FUNCTIONAL DEMOCRACY:

A NEW PARADIGM ON GEOPOLITICS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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INTRODUCTION

The Middle East has always been a place of wonder and mystery. People around the world have been fascinated by Middle Eastern culture, from the Babylonians to the Ottomans, and from the colonialists to the era of dictatorships. The culture has vacillated between ages of stagnation and ages of brilliant innovation. Although the people of the region have contributed greatly to the progress of the world, they have also suffered greatly from an inability to sustain long-term healthy progress. It seems as though the Arab Spring has come and gone, leaving many disillusioned youth at crossroads in its wake. These Millennials who tweeted, facebooked and youtubed the revolution from the streets, quickly came to the same realization as their parents and grandparents did, that change requires more than just toppling a dictator.

In order to catalyze sustainable change and healthy emergence for a society, a more holistic and open approach must be facilitated to address the structural gaps that still ail the region. Often this requires challenging the existing cultural and social paradigms and the introduction of new models that diffuse polarization, unite historically divided people, and improve the quality of life for generations to come. At the same time, it is imperative that any new paradigm honors the intellectual, religious and cultural heritage while facilitating a resilient form of cultural emergence. Jeffrey Goldstein defines the word emergence in the journal titled *Emergence* as "the arising of novel and coherent structures, patterns and properties during the process of self-organization in complex systems"[1]. This paper addresses the make-up of these complex systems from a new and innovative perspective as they apply to shaping the political future of the Middle East.

BACKGROUND

I am a native of the Middle East, fully immersed in its history, thoroughly familiar with its religious, legal, economic and socio-political practices. I have applied a whole system, emergent approach to my work with international organizations in the region. I have spoken on the subject of a new model for Arab Democracy at the United Nations, the World Future Society and a number of universities. I have also presented several workshops on the subject of social emergence. I have consulted with policy makers, diplomats, and journalists about the approach that I developed for this new and resilient model for governance in the Middle East. The framework detailed here is a summary of my upcoming book *Emerge! The Rise of Functional Democracy in the Middle East.* This Journal is the first publication where the summary of this framework appears.

The principles detailed in my book are based on a concept I call *Functional Democracy*. It aims at reframing the issues of competing political and economic ideologies and introduces a conscious evolutionary platform that is aligned with the values and future aspirations of the people in the region. The framework is rooted in the field of large-scale social psychology and provides a deep understanding of the nature of conflict through the lens of socio-cultural value systems. Once these principles are defined, the framework then offers steps on how to design a functional approach to a whole systems model for building a new political philosophy. This is a new paradigm on politics. These concepts have been field-tested on the ground around the world in places like South Africa, Iceland, and in my own 5-year experience in Israel and Palestine. This is the template on which my organization, The Center for Human Emergence Middle East (CHE Mideast) based its five-year initiative in Israel and Palestine. The case study is detailed after much of the framework is explained.

This article will illustrate how carefully crafted cultural visions lead to transformational changes in education, healthcare, economics and other important areas in the development of Middle Eastern cultures and institutions. At the heart of this new paradigm is the work of three prominent developmental theorists from the field of social psychology:

~ Dr. Clare W. Graves, author of the Levels of Existence Theory, which compared a number of psychological and behavioural constructs such as Max Weber, Abraham Maslow, and Jane Loevinger.

~ Dr. Don Beck, author of the Spiral Dynamics Theory, which uses a socio-cultural value systems approach, and acts as a scaffolding for multiple other behavioural theories while extending the applications of Graves's theory.

~ Muzafer and Carolyn Sherif and Carl Hoveland authors of Social Judgment Theory which introduced pioneering models on the subconscious sorting of ideas, the attitude scale, and the Assimilation Contrast Effect.

Dr. Beck and I co-founded the CHE Mideast and advanced these studies beyond their academic origins to integrate new insights from real applications into the area of social sciences. At the heart of designing functional governance, and new models for conflict resolution is the recognition that human existence is by nature hierarchical. It requires different solutions for cultures belonging to the different levels of existence. Thought leaders in political philosophy today shy away from considering new ideas on social hierarchies for the fear of offending political sensitivities. Acceptance of these models however, becomes easier once the science behind the framework is understood and the applications prove to provide effective solutions.

The pillars on which the framework of rests are as follows.

THE MEASURABILITY OF CULTURAL VALUES

The measure of values has always been a subjective endeavour. This is not the intent of our approach. In this context, cultural values refer to the deep examination of Graves' eight levels of human existence known as value systems and their subsequent field applications by Dr. Beck and me. While we acknowledge the fact that all people have the potential to develop high cognitive capacities, our framework examines the limitations that come from existential realities within every society and looks to nurture an emergent habitat that positions the culture for maximum potential. Our developmental programs target the needs of specific value systems from an integral, whole systems approach. It uncovers the reasons why different people and different cultures have distinct value preferences and ways of thinking about politics, economics, life priorities, and an array of other metrics.

