the larger society.

In transcendent pluralism I have described the phenomena of "transformative risk," which is the risk encountered when an individual tries to change major unauthenticity in a society through the communication of original meaning.[60] Transformative risk can be particularly problematic when the transformer is part of the society he or she is trying to transform and thus becomes part of the infrastructure and superstructure simultaneously. If members of the infrastructure are resistant to change, the transformer's position in the infrastructure might be jeopardized. Israeli participants, in particular, discussed facing resistance to their message and some risk to their reputations and relationships in their own society. As "left wingers" they felt themselves to be in a shrinking political minority and sometimes found themselves at odds even with close friends. One participant described a new experience of being "hated." Working for peace was interpreted by some as being "against us."

Some Palestinian participants described having initial concerns about being considered "traitors" in their society because they were

---

57 *Insight*, 255.

58 *Insight*, 248.

59 *Insight*, 502.

60 Perry, *Catholic Supporters of Same Gender Marriage*, 147-48.

working with Israelis – and former solders at that. However, most of the participants said that at the present time they did not feel much risk in the Palestinian community because people came to realize that their activities were not "normalization."

Despite challenges, members of the group continued to promote genuineness in society through their public lectures and demonstrations. They felt that the Israeli-Palestinian encounters made possible through CFP have challenged people to reconsider their prior judgments about the Other. Several participants described encounters in which they were able to witness new insights and even new relations generated when individuals from one side of the conflict met CFP members from the other side. One participant said that observing people as they wrestled with the dissonance provoked by such encounters offered a glimmer of hope that inspired them to continue.

10. DIALECTIC AND CONVERSION

Lonergan describes the failure of genuineness as giving rise to dialectic. Dialectical differences involve actual differences between the authentic and the unauthentic (as distinguished from complementary differences or genetic [developmental] differences. The dialectic of community "gives rise to the situations that stimulate neural demands" providing "a focal point from which aberrant social attitudes originate."[61] One can view such a dialectic within the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as an underlying manifold of human needs, abhorrences, and fears in tension with the capacities of human intelligence, morality, and love. But just as the social situation gives rise to fear and anger so too can it give rise to a longing for peace and the call for a reasonable response that brings an end to the mutual infliction of suffering.

Lonergan notes that the dialectic of community holds the dominant position over the dialectic of an individual because the community brings forth the situations that will stimulate the neural demands of an individual and also because it molds the attitudes through which intelligence will be called forth or suppressed. But this dominance is not absolute. The individual person plays a role in the development of

---

61 *Insight*, 243.

the social order, and a manifold of individuals can serve as originators of social attitudes.[62]

If the genetic laws of human development prevailed unconditionally we would proceed on a steady course toward transcendence. But we do not follow the developmental laws in a logical and predictable trajectory. Therefore, another method is needed to understand and address human transformation. Following his discussion of the genetic method in *Insight*, through which one analyzes development, Lonergan introduces the dialectical method. In *Method in Theology*, Lonergan describes the dialectic as a conflict between "positions" which are compatible with intellectual, moral, and religious conversion and counter-positions which are not compatible with conversion.[63] Dialectical operations involve advancing positions and reversing counter-positions.

Development is defined by Lonergan as, "a flexible, linked sequence of dynamic and increasingly differentiated higher integrations that meet the tension of successively transformed underlying manifolds through successive applications of the principles of correspondence and emergence."[64] Dialectic is "a concrete unfolding of linked but opposed principles of change."[65] The commonality in development and dialectic is that that both processes involve "linked" principles; the bringing together of similar or dissimilar materials for a change within the same unity.

Lonergan describes the vertical movement into a new horizon as occurring through two paths. One path is the extension, deepening, and widening of the potentialities of the old horizon. The other path involves an "about-face"[66] in which certain characteristics of the old horizon are repudiated. Such an about-face is a conversion of either an intellectual, moral, or spiritual nature. So conversion is not *merely* a development in the sense of something added to and integrated with one's current horizon. But Lonergan does note that, "Human development, in brief, is largely through the resolution of conflicts and, within the realm of intentional consciousness, the basic conflicts are defined by

---

62 *Insight*, 243.

