An analysis of warfare with a scale-invariant view of human foundational psychological traits.

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Foundational human psychological traits are used to create a framework to understand political conflicts on the margin of these few traits. Recent major wars are examined in a similar context noting societal catastrophes from blind faith in technology as a tool to solve any problem, to philosophies that devalue individual human life for the gain of nebulous nation-states and tribal ideologies. The special value of human life and especially conscious minds is considered with the Vietnam War noted as a particular and shocking confrontation of technology versus the brute attrition of humans.

Recent psychology studies have confirmed humans are born with three innate foundational psychological traits or predispositions. Tests have shown three-month-old human babies showing clear understanding of the concepts of fairness, compassion(empathy), and "visual differences" (the ability to discern or discriminate by size or skin color etc…). This is a significant fact and one that is not given enough credence as a mechanism to explain large-scale human interactions and cultural phenomena. We can see today that almost all major political topics of contention lie at the margin of these three innate traits.

If we use immigration into the United States as an example, we can see how we have two valid and legitimate debate points. Immigrants or refugees can be seen as "in need," and deserving of compassion as partner human beings in this world, but we also can see that, in a world of obvious scarcity, how the taxation created spending resources of a single nation cannot (nor under a guise of fairness should it have to) provide for all individuals on a continent versus those that pay into the system or are citizens of that nation. Thus, we have an obvious situation of friction at the margin between compassion and justice (i.e between empathy and fairness). Health care and insurance, taxation, minimum and living wage, and income inequality debates all fall along similar marginal lines.

Now, however, let us examine the trait of "tribalism" or the third noted innate trait of distinction where we can "identify" with those that "look like us" and "talk the same language" as "us" and smell, eat, dress, etc… like the proverbial "us." It is the realization regarding this deep genetic trait that, while it must be acknowledged, must also be understood historically as a trait that, unlike the two aforementioned traits, is really the "false leg" of an evolutionary tripod of primal psychological traits. Genetically speaking, white, Black, Oriental, Hispanic, etc… individuals are, statistically speaking, identical. Thus, unfortunately, the most visual of our traits is logically the least likely to give a human accurate information or "the truth" of any interpersonal situation and in fact can lead to bias and prejudice.

Focusing again on the two core traits of compassion and justice (we can consider "truth" to be a form of justice as a lie can be considered an unjust and unfair claim and an unjust act of giving false information) we thus come to a true moral or ethical foundation that is in-sync with and not contrary to our core genetic traits. For compassion and justice are thus genetically speaking and morally the "right versus wrong" contrasted with their logical opposites of cruelty (often exemplified via violence) and unfairness (often demonstrated as superiority and the dehumanization of others that thus "deserve" a "different set of rules" or lie). Let us never confuse this with "moral relativism." We are not concerned with a society's proclivity to, or abhorrence of, nudity or ways of dress, etc… as we are concerned only with defining core fundamental traits and how they impact our society and reality in this analysis. Thus, comparisons (this is an example of an actual false-equivalency) of peaceful protestors (advocating non-violence and defense of compassion and justice) cannot be equated with "neo-Nazi" groups that, by definition, advocate unfairness (class superiority) and often cruelty (as seen in violence) and the obvious use of discrimination based on "physical differences." This is not a comparison of apples and oranges, or blue and red politics, it is a comparison of right and wrong.

We should not confuse this with the American First Amendment right-to-free-speech. Everyone has a right to speak as entire philosophies and societies have been proven wrong and only via open discussion of any and all ideas can the truth of any claim be identified, tested, and validated.

It should also be noted that cruelty and violence are fundamentally wrong. Psychopathic murders are put to death in communities via death penalty laws agreed upon by their societies. Also, the existence of

tribalism in our society and psychological inheritance must be acknowledged. It has been proven that social isolation (a la prison solitary confinement) is literally more painful than even physical punishment as our core genetic selves understand that humans exist, and basically must exist, as a society or tribe, so exclusion from that tribe becomes a literal "existential threat" to any individual. Humans also evolve as small and dependent individuals into a world of dependence and scarcity requiring years of assistance, care, and love to mature into an adult. Thus, after birth we all watch, obey, and copy in order to learn and survive in a valiant attempt to reach adulthood and to thrive and prosper and coexist.

It is now that we have a framework to compare foundational psychological human traits to recent major historical wars and human warfare in general. If we examine the Second World War we see, at a very large scale, a perspective of a "just war." We have a war against societies promoting racial discrimination and unfairness based upon national and ethnic tribal divisions and using the most horrific examples of violence and dehumanizing tactics to achieve their goals. There is no argument here of a "right versus wrong" analogy or at least none that stand any logical ground as noted previously in this analysis.

Now deep in our past history we see wars of domination and expansion and of survival (to avoid domination or where parties conflict over scarce resources of food, water, etc…). Some of this is obvious so I will not dwell on an analysis of every war, however let us look at the Vietnam War under a different framework, along the lines of that established in this psychological analysis.

Now many look at the Vietnam War as a sad quagmire of a foreign super-power nation attempting to maintain just and legitimate treaties, of American defense of liberty and freedom versus "unfair" Communist expansion that could have led to the world's nations "falling like dominoes" to Communist rule (we must remember decisions were made under the then recent experiences in Germany like the Berlin Airlift and Berlin Wall and the invasion of Eastern Bloc nations and Soviet and Chinese nuclear weapons development).