In developing Graves' concepts further, Beck added the word memes to value systems and created the term MEMEs to provide a better analogy of how values spread. The word "meme" is a term originally coined by evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins. It rhymes with gene and just like a gene that carries the codes that define human characteristics; a meme carries the codes that define societal characteristics, like values, language, religion, philosophy, politics, and economics. Value systems are a hierarchically ordered, always open to change set of ethics, values, preference, priorities and worldviews that define an individuals, a group or a culture[2]. They have a spectrum of meaning for words, expressions and experiences that are crucial at every level of personal and cultural development. Humans evolve in response to existential challenges from their environment and as they evolve into higher levels of existence their preferences, or values evolve with them. As societies emerge to higher levels they develop more complexity that transcend and include the lower levels. After decades of applying our model it seems that the best an enlightened leader can do is move the values of a society up the ladder of development a half step and allow that new level of existence to penetrate the culture over time in slightly more progressive ways. Based on these eight value systems, we have developed tests and instruments that make it possible for researchers to measure cultural preferences and human needs and design programs to meet those needs. It is these preferences that Beck and I use to tailor development programs that are resilient. The eight levels of human existence identified by our model and the ones I have developed further in my theoretical framework about *Functional Democracy* are depicted in the GRAPH FACING PAGE.

There is a healthy and unhealthy expression at every level and the higher the unhealthy expression is, the more damaging it can be to a culture's continued development[3]. Examples of an unhealthy expression of the fifth level political system of strategic and enterprising values are the US and its current political gridlock. The European Union, which is centrered in the Sixth level political values of egalitarianism and humanitarianism offers a higher standard of care for its citizens but is not without its unhealthy side. In Europe, it was the egalitarian political values that sought to unite the continent through a common currency, but failed to take

THE BIO-PSYCHO-SOCIAL MAP OF THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE

The value-systems/Spiral Dynamics framework on the eight stages of development

Second Tier "Being" valueMEMES

8 TURQUOISE Eighth Level System: Holistic vMEME – starting 30 years ago

***Basic theme**: Experience the wholeness of existence through mind and spirit*

- The world is a single, dynamic organism with its own collective mind
- Self is both distinct and a blended part of a larger, compassionate whole
- Everything connects to everything else in ecological alignments
- Energy and information permeate the Earth's total environment
- Holistic, intuitive thinking and cooperative actions are to be expected

7 YELLOW Seventh Level System: Integrative vMEME – starting 50 years ago

***Basic theme**: Live fully and responsibly as what you are and learn to become*

- Life is a kaleidoscope of natural hierarchies, systems, and forms
- The magnificence of existence is valued over material possessions
- Flexibility, spontaneity, and functionality have the highest priority
- Differences can be integrated into interdependent, natural flows
- Understands that chaos and change are natural

"When man is finally able to see himself and the world around him with clear cognition, he finds a picture far more pleasant. Visible in unmistakable clarity and devastating detail is man's failure to be what he might be and his misuse of his world. This revelation causes him to leap out in search of a way of life and a system of values, which will enable him to be more than he has been. His values now are of a different order from those at previous levels. They arise not from selfish interest but from the recognition of the magnificence of existence and the desire that it shall continue to be."

Dr. Clare Graves

First Tier "Subsistence" valueMEMES

6 GREEN Sixth Level System: Communitarian/Egalitarian vMEME – starting 150 years ago

***Basic theme**: Seek peace within the inner self and explore, with others, the caring dimensions of community*

- The human spirit must be freed from greed, dogma, and divisiveness
- Feelings, sensitivity, and caring supersede cold rationality
- Spreads the Earth's resources and opportunities equally among all
- Reaches decisions through reconciliation and consensus processes
- Refreshes spirituality, brings harmony, and enriches human development

5 ORANGE Fifth Level System: Achievist/Strategic vMEME – starting 300 years ago

***Basic theme**: Act in your own self-interest by playing the game to win*

- Change and advancement are inherent within the scheme of things
- Progresses by learning nature's secrets and seeking out best solutions
- Manipulates Earth's resources to create and spread the abundant good life
- Optimistic, risk-taking, and self-reliant people deserve success
- Societies prosper through strategy, technology, and competitiveness