63 *Method in Theology*, 251-54.

64 *Insight,* 479.

65 *Insight,* 242.

66 *Method in Theology,* 237.

the opposition of positions and counter-positions."[67] Perhaps, then, conversion, could be considered a higher aspect of human development.

Given that development, by Lonergan's definition, involves "transformed" manifolds, conversion – as an even more profound change – must too be a transformation. For purposes of clarity in this analysis, transformation will be defined as a new way of being in the world through development, conversion, or both, in the same unity.

Within the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, dialectical tensions are found within each person in the individual struggle for authenticity, within each society or tradition as the achievements and limitations of the body politic, and within the larger unity of the two societies as the tension between fear and hatred and the higher ideals of a genuine peace. We can even appreciate this tension within the international community as a whole as we reflect on the impact of other nations on the conflict and consider how the international community might help achieve a resolution.

Some of the tools to advance positions are found within the group itself, through an authentic interpretation of within-group values. For example, Palestinian participants spoke of the Muslim teaching not to take innocent life. Israeli participants spoke of the values of social justice. Experiences in which these values were not being manifested led to reflection and realization of the need for a new path. Lonergan discusses de Finances's notion of vertical liberty which occurs when commitment to an ideal draws us out of our current horizon to a deeper understanding and practice of that ideal.[68]

Genuine between-group pluralistic encounters can also serve to help each person and society to better understand and respond to dialectical differences by enhancing faithfulness to the transcendentals. The Israeli-Palestinian relations in the group were important in helping to increase attentiveness to the impact of one group's actions on the suffering of the Other, understanding the conditions that led to violence, advancing critically reasoned judgments, and inspiring and supporting responsible action. As Lonergan notes, the challenge

---

[67] *Method in Theology,* 252.

[68] *Method in Theology,* 40-41.

of dialectic is to be met through "encounter."[69] Encounters with the Other can stimulate genuineness by admitting the tensions of dialectic into consciousness. The responses of the research participants provide several examples of intellectual and moral conversion and also some examples of spiritual conversion.

Intellectual conversion involves overcoming the myth that knowing is merely looking and acknowledging that data must be subjected to critical reflection and judgment in order to reach understanding and affirmation.[70] Intellectual conversion was critical for participants in order to overcome the myths of the received tradition and the rhetoric of national positivism. A story told by one of the participants provides an example of intellectual conversion in which he realized that blind spots were preventing people from both sides from recognizing the truth, but that the human person had the capacity to discern truth for themselves.

> One time I was in Jerusalem with one of my friends and I just invited him to go to eat hummus inside the old city. It was the first time that he go to the old city and he was freak[ed] out. "How could I go inside the old city?" I said, "Very easy. Come on. It's no big thing." And he said …"That's why we have those ideas about Palestinians."…[It was] one of the Combatants members. He never been there. I couldn't understand why he had these ideas…. That made me more convinced that we in some way cover our minds, or trying to – to fake the truth. That each side want to put a barrier on the other side. Even the barrier on our mind and ideas…most of the people are…they are good people. They are normal. They have the same thing, have the same brain. They could think. They could realize the truth.
>
> –Palestinian member of CFP

Moral conversion involves our apprehension of values and the willingness to overcome personal discomfort, fears, and hardships in order to carry out a course of action when a higher value is perceived

---

69 *Method in Theology,* 247.

70 *Method in Theology*, 238.

to be at stake.[71] Several participants described the need to overcome the discomfort associated with talking to the enemy and the fears of stepping into the unknown in order to achieve the higher goal of peace.

There were also some examples of spiritual conversion[72] but to understand these as such involves an abstraction that moves beyond Lonergan's language of "being in love with God.[73]" While some participants described their work in the group as having influenced their spirituality in explicit religious terms, several described an evolution of spirituality with regard to *relationships*.

Many of the Israeli participants had a secular worldview and a few described themselves as not believing in God. But moving beyond a religious declaration, I believe examples of "being in love" can be appreciated in the realm of human relations. For example, one participant who declared that he did not believe in God, when asked if membership in the group had influenced his spiritual development, answered:

> I think in terms of imagining living with Palestinians, which has a lot to do with spirituality and faith in my mind, for me, then *yes*.
>
> –Israeli member of CFP

He also described a very emotional response to making peace with Arabs.