However, could the Vietnam War be viewed from a higher-level (not better, just different) perspective based on foundational human psychology? Another factor in human psychology is our deep core drive to not only solve problems, but to use "tools" or technology to do so, and what we see with our eyes and touch with our hands every day for hundreds and thousands of years is the success of this paradigm. It is the paradigm belief that "technology and tools can lead to victory" and solve any and all problem. This paradigm has been seen every day with guns over knives, cannons over walls, skyscrapers over gravity, flash trades over fair market, money over love, atomic bombs over armies, and on and on and on for centuries.

But core to human existence, also is the ideal of the "value of a human life" and value of rights of an individual life. Libraries have been written on the miniscule nature of human beings compared to the size of the world or the Universe. Physicist Stephen Hawking famously even called humanity basically random chemical scum on a rock in a random galaxy. However, this view has changed as science has advanced. David Deutsch, one of the world's premier quantum mechanics scientists, I believe correctly notes that the "magic" of the human mind is how it is, and still is, the most complex construct ever found in the Universe (separating human minds as a "natural creation" versus say an aggregate entity like an entire human civilization or The Internet etc…).

The scientific pillar of Quantum Mechanics places consciousness and the role of the "conscious observer" in a place of ultimate primacy and importance for the literal existence of the Universe itself. Thus, while a cynic can logically argue that humans (like many advanced animals) can breed in excess of resources (I seek no debate on birth control in this discussion), one simply cannot remove the existential value of a "human mind" and consciousness in terms of its value in the Universe and, thus, as the most precious thing ever to have been created and observed in Nature. A literal cosmic observation, if not an amazing coincidence, is that the human mind, as the most complex (implying value in complexity) creation in existence, lies exactly "in the middle" of the scale between the quantum sub-atomic world (in terms of scale or powers of 10) and the cosmological scale of the Universe of galaxies and super-clusters. Thus, again perhaps intimating a special place in our Universe for consciousness as if the stage has been set for its magnificence. It has even been intimated that consciousness could we be the entire raison d'etre of the Universe as a tempting deduction along metaphysical lines (a la John Wheeler's Participatory Universe).

Returning to the example of the Vietnam War, we thus have an American civilization that has reached the epitome of technical achievement using millions of dollars' worth of technology from B-52 bombers in massive squadrons and aircraft carriers and more bombs than all of those used in the entire Second World War and yet what? The American military machine faced and ultimately "lost" to a foe that, for all intents and purposes, and in perhaps an even greater sense of distortion, waged a war of literal attrition under the guise

that any amount of human sacrifice of lives, and thus conscious minds, was acceptable to ensure their "ideal" of a nation or their political perspective of "independence," freedom, or self-governance. Logic demands why and argues, based on the real value of human life or conscious minds, that this is insanity.

Thus, at this juncture in history, has the entire human race not fallen into the ultimate disaster in the Vietnam War? A disaster not of just war but a disaster of logic and civilization. A disaster of one side under the myth that "technology can solve anything" and the other side under the myth that their "ideal (nation, independence, etc… not tied to any core genetic sense of compassion or justice) is worth the sacrifice of any amount of human lives" in fact literally throwing humans into machine gun battles as proverbial "cannon fodder." In this sense, is the Vietnam War, while not as vast in scale of impact or damage as the First or Second World War (The First and Second World War are often considered a single "war of the world" resulted in an estimated 100 million killed, unimaginably many injured, and with 500 million, at least, having PTSD and the subsequent epigenetic damage and political legacies still in play today), the literal epitome of a "human psychological disaster" and thus this is perhaps why it is so haunting a War even beyond the common "what were we fighting for" commentaries?

Thus I argue for the need to analyze human warfare and societies at a large-scale compared to the human foundational psychological traits of compassion/empathy and justice/fairness/truth and our often twisted genetic need of tribal inclusion (witnessed every weekend in various sporting matches as a safe form of release) and our ancient paradigms of "technology solving all problems" (note even in the Star Wars films we expand technology to ever greater scales of Death Stars and then even planetary scaled lasers that can destroy planets in a single shot; pause to consider the actual violence implied here for a moment) as well as the savage paradigm of "principles" and "ideas" that under-value human life and result in the sacrifice of so many millions for nation-states and ideologies that have, like so many others, vanished like sandcastles in a desert. Note I am not saying that only individuals matter or any tribe or community but I am arguing rather that this known trait and evolutionary desire to protect ones "band of brothers" should not be used a lever for political or aggressive purposes.

So, while human lives themselves are not built to last forever and can die with accidental ease, perhaps human life on this planet can begin to view our reality based, not only on our genetic core psychological drives and their interplay on society but also based on our literal fit in an ecosystem of a planet that, again while it might be life-centric, does not necessarily imply "human-centric." Then we can continue to examine the false promise of chemicals as tools to solve every problem and that they (plastics, pesticides, animal antibiotics, ozone, etc…) may actually cause more individual and even planetary problems than good and that perhaps we can accept the actual "majesty of consciousness" on the stage of reality and remember that humans are not the only conscious beings and revisit not only how we as individuals and tribes or societies interact with each other but also with other life on this planet or in theory the Universe.