4 BLUE Fourth Level System: Purposeful/Authoritarian vMEME – starting 5,000 years ago

***Basic theme**: Life has meaning, direction, and purpose with predetermined outcomes*

- One sacrifices self to the transcendent Cause, Truth, or righteous Pathway
- The Order enforces a code of conduct based on eternal, absolute principles
- Righteous living produces stability now and guarantees future reward
- Impulsivity is controlled through guilt; everybody has their proper place
- Laws, regulations, and discipline build character and moral fiber

3 RED Third Level System: Impulsive/Egocentric vMEME – starting 10,000 years ago

***Basic theme**: Be what you are and do what you want, regardless*

- The world is a jungle full of threats and predators
- Breaks free from any domination or constraint to please self as self desires
- Stands tall, expects attention, demands respect, and calls the shots
- Enjoys self to the fullest right now without guilt or remorse
- Conquers, out-foxes, and dominates other aggressive characters

2 PURPLE Second Level System: Magical/Animistic vMEME – starting 50,000 years ago

***Basic theme**: Keep the spirits happy and the tribe's nest warm and safe*

- Obeys the desires of the spirit being and mystical signs
- Shows allegiance to chief, elders, ancestors, and the clan
- Individual subsumed in group
- Preserves sacred objects, places, events, and memories
- Observes rites of passage, seasonal cycles, and tribal customs

1 BEIGE First Level System: Instinctive/Survivalistic vMEME – starting 100,000 years ago

***Basic theme**: Do what you must just to stay alive*

- Uses instincts and habits just to survive
- Distinct self is barely awakened or sustained
- Food, water, warmth, sex, and safety have priority
- Forms into survival bands to perpetuate life
- Lives "off the land" much as other animals

inventory of the value systems of new members as the sixth level system often does in its blind pursuit of equality, and the result is the current European state of financial disorder.

Looking at a surface assessment of governance using these values one can see that Democracy in the US today is representative of the fifth level of values, which is a far more complex form of development than ideas on democracy are in China or Russia. In the Middle East, one could argue that Turkey's style of democracy is a *healthy* manifestation of a Fourth-to-Fifth Level political system, while Syria's oppressive feudal system is an *unhealthy* expression of the Third Level value system. When it comes to the application of politics to values systems, each of these eight levels can be described as being in one of three conditions: open, arrested, or closed. An open system describes a dynamic culture that anticipates change and adapts well to it like many of the Scandinavian countries. An arrested system has stagnant institutions that may change incrementally but not enough to keep up with internal or external dynamics. A closed system is one that doesn't accept change and works at blocking input from the outside. The only change possible with a closed system is through a crisis or revolution. The Arab Spring is the undeniable result of people living in a closed system.

Measurable cultural values are noticeable at the personal level as well. In speaking to audiences from different parts of the world, the word *peace* for example, has different meaning to different people. Peace to Palestinians means ending the Israeli occupation and forming a nation state. To the Syrians today, peace means the ability to secure food for the next two weeks. To a first world audience peace is the reference to the abstract concepts like harmony, inner peace, or sometimes financial security. If one looks for a definition of peace along the spectrum of values, to the first level it means "I stay alive"; to the second level "we are safe", to the third level " I dominate", to the fourth level "we have religious or patriotic order, ", to the fifth level "let's make a deal", to the sixth level "equality and harmony." To the seventh level "I design systems to ensure that peace works for all."

As one can see from this simple example, the concept of measurable cultural values generates a dynamic synthesis of actionable data regarding values that inform the design of governance that fits. *Functional Democracy* upholds the values of the seventh level system, and designs democracy that fits the needs and uniqueness of that specific society. This is what we call a memetically-stratified lens through which we reframe political design and conflict resolution.

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SEEING MIDDLE EASTERN HISTORY THROUGH MEMETIC LENSES

In order to get a new and fresh perspective on the challenges that face the Middle East, the region's political history must be reinterpreted through a memetic lenses. This is where the linearity of the historic narrative is replaced with the complexity of cultural values-systems. When compared to the way non-indigenous development agencies approach change, one begins to understand the importance of replacing the linearity of history with the complex dynamics that drive the development of local cultures. The former seeks to impose a template for rapid non-indigenous change, while the latter seeks to unblock developmental gaps and allow cultures to emerge at their own healthy pace with built-in sensitivities to the content of the local value systems. Our work focuses on determining the existing and emergent values systems of a culture, specifically identifying its unique local expressions.

What follows are examples of substituting value systems complexity for historic linearity:

1 ~ Most historians may view the Ottomans as pioneers of modern governance, but when viewed through the value-systems prism, their rule did more to arrest the emergence of the Middle East than any other. While the Industrial Revolution was leading human emergence under the fifth level value system and empowering the strategic and scientific minds of Western Europe, the Ottomans persisted with the values of "governance by exploitation" of the third level of values, oppressing their subjects under the auspices of maintaining tribal peace, while keeping them in dire poverty.