> I'm very *moved* by peacemaking. Very moved by finding Arabs to – to make peace with.
>
> –Israeli member of CFP

Given Lonergan's use of the term "religious conversion"[74] and his explicitly religious focus, it may seem unusual to describe spiritual conversion in atheists who continue to be atheists. But I would suggest that what I learned from meeting with the participants as well as witnessing the group's interactions were expressions of such a

---

71 *Method in Theology,* 240.

72 Note: I have described Lonergan's "religious" conversion as "spiritual " conversion. Perry, *Catholic Supporters of Same Gender Marriage*, 98-99.

73 *Method in Theology,* 105.

74 *Method in Theology*. 240

conversion. I remember one moment vividly in which I had taken part in a tour and nonviolent action in the West Bank. We had taken three separate buses to the meeting place. Two buses were from Israel and one bus brought Palestinians from the West Bank. When we reached the appointed meeting place, a desolate spot by the side of a desert highway, the occupants of each of the buses disembarked eagerly and then drew together with warm and excited chatter. Palestinians and Israelis were clearly thrilled to be together at last and to begin the day's work. I had no doubt that what I was witnessing was a manifestation of the unrestricted desire to love.

11. COMMON SENSE AND THE HIGHER VIEWPOINT

In addition to moral insights that led participants to renounce violent resistance and to oppose the occupation, one of the insights related by study participants was the very practical realization that violence was not working. The decision to work for peace nonviolently within CFP was a development in practical intelligence.

Lonergan describes the dialectic of community as emerging from the tension between spontaneous intersubjectivity of human desires and fears and the practical common sense that intelligently crafts a social order. This tension leads to alternating periods of social tranquility and social crisis which "mark successive stages in the adaptation of human spontaneity and sensibility to the demands of developing intelligence."[75] It follows then that moving beyond the shorter cycles of decline related to group bias, will somehow involve the adaptive intelligence of common sense. Indeed, as Lonergan describes group bias involving "an interference with the development of practical common sense,"[76] the reversal of group bias must involve a restoration of that development.

Common sense, however, is limited by its own bias. Lonergan argues that the general bias of common sense cannot be corrected by common sense because common sense does not have the tools to analyze itself. He describes the need for a higher viewpoint or heightening of consciousness that takes responsibility for human history in order to

---

[75] *Insight*, 243.

[76] *Insight*, 247.

overcome general bias. Yet he also identifies common sense and its judgments as one of the two "allies"[77] in reversing the longer cycle of decline, noting that "common sense tends to be profoundly sane."[78] How can these statements be reconciled?

Lonergan notes repeatedly that common sense is constantly undergoing adaptive change. And the withdrawal from common sense is not to *eliminate* practicality but to "*save* practicality."[79] Is it possible for a higher viewpoint – the heightened sense of consciousness that grasps historical responsibility – to become part of the common sense of a people? In order to overcome the general bias, a higher viewpoint could not eliminate common sense in favor of an elite intellectual class. That would merely accelerate the retreat into the ivory tower, which is already a problem in the longer cycle of decline. Also higher viewpoints do not eliminate underlying manifolds; they reorder and integrate them into new understandings. Such a viewpoint would then need to be a practical transformation.

Common sense cannot save itself but the higher viewpoint that emerges from a withdrawal could conceivably sublimate the return. It seems feasible – and quite possibly desirable – that the common sense of the human culture could adaptively gain insight into the need for the higher viewpoint in order to ensure its own survival – and betterment. Lonergan does indicate that the destruction wrought through the longer cycle of decline will come about "unless common sense can learn to overcome its bias . . . unless common sense can be taught to resist its perpetual temptation to adopt the easy, obvious, practical compromise."[80] Common sense can be taught. It can – and indeed *does* learn.

There are even empirical examples of such a cultural consciousness in native peoples such as the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) who embrace the notion of the righteous mind and the power of united human action for peace and justice. Their "seventh generation" philosophy, considers the impact of all decisions on the welfare of the seventh generation to

---

[77] *Insight*, 267.