2 ~ When considering the colonial mandate period, though brief, Westerners introduced a foreign system for governance. The concept of nations is a value of the fourth level system. It artificially mapped national boundaries and forced historically competing tribes to fight for power and control. Throughout Middle Eastern history, local power was vested in the heads of tribes and religious leaders, not in democracy and it abstract concepts and institutions. A values systems analysis of the colonial mandates era shows the tribal mindsets weren't ready for that level of social development, especially when its content was full of Western concepts for nations and democracy.

3 ~ Arab Nationalism, although well meaning, was influenced by intellectual elites who travelled abroad but couldn't bridge their transplanted political models and connect them to the existential

Functional Democracy & The Eight Levels of Human Existence

'MEME LEVELS	Meaning of Democracy	Political Form	Perception of One Person, One Vote	Region/Country % World Population Under Rule today (PUR)
8	- Global Governance - Macro management of all life forms. - Seeking the common good in response to Global problems.	- Holonic Democracy - Whole-earth Networks - Interconnection of geo-consciousness - The global brain on governance	All constituents vote and act in a globally conscious manner	Won't appear until political systems are centered in the 7th level of values **0% PUR**
7	- A process of integrating the majority of all the first tier political systems into a functional form of governance that works for all - People have the right to be who they are as long as they are not hurting anyone or the planet - Balance of government & private sector based on functionality	- Functional Democracy - Forms of governance that work based on value-system profiles and stages of development. - Stratified systems designed with the input of the Indigenous Intelligence	-Recognizes that one-person one-vote works for societies with dominant 'MEMEs at the 4th Level or higher. - Works with healthy values leaders within the 2nd and 3rd 'MEMEs to establish institutions leading to one-person, one-vote systems in the future.	- Germany (entering) - Northern Europe (entering) - Switzerland (entering) **3% PUR**
6	- Everybody shares equally in reaching consensus - The purpose of the system is to care for "we the people" and the common good - Equal access to all resources by all people - The human bond has priority over political manipulation	- Social Democracy - Coalition governments - System is short-lived unless society is highly homogenous with complementary value systems (ex: Scandinavian countries & N. Europe)	- Votes are important, but the loser still has an equal voice -Makes sure there is group consensus on a candidate before voting - Our vote goes to the candidate who most supports the environment	- Western Europe (mixed) - Northern Europe. - Canada (mixed) - US (entering) **8% PUR**
5	- Pluralistic politics - Game of incentives within a system of checks and balances - To the winner belong the spoils - Relationship with losing party is to the strategic advantage of the winner - System turns politicians into corporate lobbyists after service	- Multi-party Democracy - Corporate states. - Bill of Rights. - Economic status sets power ratios resulting in wider gaps between the haves and have-nots.	- Individual votes are highly valued and go to the candidate who share voter's views. - I vote for candidate who provides opportunity for personal success and financial achievement. - The higher my net worth the higher the power of my vote	-US, UK, Canada (mixed) - Japan (mixed) - Western Europe (mixed) - China (entering) **24% PUR**
4	- Justice and Fairness for all - Everyone is equal under the law - Good people follow the law, rules and traditions - Disputes resolved through institutions and legal procedures - Duty to pay fair share to support the system	- Authoritarian Democracy - Nation states - One Party Rule - Heavy hand of government - Winner takes all and rules all without input from the losing minority parties.	-Votes matter to the one party that has all the right answers. -Vote in line with family, church, and other civic groups who know the one true way. - Candidate who shares my ethnicity gets my vote.	- Singapore - China (mixed) - So. Korea (mixed) - Russia, India (entering) - Eastern Europe - US, Japan (mixed) **27% PUR**
3	- Whatever the Feudal Lord says it is. - "Power to the People" is power to the clan leader and the chosen few. - Feudal Distribution System. - Institutions are vacuous. Designed to enrich self and cronies. - Rich get richer, poor get poorer. - All accept have-have not as reality	- Dictatorship - Feudal Empire - Domination - Corrupt autocracy - Strong-arm tactics - Patriarchy - No clear national platform.	- Votes go to feudal lords and Za'eems. - Descending voters get eliminated, thrown in jail, thrown out of the country or killed - Voting for winning candidate grants access to power	- Middle East, India (mixed) - Africa (mixed) - So. America (mixed) - Parts of S.E. Asia. - China (mixed) - Russia (mixed) **33% PUR**
2	- What our people decide to do. - Announced by the chief. - Guided by the elders/mystical forces	- Tribes - Clans - Councils - Extended family - Lineage	- Individual votes don't matter and are not encouraged by the group/tribe - Chief knows best	-Middle East, India (mixed) -Africa (mixed) - China (mixed) -So. America (mixed) **5% PUR**
1	- Survival-based groups. - Genetic memory/instinct.	No concept of governance.	No concept of governance	**0% PUR**

Key: In *%World Population Under Rule* column, mixed system indicates more than one value system defines the country or region's political form. Entering means the values of the next system are emerging but don't define the country/region's institutions and electoral process yet. No designation indicates the corresponding system is the dominant form of governance.

reality on the ground. Although they were natives of the region they didn't recognize the misalignment of Western political and philosophical thought with an enumerable collection of proud tribes whose values were dominated by history, tradition, and territorial battles. As a concept of the fourth level system Arab Nationalism was short lived as the majority of culture still needed to transition to an essential stage of peaceful tribal and religious co-existence before it was naturally ready for nation states. As a result of failed Arab Nationalism, dictatorships dominated the region. These were the values of an unhealthy third level system whose brutal tribal leaders were provided with hollow institutions and the global recognition to rule over other tribes and sectarian groups using the values of brutality and bloodshed that defined their past. If the colonialists were to use a value systems approach to designing democracy, the appropriate form of governance for most of the region would have been a benevolent monarchy that picks a respected monarch among the tribes who becomes their servant leader while building the institutions of the fourth level system over time with the input of his subjects. This is what *Functional democracy* calls the "half-steps strategy."

These are just a few examples of how *Functional Democracy* reframes politics in terms of evolving systems of social and political models. It designs for values that continue to emerge in response to changes in the needs of existential reality. Just as democracy in the United States emerged differently than the social democracies of Western Europe, democracies of the Middle East will be vastly different than any we've seen so far. They will be shaped by the unique value memes of Arab culture, which reflect democracies created by these specific people for these specific people and their present-day realities. By reframing the region's history through value systems and memetics, we shed the light on the causes of the historic dysfunction that has plagued the region and offer clear measurable indicators of what is required for the emergence of Arab-style democracies.

UNCOVERING THE INDIGENOUS INTELLIGENCE

Indigenous Intelligence is one of the most crucial elements of the *Functional Democracy* model. Experts in this newly defined field are the first individuals we seek when we begin our field design projects. Dr. Beck has always emphasized the importance of working with people who have a deep understanding of the society they are working in. It wasn't till I teamed up with

him to create the Center for Human Emergence Middle East (CHE Mideast) that I discovered the need to further define the importance of this part of our model. For someone who was born in Lebanon, I noticed certain events, behaviours and phenomena in Middle Eastern culture that were missed by most of my highly intelligent Western colleagues. This pattern of things lost in translation kept repeating in higher frequency as our work progressed, making it necessary for me to conduct research into this field. I began to develop my model after much analysis of field data and assessment of why developmental problems persist in spite of all the good intentions behind foreign aid and the noble work of Non-Governmental Organizations.

Often the term "indigenous" is associated with native minorities and cultures of the developing world that have been marginalized by progress. In this context, I was looking to redefine the meaning of indigenous to include the "unique value-systems expression" of the complex intelligences within each culture. Those are the type of experts who can offer their countries, and the world community creative solutions that meet the challenges facing our world today. After weeks of research including a detailed look at the multiple intelligences model of Howard Garner, I found no definitive studies into the field of local cultural intelligence as its own area of academic focus. No researchers have viewed the importance of this intelligence the way we viewed it at the CHE Mideast.

Based on my field experience and the extensive research I conducted, I came to define indigenous intelligence as follows:

> *Indigenous Intelligence (II)* is the multidimensional capacity of an individual or a group in a specific society to interpret its value-systems' complexity to non-natives. It is represented in a cross section of any given society, from Millennials to women, community leaders and elders of the tribe. Unlike other intelligences, it provides rich and actionable culturally fit answers, to why certain individuals or groups act in certain ways. Why do they have certain preferences, priorities, beliefs and worldviews and why solutions need to be tailored for their specific value-structure[4].

Indigenous Intelligence informs governance by assessing where people are in their developmental stages and the challenges they face. II paints a more complete picture of the obstacles facing stakeholders in a society, not just the elite and the privileged. It always finds opportunities in the challenges facing a certain society and finds a silver lining through creative thinking. Economic and political development that is informed by II places the uniqueness of people's capacities into a long-term resilient scheme that makes the culture move at its own healthy pace towards a collective vision of the future.