[78] *Insight*, 267.

[79] *Insight*, 266.

[80] *Insight*, 259.

follow.[81] (Six Nations, 2005). In this ethos, for example, nonsustainable environmental practices are understood not as "practical," but harmful.

"Ideas," notes Lonergan, "occur to the man on the spot."[82] The emergence of CFP as a movement of people who describe themselves as serving "on the ground" in the midst of the violence has occurred through not only moral understanding but a very practical adaptation from those with the insight to recognize the futility of their actions, the courage to say so, and the creativity to plan a new course. And changing that view of practicality required a reflective withdrawal from the common sense of "security" and "resistance" to reemerge with the higher viewpoint of a new practicality.

However, unlike the practical intelligence that develops from common sense as described by Lonergan, nonviolence in this setting was more than an adaptive tool. In contrast to technological adaptations implemented to achieve human desires, the instruments of peace can be desired in themselves, as both a means and an end. While a future political peace settlement might render some of the activities of the group unnecessary, such as nonviolent civil demonstrations, other actions would conceivably continue, such as the dialogue, mutual relations, and deep friendships among the group's members. And these processes would carry on not only to sustain and deepen the peace but because they were desired as goods in themselves.

12. THE HORIZONAL EXPANSION OF MUTUAL HUMAN TRANSFORMATION

Figure 2 denotes a general outline of the movement and expansion of horizon that occurred with the process of human transformation in members of CFP as suggested by the research findings. This transformation included both genetic and dialectical processes. This diagram does not provide the level of detail required to analyze each operation within each decision but it suggests a linked sequence of horizonal expansions occurring within the transformational process.

Participants lived within a preexisting horizon of personal history that included foundational knowledge, values, beliefs, and biases. Their

---

81 Six Nations. Retrieved 12/1/05 from http://sixnations.buffnet.net.

82 *Insight*, 259.

understanding of the Other was mediated by the received tradition and through past personal experiences. They were deeply immersed in the cycle of violence, either as close observers or participants. The Other was viewed as a threat. Eventually new experiences raised questions about the Other and about the conflict, leading to new insights in which they began to understand the suffering of the other, the reasons behind the Other's behavior, and the impact of violence on further perpetuating the conflict. This led to both latent and explicit reflection that one participant described as being "bothered."

As new experiences and insights were evaluated, those that were deemed logically consistent with prior values and knowledge were affirmed and integrated. The personhood of the Other became known and affirmed as human, good, trustworthy, a fellow sufferer and as a unique person within a larger culture. Affirmed judgments that invalidated previous beliefs such as myths about the Other, the need for violence, and the occupation led to dialectical processes. With the affirmation of new understandings some previous understandings were repudiated. Group bias against the Other began to be understood and rejected. Personal participation in the cycle of violence was renounced.

As participants began to assimilate new understandings and repudiate old beliefs, a threshold of pre-decision readiness emerged. In some cases the participant was moved to personal action through an internal creative practical insight. But in many cases, the "condition" that led to new action was an external opportunity – new schemes of recurrence that had been put into place by existing members of CFP. A specific invitation to join these schemes from a current member provided the needed catalyst. The organization's schemes of reflection, dialogue, relations, and action provided a structure from which previously undeveloped insights and ideas could be implemented. And the Other became a partner in these new activities.

Integration into these schemes influenced further development on other levels, both for individuals and the group as a whole. However, this new expansion in horizon was challenged with barriers, the internal barriers of deeply held stereotypes, fears and undeveloped skills, as well as external social barriers that created actual physical and psychological risks. New "Others" began to emerge in consciousness and included people in both the Other society as well as one's own

society who continued to live under the horizon of fear, suspicion, and violence.

Ultimately overcoming both personal and communal dialectics was facilitated and sustained by internal and external resources. Intellectual, moral, and spiritual conversion provided the inner conviction and determination to help participants overcome challenges and, in turn, stimulated deeper levels of conversion. External support came through the relations and transformative solidarity within the group. The Other was now not only partner but friend. And as members of the group were themselves transformed they began to reach out to the larger societies to initiate development in the horizon of the Israeli-Palestinian community.