Indigenous Intelligence is manifested in individuals as well as groups who are known as *Indigenous Intelligence Experts (IIEs).* They exhibit some of the following characteristics:

- They are most likely natives of the territory who speak the language, know the customs and understand the culture and the many subcultures within it.
- Their thinking is an open-system with high cognitive abilities. They can speak with ease to a tribal leader in the same colloquial tongue as well as to a national or Western politician and be fully aware of the value-structure distinctions of what is being said.
- He/she is shaped by a first-hand experience of his/her own transition from being zealots and flamethrowers. He/she has earned his/her dues in becoming a conciliator and pragmatist who thinks about future generations and their wellbeing, rather than revenge, instant gratification, and traditional allegiances.
- While the West paints with broad strokes that miss the finer details, IIEs instinctively discern the complex patterns of their society allowing for a natural process of identifying developmental gaps.
- They understand the value-systems meaning of history through first hand experience not the simplicity of western historic narrative.
- They understand the complexity and the uniqueness of the indigenous challenges that brought the culture to its current status of desolation.
- They are strategic and systemic in their thinking and believe in efforts that can be sustainable and resilient for generations to come.
- They look at Western organization's objective for peace and prosperity and help them channel their efforts as not to offend local stakeholders and historic grievances while at the same time providing culturally honed plans for distributing resources where they are most needed.
- They are servant leaders, who realize that functional alignment with the needs of their society is at the top of their agenda.

IIEs open the door to a culture from the inside in societies that would otherwise be hesitant to disclose any information to an outsider. They can move freely through the various value-systems within their culture, knowing how to uncover the challenges facing it. They can repair the expression of every local value system. In parts of the Middle East, that have seen war, and have gone through the Arab Spring, many IIEs gain respect due to their activism and sacrifice. It is very likely they had served time in jail for their

views and actions. The rest of the culture witnessed their transformation from tribal and feudal lords to pragmatic leaders and conciliators. They live in two worlds and cater to the traditional needs of the tribe while expressing with clarity, and vision, the future needs of their nation.

Under the *Functional Democracy* model, IIE's are the primary source of information for individuals in charge of creating the blueprint for democratic and transitional institutions. These experts who make up a second layer of experts are called Integral Design Architects (IDAs). They rely greatly on the input of IIEs to design large-scale systems. IDAs are the quintessential Seventh Level thinkers who place all the data coming from the IIEs into a memetically functional design scheme. They play their crucial roles from behind the scenes as they shape the thinking of politicians, business leaders, heads of NGOs and global aid agencies. IDAs are generally not interested in the visibility their work allots them but in the functionality of the systems they design. By doing their work from behind the scenes, they insure their recommendations take on the highest form of indigenous design leading to optimum success.

FRAMING CONFLICT THROUGH THE PRISM OF VALUE SYSTEMS

Essential to the design of *Functional Democracy* is a new understanding of the nature of conflict and the values of the politicians who shape it. Much of the science on conflict today relies on the seminal work of Muzafer Sherif, Caroline Sherif, and Carl Hoveland and the two models they created. The Sherifs verified a model called Realistic Conflict Theory (RCT) through the Robbers Cave Experiment. The theory accounts for group conflict, negative prejudices, stereotypes, discrimination and even violence as being the result of competition between groups for limited resources[5]. In later years, the Sherifs worked with Hoveland and authored the Social Judgment Theory (SJT), which explains how attitudes are expressed, judged and modified. Beck was a student of Muzafer Sherif while working on his PhD at the University of Oklahoma in the Sixties. He combined the most notable findings from both theories and added to them many elements of the value systems model giving much impetus to his experience in the field.

Beck closely reexamined the underlying assumptions affecting the importance of intra-group dynamics on each side of a conflict. Using SJT, he transformed the assimilation and contrast aspects of group dynamics by providing a far more sophisticated articulation of the different spectrums that represent the different value systems on each side of a conflict. This pioneering model became known as the value-systems Assimilation-Contrast Effect model, or the VACE model for short. It became the basis for identifying the most important parties and individuals to a conflict in our work at the CHE-Mideast.

According to the model, there is a total of six positions or standings related to beliefs and actions on each side of the spectrum in any given conflict. VACE more accurately predicts the motivation of people, groups and cultures under conflict conditions. It illustrates graphically the dynamics of polarization, social conflict and the balance of perspectives in the pursuit of systemic equilibrium (peace, armistice, non violence) between opposing viewpoints or values. Each position has its own value system preferences or mix of value systems. These are expressed in designations of R-1 through R-6 for positions on the right side of the issue, or L-1 through L-6 for positions on the left side. The designation of 'right' or 'left' side does not indicate any party affiliation or political leanings, although it can be used that way for convenience if the political left and right are being discussed.

The six positions based on the spectrum of value systems approach to a conflict are as follows:

1 ~ Flamethrowers (R-6 & L-6): These are the groups that are represented by the Third Level value system. They are aggressive, violent and predatory with intent to destroy, attack and eliminate the opposition without the possibility of compromise.

2 ~ Zealots (R-5 & L-5): These are groups centrered partly in Third-Level and partly Fourth Level. They are highly directed by doctrine, partisan, and fiercely fervent, tending toward "all or nothing" demands.

3 ~ Ideologues (R-4 & L-4): These are the True Believers represented by the arrested stage of the Fourth Level system. They are absolutists with firm convictions and rigid boundaries.

4 ~ Moderates (R-3 & L-3): This is where an open Fourth-Level system exhibits softer beliefs. This group recognizes the entry phases of the Fifth Level system. They are more open to seeing options for compromise and negotiating trade-offs, although they want to come out ahead. Positions can be somewhat intense but have less ego-involved in negotiation.

5 ~ Pragmatists (R-2 & L-2): This position is in the Fifth-Level system. They are very practical and believe in results that work. They advocate the art of the possible, creative and functional solutions, and can be highly skilled at negotiation.

6 ~ Conciliators (R-1 & L-1): This is the position where Fifth Level meets Sixth-Level system. This position seeks inclusivity, consensus and a place for everyone to feel good about the outcome. They often do not recognize manipulative strategies used by the other First Tier systems to gain sympathy and concessions.

The way each value system perceives the others on the left or right side of an issue determines whether they view the other perspective as one that 'assimilates' within their own viewpoint, or is in 'contrast' to their viewpoint. 'Assimilation' expects that 'if you aren't against us, you are with us'. Since this isn't really the case, a lot of 'internal marketing' might be spent attempting to create stronger converts to the cause. "Contrast" expects that 'if you aren't with us, you are against us'. As a result of this dynamic, the debate no longer contains six positions on each side of the values spectrum, its the Ideologues, Zealots and Flamethrowers on one side (the rigid "us") vs. the Moderates, Pragmatist and Conciliators on the same side AND the entire other side. As Conciliators, Pragmatists and Moderates on both sides of any issue disappear the remaining positions are those that represent an "us vs. them" ideology, which then becomes the loudest voices being heard. This is extremely important particularly in terms of mass media.

The silencing of the middle spectrum of a debate results in an unbalanced representation of the issues and further polarization. Ultimately this is the foundation for serious conflict. Unfortunately, in a world that feeds of small sound bites and 24/7 news, the mainstream media only reports the sensationalized polarization of opinions. This creates a broader and more embedded view of the "us vs. them" cultural schism.

LEFT – RIGHT SPECTRUMS & THEIR vMEME CODES

SPECTRUM "Center"				vMEME CODE
L-1	Conciliators	R-1		Orange/Green- 5th/ 6th LEVELS
L-2	Pragmatists	R-2		ORANGE/5th LEVEL
L-3	Moderates	R-3		BLUE/Orange 5th/4th LEVELS
L-4	Ideologues	R-4		BLUE 5th LEVEL
L-5	Zealots	R-5		BLUE/Red 4th/3rd LEVELS
L-6	Flamethrowers	R-6		RED 3rd LEVEL

When we use this model in the Middle East, we call it the *Hearts and Minds* strategy[6]. We design steps on how to drive the hearts and minds of people away from the corrosive effects of the "us vs. them" dynamic through the following steps:

1 ~ Create a wedge between the radicals (Flamethrowers, Zealots, and the closed-system Ideologues), and the more Moderate positions on each side of the value spectrum simultaneously.

2 ~ Enhance the capacities of the Pragmatists and the Conciliators so they are able to solve the deep conflict and answer to the needs of the people.

3 ~ Anticipate the radical chitchat among the Flamethrowers and Zealots and depress the polarizing dynamics.

4 ~ Inoculate the masses and the decision makers against "Us vs. Them" rhetoric.

This is the model we presented to the United Nations and to the US Department of State on a few occasions. We always recommend that focus should not

be placed on negotiating with the loudest voices, which has repeatedly resulted in failure. Focus also should not be placed on negotiations when the majority of a society on one side of the model is centrered in the 1, 2 and 3 positions, while the other side is centrered in the 4,5, and 6 positions. This was the case in our work in Israel and Palestine. Instead of repeating the failed scenarios of the past our focus turned to help the Palestinians build capacities and institutions within their own culture. We sought to level the asymmetry between the Israelis and the Palestinians by helping the Palestinian side move their culture to a center in the 1, 2 and 3 positions where negotiations become equitable and the results more lasting.