The decision to join CFP can be understood as a horizonal expansion in liberty. The creative processes of essential freedom helped individuals to transcend both internal psychological constraints and external cultural barriers to making peace. The reflective and active schemes of recurrence in the organization itself further facilitated this transcendence of internal constraints while also extending the range of external opportunities for action. With the creation of CFP, the effective freedom of available choices was enlarged for prospective new members. This is reflected in participants who described reaching a state of readiness and finding in the group a new "window" to pass one's ideas.

13. CONCLUSION: DEVELOPMENT PEACE BUILDING THROUGH AUTHENTIC SUBJECTIVITY

"If I changed…the way that I'm thinking, maybe I could change others. I feel more powerful. Really. Because the power of the human being is in his mind and his ideas.…if you could change somebody maybe you give him more power…He could be a better person."

–Palestinian Member of CFP

Following his description of human development, Lonergan asks "whether we have established the fertility of the heuristic structure .…"[83]

---

[83] *Insight*, 503.

The fertility of the structure lies in the capacity of the human person for change and the human mind as the operator of change. And if we understand conflict resolution as a developmental – indeed a transformative – process, dependent upon conditions actualized through human knowledge and decision, then our own intelligence directs us to creatively seek out and actualize those conditions.

The study results suggest that as a "movement," CFP can be understood as a development in authentic subjectivity. Such an affirmation is not meant to claim individual or collective perfection in this achievement but merely to point out that in the decision to commit to nonviolence and the associated decision to join CFP, members of the group sought to respond more attentively, intelligently, reasonably, and responsibly to what one member of the group called their "joint historical predicament."[84] The pluralistic reflection, dialogue, and activities within the group advanced authentic subjectivity by facilitating faithfulness to the transcendentals. Members of the group shared dialogue and activities that allowed for new experiences and increased attentiveness to the Other, raised questions for intelligent understanding, generated critical perspectives for reasonableness, and called each other to increased responsibility.

Members of the group supported and sustained each other when carrying out that responsibility was difficult. Evolving relations deepened commitments and through a mutual transformation, individuals influenced and supported one another in transcendence. In this process the dignity of self and other was understood, affirmed, and enriched. Participants indicated that their membership in the group became an important part of self-dentity. There emerged a new unity in which belongingness in CFP had become integrated within the self.

In order to overcome the shorter cycles of decline, and their associated violence, we must transcend group bias, which is at the root of these cycles. Of note is that Lonergan calls group bias a "bias of development"[85] and indicates that "group bias leads to a bias in the generative principle of a developing social order."[86] It follows then that

---

84 Shelley Hermon, "Combatants for Peace Promotional Film," 2010, Retrieved 5.2.10 from http://cfpeace.org/.

85 *Insight*, 249.

86 *Insight*, 248-49.

the repair of the damages wrought by group bias will require restorative developmental processes of human intelligence. The study suggests that the developmental processes of CFP facilitated transcendence of group bias.

It is important to note that while the strategic goals of CFP are consistent with mainstream proposals for a political settlement, the decisions underlying these goals were reached not by negotiation but through the transformation effected by authentic subjectivity. Members of the group have directed their efforts away from offensive and defensive strategies toward making operative the ideas needed at the level of their time. Individually and collectively they are working together to authentically respond to their historical responsibility to reverse the counter-positions of group bias and violence and to advance the positions of nonviolence, mutual respect, and reconciliation. In Lonergan's words the movement has made probable "a sequence of operative insights by which men grasp possible schemes of recurrence and take the initiative in bringing about the material and social conditions that make these schemes concretely possible, probable, and actual."[87]

The study results suggested that the decision to commit to nonviolence and active membership in CFP had a positive self-constituting effect, leading to personal empowerment and a sense of having done good for oneself and one's society. Participants also described a new sense of hope for the future, while at the same time acknowledging the reality that this hope lay in a long-term historical view. My personal experiences in the region suggest that such a development of hope is significant, because the pervasive cycles of violence in the conflict have led to a profound sense of despair on both sides. Such despair fuels general bias by leading people to believe that efforts to resolve the conflict are futile. They cannot see beyond the next checkpoint or looming rocket. This reinforces the importance of not ignoring shorter cycles with the rationalization that they will self correct. Shorter cycles very quickly become enmeshed in the successive lower viewpoints of the longer cycle. So part of overcoming the shorter cycles of decline is overcoming the despair that fuels the practical blind spot that "nothing can be done about it." The study suggests that

---

[87] *Insight*, 252.

members of CFP were able to transcend despair and sustain a hope for the future.

Within transcendent pluralism three types of outcomes are considered related to human action: the empirical effect, the self constituting effect, and the transformative effect.[88] I wish to suggest that members of CFP were able to develop and maintain a hope for the future because of their ability to appreciate these outcomes and to maintain a longer historical vision. In the seemingly friendless universe of the "already out there now real"[89] occupation and rockets, Israeli and Palestinian members of CFP had an appreciation for the authentic interior evolution of self and other. Their ability to experience, understand, and affirm change in themselves and their partners gave them a higher viewpoint and a hope that sustained their work towards a new future. This was not a fairy tale hope but a critically real hope.

This paper began with Lonergan's statement about the cycles of decline "in which the hegemony passes from one center to another to leave its former holders with proud memories and impotent dreams."[90] But the quote above from a CFP member speaks of a new kind of power, not the hegemony of one nation over another, but the power of the human mind – used intelligently, morally, and lovingly – to help oneself and others advance in good will. This is consistent with Lonergan's assertion that the higher viewpoint of cosmopolis will have to witness to making ideas operative without the backing of force. As a grassroots group committed to nonviolence, members of CFP have to break the cycle of myth and violence by relying on their own witness, and calling forth the transcendental norms in the minds of those around them.

A political solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is critically needed in order to create the conditions that foster peace. Negotiation can help set up conditions but unless guided by authenticity, negotiation will be insufficient. To work for a sustained peace that overcomes the shorter cycles of violence that feed the longer cycle of decline will require human transformation through the development of authentic subjectivity.

---

88 Perry, *Catholic Supporters of Same Gender Marriage*, 65-73.

89 *Insight*, 276.

90 *Insight*, 256.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Group bias, exacerbating conditions and shorter cycles of decline

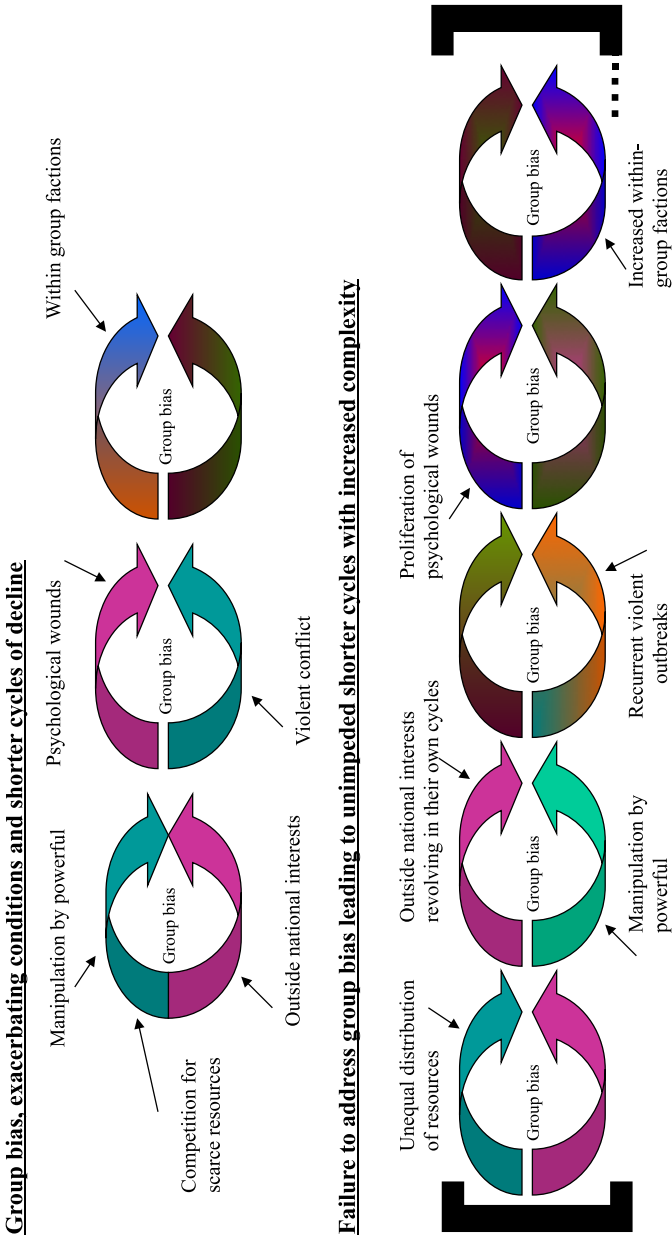**Failure to address group bias leading to unimpeded shorter cycles with increased complexity**