ISRAEL AND PALESTINE, THE CASE STUDY

Throughout this article reference was made to our field application of this framework in the Middle East. Our organization, the Center for Human Emergence Middle East began a mission in 2005 to help Israelis and Palestinians break the logjam that was preventing permanent peace from taking hold. The large-scale social psychology tools that are outlined in this article were applied in Israel and Palestine over a five-year period. Here is a summary of that field experience.

I had met Dr Beck a few years before we started our work together and was thoroughly familiar with the value systems model, his work with large scale psychology and his field experience in helping lay the ground for South Africa's transition from Apartheid. After the events of 9-11, Mr Beck set his eyes on bringing his work to the Middle East. Following the South African model, he was looking for someone who understood the cultural values of the Middle East as well as the value systems framework and large-scale social psychology and with whom he can start a new initiative. That is how we began our long professional partnership.

The efforts needed to create a tipping point in how Israelis and Palestinians perceived a solution to the conflict were massive. Although we wanted to do the work, we were careful as not to accept funding from government sources or the UN in order to preserve the integrity of the approach. Many American and Canadian businessmen who knew Mr Beck offered to sponsor our initiative. The first step was the most arduous as we began our search for IIEs on both sides of the conflict. This was a meticulously drawn out process that took over a year to complete. We wanted to make sure that whoever was picked had the qualifications of an IIE that were described earlier.

On the Palestinian side our initiative drew the interest of members of the Third Generation Fatah political movement. They were led by Nafiz Al Rifae a pragmatist with strong Fifth Level values. Nafiz was also influential with Palestinian Authority President Abbas and his powerful Old Guard as well as in shaping the minds of Fatah's future generations. Most IIEs under his leadership had a fresh perspective on the future of a non-violent and a corruption-free Palestine. Neri Bar-On, a successful engineer, who exemplified the bright Fifth Level values, and had embraced the Sixth Level humanitarian values, led the Israeli side. Most IIEs in his group also had a future vision of a more peaceful Israel. All EEIs were trained in the value systems methodologies for research before doing fieldwork.

Once the teams of experts were in place on both sides, we proceeded to map out the memetics of both Israel and Palestine. This long drawn out process showed a true depiction of the value systems in both cultures, and how they react to existential threats. More notably what we observed was that Israel was a first world country with values centrered in the 4th and 5th level value systems and emerging into the 6th level system. Palestine, on the other hand was centrered in the 2nd and 3rd levels and emerging into the 4th level. In short, Palestine had many developmental challenges.

This became the catalyst that shifted our focus from negotiating a better deal on peace accords, to building the capacities of Palestinians. We called this "The Build Palestine Initiative[7]." Our work for the following few years was to give the Palestinians a vision of their own future and think of ways to influence their representatives to build their own indigenous institutions and support a future state. For several years the Palestinian IIEs roamed every town city and village in the West Bank to spread the memes of "prosper and let prosper," as part of the new value structure that the Palestinians were aiming for.

In 2008 this large-scale design project culminated in a summit on the future of Palestine, where over 700 community leaders and Fatah Third Generation Party officials detailed their vision of a prosperous and peaceful Palestinian State. This became the blueprint that inspired many progressive Palestinians, including Prime Minister Fayyad. Today, although the Arab Spring has taken the spotlight away from Israel and Palestine, the CHE Mideast, still advises many IIEs on how to shape their indigenous institutions that will eventually lead to their own version of *Functional Democracy*.

CONCLUSION

The *Functional Democracy* model requires the fundamental reworking of many of the assumptions the world has about the virtues of Democracy. As

Winston Churchill once told the British House of Commons: "Democracy is the worst form of government except for all the others." Our model is one that is evolutionary by nature. By using the principles that are outlined here, the model becomes a template created *by the people for the people*, which in turn elect politicians who are *of the people*. When it comes to the Middle East, since the region is centrered in the Second and Third Level of values and is entering the Fourth Level system, *Functional Democracy* might mean that parts of the region will naturally elect a benevolent leader to take them to the next stage of their development. Other parts of the Middle East might be ready for an authoritarian democracy that can channel the energies of the Third Level values. This is evident in what is happening in Egypt as the country rejected the Muslim Brotherhood and its 3rd level values, while the country's liberals with 6th level values can't seem to gain enough political traction. The autocracies the Egyptian army represents are the values that Egypt needs before it can transition to a truly representative democracy. Whether General Al Sisi will represent the healthy aspect of the system is still to be determined.

The Middle East is a region on a hero's journey that requires the building of resilient institutions. The road ahead might be bloody and dangerous at times just like most historic transitions from the Third to the Fourth level of values were in human history. But, knowing the people of my region I have high hopes that the resilience that made them endure for so long will shine through again as they integrate into an increasingly more complex world.

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