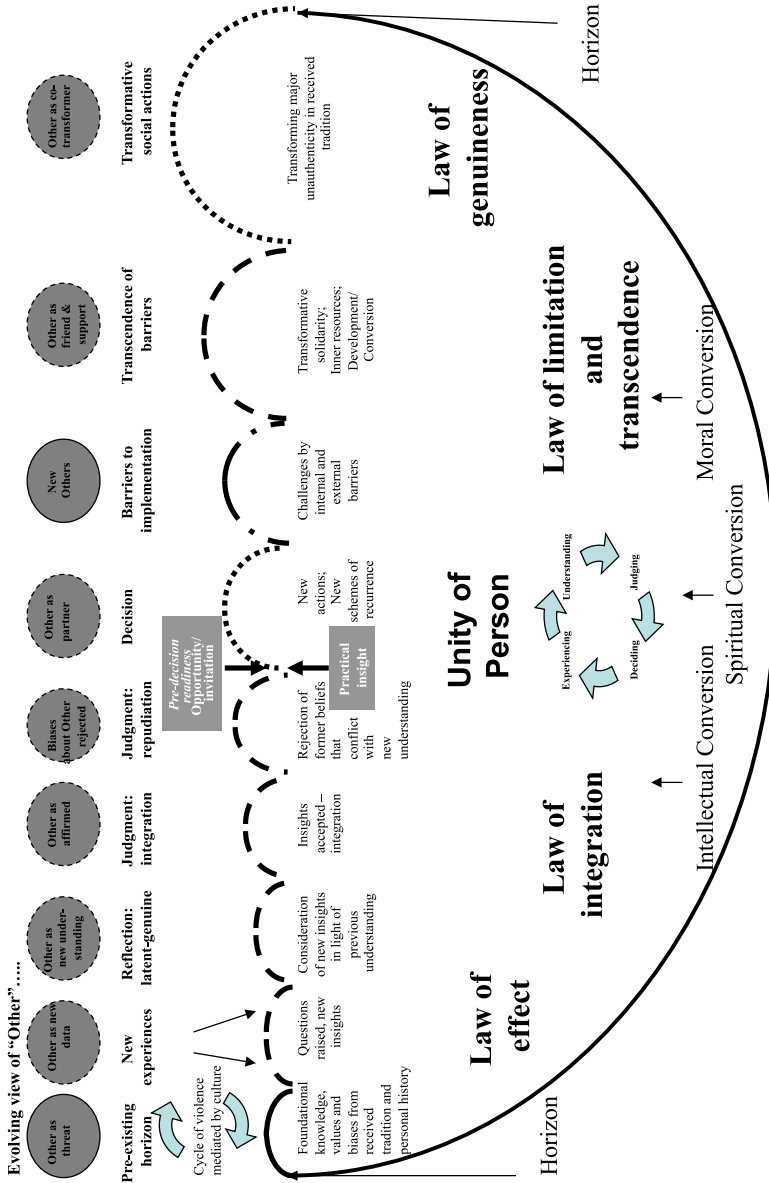**Figure 1. Perpetual shorter cycles of decline as function of group and general bias**

Figure 2. Horizonal expansion in human transformation